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Portraits of Women: Mexican and Chilean Stereotypes in Digital Advertising

Marta Mensa
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8239-3674
Marta.mensa@uach.cl
Universidad Austral de Chile

Verónica Bittner
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1726-5510
Veronica.bittner@uach.cl
Universidad Austral de Chile

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Abstract

By 2020, brands will invest half of their marketing budget on Internet advertising. The Internet has effective potential in advertising, and it can mold stereotypical roles for future generations of consumers. Social norms and beliefs towards respect and gender equality can be reinforced through digital advertising. This study compares empirical evidence of how women are portrayed in digital advertising on Facebook from Mexico and Chile. Samples were compiled by selecting forty fan pages with the most followers –20 from Mexico and 20 from Chile. 1600 posts were examined by quantitative content analysis method. Results show that Mexican posts use 10.2% more sexist stereotypes than Chilean posts. In a traditional role's context, advertising emphasizes behaviors along gender stereotypes, where women are not perceived equal to men. "I love shoes" (97.5%), a Mexican company with the second highest number of followers and "Forever 21," an American juvenile clothing brand (85%) in Chile, are the brands that portray women in mostly traditional roles. These data reinforce the theory that female-audience brands support sexist values in advertising. Both countries show women engaged in activities outside the home, but not professionally or as an authority figure. Summary, in many ways, evidence suggests a paradoxical approach to portrayals of women in Mexican and Chilean Facebook fan page advertising.

Keywords
Stereotypes, Latin America, Digital advertising, Facebook, Gender.

1. Introduction

Sixteen years have passed since the birth of Web 1.0 in 2001 to the current Web 4.0, launched in 2016. As the web evolves, digital media replace traditional media because they are faster, friendlier, more efficient and affordable for consumers (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017). The internet is a forum for interactive communication between brands and their followers, as well as a place where brands can learn more about consumers (Briggs & Hollis, 1997; Erkan & Birol, 2011; Gallagher, Foster & Parsons, 2001; Wolin & Korgaonkar, 2003). According to Zenith (2017), 44.3% of the overall advertising budget will be assigned to digital investment. This means almost half of all advertising investment in the world will go towards digital media.

Advertising uses images that influence consumers' social behavior (Tsichla & Zotos, 2016). Whereas such behavioral modeling used to take place though television or press, it is now done by Internet. This communication media continues growing and shaping digital

consumer identities but much faster than traditional media. Thus, it has a huge potential to influence stereotypical roles allotted to men and women (Gauntlett, 2002; Plakoyiannaki *et. al.*, 2008). Marketing plays an important social role, and it can generate public opinion and also dictate social norms. Individuals consume marketing images from social networks until they accept them as normal and natural (Tsichla & Zotos, 2016; Velandia-Morales & Rodríguez-Bailón, 2011). For that reason, advertising can generate a healthier, more egalitarian, and respectful society (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2000; Orth & Holancova, 2004). As more resources that are invested in digital advertising, the more influence it will have over social norms and beliefs about gender equality (Giddens, 1991; Glik & Fiske, 2011; Tsichla & Zotos, 2016). This study has two objectives: The first is to compare women portrayed in Mexican and Chilean Facebook fan pages. The second objective is to understand what type of female stereotypes are used in Mexican and Chilean digital advertising. Since the 1960s, academia has studied female stereotypes only in traditional media advertising (Alvesson, 1998; Brown & Bobkowski, 2011; Dahl, Sengupta & Vohs, 2009; Dupagne, Potter & Cooper, 1993; Furnham, Babitzkow & Uguccioni, 2000; Kim & Lowry, 2005; Milner & Collins, 2000; Villegas, Lemanski & Valdéz, 2010; Zotos, Lysonski & Cirilli, 1996). However, there are few studies about female stereotypes in digital advertising, and even fewer in the Latin American context (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2000; Thompson & Lougheed, 2012; Villegas, Lemanski & Valdéz, 2010; Wolin, 2003). In Mexico, Calderón (2008) and García (1980) showed that advertising tends to portray women as sexual or decorative objects; while in Chile Porath-Campos (2014) and Uribe *et al.* (2008) show that advertising in traditional media tends to show women wearing less clothes than men. However, this is the first study that compares Mexican and Chilean female stereotypes in digital advertising.

2.Theoretical Framework

Stereotypes are beliefs and expectations shared by people about the characteristics that women and men should have within society (Alexander & Ben, 1978; Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Morrison & Shaffer, 2003; Putrevu, 2008; Stockdale & Nadler, 2013). Gender theories suggest that advertising is responsible for promoting sexism and female role stereotypes where women are shown as vulnerable members of society (Alvesson, 1998; Dupagne, Potter & Cooper, 1993; Giddens, 1991; Orth & Holancova, 2004; Villegas, Lemanski & Valdéz, 2010). Sexism portrays women as inferior to men in their abilities and potential (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Lysonski, 1985). In advertising, sexism is manifested when women are shown in traditional roles, such as caretakers and/or exalting their bodies as decorative or sexual objects (Giddens, 1991; Glik & Fiske, 2011; Mackay & Covell, 1997; Plakoyiannaki *et al.*, 2008; Tsichla & Zotos, 2016). In contrast, advertising treats men differently, showing them as professionals, having authority, performing activities outside the home, associated to leadership and competence (Del Moral, 2000; Tsichla & Zotos, 2016; Luengas & Velandia-Morales, 2012; Plakoyiannaki *et al.*, 2008; Kim & Lowry, 2005; Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005; Vianello & Caramazza, 2002). According to Plakoyiannaki *et al.* (2008) and Tsichla & Zotos (2016) stereotypical female roles have been categorized into three groups: *women in traditional roles that promote sexism* (dependent, caretaker, decorative and sexual object); *women in non-traditional roles that do not promote sexism* (non-traditional activities, professional, authority figure) and *women in neutral roles that do not promote sexism* (see Table 1).

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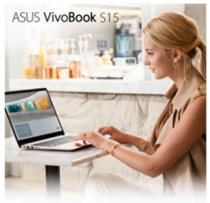
Table 1: Woman Role Stereotypes (Plakoyiannaki *et al.*, 2008; Tsichla & Zotos, 2016).

Category		Description	Example – Chile	Example – Mexico
Woman in Traditional Roles (Sexist)	Dependent	Woman is dependent on the man. She appears passive and someone who serves him. Man shows his power by protecting and having authority over the woman.		
	Caretaker	Mother and caretaker. Woman performs activities at home (cooking, cleaning, ironing, washing floors…). This category includes women caring for their family or her loved ones.		
	Decorative Object	Woman as decorative object means that she is associated with an object rather than a person. Her intellectual skill is not important, but her body is.		
	Sexual Object	Woman is used purely to sell products. She is an object of desire; her physical attractiveness is emphasized. Her body is fragmented in different parts (lips, hair, mouth, legs…) becoming a consumer object, devoid of personhood.		
Woman in Non-Traditional Roles (Not Sexist)	Non-traditional activities	Women performing non-traditional activities (not dependent on man, not a caretaker, not a decorative nor sexual object). Women's activities are contextualized out of home: she goes out with friends, plays sports, travels and goes on outings. She is independent and away from her mother role.		
	Professional	Women as professional, career-oriented, active in the labor market.		

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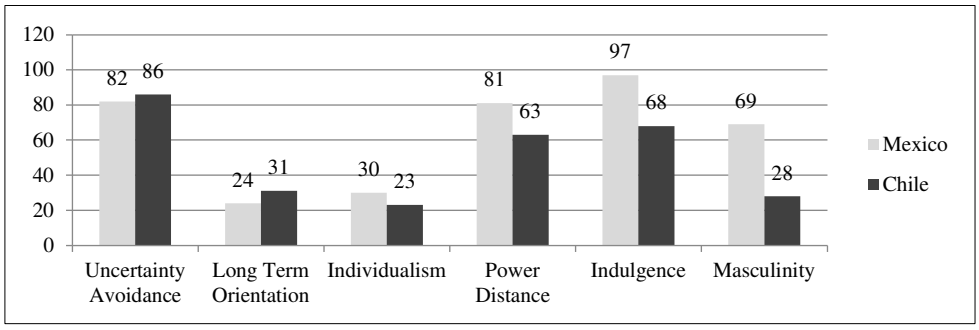
	Authority Figure	Women with a voice of authority. Women project confidence, autonomy and independence.		
Neutral Woman (Not Sexist)		Woman is presented side by side with man. Neither man nor woman is portrayed as superior, they are on the same level.		

Source: Own elaboration.

2.1. *Mexican and Chilean Cultural Dimensions*

Mexican and Chilean cultures need to be understood in context. Hofstede's (2001) work provides a lens for contextualizing a country's cultural norms. This study classifies national cultural norms along six dimensions, each of which is given a score from 1-100, with 50 as the median. *Uncertain avoidance* measures how uncertain a country feels about the future. Chile's (86) and Mexico's score (82) are similar, implying that these societies are slow to accept changes. Both prefer to avoid risks and choose habitual approaches for solving societal issues. *Long term orientation,* refers to the importance a culture allocates to short-term versus long-term goals. Both Chile (31) and Mexico (24) score low in this dimension, which implies that their vision is more focused on quick results in the short-term. *Individualism,* describes the degree of interdependence that society's members share with each other. In this regard, Chile tends to be more individualistic (23) than Mexico (30). Mexico, by contrast, is considered more collective than Chile, with a society where values such as loyalty, responsibility and familiarity prevail. *Power distance* measures the unequal distribution of power within a country. This dimension refers to the extent to which power relationships are understood and how wealth inequality is tolerated. Here, Chile is close to the medium score (63), while Mexico scores quite high (81). This suggests that while both societies have a marked hierarchical social structure due to social differences, Chile is aware of improving equal rights, and Mexico has not taken actions to make its society more egalitarian. *Indulgence* addresses tendencies toward gratification across a spectrum between indulgence and restraint. It is a measure of satisfaction and it relates to degree of happiness. Chile is relatively indulgent (68) and Mexico has a high score (97), meaning that both countries have a positive attitude towards life, though Mexico is more optimistic about life in general (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Mexican and Chilean Cultural Dimensions.



Source: Own elaboration.

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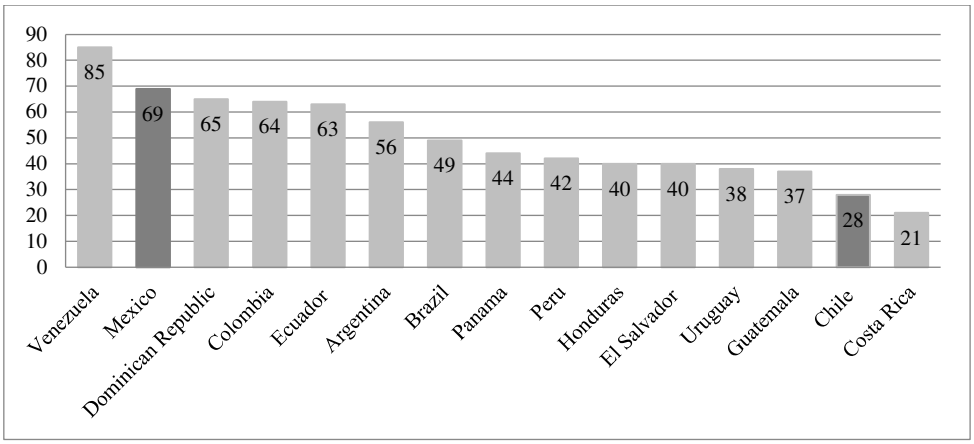
The final dimension is *masculinity*. This dimension tries to capture how people behave in relation to their gender roles. According to Triandis & Suh (2002), this dimension represents the deepest societal structure and for this reason, is the most studied. The *Masculinity* score has been used in academic cross-cultural research in order to understand female sexual roles in advertising (Emery & Tian, 2010; Gibson & Steinberg, 2016; Hatzithomas, Zotos, & Boutsouki, 2011; Nelson & Paek 2005; Pergelova & Angulo-Ruiz, 2017; Rovira & Sedano, 2004; Triandis & Suh, 2002). Countries considered "feminine" do not emphasize gender stereotype behaviors; conversely "masculine" countries reinforce differences between sexes (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede, 1998; Hosfstede, 1991; Rovira & Sedano, 2004). Mexico (69) has the second highest *masculinity* score in Latin America. It is also a country with many gender problems, such as femicides, the killing of a woman by a man and on account of her gender. In 2015, more than 1900 women were violently murdered in Mexico (UN, 2016); the same year only 58 femicides were documented in Chile (Minmujer, 2015). Mexican culture values strength, competitiveness and fighting, traits associated with men, and by extension, with machismo. Mexican women, by contrast, are expected to be calm, acquiescent and submissive (Hofstede, 2018; Lamas, 2016; Tuñón, 2015; Villegas, Lemanski, & Valdéz, 2010; Ramírez, 2008; Gutman, 2006; Lamas & Bissell, 2000; Lamas, 1997). In summary, Mexico is a country with gender inequality and patriarchal rules (Gneezy, Leonard & List, 2009; Valdez & González, 1999).

By contrast, Chile's low *masculinity* index (28) points to complementary gender roles and non-violence values (Figure 2). Chile has built an egalitarian and pluralistic society in gender issues within the Latin American context (Antezana & Bachmann, 2016). The government created "Fourth National Gender Equality Program 2018-2030," and the Chilean society has taken responsibility for gender equality though protests and university and school occupations (Uribe *et al.*, 2008; Paniagua, 2000; Agacinski, 2000). There was a feminist revolution in 2018, in which people demanded the end of machismo in Chilean patriarchal social system (Observatorio Contra el Acoso Callejero, 2018; Cepal, 2018). Keeping in mind the *masculinity* dimension in Chile and Mexico, the following comparative hypothesis was developed:

H1: Mexico will have a higher percentage of women portrayed in traditional roles in digital advertising than Chile, according to its *masculinity* score.

Figure 2: Index of *masculinity* in Latin America countries according to Hofstede (2018).



Source: Own elaboration.

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2.2. *Gender Stereotypes in Digital Advertising*

Few studies examine female stereotypes in digital media, and even fewer look at how women are stereotyped in Latin American countries (Gustansson & Czarniawska, 2004; Haferkamp *et al.*, 2012; Knupfer, 1998; Linne, 2014; Oberst *et al.*, 2016; Oberst, Chamarro & Renau, 2016; Plakoyiannaki *et al.* 2008; Renau, Oberst & Carbonell, 2013; Thompson & Lougheed, 2012; Wolin & Korgaonkar, 2003). Plakoyiannaki *et al.* (2008) analyzed female images in online advertisements and their findings indicated that women are mainly portrayed in traditional roles, concluding that sexism in digital advertising is recurrent. Their findings are consistent with those of Gustansson and Czarniawska (2004) and Knupfer (1998), which were the first authors to analyze female web virtual animations concluding that the Internet perpetuates gender discrimination through attractive and sexy virtual women. The second study, Knupfer (1998), asserts that Internet advertising places women in secondary roles which tend to emphasize their sexuality and physical appearance. Also, Facebook perpetuates traditional gender stereotypes. Thompson & Lougheed (2012) concluded that Facebook is a source of stress for women, because some images cause them dissatisfaction with their own bodies. Based on this theoretical framework the following four descriptive hypotheses were constructed:

H2: In Mexico, the most common traditional female stereotype is women as sexual objects.

H3: In Chile, the most used traditional female stereotype is women as decorative objects.

H4: In Mexico, the most common non-traditional female stereotype is women performing non-traditional activities.

H5: In Chile, the most used non-traditional female stereotype is professional women.

3. Methodology

The methodology chosen to test the hypotheses is content analysis, a "research technique that makes valid and reproducible on their context from data" (Krippendorf, 1997, p. 28). This method was deemed most appropriate for providing "a scientific, quantitative and generalizable description of communication content" (Kassarjian, 1977, p. 10).

Sampling and coding norms were especially important in this study (Kolbe & Burnet, 1991; Thayer, 2007). Samples were compiled by selecting forty fan pages with the most followers –20 from Mexico and 20 from Chile. The digital platform Fanpage Karma (Table 2), a paid tool that is useful for analyses of Facebook pages, was used to determine which pages had the most followers. The first forty published *posts* were selected from each brand (n=1600) using the following criteria: 1. *Posts* that did not have any images of women or men were eliminated; 2. Promotional *posts* for movies, with famous actors and actresses, were excluded (Table 1). The sampling period started in January 2018 and continued until reaching the forty *posts* required. A specific code was developed to process the analysis units, which was used to test each hypothesis. Construction of the female stereotype code was based on previous studies of Tsichla & Zotos (2016) and Plakoyiannaki *et al.* (2008) (Table 1) and the statistical program SPSS, version 19 was used to codify data.

In order to assure codification accuracy, training sessions were held: concepts, key categories, and the codification process –including directives and tables– were explained to coders. In order to ensure that guidelines were understood, coders examined 100 posts before analyzing the ones designated for research purposes (Igartua, 2006; Wimmer & Dominick, 1996). The pilot coding minimized differences in category interpretation and improved consensus among coders. Coding was carried out individually (n=1600), and *posts* were analyzed according to these codes. If an ad presented more than one stereotype, it was classified according to the dominant stereotype (Plakoyiannaki *et al.*, 2008). The reliability index was calculated for both coders (Dupagne, Potter & Cooper, 1993). The operative range

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of values for this index went from 0.0 (not reliable), to 1.0 (perfect reliability) (Igartua, 2006). The study's *intercoding reliability* of 0.95 confirms that coding process was accurate.

Fan pages were taken from eight product categories: drinks, textiles and clothing, automobiles, food, commerce, telecommunications and Internet, beauty and hygiene, and home (Table 2). The most frequent product categories were beverages (20%), textiles and clothing (17.5%) and food (14.9%). Together, they constituted 52.4% of the sample. The categories classification by product was based on the Infoadex list, an advertising database (2018).

Table 2: Mexico and Chile Fan pages.

	Mexico			Chile			
Nº	*fan page*	Number of fans	Product Category	Nº	*fan page*	Number of fans	Product Category
1	Coca-Cola	102.754.000	Beverages	21	Coca-Cola	108.000.000	Beverages
2	I love shoes	41.200.000	Textiles and Clothing	22	Kitkat	26.500.000	Food
3	Nescafé	34.800.000	Beverages	23	Asus	26.500.000	Telecommunications and Internet
4	Volkswagen	28.900.000	Automobiles	24	Heineken	24.600.000	Beverages
5	Doritos	16.400.000	Food	25	Sprite	22.800.000	Beverages
6	Corona	12.900.000	Foods	26	Nivea	21.900.000	Beauty and Hygiene
7	Walmart	6.100.000	Commerce	27	Spotify	21.100.000	Telecommunications and Internet
8	Bodega Aurrera	5.500.000	Commerce	28	Fanta	19.900.000	Beverages
9	Andrea Design	5.300.000	Textiles and Clothing	29	Groupon	19.500.000	Sports and Leisure
10	Samsung	5.100.000	Commerce	30	Maggi	18.200.000	Food
11	Telcel	4.300.000	Telecommunications and Internet	31	Vans	18.100.000	Textiles and Clothing
12	Sam's Club	4.200.000	Commerce	32	Doritos	17.000.000	Food
13	Converse	4.100.000	Textiles and Clothing	33	Mastercard	16.100.000	Finance
14	Liverpool	3.600.000	Commerce	34	Dunkin'Donuts	15.500.000	Food
15	Papas Sabritas	3.500.000	Food	35	Forever 21	15.400.000	Textile and Clothing
16	Elektra	3.400.000	Home	36	Smirnoff	14.400.000	Beverages
17	Samsung Mobile	3.400.000	Telecommunications and Internet	37	Dafiti	13.000.000	Textiles and Clothing
18	Suburbia	3.300.000	Textiles and Clothing	38	Mini	12.100.000	Automobiles
19	Mary Kay	3.200.000	Beauty and Hygiene	39	Peugeot	11.700.000	Automobiles
20	Kotex	3.100.000	Beauty and Hygiene	40	Durex	11.600.000	Health

Source: Own elaboration.

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4. Results

A significant difference was observed in distribution percentages within each country (χ^2=19.926; p=0.007). Table 3 shows gender frequencies of the n=1600 posts, 800 from each country. In Mexico, there was a greater percentage (53.6%) of posts with only females, compared to Chile (45.7%). In other words, women are portrayed 7.9% more in Mexico than in Chile (Table 3).

Table 3: Gender frequencies and *X*2 values.

	Total		Mexico		Chile			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	X^2 (d.f. = 1)	*p*
Only Males	496	31.0	229	28.6	267	33.4	4,219	0,0400
Only Females	795	49.7	429	53.6	366	45.7	9,123	0,0016
Females and Males	309	19.3	142	17.8	167	20.9	2,507	0,1134
Total	1600	100	800	100	800	100		

Source: Own elaboration.

Gender was associated with product typology in order to detect what brands most frequently employ male or female models on their fan pages. The data set shows that in Mexico, automobile advertisings use posts showing *only males* 52.5% of the time and 22.5% *only females* (Volkswagen). In Chile, automobile fan pages (Mini and Peugeot) post images of *only males* 58.8% of the time and 25% *only females*. Gender differences are more noticeable on beauty and hygiene products: Mary Kay and Kotex (Mexico) show *only females* on 96.3% of their *posts* and *only males* on 2.5% of them; Nivea (Chile) projects *only females* for 95% of posts and *only males* on 5%.

4.1. *Comparative Statistics: Female Stereotypes by Cultural Dimension (Hypothesis 1)*

This section focuses on the *masculinity* dimension. This cultural measurement tries to capture how people behave in relation to their gender roles and has been utilized in academic research in order to better understand female sexual roles projected in advertising images (Emery & Tian, 2010; Gibson & Steinberg, 2016; Hatzithomas, Zotos, & Boutsouki, 2011; Nelson & Paek 2005; Pergelova & Angulo-Ruiz, 2017; Rovira & Sedano, 2004; Triandis & Suh, 2002). According to Hofstede (2018), Mexico has the second highest *masculinity* score (69) in Latin America; conversely Chile has a low index (28). This means that Mexico has a stronger machismo culture than Chile, and this section points to contrast *masculinity* dimension data in a digital advertising context between both countries.

Our research objectives focused on determining which female stereotypes are most utilized on fan pages from Mexico and Chile. For this reason, and in accordance with Tsichla and Zotos (2016), and Plakoyiannaki *et al.* (2008), the only *posts* considered for descriptive and comparative statistics were the ones in which women appeared (alone, with other women or with men). *Posts* with only men were not considered. A total of 571 Mexican posts (71.4% of total) and 533 Chilean posts (66.7% of total) fulfilled this requirement. Contingency tables were developed to test hypotheses and Chi-squared values were estimated in order to determine if there were significant differences between the stereotype percentages.

Traditional role stereotypes are those that promote sexism, showing women inferiorly in relation to their abilities and potential (Alvesson, 1998; Dupagne, Potter & Cooper, 1993; Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Giddens, 1991; Lysonski, 1985; Orth & Holancova, 2004; Villegas, Lemanski & Valdéz, 2010). Hypothesis 1 states that Mexico presents a higher percentage of women in traditional roles than Chile, based on the *masculinity* cultural dimension (Hofstede, 2018). Data compiled support this affirmation (Table 4), showing that Mexico presents 73

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(10.2%) more posts of traditional women roles than Chile, with a significant difference (X^2 = 11.52; p = 0.0007). This means that Mexico promotes more sexism and depicts women as inferior in relation to their abilities and potential compared to Chile (Furnham & Paltzer, 2010; Villegas, Lemanski & Valdéz, 2010; Orth & Holancova, 2004; Alvesson, 1998; Dupagne, Potter & Cooper, 1993; Giddens, 1991; Lysonski, 1985). This idea is connected with machismo culture in Mexico, where the country expects that women are submissive and soft-hearted. They must care for home and family, which includes staying at home with children (Mensa & Grow, 2019). Ultimately, women are seen as nurturers, while men have to be commanding and commonly demonstrate their dominance with assertive competitiveness (Agoff, Casique & Castro, 2013; Mollett, 2017). According to Lamas (2016) machismo in Mexico is typified by a man who can drink the most, sire many sons, defend himself successfully and dominate his wife.

Table 4: Women in traditional, non-traditional and neutral roles.

	Total		Mexico		Chile			
Females	n	%	n	%	n	%	X^2 (d.f. = 1)	*p*
Traditional	493	44.7	283	49.6	210	39.4	11.52	0.0007
Non-Traditional	441	39.9	224	39.2	217	40.7	0.253	0.6150
Neutral	170	15.4	64	11.2	106	19.9	15.94	0.0001
Total	1104	100	571	100	533	100		

Source: Own elaboration.

4.2. *Descriptive Statistics: Stereotype Analysis (Hypotheses 2-5)*

In a traditional role's context, advertising emphasizes behaviors along gender stereotypes, where women are not perceived equal to men. "I love shoes" (97.5%), a Mexican company with the second highest number of *followers* and "Forever 21", an American juvenile clothing brand (85%) in Chile, are the brands that portray women in mostly traditional roles. These data reinforce the theory that female-audience brands support sexist values in advertising (Fullerton & Kendrick 2000; Plakoyiannaki *et. al.* 2008; Taylor, Landreth & Bang 2005).

Hypothesis 2 states that women as *sexual objects* would be the most common traditional role in Mexico, however this hypothesis was rejected (Table 5). The reason is that this stereotype was relatively infrequent (9.5%), and women were mostly portrayed as *decorative objects* (53%). Hypothesis 3 suggests that women as *decorative objects* would be the most commonly found traditional stereotype in Chile, and this hypothesis was accepted because this was presented in 64.9% of *posts*. Thus, there is a coincidence between Chile and Mexico, both countries portray women as products and not as persons, minimizing and treating them as objects. Both cultures perceive women with low status and little capacity to play roles that imply power.

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Table 5: Traditional Females Roles.

Country	Traditional Females Roles										X^2 (d.f.= 3)	p
	Total		Dependent		Caretaker		Decorative Object		Sexual Object			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Mexico	283	100.0	17	6.0	89	31.4	150	53.0	27	9.5	161.37	0.0000
Chile	210	100.0	17	8.1	46	21.9	137	65.2	10	4.8	195.22	0.0000
Total	493	100.0	34	6.9	135	27.4	287	58.2	37	7.5		

Source: Own elaboration.

Hypothesis 4 proposes that the most common non-traditional stereotype put forth in Mexico is that of woman *performing non-traditional activities*. Empirical results support this hypothesis, 76.9% of non-traditional *posts* showed women being active outside the home (Table 6). Hypothesis 5 stated that the most common non-traditional stereotype in Chile would be that of *professional women.* However, the most common is actually the portrayal of *woman performing non-traditional activities* (88.5%). Hypothesis 5 was therefore rejected. Another coincidence, while digital advertising in both countries contextualize woman outside home, whether socializing with friends, playing sports or traveling, it does not portray her as a professional. Women were portrayed as professionals only in 16.0% of Mexican posts and 9.8% of Chilean posts. Percentages were even lower for images of women as authority figures (Mexico 7.1%, Chile 1.8%). This result reinforces machismo culture, which emphasizes that women can do activities outside home, but they cannot be professionals or strong, meaning that men are still protagonists of these cultures.

Table 6: Non-traditional female roles.

Country	Non-Traditional Females Roles								X^2 (d.f. = 2)	p
	Total		Non-Traditional Activities		Professional		Voice of Authority			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Mexico	225	100.0	173	76.9	36	16.0	16	7.1	194.75	0.0000
Chile	217	100.0	192	88.5	21	9.7	4	1.8	298.96	0.0000
Total	442	100.0	365	33.0	57	5.2	20	1.8		

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Discussion

This study is unique in offering and comparing empirical evidence on how women are portrayed in digital advertising in Mexico and Chile. The Internet has changed the way that we communicate, but on digital platforms women are still portrayed in traditional roles (Oberst, Chamarro & Renau, 2016). Data show that women *as decorative objects* is the most common traditional stereotype in both countries. This finding is consistent with the studies by Milner & Collins (2000), and Zotos, Lysonski & Cirilli (1996), which found an increase usage of the stereotype of women *as decorative objects* in press and television media. Such stereotypes promote hostile sexism, meaning a woman is a man's accessory and not an

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autonomous figure with personhood of her own (Glick & Fiske, 2011; Lemus *et al.*, 2008; Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2006; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Findings on non-traditional female roles show that, in both Mexico and Chile, women are shown doing activities outside home and in social contexts, but still, removed from roles of power and competitiveness. These findings contrast with Plakoyiannaki *et al.* (2008), as they exposed that the professional woman is the most utilized non-traditional stereotype in web page banners. This is not observed in *fan pages* data for digital advertising in Mexico or Chile, where a woman from these countries can be outside the home or doing some activities, she is still not seen as a worker.

Women are still associated to beauty and hygiene products, far from other categories like technology or automobiles. Advertising has been known to promote an unattainable ideal of beauty, pushing women to reach a perfect body and eternal youth (Birkeland *et al.*, 2005; Furnham, 1999; Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2004; Plakoyiannaki *et al.*, 2008; Tsichla & Zotos, 2016). Gender-space-power theories affirm that historically and socially, the man is allocated economic power and external space, while the woman is endowed with physical beauty power, acting within the internal space, she is expected to be attractive and an object of male desire (Kagan & Lewis, 1990; Lamas, 2000; Nicolson, 2015; Scott, 2016; Vianello, M. & Caramazza, 2002; Wolf, 1991). As such, beauty products are for women and cars for men. García & Martínez (2009) also draw this conclusion, they find that women make an appearance in less than 15% of ads for financial products, automobiles or telecommunications in mass media.

Furthermore, Grow, Roca & Broyles (2012) identified an advertising structure marked by gender discrimination and machismo because agencies divide accounts into "men accounts" and "women accounts." The former, "men accounts" are responsible for products such as beer, cars, watches; and the latter, so-called "pink accounts," for diapers, sanitary napkin or facial creams (Mallia & Windels, 2011; Mallia, 2009). According to Grow & Broyles (2011), dividing accounts in this way emphasizes the gender differences inside agencies. Creative women are restricted to "pink accounts", losing the opportunities for performing other sorts of advertising jobs. Finally, our findings indicate that Mexico's advertising is more sexist than Chile's, though this difference does not completely reflect the high index of *masculinity* that Mexico has, compared to Chile. It is possible that the cultural structure organization inside advertising agencies could have more influence than the country's own culture (Mensa, 2017).

Even so, there is room for optimism, progress has been made reducing the use of the woman as a sexual and dependent object for digital advertising in Mexico and Chile. Advertising should not forget its social responsibility towards the elimination of sexism and towards the visualization of women in innovative roles. Above all, women with young people and *netizens*, will be the demographic group with the highest digital marketing potential in the future (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017).

6. Future Research and Limitations

This study comes with specific limitations that can influence the main research hypotheses and additional analyses, suggesting how to conduct future investigations in digital advertising, sexism and social change. It would be useful, for example, to be able to quantify how the internal decisions of advertising agencies affect the creative results, from a gender point of view. This future study would research what kind of internal decisions and parts of the process create ads that foster sexism. It will be also interesting to apply the same method to other digital advertising platforms like Instagram, Twitter or YouTube, each one with a certain personality and concrete marketing goals. Also, this study focused on female stereotypes in a Latin American context, and it would be enriching to do the same study in Asia or Europe. It is time for advertising to stop projecting images of women in traditional roles. The future of digital communication will be female.

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