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Fair-skinned and Happy housewives

How women are portrayed in advertisements in
Mexican fashion magazines.

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ABSTRACT

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Advertising has a powerful role in today's society, especially since we are constantly surrounded by it. Advertisement does not only encourage people to make decisions about their purchases but has a big impact on the culture (Lin & Yeh, 2009; Lindner, 2004). Hence, it is a big factor of creating norms and ideas of what is feminine and masculine; thus affecting the perception on gender within societies. Unfortunate is however that to be able to cut through the enormous advertising clutter that people are exposed to daily, advertisers tend to use sexual content and portrayals as tactic, leading to an obscure ideal (Dahl, Segupta & Vohs, 2009; Cortese, 2008; Connell & Pearse, 2015; Butler & Almqvist, 2007).

This quantitative and qualitative study examines from a Gender and Feminist theory perspective how women are portrayed sexually and stereotypically in advertisements within Mexican fashion magazines. The advertisements found within the seven biggest fashion magazines in Mexico are being studied both through a quantitative content analyse and qualitative text analyse using a semiotic approach.

The result of the study shows that the content of advertisements in Mexican magazines frequently portray females in a sexualised and stereotypical way. Within our qualitative result six different stereotypes could be found. Furthermore, our quantitative result shows that the most commonly portrayed female within the advertisements are White. Henceforth, our result shows that a female ideal where the most crucial attributes are: to be sexy, beautiful, obtain an attractive appearance and to be White.

Keywords: sexualization, stereotype, female portrayal, advertisement, female ideal, Latin America, Mexico

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Problem Discussion

“A young woman is laying down in water with her head leant back. She has pouting red lips and her mouth is slightly open in a moaning way. She is looking straight into the camera with a seductive and sexually inviting gaze. Her skin is soft and flawless and she is exposing her cleavage” (Figure 6.3).

The image of a woman described above is from an advertisement in Elle magazine (Mexico) and this kind of sexualizing portrayal is far away from unusual. More correctly, they are so common that they become the norm (Merskin, 2006). According to Bosak, Infanger and Sczesny (2012) the main purpose of advertising is to increase a product's or brand's attractiveness towards potential consumers and consequently increase sales. In today's society people are exposed to visual advertisements every day. Unfortunately marketers have resorted radical tactics to cut through this enormous advertising clutter, where a popular tactic is the use of sexual images, even though the sexual image has little, or even none, relevance to the marketed product (Dahl, Segupta & Vohs, 2009).

Advertising has a powerful role; it is a tool for changing attitudes and self-images, to create personal needs, affect perception of life and it has impacts on people's identities (Lin & Yeh, 2009). Therefore, advertisements are not only supposed to encourage people to buy products and services but also work as socializing agents in the society, because of their effects on people's attitudes, norms and behaviors (Lindner, 2004). In visual media the advertisements can be seen as a mirror where the cultural meaning, the society's values and personal dreams are reflected. The representations in advertisements create and push myths of what is needed, myths of what is feminine and masculine (Lin & Yeh, 2009; Cortese, 2008). Furthermore, advertising affects the ideas and perceptions of ethnicity, gender and social class (Cortese, 2008). When numerous advertisements contain messages about distorted gender roles where the appearance of both men and women are appropriate, it creates a wrong image of the role of being man or woman in the society (Lindner, 2004).

One of the first sociologists to study the gender stereotypes in advertisements was Goffman (1979). His main argument was that advertisements contribute to the ideals of femininity and masculinity. Advertisements portray women and men in ways that we think they behave not how they actually behave in real life. Women in advertisements are often portrayed in a stereotypical way and have a submissive role and a lower physical and social position than

men. Furthermore Goffman found that women were portrayed less serious in social situations than men (ibid.). Even though more than 35 years have passed since Goffman's study, previous studies have shown largely unchanged results. However, there was a minor change by the late 1980's and early 1990's when advertisers started to take seriously upon women's anger at being objectified and sexualized in media. As a result advertisers begun to rethink the way they represent women and how they create feminine ideals (Gill, 2008). Yet, findings show that the sexualization of women and the portrayal of women in submissive roles and as sex objects have not changed over time (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010). The use of sex appeal and erotic provocations has been a leading tool of creating advertisements from its earliest conception, and still is. The problem is that advertisers work with the perception that sex sells and it has arisen an idea that you will sell more if the advertisement is focusing on showing the sexy parts of a female body. This idea results in a consumer culture where sexist advertisements should stimulate us to buy and where sex in advertising captures people's attentions, which has become so common that it is almost intolerable to argue that sexist advertisement is wrong (Cohan, 2001).

Historically it has been a change of the ideal women and how they are portrayed stereotypically. In early years, in the 1950's, the ideal focus for a woman's labor and success came from their home (Gill, 2008) and the myth of the "happy housewife" was the main discourse of femininity (Stevens, Maclaran & Brown, 2003). Nowadays it has been a shift from the home to women's bodies. It is a woman's body parts that is portrayed in advertisements and that counts as the primary source of success. The new key source of identity is a "sexy body", a source more important than any other skills she may have (Gill, 2008). The influence of the first feminism movement started in the late 1960's, mainly in United States, Britain and Europe (Stevens, et al., 2003). Hence, it was not until 2003 that the concept of "sexualization" started to be seen as an issue in the public eye. The main reason for this was the positioning as a feminist issue, by discursive actors and in a number of media discourses (Duschinsky, 2013).

Merskin (2006) assert that sex is a commodity without no signs of decrease when it comes to the use of sexual imagery in advertising, especially fashion advertisements. This is problematical due to the sexualization's huge impact on the society. Both for women and girls, as it may harm their self-esteem, body satisfaction, mental and physical health etcetera, but it can also have a negative impact on boys and men. Boys and men get an unrealistic image of the perfect women, which may affect the way they look upon "real" girls and women in the society and how they get treated. Further it has a huge societal and cultural impact as

well. The objectifications and sexualization that can be found in media affect general social attitudes and expectations of gender roles and sexuality (APA, 2010).

2. Aim and Question Formulations

2.1 Aim

Even though this subject has been widely researched, debated and written about for decades, there is still a huge objectification and sexualization of women in advertisements. From the base of previous research we detected that most of the studies have been done in the Western world. Therefore we found a gap within advertisement studies from a gender perspective in Latin American media. Further we located a lack within the time perspective, there are few recent studies concerning this field and most of the studies have been done before 2010.

Within Latin America, Mexico is a country with great development, however they are still far away from being a gender-equal society, which may be connected with how women are portrayed in media. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze, from a gender and feminism theoretical perspective, how women are portrayed in advertisements in Mexican fashion magazines. Further we aim to investigate in how the fashion magazines are creating myths about the Mexican woman. We have chosen to only focus on the female representations and portrayals, as we are interested in the feminist approach of the issue.

2.2 Question Formulations

Our question formulations are as following:

- In which ways are women sexualized and stereotypically portrayed in the advertisements and which different stereotypes can be found?
- How frequently are women sexualized and stereotypically portrayed in the advertisements?
- How can the male and female gaze be connected to the stereotypical and sexist portrayals?

2.3 Importance of the Study

Many researches have claimed that sexist advertisements are one cause of violence towards women and women become more “it” instead of “she” (Cohan, 2001). Therefore, this is an important area to study because the sexualization, objectification and stereotyping of women in advertisements has a huge impact on the society; both in the way people look upon women and girls, how they are treated and their role in the society. But maybe most important; it affect how girls and women look upon themselves. It creates an image of an ideal woman that

may not exist in the real world. To study popular media's utilization of how women are portrayed in advertisements is necessary because it, both directly and indirectly, influence the growth of feminist social consciousness that is further important for a country's development (APA, 2010).

Moreover, The World Economic forum has since 2006 published "The Global Gender Gap Index" which targets national gender gaps on economics, political, educational and health criteria. Mexico is, according to The Global Gender Gap Index 2014, ranked as number 80 (out of 142 countries) where Mexico scores 0.6900 on a scale where the highest possible score is 1 (equality) and the lowest possible score is 0 (inequality). According to the 2013 years index Mexico was ranked as 68 (out of 136 countries), which means that the country actually is more unequal than previous year (World Economic Forum, 2014). Therefore this study will be of importance for the development of gender equality in Mexico. Finally, our study is important due to the lack of recent research within this area, as well there are almost no studies within Latin American media.

3. Research Survey

In this chapter, we will give a review of previous research signified for our current research. First we will give an introduction to the previous research we present the extent of research within the area of sexist advertisements and gender representations in advertising, as well as the most common methods and theoretical approaches within this area of study. Further we will present the main researches with importance to our study and a minor conclusion.

3.1 Introduction

There are many researches to be found within the area of sexist advertisements and gender representations in advertising. Ever since the 1960's many researchers have worked with questions concerning how especially women are portrayed in advertisements and the stereotypical gender roles. Overall, research in this area has focused mostly on the qualitative text analysis and quantitative content analyses to investigate in contentious issues surrounding the sexual objectification of women in advertising. To get answers to their questions, the main theoretic framework are the gender perspective and feminist media studies. Moreover, most of the researches have been done in the US and Europe.

All the studies presented below are important to our current study. They are in different ways bringing up the sexualization of women in media, especially in advertisements. Furthermore they are talking about gender roles and how women are stereotypical portrayed and objectified in media and advertisements. One of our main resources is a study written by Anthony Cortese (2008) where he offers an in-depth critical analysis of modern advertising. His focus lies within how women and minorities are portrayed and brings up the gender roles that advertisements reproduce. Another main resource is Debra Merskin (2006), who has brought up sexuality and gender in several studies. For example she has investigated in pornographic images in fashion magazine's advertisements. Further we have used a report from APA (2010) where all the feminist discourses are fed and they discuss the sexualization of girls and women within media and other cultural messages.

3.2 Gender Roles and Stereotypes in Advertising

Cortese (2008) claims that advertising is one of the greatest sources of gender display, where masculinity and femininity often are defined as opposite to each other. There can be found two main patterns when it comes to gender and advertising. Primarily the advertisements tell us the difference between men and women's appropriate behavior and the expected behavior. Secondly, advertising represents a cultural theory where women are subordinated men. In brief, the masculine role is more dominant, intimidating and highly valued, while the female

role is portrayed as subordinated, passive, receptive and disregarded. Unfortunately, advertisers have an extremely narrow ideal of femininity that they encourage in advertisements. This ideal image of a woman can be explained by the concept of a provocateur, which is “media gender image characterized by youth, flawlessness, attractiveness, and sexual allure” (Cortese, 2008, p. 162). The provocateur cannot be compared with a human being but more as a representation of a perfect female figure with an unrealistic standard of beauty (see Appendix 3). This image of the perfect women portrayed in advertisements is not real, but a construction made by the help of cosmetics, photography and retouching.

Lindner (2004) has done a research about how women are portrayed in fashion magazines over time (from 1955 to 2002). She found that overall in magazines women are portrayed stereotypically quite frequently. Most of the times women were objectified or subordinated to men and was portrayed as a person with lower social power. Moreover she contends these stereotypical portrayals have not changed over time.

3.3 Sexual Imagery and Sex Roles

Sexism is any attitude, behavior, institutional arrangement, or policy that favors one gender over another. Advertising sells much more than products; it sells values and cultural representations, such as success and sexuality... (Cortese, 2008, p. 51).

This sexualization of especially girls and women occurs within different spheres where one of the main contributors is media. Media works both as a reflector and a contributor of culture, wherein cultural norms, expectations and values are communicated to the civilization. Nowadays girls (and boys) are living in a cultural environment where societies are inundated with sexual messages and the media and its culture are filled with sexualized representations of girls and women (APA, 2010). Numerous researchers claim that women are portrayed as sexual objects in advertisements and that being a woman is directly connected with being sexy, something that has become relatively accepted in the society (Cortese, 2008; APA, 2010; Merskin, 2006). Merskin (2006) explains that the ideal female identity portrayed in advertisements can almost be defined as female sexuality. Further, she brings up how advertising is a huge contributor and helps maintain a societal environment and a mainstream culture where the sexualization of women becomes normal. Women's bodies are portrayed as sexual products, which emphasize the old stereotypes and negative attitudes.

Moreover, sex in advertisements is a way to produce empty promises. For example, if you buy this car you also get the sexy women in the advertisement; if you use that mascara you get exactly as beautiful, young and most important, you become sexy. Consequently, advertisements sell a whole concept of sexuality (Cortese, 2008). Merskin (2006) further brings up that this construction of sexiness in advertisements helps to reinforce sex roles and gender differences and it maintains an ideology where men dominate women and the female submission becomes a natural phenomenon. Also, she claims that the images of femininity that advertisers construct show an ideal female. The advertisements contain codes and conventions about what being a women means and these codes illustrate feminine qualities such as sexiness, perfection and beauty. The ubiquity of highly sexist advertisements makes the unrealistic female goals and ideas normal (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to a number of studies in the stream of sexual advertisements, one clear fact is that sexist advertisements exist in a high degree and have not change over time. Plakoyiannaki, Mathioudaki, Dimitros and Zotos (2008) did an investigation in how women in online advertisements are portrayed and if sexism does exist. They found that women primarily were portrayed in decorative roles and as sex objects, with a main focus on their physical attractiveness. Further they connected their findings to the concept of “perfect provocateur” which Cortese (2008) brought up in his book. The American Psychological Association (2010) also indicated that these sexual patterns in advertising have been increasing over time and women are more frequently and steadily portrayed as products of sex.

However, Gill (2008) claims that it has been a shift when it comes to how women’s bodies are portrayed, from sexual objects to sexual subjects. Today women are portrayed as more active than before when sexualized representation was presented as a passive woman, an object for the male gaze. Advertisers are moving away from constructing women as unintelligent to portray women in a more post-feminist way as powerful women with control. Gill (2008) found three modern portrayals; the vengeful and sexy woman, the hot lesbian (who almost always is kissing or touching another girl) and the active heterosexually desiring Midriff. The Midriff is a new type of representation of women, as more active, desiring sexual subjects, where the women are not only objectified but also a subjectified as their objectification is in some way self-chosen. Midriffs are connected with powerfulness and playfulness, characterized as a fun and fearless woman instead of a being portrayed as passive and victimized. Further a heterosexual norm and a white woman-perspective characterize the Midriff. Despite this positive shift, women are still portrayed as sexual agencies, where the

key source of a female identity is a sexy body. Hardy (2009) describes the Midriff as a young, heterosexual woman who consciously is playing with her sexual power and that the Midriff is a way of re-sexualize the female body. Further he claims that the Midriff advertising has become an excuse for using sex in advertisements.

3.4 The Portrayal of Women from Cultural Aspects

Most of the previous researches done in this field have been analyzing white women, which means that all the results apply specifically to white women rather than women of colour. Hence, several researchers bring up the ethnical differences in advertisements. Even though magazines state that they target all different ethnicities, mostly white models are portrayed in the advertisements (Baker, 2005; Gill, 2008; Merskin, 2006; Cortese, 2008). Baker (2005) did a research of the sexual images in magazine advertisements from a black- and white-oriented perspective and found out that 88% of women in advertisements in women's magazine and 94% in men's magazines were white. She claims that the images of women's sexuality depend on the race of the audience but also the race of the women in advertisements. For example, white women were objectified more than black women and the white women are thought as a required sex object. Gill (2008) also brings up the fact that black women, older women, disabled women, fat women and any women who cannot match the extremely narrow criteria of female beauty and sex appeal are excluded. Moreover, Cortese (2008) claims that the area of advertising follows a mainstream culture with an ideology based on a white, male, upper-middle to upper class and heterosexual concept. Therefore the marginalized group (women, women of colour, gays, lesbians etc.) is not represented in this mainstream culture.

A similar finding was reported by Sanchez-Hucles, Hudgins and Gamble (2005) in their comparison of women in ads in mainstream, Black-oriented, and Latina magazines. In this study, 42% of ads in Cosmopolitan were found to contain suggestive body exposure, compared with 13% in Ebony, 32% in Essence, 0% in Filipinas, and 21% in Latin Girl. These patterns appear to persist over time.

The conception of gender roles, sexuality and the ideals of physical appearance vary across different cultures, where advertising reproduces the traditional myths, beliefs, tales and practices in the society and culture we are living in (Cortese, 2008). A cultural aspect was done by Lee & Morris (2005) where they studied relationships between cultural dimensions and the characteristics of advertisements. For example, in masculine countries like Mexico, they found that it is more common with men portrayed in professions in advertisements than

women, which may be a result of the country's culture. Tartaglia and Rollero (2015) discovered that more masculine and gender-unequal countries have a greater sexualization than the more gender equal countries, however they could not find a correlation between masculine countries and how they portray gender roles.

Royo-Vela, Aldás-Manzano, Küster-Boluda and Vila-Lopez (2007) analyzed stereotypes in advertisements in Spanish magazines where their result showed on the contrary to many other studies; males and females were portrayed in a sexist or independent role to the same extent. There are still stereotypes of men and women in Spanish magazine advertisements but they are becoming less dominant. Their explanation is because Spain has changed over the last decades, when it comes to women's role in society, and the advertisements have changed with it. According to World Economic Forum (2014) Spain is becoming more and more equal. They are in the top ten of the best countries when it comes to female-to-male ratio of women in parliament and they are ranked as number 29 in The Global Gender Gap Index 2014. This is an interesting aspect as it may reflect the way of how women are portrayed in their advertisements as well.

3.5 The Consequences of Sexualization

Due to the immense media exposure, where women are subject to a massive exposure to sexualized pictures of their gender, it may affect the conceptualization of femininity and stereotypical ideas about gender and sexual roles. Furthermore the objectification and sexualization within media affects the social attitudes and expectations of gender roles. As a result, the sexual representations suddenly appear as something normal to the society and girls and women may accept those stereotypical concepts about gender roles and accept the portrayal of women as sexual objects (APA, 2010; Cortese, 2008).

Cohan (2001) proposes three principal ethical issues in women's advertising: many advertisements use sex stereotypes as a way to put women in a weak role. Women are portrayed in a way that they need help, this sexy women is easily manipulated, weak and vulnerable which results in a general thought across women that this is how they are (1). Women's portrayal in advertisements changes the idea of attractiveness from something natural to an ideal that cannot be achieved. Women are retouched into a perfection that can seem inhuman and forms a beauty myth that the only way to be happy with you is to obtain the beauty advertisements depict (2). In many cases women are portrayed as sex objects and the women's body parts are more important than a woman's true nature and personality.

Every day women are bombarded with these advertisements where attractive models are used as sexy objects, which erode women's self-esteem (3).

3.6 Conclusion

Overall previous research shows that today's advertisements are likely to portray women in a stereotypical and sexist way, where they become an object more than a human being. Furthermore, there is a larger sexualization and objectification of women than men and the way women are portrayed differs from different cultures. The sexualization of women has consequences both for the society, the culture and women's well being. Unachievable feminine ideals are built up and the sexist advertisements are so common in today's society that they seem normal and not bad at all.

Although the sexual objectification of women in advertisements had been widely researched we have found a lack of research within this area in Mexico. In an old study by Santa Cruz and Erazo (1980) they found that almost 70% of the analyzed advertisements in Mexico, women were portrayed as objects or sexual objects. However, there are no recent analyses known to have been done of sexist advertising in Mexico. Therefore we consider it being a vital area to study.

4. Theoretical Framework

In the following chapter we will define important terms and theories that form the basis of our theoretical framework and furthermore, how they are related to each other.

According to Ashmore and Del Boca (in Zotos & Tsihla, 2014) gender stereotypes are generalizations about what certain characteristics that represent and describe either femininity or masculinity. Where advertisement is one of the strongest forces as ideal building when portraying and suggesting lifestyles and characteristics that individuals use to define themselves as gender and in their social role (Giddens & Wolf in Plakoyiannaki & Zotoz, 2009). In the 1960's the feminists arouse the discussion and research about the portrayal of female stereotypes in popular media. The discussion suggested that the main source for creating and indorsing a misrepresenting female stereotype and sexualization was through advertisements in popular media (Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2009).

Our theoretical framework is going to be built upon and defined through sexualization, the gaze and gender. Further, our approach will have its base within stereotyping, feminist theory and gender theory. We will through feminist theory be able to analyze and discuss social inequality between genders and advertisers misrepresentation and sexualization of females. Gender theory will conduce our discussion of gender identity and representation. Moreover, how advertising affect the process and neutralization of sexualization of women within the society. The use of stereotypes will help us embody the different, socially accepted, socially reinforced portrayals of females in the advertisements.

4.1 Terms

The following chapter includes the definitions of the key terms sexualization and the gaze, which includes the female gaze and the male gaze. These terms are used as endorsement to our framework.

4.1.1 Sexualization

The term sexualization can both be defined as healthy sexuality, which is of necessity when it comes to physical and mental health, but also as negative sexualization when excluding all characteristics but the body and seeing the person as an object rather than subject (APA, 2010). Our theoretical framework is primarily going to rely on the following definition and four characteristics of the term sexualization:

1. *A person's value comes from his or her sexual appeal or behaviour, to the exclusion of other characteristics.*
2. *A person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness with being sexy.*
3. *A person is sexually objectified; that is, made into a thing for other's sexual use, rather than seen as a person with capacity for independent action and decision-making.*
4. *Sexuality is inappropriately imposed upon a person.*

(APA, 2010, p. 1)

According to APA (2010) only one of the characteristics has to be present for it to be a subject of sexualization.

Furthermore, according to Plakoyiannaki and Zotos (2009) sexualization emerge when women are represented as inferior when related to her capabilities and potential, generating in a patronizing female ideal. These cases are often symbolized as giving the woman a clichéd, traditional role and/or decorative part in the advertisement (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014). These traditional portrayals can moreover be related to retro-sexism, which is a phenomenon that partly is based on the aspects of femininity as something related to the traditional roles such as adherence to household tasks, or for example; the stereotypical mother (ibid). In addition to APA's (2010) definition of sexualization, we will also include these traditional, clichéd and decorative representations to the term to be able to analyse the advertisements with a wider perspective.

In conclusion our study is going to rely on the APA's definition of sexualization; as the sexual objectification of women, and moreover how they are represented as inferior in relation to their actual competency and as having traditional roles and decorative parts in advertisements. Our theoretical framework will include the term sexualization to analyze and discuss how females are portrayed stereotypically and sexually in advertisements within Mexican magazines.

4.1.2 The Gaze

Within the gender research the gaze is defined as the objectifying gaze, which is centered around and has its base in power relations (Eriksson & Göthlund, 2004). According to Mulvey (in Eriksson & Göthlund, 2004) different gazes are coded and connoted as masculine or feminine. The gaze theory and the view on the contemplation are assumed to be coded dependent on the attribute of gender. Therefore, the gaze is strongly embodied to femininity

and masculinity (ibid). Our theoretical framework will include the term of the gaze as it helps us analyze how the women are portrayed. Below follow definitions of the female versus the male gaze, which will be included in the term of gaze as it gives a deeper theoretical approach when analyzing the advertisements.

The female gaze

One stereotypical way of representing women in media is through closed eyes, having her gaze directed downwards and to the ground, or averted. This makes the female more easily accessible as an enjoyable object (Eriksson & Göthlund, 2004). The most significant with the female gaze in advertisement is the passiveness and the lack of power. Further, the stereotypical female gaze is self-objectifying, including female participation in the female sexualization. The female gaze in our theoretical framework will be studied as the definition of passive, powerless and self-objectifying. Throughout our analysis we will use this term in the discussion of how the females are portrayed in the advertisements.

The male gaze

The most significant to male gaze, in contrary to the female gaze, is the presence of power and ability to take action (Shroeder & Borgerson, 1998). In our theoretical framework the male gaze will be defined as the male viewer's position and how the positioning of the male gaze is objectifying. Meaning, women are portrayed based on and as a result of expectations from the masculine viewer, which is incorporated in the values within the society and culture (Zetterman, 2004). The advertisements will therefore be studied with the theory of male gaze as objectifying and as an attribute that creates and upholds misleading female portrayal with sexualization as a consequence (Gervais, Holland & Dodd, 2013).

The male gaze in our study will be discussed through analyzing how the women are portrayed in advertisements with the male gaze in consideration and as a influencing factor to the portrayal. According to Shroeder and Borgerson (1998) the nudity (a part of sexualization) is "to be looked at, possessed, lusted after" (Shroeder & Borgerson, 1998, p. 171) and relate to how the male gaze has the power of action and the fact that images in advertisements are fixed in and a result of male gaze (Shroeder & Borgerson, 1998).

4.2 Theories

In the following part our theoretical foundation of feminist theory, gender theory and stereotypes will be defined and examined as our theoretical approach.

4.2.1 Feminist Theory

Throughout history women have had a subordinate role in the social power relationship between the genders. Feminism has emerged as an answer to the paradox and social movement with aim to empower women (Connell & Pearse, 2015). It has become one of the most essential and influential currents of the 20th century (Buchanan, 2010).

Feminism is a very complex, static and powerful term that evokes a lot of discussion and opinions amongst people in today's society. Abbreviatedly feminism can be defined as an outgoing social movement that strives to emphasize gender inequality within cultures and to question the conception of women in traditional thought (Buchanan, 2010; Beasley, 1999). However, as mentioned above, the term has an ever-developing and expanding definition (Beasley, 1999).

The theoretical discourse of feminism is the feminist theory. The theory is broad but has its principal focus at social sciences and the humanities. As the term of feminism has a complication when it comes to definition, this is also the case with feminist theory. However, the theory has a core with four principal concerns that according to Buchanan (2010) are:

1. To address the roots and causes of gender inequality
2. Explain the propulsion and perservance within this condition
3. Define strategies to either achieve total gender equality or yet moderate the impacts of the present inequality
4. To narrate a world where gender inequality does not exist

Further, the dilemma and question that feminist theorists have carried out the most is why sexism still continues even though its main justification no longer exist (Buchanan, 2010). Because of the centrality of this question, the theory will be of highest relevance to our study and aim to investigate how women are stereotypically portrayed in advertisements. Moreover, how it can contribute to and reinforce the inequality within the Mexican culture.

According to Butler (Butler & Almqvist, 2007) one important basis of the feminist theory is the presumption that it exists a certain identity, which is conceived through the category of women and has emerged from representations. Another aspect would be representation as the normative function within a language that would either reveal or distort of what is assumed to be the truth about the category of women. In today's society women are either misrepresented or not represented at all in language. To be able to favour the salience of women it is within the feminist theory essential to develop a language that fully or adequately

represent women. Furthermore Butler addresses the importance of criticizing how the category of women both is created and has limits within cultural power structures (Butler & Almqvist, 2007).

The feminist theorist Simone de Beauvoir claims that a woman becomes a woman through the cultural compulsion to be so. Further, women are defined through their, and as a, sex meanwhile men are seen as the bearer of the non-sex justified, universal virtue to be a human (Beauvoir, 2002). Our theoretical approach compasses the feminist theory's and Beauvoir's thoughts and defines advertisement as one of the subjects within "the cultural compulsion" that maintains the misrepresentation of women.

According to Feminism theorists advertising in popular media is one of the strongest forces of creating, maintaining and stimulating the female stereotypes and sexism. The misrepresentation of women was mainly focused on how women are portrayed as sex objects, "happy housewives", themes of females as incompetent, portrayals of women's dependency upon men and underrepresentation of working women (Courtney & Whipple, 1983). Our theoretical approach will through these hypotheses discuss how the women are portrayed in the advertisements within Mexican magazines and if stereotypical elements can be found.

As big part of the theorizing of feminism lies within the discipline of White women and Western culture the reflections will be grounded mainly in western theories and research but applied on a Latin American context.

4.2.2 Gender and Gender Theory

Gender derives from the Latin word *genus*, which according to Hirdman (2003) stands for kind, sort, race and sex. Within linguistics the word has been used to relate to a noun for he, she and it. The term gender is significant especially within feminism and gender studies as it can refer to and can be defined as something "bigger", independently and set apart from the fixed sex. The term can for example be used with benefit when analyzing female subordination and to understand both men's and women's participation in it (Hirdman, 2003). Moreover, the term is conveniently used when wanting to lose the aspect of biological sex and the rolls that are expected from these. Instead gender is defined as neutral and refers to a social construction, which creates a term and tool that can be used when analyzing and discussing sex and gender rolls from a bigger, social perspective as it embodies the abstract concepts about masculinity and femininity. Further, gender includes the discussion of how femininity and masculinity are implied in contexts within politics, work, and parenting etcetera (ibid).

Within gender theory the term gender is in conclusion defined as something socially constructed and inexplicable correlated to sex, where sex in the contrary is something fixed and given by birth through our genitals (Connell & Pearse, 2015). Our theoretical framework will rely on the definitions above and how men and women are defined through their actions and roles in the society (Hirdman, 2003) and we will use the term within gender theory to analyze and discuss how the female gender is constructed and portrayed in the advertisements of Mexican Magazines.

The relationship between gender & sex

Gender and sex are somehow linked together. When trying to define and prove the relationship an approach is to connect them to the sexual behavior, which first of all has its base in sexual and erotic attraction. Also, the sex and gender performance plays an important role to it and generates the sexual interaction between or in-between females and/or males (Dozier, 2005). Within our theoretical framework the important reason of why the performance of gender is a necessity within the sexual arena is because of how social inequalities and the misrepresentation of women sometimes can be symbolized and represented in, mainly, the heterosexual intercourse and erotic attraction (Dozier, 2005). It can further be explained through the sight of female-to-male (FTM) transsexuals: “Altering the body alters the sexual relationships of FTMs by changing their gender/sex location in sexual interaction” (Dozier, 2005, s. 311). We will emphasize the relationship between the sex and gender through our analysis to be able to discuss how women are portrayed within these terms and how it affects the cultural view of the female as a sex object.

Gender theory

Gender is often taken for granted. Women and men have different social actions and behave within certain patterns without further questioning. The arrangements and rules within society become so familiar that they are assumed to be something of nature or something fixed. Which further makes it protruding and provocative to break these patterns or expected sex-rolls (Connell & Pearse, 2015).

Generally, the concept of gender is used in aspects of everyday life and is often used in the same matter as the term “sex”. In most societies the two terms are inexplicably connected with each other and theorists seem to struggle with keeping them apart throughout their work. According to gender theory the term sex is something fixed and given through the genital inspection at birth whereas gender, in contrary, is not fixed but socially constructed (Dozier, 2005). However, theorists generally define gender as “the socially constructed

correlate of sex” (Dozier, 2005, p. 298). Meaning “being a man or a woman is not pre-determined but is a ‘becoming’ - a condition actively under construction” (Connell & Pearse, 2015, p. 6).

The theorist Judith Butler discusses that static foundations of gender categories do not exist. She suggests that gender is “performative”, meaning that identities emerge through repetitive actions and are not applied or practiced through an already existing reality. Cadance West and Don Zimmerman analyze how gender emerge when people participate in everyday life, how it occurs in routine interactions (Connell & Pearse, 2015). This is important to our study when looking into how women are portrayed in advertisement. Also, since theorists argue that the masculinity and femininity could reflect power relations (ibid.), the gender theory will help us analyze how and/or this is represented in the advertisement and if it follows the norms of society, generating in gender stereotypes.

A central insight from gender theory that drives research and discussion is how humans deny and question their nature and bodily given identity, as the crucial and defining component to what we are as human beings. Instead, this is not something fixed and/or given but for us to create and uphold for ourselves (Connell & Pease, 2015).

In conclusion gender theory concern sexuality, personal identity, representation, language and differences. Gender is something socially constructed, meaning we can in some extension create our own gender. Further, the theory discusses how masculinity and femininity reflects power relations in today’s society. The theoretical framework of our study will therefore include gender theory to examine how the genus role of women is represented and if it lays ground for discussion weather and how it follows the norms of the society and the creation of stereotypes.

4.2.3 Stereotypes

Why do stereotypes emerge?

Stereotypes emerge for several reasons. Normally it is a way to facilitate the requirements of the observer, where stereotypes create a shortcut for managing the perceived information. The observer is through stereotyping able to relate and base the perception on former attained experiences and knowledge, which makes the new information easier to process (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). This phenomenon helps us grasp and organize our environment to understand it. For example consumers can interpret and get to a conclusion about the image quicker through stereotyping, especially since we in today’s society constantly are

exposed to images and advertisements (Karan & Khoo, 2007). Another reason for the emerging of stereotypes concerns the reactions within the social environment. Humans react and response to different social roles, group conflicts and difference in power as a way of creating “the self” and a social identity (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996).

What is a stereotype?

According to Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) stereotypes are conceptions and thoughts of characteristics, qualities and behaviours of members of certain groups. Further, it can simply be explained as the generalization of people (Karan & Khoo, 2007). Moreover, stereotypes are theories of how attributes operate and are bound together. An individual who observes another individual often place the observed person into a group, labeling him or her into a certain category. This creates a “mental scheme” which helps us understand our surroundings (Karan & Khoo, 2007). Within the groups there are various theories, which concern the specific group’s values, attitudes and/or believes. Stereotypes can both be defined through the perception of what they are not and differences within categories and in contrary: what they are and similarities within categories (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996).

Why/how does gender stereotypes emerge and what defines them?

Gender and sex-role stereotypes, alike other stereotypes, also emerge as an effect of making sense of the surrounding environment. This fact results in the thought that different, specific characteristics distinguish a woman or a man (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981). Within the stereotyping of the gender or sex-role there are four attributes that independently answer for and are strongly linked to a female or male portrayal:

1. *Trait descriptions (i.e. self-assertion, concern for others)*
2. *Physical characteristics (i.e. hair length, body height)*
3. *Role behaviour (i.e. leader, taking care of children)*
4. *Occupational status (i.e. truck driver, housewife)*

(Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Zotos & Tsihla, 2014, p. 447)

Gender stereotypes in advertising

In advertisements the stereotyping of men and women are particularly transparent and can often lead to a negative effect on the sex-role, especially the female. The portrayal of the genders in advertisement confirms and contributes to the socially accepted stereotyping of the female and male characteristics, also the difference of power between them (Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998). The female stereotype is often portrayed as beneath the male stereotype, as a sexual object (which is glamorized in advertisements), and as vulnerable (Zotos & Tsihla,

2014). According to Schroeder and Borgerson (1998), women are often posing in an admiring and passive way, for example posed lying down. Further they claim that beds and floors convey vulnerability and sexuality. Another stereotypical female attribute that is interesting to our study is that women in advertisements generally are portrayed as white-skinned. Generating in the idea that the ideal beautiful woman is White (APA, 2010), which is a problem when it comes to the Latin-American culture as the women most often have a darker skin colour.

Stereotypes as a reflection of society

According to Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) stereotype is a negatively charged word. However, the belief about a certain stereotype does not have to cover or be about the negative thoughts within a group of individuals. These constructions might actually be an accurate reflection of the society together with its values. Yet, it is when these occurred believes are simplified and exaggerated, which is very common, a problem emerges (Hilton & Von Hippel 1996). For example: the distorted female ideal, where women in advertisement are appropriated and retouched to an unobtainable standard. The term “stereotype” is often used to indicate representations that are misleading, inadequate and negative for a certain group of people (ibid.).

Stereotypes and myths

Myth is not an object, is not a concept, nor an idea; it is a type of signification, a system of communication and a special type of speech defined by its purpose that transform meaning into form. Myth is a value and a pure ideographic system and can be seen as a twist between reality and fiction. This means that the myth is neither a lie nor a confession and it will never guarantee the truth. Even though myths are not a reflection of the reality, since it is a man-made perspective, myths still become something natural in the society, an axiomatic image of the reality, which grow throughout history. In other words, the cultural myths found in the society shape the way we perceive the world (Barthes, 1957). Within semiotics the myths are explained as a second-order system, which uses already established signs and creates them into signifiers. For example Barthes uses a picture of a black soldier saluting the French flag; in the first-order language the picture is the signifier that denotes a happening - the soldier that salutes a flag. However, in Barthes second-order mythological level the signifier that is created is the thought of France as a great multi-ethnic country, a mixture of French and military (Robinson, 2011). Barthes argue that myths are imbedded in all our ways of communicating and much of what we consider as culture, mass media, advertising and entertainments is built on myths. Further, the myth must be believed in by its audience to exist (Barthes, 1957).

One way for advertisers to use myths is through gender roles and stereotypes. For instance, an old myth introduced by Sigmund Freud in early 1900 is the myth and complex about the Madonna and the Whore. The complex shows the distinction men draw between a desired woman and a respected woman. The whore is the woman men want to sleep with, the sex object with sexual capacity and sensuality and Madonna is the adequate and respected partner who cannot be desired as the Whore (Hartmann, 2009). The whore can as well be seen as the “bad girl” who is sexually free in her bodily expression, size and gender expression. She can both look very sexy or not sexy at all, and her appearance and style can sometimes be more masculine than feminine. On the contrary, the “good girl” is not too sexy but still obtains the social standards of beauty and this stereotype has a more feminine expression (Crane, Towne & Crane-Seeber, 2013). This is a complex and conception that may be discovered in advertisement images.

Concluding stereotypes & myths

In conclusion stereotyping are the generalization of people which further contributes to socially accepted views of gender where women most often are portrayed as less than men and sexual objects. Furthermore, the myths as part of the language and society will help us get a deeper understanding of the socially constructed views of females and of sexual portrayals as culturally accepted phenomena. In our study we will rely on female stereotypes and myths as a sexual object and through the stereotypical and mythological attributes we will be able to analyze how the females are portrayed in the advertisements of Mexican magazines with the cultural language as concern.

5. Method and Material

In the following chapter we will present our choice of method and our choice of material, selection and limitations. Further we will declare how the method will be practical applied and eventually a report of the study's reliability and validity.

With a rather immense investigational material in the shape of advertisements we will use a mixed method approach incorporated with both quantitative (content analysis) and qualitative (text analysis) elements, to complement each other and to get a deeper result of our research objects. As the quantitative content analysis is a purely descriptive method, only describing the clear content, we will complement with a qualitative text analysis to reveal the underlying patterns and motives in the advertisements. This means, to combine those two methods we will reach both the describing and explaining level and through our focus on the advertisements pictorial material, we hope to find a pattern in how women are portrayed from a gender and feminism perspective.

5.1 Quantitative Content Analysis

Quantitative content analysis utilizes a diversity of tools and methods to analyze media content. The concept of a quantitative content analysis consist of two vital components; the content analysis refers to a research where the content in any form of epistolary, verbal or pictorial presentation are analyzed. Additional, a quantitative research is built on equivalent and comparable data with voluminous “analyzing units” which can be phrased and analyzed with the help of numbers (Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson & Wängnerud, 2012).

We will use the quantitative content analysis to analyze the content of the advertisements. With the aid of this method we will be able to reach a comprehension of the media content and it will allow an objective, systematic and quantitative description of the apparent content of the advertising. The quantitative content analysis is a highly applicative tool for getting answers to questions according to the presence of different types of content categories in the material (Esaiasson et al., 2012). This is the best way for us to get answers to our describing question formulations; how frequently the women are sexualized and stereotypically portrayed in the advertisements, and also to be able to map different stereotypes in the material.

A quantitative content analysis is a transparent research method, which makes it easy to in a concrete way explain the choice of sample and coding system that further makes it simpler to

replicate and to do follow-up studies. On the other hand, it is hard to get answers to why-questions and some content analytical researches get critic to be atheoretical (Bryman, 2011).

5.1.1 Analyzing units

The study will focus on the content of several advertisements in the seven biggest and most popular magazines in Mexico City. One of the sampling criteria is that the magazines have to be in the same genre (fashion/lifestyle magazines) and aimed to the same age cohort, since it will affect the advertisements visual expression and the sender's message. Further, they all are monthly magazines and we have picked the November issue. These magazines are:

- Vogue México
- Elle México
- Cosmopolitan México
- Glamour México
- Vogue Hombre
- GQ México
- Open

Further, to be included in the material each individual advertisement have to be at least one full page and containing as a minimum one dominant female figure. This scope produced a data corpus of 182 advertisements.

We have made a purposive sampling since the goal with this method is to concentrate on particular characteristics that are of interest for our study and research questions (Lund Research Ltd., 2012), therefore we have subjectively chosen the magazines that cover the population most relevant to our study. We have both made a homogenous sampling as the selected units are based on their similar characteristics (monthly magazines, the same age cohort, same genre) but also a typical case sampling, as we are interested in the normality/typicality of the units. This means that the sample we have studied is not a representation of the whole population, however this is not a weakness as we still are able to make generalizations for the specific population that the magazine are representing (Lund Research Ltd., 2012) and further reach a report of the current situation. Even though a randomized sample may reach a greater reliability we have chosen the magazines due to, they are in a theoretical aspect most impactful for the receivers, since they are the biggest magazines in Mexico and are therefor the magazines that reach most people, meaning the advertisements in the magazines is seen by a large audience.

5.1.2 Procedure and Coding System/Variables

The quantitative content analysis characterizes by several stages, which our research will follow:

1. Define the research issue
2. Define the sample
3. Data collection
4. Define the variables
5. Construct a coding system and test
6. Data processing and analysis

(Ekström & Larsson, 2000)

After defining the research issue and the sample we collected our data and defined the units of analyzing, which is full-page advertisements in the biggest Mexican fashion magazines where at least one dominant woman is portrayed. On the basis of our data collection we determined which variables that should be coded in the analyzing units and also decided which different categories or values that the variables should consist of. We have selected the variables that we consider most relevant for attaining answers to our question formulations. The variables are based on the visual advertisement and the variables are formed in a more qualitative way as they apply from the advertisements commercial product, age on the models, gender, target audience, the model's approach to the product and the camera, power position, different types of positions, the gaze, colours and main message. Our selection of variables are based on Ekström and Larsson's (2000) way of considering the variables as a tool where the purpose is to characterize the content in the advertisements. We developed 21 variables that we expected to help us find patterns in the way women are portrayed in the advertisements.

Our categories are exhaustive (for example we have used "other", "none" and "cannot be coded" categories), mutually exclusive (the units fit into only one category), independent and adequate to answer the question asked for the data (Ekström & Larsson, 2000). Further, we have tried to construct objective categories as much as possible, however some categories can still be seen as subjective as different coders may read them quite variously. Moreover, some categories may be called for value judgments and interpretation on the part of the coder. Therefore, we constructed coding instructions for each category that should assist the coder if possible indecisive interpretations appears, which further increases the reliability of the coding system. Based on the variables and the categories we constructed the coding scheme (see Appendix 1), which we tested and considered being relevant to the study and easy to reuse. Finally, the data processing was made with the aid of a computer program (SPSS) that

is working with statistics and numerical data based on diagrams and charts. We choose the diagrams and charts most interesting for our study for a further analysis in our result chapter.

5.2 Qualitative Text Analysis

The qualitative text analysis aims to produce the most essential content with the aid of detailed reading of the text's parts, the bodily and the context wherein the text is included in (Esaïasson et al., 2012). The main reason why we choose to combine the quantitative content analysis with a qualitative text analysis is to get a deeper comprehension of the analyzing units and to find the underlying and obscure content of the text, which cannot be reach without a deep and intense reading of the text (Esaïasson et al., 2012).

A text analysis aims to deconstruct a text to find the intrinsic, where the deconstructions help to dispute the axiomatic in the text. To deconstruct a text questions are used as reliance and guidelines for what aims to investigate, and they work as guidelines when the text is breaking down into solitariness. Hence, it is important to never loose the comprehensive picture, as it is the combination of the different resources and their interaction that we are interested in (Ledin & Moberg, 2010). Our guideline questions are following;

- What is the message of the advertisements?
- How is femininity portrayed through the visual images?
- Can there be found any sexualizing codes and conventions in the advertisements?
- Which myths can be found in the advertisements? – Stereotypes, power configurations etc.?
- Are there any differences of sexual portrayals depending on which type of product that is advertised?
- Which senses of gender and gender roles are communicated through the advertisements?

Sexual content in advertisements can be obvious in greater or lesser degrees. Some advertisements may include nudity or erotica as sexist content and some other may embrace only a hint of sexual content, for example indirect sexism or play on words. Therefore, when analyzing the images we will take help from Reichert's (2003) framework for conceptions of sex in advertising where he present different types of sexual information and categories in advertising (see Appendix 2) and with the aid of Cortese's (2008) concept of the provocateur (see Appendix 3). We will conceptualize sexual content as a part of the message and not as an isolated fragment; the reason is to in a more complete way be able to describe the nature of

the sexual content in advertising. Further we will analyze the images through our theoretical frameworks and with the aid of a semiotic image analysis.

5.2.1 Sample

Throughout the quantitative content analysis we found several frequently stereotypical and mythical portrayal of women. We choose 2-4 advertisements for each stereotypical portrayal based on relevant key words (female, gender roles, sexist) for a further qualitative analyze, which means we have made a semiotic analyze of 18 advertisements in total. We choose a strategic sample, as we picked the advertisements that best represent the stereotypical portrayal of women that we found in the quantitative analysis. Furthermore, an important salience that we are conscious about is that most of our analyzed advertisements, and a high degree of the advertisements in the Mexican magazines overall, are from international brands. However, despite the international character and regardless of the sender it is still interesting to the research of the Mexican image of women as these international advertisements are the advertisements that the Mexican women face in their daily lives and hence set the standard for the ideal of women in the country. This means, the international appeal of the advertisements is not a disadvantage for our research but rather an interesting aspect of the huge impact international advertisements have on the Mexican society and the female ideal.

5.2.2 Semiotic Image Analysis

We will analyze the pictures from a hermeneutic perspective with the aid of a semiotic approach. Semiotics can be described as the study of signs and symbols, with the benchmark that all types of communication are coded. When studying advertisements the most providing analyzing method is the semiotic analyzing approach and we consider it to be the best fitted for our research, as we will study the social codes and the underlying meaning in the advertisements. The semiotic analysis is focusing on the communication materials and the different signs that the text is built on (Gripsrud, 2011). Ferdinand de Saussure, a French linguistic, claims that a sign consist of a material expression and an immaterial content. It can, accordingly, be a physical phenomena that we connect to a certain conception or idea. This connection may be described as a convention, as it occurs within already learnt codes and rules in society (ibid.).

We will mainly use Roland Barthes' semiotic model, which makes allowance for both the objectivity in the image as well as the cultural aspects of the receiver. The model consist of the terms: denotation, connotation, symbol and myth. The first degree of interpretation is the

denotation, where the distinct content can be perceived (Fiske, 1997). The denotation is a sign's obvious and commonsense meaning, a meaning that would be the same for viewers from any culture and time (Chandler, 2015). The denotation will be used in this study to describe the content of the advertisements, the direct meaning of what we can see, without any value assessments. Subsequently, we will apply the second degree of interpretation, which is connotation. Both denotation and connotation can be described as different levels of representation of a meaning (ibid.). However, the greatest distinction between denotation and connotation is that within the connotation, *every* particular object obtains a meaning, with other words, the objects signal different meanings (Fiske, 1997). With the connotations it is possible to observe the indirect meaning and the interaction between the object and the receiver's valuations, emotions and cultural frameworks (ibid.). Further, Barthes claims that the connotations are regulated by codes and regulations in the society. With codes he means conventions or regulations, which combines an expression and the content. The connotations are the socio-cultural and personal associations of a sign, which can be ideological, emotional, sociological etcetera (Chandler, 2015). Moreover we will use the concept of the myth, which are the cultural values connected to a sign on a connotative level. The myth mediates meaning to us with the interconnection to the cultural sphere we are situated (Gripsrud, 2011) and helps to conceptualize something within a culture, for example masculinity, femininity, freedom and objectivism (Chandler, 2015). With the help of connotations and myths we will be able to indicate the deeper meaning of the different components in the advertisements, where we will interpret the images on a cultural (a community based on common codes) and theoretical level. The myths will help us to reach a societal level and context and to explain the power configurations that prevail in the society. By the basis of our theoretical framework and the myths we will further be able to identify how femininity, stereotypes, ideals and norms are portrayed, as they are built on cultural and societal appearances.

5.3 Method Discussion

It is important to have as high validity and reliability as possible throughout the whole work (Esaiasson et al., 2012). Below we will discuss how we have been working to reach as high intern and extern validity as possible. The estimation of validity and reliability partly differs in a quantitative and qualitative approach. Therefore are we explaining the validity and reliability for the quantitative content analysis and the qualitative text analysis in separate subheadings.

5.3.1 Quantitative Analysis

The validity refers to how well the measurement measured what was purported to measure;

- Face validity: an outsider, highly informed with the problematic, is expressing oneself
- Criterion validity: the result coincide with results from other studies
- Construct validity: if the related concepts/ideas coincide with our measuring
- Communicative validity: the researcher's ability to communicate the process, a description of the method

(Gunnarsson, 2012)

The reliability refers to the measurements dependability;

- Inter-rater reliability: is the measurement free from the bias of the person that is measuring?
- Test-retest reliability: if the measurement is affected of time – is the same measuring values acquired at different measurements?
- Internal consistency reliability: the consistency of results across items

(ibid.)

We will reach validity as we are analyzing pictorial material that expectantly will get answers to our question formulations, which means our analyzing material is relevant for the aim of the study and the concept is accurately measured. In our research the reliability will be improved as we base our study on a stringent framework when it comes to theory and analyzing scheme. Our categories are exhaustive, mutually exclusive, independent, adequate to answer the questions and constructed as objective as possible. The coding instructions used in the coding system will help us reach a greater reliability, as it will make the method more subjective and independent regardless who is doing the research. Further, we have been two persons measuring and then compared the results to see if they are matching, which strengthen the inter-rater reliability and make it free from the bias of the person who is measuring.

5.3.2 Qualitative Analysis

In a qualitative research you cannot estimate the reliability with the aid of numbers. Validity and reliability in studies with a qualitative approach is about the description of the collection of material and how the materials have been processed in a systematic and honestly way (Gunnarsson, 2012). According to Bryman (2011) it may be problematic to discuss validity and reliability in a qualitative study as certain subjectivity reigns and the data is not statistical measurable. We have chosen a semiotic approach, which means our qualitative research will be based on interpretations.

To estimate the reliability of a qualitative text analysis we have to use the terms credibility, transferability, reliability, and objectivity:

- Credibility (intern validity) aims to the researches ability to communicate the research process.
- Transferability (extern validity) is about the degree of transmissibility and implementation.
- Reliability determines if the measuring instruments are trustworthy. In studies with a qualitative approach both technical tools and humans are used, and both have to complete their assignments in a trustworthy way.
- Objectivity is about the researcher's ability to be neutral and do not engrain the data with own pre-understandings.

(Gunnarsson, 2012)

We are conscious about the problematic that comes with a qualitative approach. Qualitative studies may be hard to replicate due to the researcher's own personality, interpretation and experiences are relevant for the study and interpretations are always based on pre-understandings. Nevertheless, we consider our study to implement all the criteria above. We have been striving to reach as high intern validity as possible, by continuous working on the basis of our theoretical frameworks and our aim and question formulations. Further we have presented detailed description of the material and our pre-understandings, thoroughly given an account of all phases in the research process and the whole procedure. Moreover, we have tried to maintain objectivity throughout the entire analysis process and been self-critical and self-reflected to ensure that the interpretations are valid and based on the data and further we have reach credibility through researcher triangulation, as we have been two persons analyzing the material. Since this work aim to investigate the content from a media and communication scientific approach, our preconceptions and experiences within the area may work as an advantage. We have also been inspired by established researchers' approaches and procedures and have used semiotic analyzing frameworks from Cortese (2008) and Reichert (2004), which according to Esaiasson et al. (2012) make our study comparable and increase the reliability of our study. Finally we have discussed our awareness of the problematic with the methods.

Furthermore, we are aware of the cultural differences in Mexico compared to Sweden and we are conscious about that the common codes differ in different countries. Therefore, we are doing a semiotic analyze of the material from a Swedish cultural approach, however as we are using a semiotic analysis aimed to detect the cultural myths in the advertisements we may, to

some extent, reach a comprehension of the Mexican society and culture. This will be an advantage as we already have pre-understanding within the Swedish culture and its codes and regulations. Moreover it is important to notice that the connotative meanings are situation based, which means that the meaning of a sign differs depending on the context. Therefore we have always had the context in mind during the analyzing process, which strengthen the external validity.

Finally we do not aim to make this study generalizable in a larger context, due to the material not being big enough. However we aim to, to a certain extent, generalize within the context of fashion magazines in Mexico and further expand theory through a Latin American perspective. In this way we can make general conclusions through our relative small units of analyzing. The ethical aspect on our study will not be a problem as all the images we are using have already been advertised in public.

6. Result and Analysis

In this chapter we will present our result in combination with an analysis of the result with the aid of previous research. The chapter is divided into two parts, one for the quantitative result, where a discussion of the relationship between the different interesting variables are included and one for the qualitative, where we discuss the different stereotypes found.

6.1 Quantitative Result and Analysis

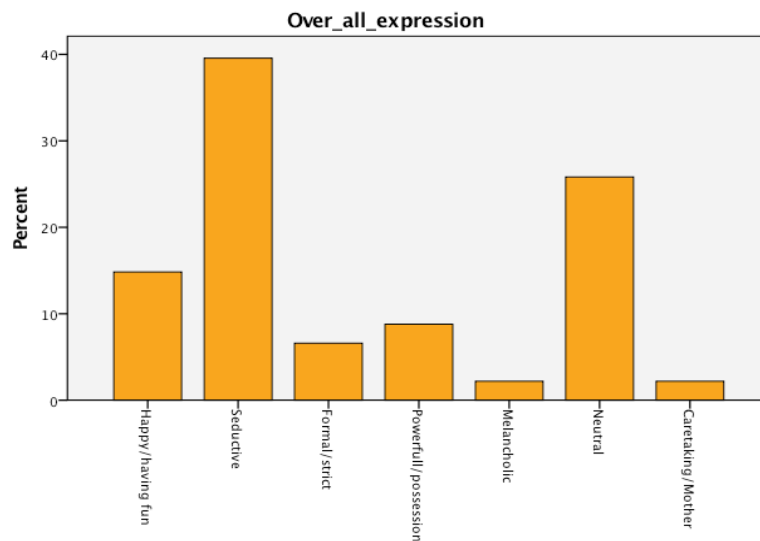
In the following chapter the outcomes of our quantitative research are presented. We have chosen to present only the numbers and results that are relevant to our study, which are analysed and presented in this chapter with aid of subtitles.

The relevant numbers are linked to a diagram or table depending on where in the SPSS-outcome the numbers were received. To avoid possible misleading, the diagrams and tables are attached without any adjustments directly from SPSS. The colours are only depending on if there are several one or more variables represented in the diagram. I example, if there are two variables put in relation to each other there are more colours to distinguish the variables from each other, with the tags on the right hand side of the diagram.

Within the seven biggest Mexican fashion magazines we found a total of 182 advertisements matching our criteria for analyze material and accordingly form the basis of our quantitative analysis.

The monotonous portrayal of women

Diagram 6.1: Overall Expression



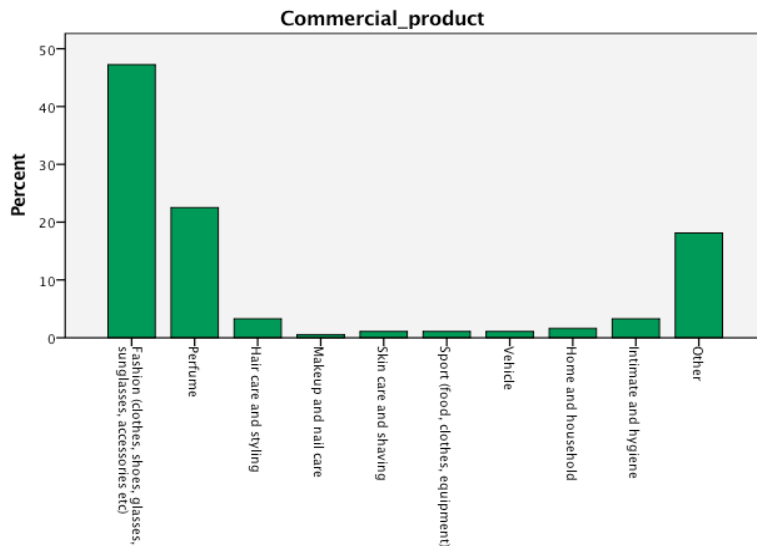
One of the most interesting variables analyzed was the analyze variable “Over all expression” which had a clear trend of the result of the female as “Seductive”, which was very protruding throughout the analysis of the material (Diagram 6.1). The outcome of our study and the analyzed variable of “Over all expression” show and give us the result related to our theoretical definition of sexualization. In the outcome we found several attributes that correspond with sexualization. Most frequently linked to the term of sexualization is the portrayal of the females as “Seductive”.

With a frequency of 40 percent we found that female most often are portrayed within the variable of “Seductive” in their over all expression (Diagram 6.1). Within the frequent use of this variable in advertising the female portrayals within our analyzed material are defined as: her value is created from her sexual appeal, the standard of physical attractiveness as being sexy, the female is made into an objects for others’ sexual use, etcetera (APA, 2010). Which show us a common sexualized portrayal of the females in the advertisements of Mexican magazines. With a clear distance, the second most frequent portrayal is within the variable of “Neutral” (Diagram 6.1) and the rest of the variables can be found with a limited frequency (Diagram 6.1). This result demonstrates a lack of change and decreases of women as sexual objects in advertising and also shows an unvaried portrayal of the females. The result relates to and follows earlier researchers results, where there is no change in the portrayals of females as objects (Lindner, 2004). It shows that the sexualization is still a clear outset in female portrayal. This can also substantiate the fact that advertisers still have a narrow ideal of femininity (Cortese, 2008), which evidently is portrayed in the advertisements. Moreover, the result strengthens the necessity of our study and further research within this area. To put

more sense into the different portrayals and find possible trends of portraying we analyzed and put the over all expression in relation to other categories and variables.

The lack of change and presence of sexualization

Diagram 6.2: Commercial product.



Earlier studies show that the use of sexual content in advertising is the factor that attracts the largest number of consumers and consequently sells the most (Reichert, 2003). Therefore, we will review the relationship of the over all expression and commercial product to explore if, how frequently and how different markets sexualise women in the advertising content (Diagram 6.2). Firstly, the outcome shows that 47 percent of the advertisements advertise “Fashion” in any aspect, which makes it the most frequent variable (Diagram 6.2). Second most frequently advertised is “Perfume”, and the third most common commercial product was within the variable of “Other” (Diagram 6.2). The advertisements within the variable of “Other” mostly included event, holidays, hotels and shopping malls etcetera. In conclusion we could see a trend of leisure in this variable, which shows us that the most common products to advertise in Mexican fashion magazines are fashion products, perfume and products related to leisure. Further we will analyse the result in relation to “Over all expression”.

Diagram 6.3: Over all expression in relation to Commercial product.

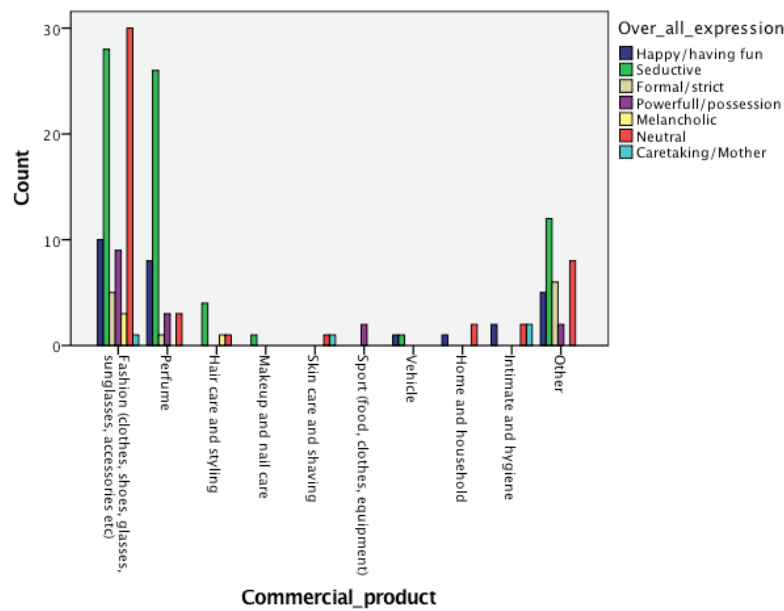


Table 6.1: Commercial product in relation to Over all expression.

Count		Over_all_expression							Total
Commercial_pro	duct	Happy/havin g fun	Seductive	Formal/strict	Powerfull/po ssession	Melancholic	Neutral	Caretaking/ Mother	
	Fashion (clothes, shoes, glasses, sunglasses, accessories etc)	10	28	5	9	3	30	1	86
	Perfume	8	26	1	3	0	3	0	41
	Hair care and styling	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	6
	Makeup and nail care	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Skin care and shaving	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
	Sport (food, clothes, equipment)	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Vehicle	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Home and household	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
	Intimate and hygiene	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	6
	Other	5	12	6	2	0	8	0	33
Total		27	72	12	16	4	47	4	182

We could find an interesting difference of portrayal when reviewing the correlation between the two variables of “Over all expression” and “Commercial product” (Diagram 6.3). Within the category of fashion advertisements it is almost an equal distinction between the portrayals of the female as “Neutral” or “Seductive”, with the former variable as a slight majority. Both significantly more used than the other variables within the category “Over all expression”, together representing 67 percent (58/86) of all fashion ads (Table 6.1). According to the result, fashion ads use “Seductive” portrayal 33 percent (28/86) of the times (Table 6.1). The interesting relation and result are however the frequency of “Seductive” portrayals within the variable of “Perfume” ads, where females were sexually portrayed in 63 percent (26/41) of all perfume ads (Table 6.1). The result tells us that within Mexican fashion

magazines it is more common to portray females as sexual objects when advertising perfume than any other type of product. This is remarkable because even though earlier research claim that advertisers have started to rethink the portrayals of females (Gill, 2008) our outcome show the opposite. Especially when reviewing the cases of perfume advertisements. In conclusion, that in fact a lot of markets and brands represented in Mexican magazines still use sexualization of women very frequently when promoting their products (Diagram 6.3).

Brown is more fun than White

Table 6.2: Skin colour in relation to over all expression

Count		Skin_colour			Total
		Fair skinned	Medium olive skinned	Brown skinned	
Over_all_expression	Happy/having fun	17	7	3	27
	Seductive	43	22	7	72
	Formal/strict	10	2	0	12
	Powerfull/possession	14	2	0	16
	Melancholic	2	2	0	4
	Neutral	40	5	2	47
	Caretaking/Mother	4	0	0	4
Total		130	40	12	182

To grasp which kind of females that are stereotypically portrayed and sexualized in advertisement within Mexican magazines we examined the skin, eye and hair colour of the female/females of the advertisements. When reviewing the skin colour of the females in the advertisements we found a clear over-representation of “Fair skinned” females. According to our outcome white females are represented with a frequency of 71 percent, which demonstrates an unchanged portrayal of women in magazines and a continuous lack of advertisers using females which represent different ethnicities (Baker, 2005; Gill, 2008; Merskin, 2006; Cortese, 2008). Even though we could see this clear trend in using “Fair skinned” females in advertisements in Mexican magazines, we further wanted to compare and look into if there was any difference of portrayal between the different skin colours. Also, to get a deeper understanding of how different females are portrayed in the Mexican advertisements. Our outcome shows us that “Medium/olive” and “Brown skinned” females are in total represented with a frequency of only 29 percent (40/182, see Table 6.2). Thus, our analyse variable “Dark skinned” was not coded in one single advertisement. Despite the low representation of difference in skin colour we wanted to review the relation between the over all expression and the skin colour. The outcome shows that the three most common variables are as mentioned: “Seductive”, “Happy” and “Neutral”, with “Seductive” as a strong majority in frequency. When reviewing this relation all females, independently of skin colour,

are most frequently portrayed as “Seductive” (Table 6.2). However, the outcome shows tendencies that “Medium/olive” and “Brown skinned” women are more frequently portrayed as “Happy” in comparison to “Fair skinned”. 17 percent (7/40) and 25 percent (3/12) of the “Medium/olive” and “Brown skinned” are portrayed as happy, while fair skinned females are portrayed as happy with a frequency of 13 percent (17/130). This result only shows us small tendencies as the amount of cases where “Medium/olive” or “Brown skinned” females are portrayed are too few. However, our result shows tendencies much alike earlier research results where white females more frequently are objectified and portrayed as sex objects (Baker, 2005). Our result therefore shows upon continuously lack in change when portraying women of different ethnicities differently in magazines.

A Colourless Representation

Diagram 6.4: Skin colour in relation to hair colour.

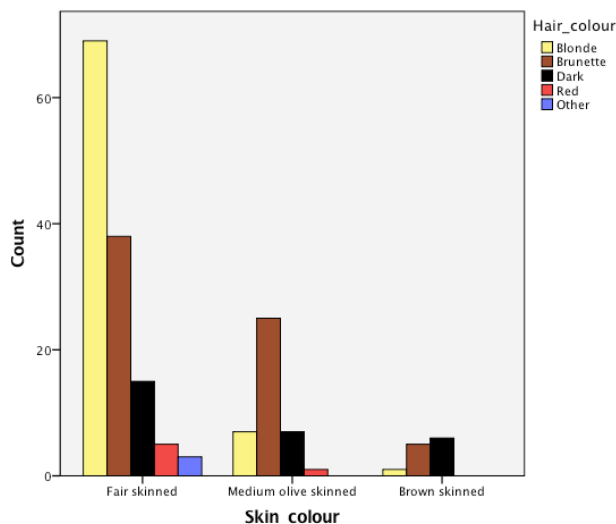


Diagram 6.5: Skin colour in relation to eye colour.

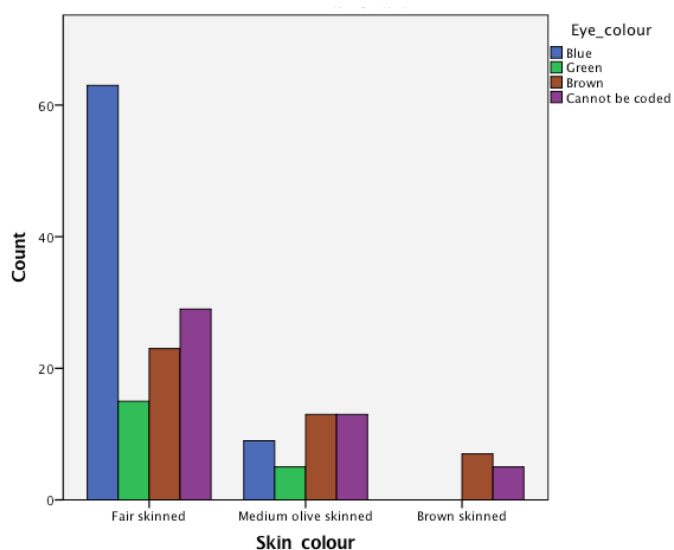


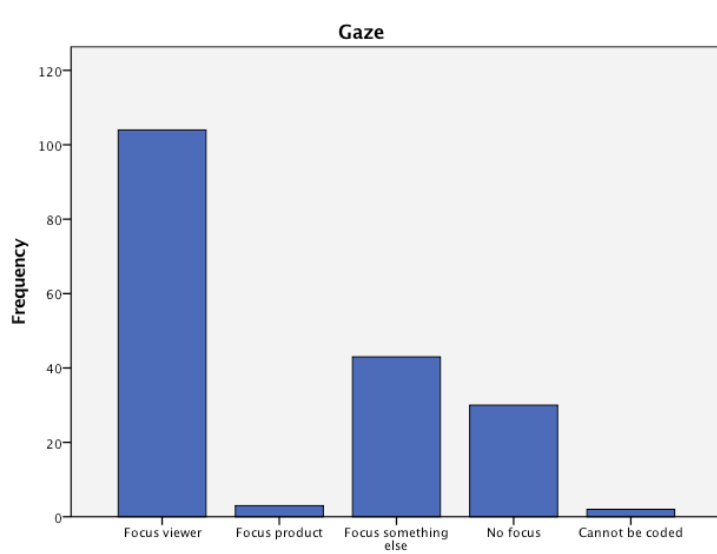
Table 6.3: Relation between skin, eye and hair colour.

Count			Hair_colour					Total
Eye_colour			Blonde	Brunette	Dark	Red	Other	
Blue	Skin_colour	Fair skinned	40	12	8		3	63
		Medium olive skinned	2	6	1		0	9
	Total		42	18	9		3	72
Green	Skin_colour	Fair skinned	8	2	1	4		15
		Medium olive skinned	0	5	0	0		5
	Total		8	7	1	4		20
Brown	Skin_colour	Fair skinned	8	11	4	0		23
		Medium olive skinned	2	8	2	1		13
		Brown skinned	1	3	3	0		7
	Total		11	22	9	1		43
Cannot be coded	Skin_colour	Fair skinned	13	13	2	1		29
		Medium olive skinned	3	6	4	0		13
		Brown skinned	0	2	3	0		5
	Total		16	21	9	1		47
Total	Skin_colour	Fair skinned	69	38	15	5	3	130
		Medium olive skinned	7	25	7	1	0	40
		Brown skinned	1	5	6	0	0	12
	Total		77	68	28	6	3	182

As white females are portrayed in 71 percent of all advertisements we further want to review the correlation with eye and hair colour to be able to make a deeper conclusions about cultural influence and possible created ideals. Our outcome shows that the majority of the fair skinned females have blonde hair (Diagram, 6.4). Further, the majority also had blue eyes (Diagram 6.5). In conclusion, the most frequent portrayal of the female is with white skin, blond hair and blue eyes, representing 22 percent (40/182) of all advertisements (Table 6.3). The second most frequent portrayal is with white skin, blond hair and within the variable where the eye colour cannot be coded, and represents 7 percent of all advertisements (Table 6.3). The majority of Latin American and Mexican females go under the variables of “Brown skinned”, “Dark hair” and “Brown eyes”. This quota only has a frequency of 2 percent in the advertisements in Mexican magazines (Table 6.3). Therefore we can conclude that the advertising in Mexican magazines still follows a mainstream culture, which in earlier research could be found within and is based on a white concept (Cortese, 2008).

Gazing at the viewer

Diagram 6.6: The gaze



According to Eriksson and Göthlund (2004) the female is more accessible as a sexual object when she has her eyes closed or directed downwards or in another direction. In our quantitative analyze we therefore analyzed where the female put her gaze and together with other attributes of the advertisement we are further able to contextualize the portrayal of the female. According to our outcome the clearly most represented variable within the category of “The gaze” was the model with “Focus on the viewer”, which has a frequency of 57 percent. Secondly most portrayed gaze is where the model has “Focus on something else”, which could be found in 24 percent of the advertisements (Diagram 6.6). We can therefore see a change of the female portrayal within the category of “Gaze” in advertisements. In opposite to the stereotypical gaze of females in advertising where the female has closed eyes or eyes in another direction our study shows a new stereotypical woman with the gaze focused on the viewer.

An empowered self-objectification

Diagram 6.7: Gaze in relation to Over all expression

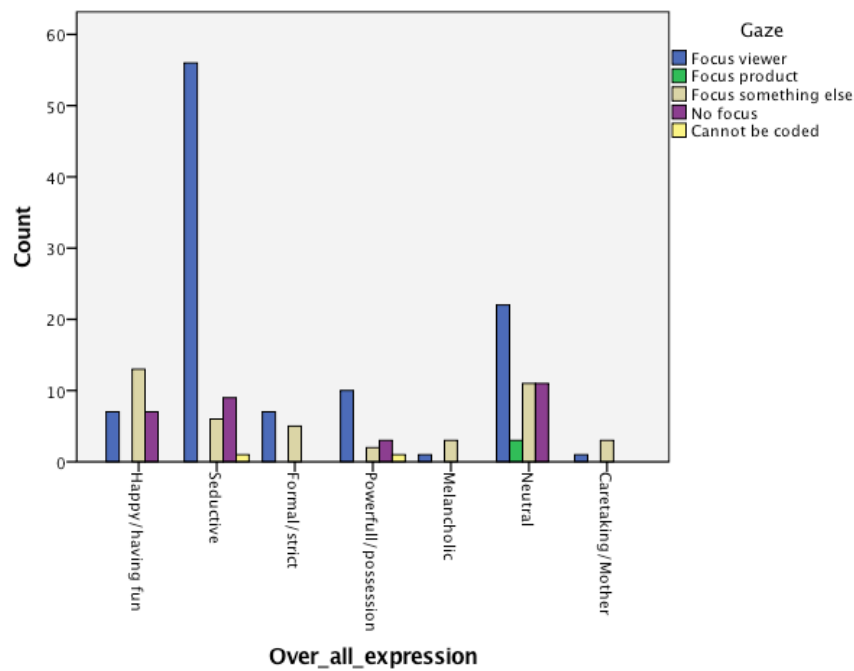
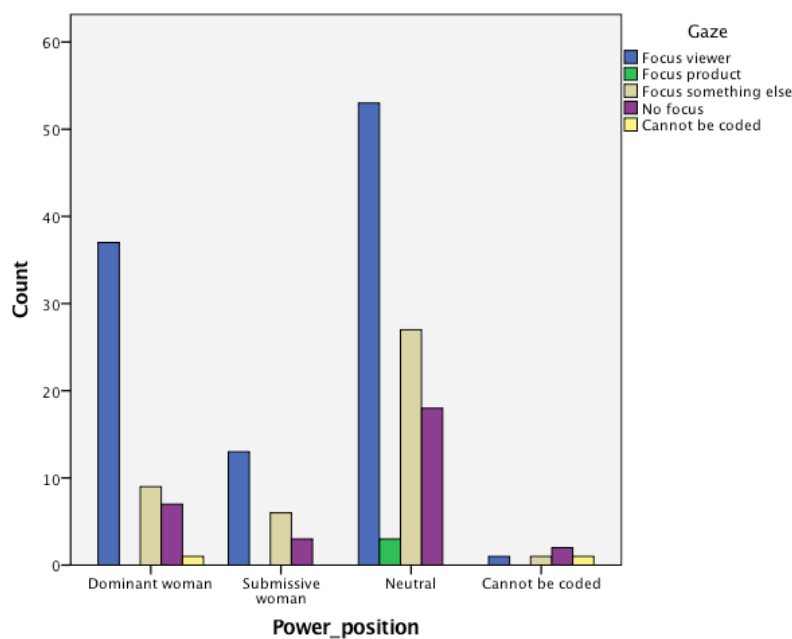


Diagram 6.8: Gaze in relation to Power position



Placing the analyze variable “The gaze” in relation to “Over all expression” we can emphasize a different and trending use of the female gaze. Our outcome shows a change compared to Eriksson and Göthlund’s study (2014). In contrary, it seems the female gaze is more frequently portrayed and stereotyped with a power that is seductive rather than a powerless or passive gaze that is seductive. When reviewing the relation between the two variables we found that 78 percent (56/72) of all “Seductive” expressions have the “Focus on the viewer”

versus 54 percent (56/104) of all gazes with “Focus on the viewer” is “Seductive” (Diagram 6.7). In contrary to previous research and results, where the female gaze of closed eyes and eyes in another direction could be analyzed as a powerless self-objectifying (Eriksson & Göthlund, 2014), our outcome conclude a different direction where the female’s focus on the viewer creates an empowered self-objectification. Our result therefore relates to Gill’s modern stereotype called Midriff, which is more related to powerful sexualization (Gill, 2008). With the focus on the viewer the female captures the viewer (with power of the gaze) and makes herself seductive, further: sexualized (self-objectifying). This analysis can be validated through placing the category “The gaze” in relation to the category “Power position”. When reviewing this relationship we can read that in 69 percent of all cases where the power position is coded as “Dominant woman” the female’s gaze has a “Focus on the viewer” (Diagram 6.8). This result shows us the conclusion that creating a dominant portrayal of the female most frequent includes a gaze with “Focus on viewer”. When comparing the “Focus on the viewer”-gaze to the portrayal of a “Neutral” power position, this gaze only represents 53 percent of the neutral portrayals. Hence, resulting in the conclusion that a focus on the viewer more frequently represents an empowered woman rather than neutral or submissive. Therefore, our outcome and analyze of the variable “The gaze” advocates the trending use of a “powerful self-objectification”, which strongly relates to the self-chosen objectification and further portrayal of the stereotype Midriff (Gill, 2008).

6.1.1 Quantitative conclusion

In conclusion we could through our quantitative study find several typical trends of how females are portrayed in advertisements within Mexican magazines. Primarily we could see a clear trend of the representation of white skinned, blue eyed and blond haired women, which could influence Mexican women’s to attain an unobtainable ideal. Secondly we found that the sexualization still has a major presence in advertisement. However, the trend follows Gill’s study of the modern stereotypes (Gill, 2008) and in contrary to representations where the female is portrayed as powerless (Eriksson & Göthlund, 2014) our result show upon a popular portrayal of females as powerful self-objectifying, or sexual subjects instead of the former; sexual objects (Gill, 2008).

6.2 Qualitative Result and Analysis

As many feminist theorists have claimed, advertising in popular media is one of the strongest forces of creating, maintaining and stimulating female stereotypes and sexism. According to Beauvoir (2002) women are misrepresented in advertisements and are defined through their

sexual traits. With the aid of a quantitative content analysis, we were able to chart numerous advertisements with a sexist content, which we further analyzed with the basis of a semiotic text analysis. The semiotic approach resulted in a finding of several persistent stereotypical portrayals of women, all consisting any type of sexual content. Our result shows that a high degree of the advertisements in Mexican magazines constructs an ideal female, where the most important qualities is to be sexy, beautiful and obtain an attractive appearance. Cortese (2008) is bringing up how advertisers have a narrow ideal of women and femininity, which can be explained by the concept of the young, flawless and attractive provocateur, who always portrys with a sexual appeal. This provocateur can be found in all the different stereotypes in our result.

6.2.1 Midriffs and Hot lesbians

The portrayal of a young and playful woman can be connected to two of Gill's (2008) new, modern female stereotypes: the Hot lesbian and the Midriff. Figure 6.1 is showing the

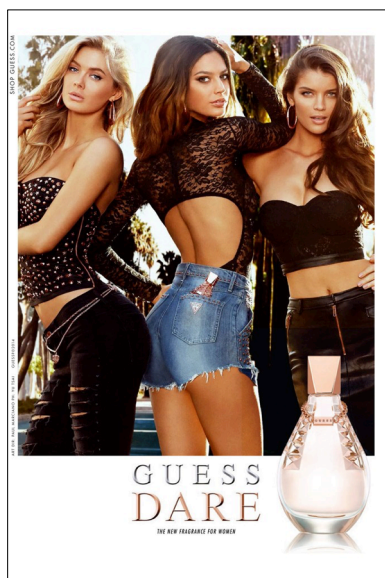


Figure 6.1 Guess Dare

Dare. The name of the fragrance can be connoted to the stereotypical Midriff as well, as it may indicate that women should dare to be more adventurous, young, playful and different. However, the Guess-women have characteristics and signs that refer to Cortese's (2008) concept of a provocateur, which is the ideal female portrayed in advertisements, not daring to be different. Further, all the women are portrayed with sexual symbols; the youthfulness is an indicator of sexual attractiveness and health, the exposure of naked skin stimulates the sexual appetite and sexually appeals the opposite gender and their long hair flow is a sign of attractiveness and

stereotypical Midriff, which is a new type of representation of women where they are portrayed as more playful, fun and fearless (Gill, 2008). However, the Midriff is still portrayed as sexy, especially with a sexy body, but as a sexual subject rather than an object (ibid.). The three young women in figure 6.1 are portrayed with sexy attributes such as seductive facial expressions, sexy poses and sexy clothes that exposures a lot of skin. The purpose is to advertise a new fragrance, Guess



Figure 6.2 Guess

femininity (Cortese, 2008). Just like a Midriff, the women are not portrayed in a submissive position; however the focus is still on their physical attractiveness, perceived in one way as sexualized subjects but also as sexual objects as they are separated from nonphysical characteristics. Even the perfume bottle is stereotypical feminine, with soft curves, pink color and chain in rosé gold.

Figure 6.2 shows another advertisement from Guess where the women's appearance is portrayed in a similar way; however they can be connected both to the stereotypical Hot lesbian and the Midriff. The Hot lesbian is characterized by the way women are touching or kissing other women (Gill, 2008). There are signs and codes for this stereotype in the advertisement as the woman to the right is touching the other woman and is making a kissing facial expression towards her. The Midriff stereotype can be found in the fun and playful way the women are portrayed. They are young, teasing and obtain a physical beauty. Both the physical attractiveness, the way they are exposing the sexy parts of their bodies (long legs and breast cleavage) and their sexual behavior, which involves the interpersonal interaction, their body language and the kissing mouth all fits under Reichert's (2003) model of sexual content in advertisement. The youthfulness, the smile and long legs symbolizes attractiveness and can, alike the women in figure 6.1, be connected to Cortese's (2008) concept of the ideal woman, a provocateur. Moreover, this advertisement has a touch of Mexican impression as the women are wearing hats and clothes that can be interpreted with a Mexican culture. On the other, they are still White, exactly as the conception of the Midriff is characterized by (Gill, 2008). This White norm can be found in both the advertisements for Guess, as all the women portrayed are White.

These images from Guess are typical examples of the male gaze theory, as the portrayals of the women consist of attributes that are misleading and contribute to the sexualization of women (Gervais, Holland & Dodd, 2013). Finally, sexualization occurs when "a person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness with being sexy" (APA, 2010, s 1), which can be connected to how the Midriff/Hot lesbian is portrayed in the advertisements.

6.2.2 Miss fairytale

Miss fairytale can be described as a sexy and seductive woman with facial beauty and attractiveness. Her appearance is soft and fairy and she is a character that is living in a fairy tale world but only portrays in decorative roles in advertisements. She has big eyes with long lashes, her eyes are soft and seductive, pouting red/pink lips, blushed cheeks, a daydreaming face and slightly canted head. All these signs construct the model into an attractive, seductive

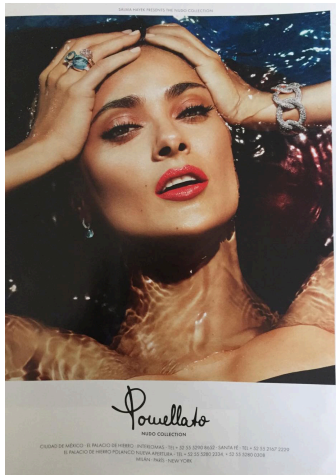


Figure 6.3 Pomellatio

and alluring woman; even though only their faces are in focus she still can be connoted as a sexual object. According to Cortese (2008) the red lips is a symbol for sexual arousal and the blushed cheeks conveys innocence. The sexual content can be found in the sexual behavior and within the physical attractiveness (Reichert, 2003). Miss fairytale has a flirty and seductive eye contact with the camera and she has a high degree of facial beauty, which creates a sexual interaction with the viewer. In figure 6.3 the model is laying down in the water, pulling her head back, with slightly closed eyes and a seductive gaze into the camera. Her mouth is open in a moaning way and she has a flawless, smooth skin. She is

the stereotypical Miss fairytale as the femininity consists of seductiveness, sophistication and sexiness and the image has a dreamy appearance. The woman in figure 6.4 has as well a seductive and sexy facial expression with plumped, red lips that gives the impression of a kissable mouth. She has all the attributes to be classified as the stereotypical Miss fairytale as her femininity is portrayed as sexy, dreamy and with a seductive gaze a beautiful face. With her paled skin and her red hair she can be connoted to the myth of the Little Red Riding Hood, which further can be interpreted as a young, naive and innocent woman but in modern time, also as an erotic metaphor, mainly because the femininity is portrayed as vulnerable, mysterious and with red features. Further, her sexual attributes have no relevance to the marketed product and she is not using the product either, which Dahl, Segupta & Vohs (2009) argued is a common tactic for advertisers. This means she is only portrayed as an object, something for the opposite gender to look at.



Figure 6.4 Riunite Red Wine



Figure 6.5 Nina Ricci My Secret

The advertisement for a new fragrance from Nina Ricci “My Secret” (figure 6.5) shows a young woman standing in a snowy fairytale landscape, surrounded by sparkling silver walls. The image can be interpreted as being influenced by the story of Snow White, though a more modern outlook of the fairytale. The woman connotes a fairytale princess with a beautiful, innocent face and blonde, wavy hair. Her skin is “white as

snow”, her lips are intensive red, and the overall appearance is phantasmal. The perfume bottle is shaped as an apple, which can be connected to the story of Snow White, as the apple is an important symbol of the fairytale. Her big, red, pouted lips symbolize sexual arousal and the youthfulness is an indicator for sexual attractiveness (Cortese, 2008).

6.2.3 Femme Fatale

Femme fatale is the woman who broke with the conventional stereotype of a needy woman, always dependent on the man. Advertisers are moving away from constructing woman as unintelligent to portray women in a more post-feminist way as woman with control (Gill, 2008). These women are more independent, powerful and sophisticated but still with a seductive and mysterious approach. She is an irresistibly attractive woman with feminine attributes such as beauty, charm and sexual allure. The Femme fatale is a woman with a combination of intelligence and sex appeal. She attracts the man by her aura of charm and mystery.

The advertisement for Versace Eros (figure 6.6) is showing a woman standing on a pedestal with a man standing on knee underneath her, holding the woman’s leg and pushing it against his side. By the environmental codes, the clothes and the name of the fragrance, the connotation of the Ancient Greek appears. The man symbolizes the Greek god Eros (as the name of the fragrance reveals) and the woman can be connoted as Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty, who is one of the historically femme fatale archetypes. By the way she is standing; her upright position and her position against the man, as well as the look in her eyes, you connote



Figure 6.6 Versace Eros

her as a powerful and more individual women. She is portrayed as a stereotypical sexy, sensual and powerful woman, an ideal femme fatale with confidence. The whole image is very intense and dramatic, where both the man and the woman are portrayed as powerful in different ways; she is posing in a powerful position and his power lays in the way he is grabbing the woman's leg, like he has control over her. Yet, the femininity portrayed in this image can be connected to Cortese's (2008) concept of the provocateur, as she is characterized with youth, flawlessness, attractiveness and sexual allure. Further the sexual content consist of her sexy dress which exposes a lot of skin, showing some of her sexy part of the body (long legs and her cleavage), but also the interpersonal sexual behavior between the man and the woman, which consist of sexual desire and intimacy.

A more modern version of the Femme fatale can be seen in figure 6.7, where a woman is portrayed in a commercial for the jewelry brand Chopard. The image connotes a majestic area with simple royal attributes (the chair and the jewelries). Comparable to the name of the collection, "Imperiale", the image radiates the imagination of an imperial lifestyle, where the femininity is portrayed in a more modern way. Her clothing, jewelry, facial expression, body language and the details around her connote a sophisticated, elegant and sensual woman with style and passion. With the aid of several denotations; her straight looking gaze, the slightly squinted eyes, her clearly marked chin bones, her red lips, her "serious" facial expression and her posing, it is possible to define her as a confidence and powerful Femme fatale; a modern and elegant businesswoman. There are still codes that symbolize sexuality; her lo-necked jacket is showing a lot of skin, including her cleavage, which according to Cortese (2008) is sexually appealing. Her facial expression, the squinted eyes, the red lips, the smoky makeup and her slightly open mouth are all signs for a sexy and sensual woman, a woman with physical attractiveness.



Figure 6.7 Chopard Imperiale



Figure 6.8 Continental

The woman in figure 6.8 portrays in an advertisement for Continental wheels. The woman is portrayed in a powerful position and she looks dominant and confident, exactly as a Femme fatale. She is a tall, physical attractive woman with a slim body, long legs and facial beauty. The commercial for wheel can be seen as stereotypical masculine and the woman portrayed has nothing to do with the product. She is only portrayed as an object, where the function of her as a woman is attractiveness and sexy to look at.

The result of the stereotypical Femme fatale shows that even when women are portrayed in a more powerful, dominant position, they still have distinctive sexual attributes that are going with the social ideal of how a woman should look like. On the first sight, the femme fatale is a reverse from the established gender roles and differs from the more obvious objectification that we are used to. On the surface, the Femme fatale seems to challenge the classic old-school stereotypes, hence on closer inspection; we find that most of these “feminist” images still reinforce the norm that they seem to challenge. The Femme fatale is still sexy, exposing a lot of skin, has a slim body, facial beauty, overall physical attractiveness and is White.

6.2.4 Bad Girl

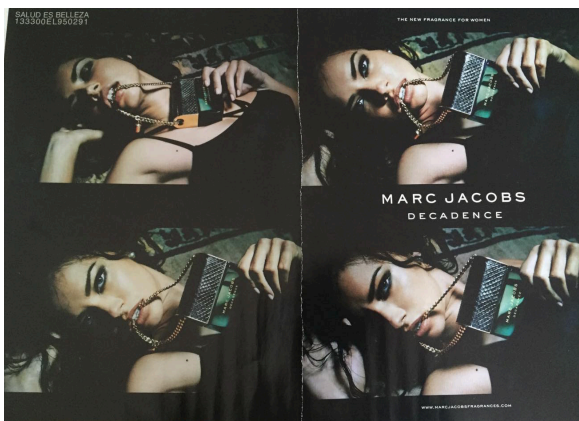


Figure 6.9 Marc Jacobs “Decadence”

The stereotypical Bad girl can be described with Sigmund Freud’s old Madonna-Whore complex, where she fits under the mythical stereotype of the Whore. The Bad girl is playing on sex and is portrayed as a sexually free person, a stereotypical woman that men want to sleep with (Crane, Towne & Crane-Seeber, 2013). Figure 6.9 shows an advertisement for a Marc Jacob-fragrance, where a woman is portrayed with a pose, facial expression and gaze that connote a sexy, playful and seductive young woman. According to

Reichert’s (2003) model, the sexual content emerges from her behavior (flirty, lying on the floor, having the chain in between her teeth, slightly open mouth and seductive eye contact), her physical attractiveness and sexual referents. The name of the fragrance, “Decadence” may

be connected to the women as well. She is a decadent person, a person who is marked by excessive self-indulgence and moral decay. The darkness of both the woman (with her dark clothes, black hair and smoky makeup) and the image overall, reinforces the image of a bad girl and the mythical Whore. The Bad girl/Whore can on the opposite appear as more masculine and less sexy (Crane, Towne & Crane-Seeber, 2013). This type



Figure 6.11 Benson & Hedges



Figure 5.10 TAG Heur

of bad girl is portrayed in both figure 6.10, where a woman is posing for the watch-brand for men, Tag Heur, and in 6.11 where a woman portrays for the cigarette brand Benson & Hedges. The woman in figure 6.10 has the combination of innocent-looking blonde hair and pretty face but with a mischievous, tough and masculinized look and gaze. With her bold eyebrows and her serious and “daring” facial expression you connote her as a young woman being free-minded, challenging the rules and chooses her own path without losing control (which can be connected to the hashtag; #DontCrackUnderPressure). There is no obvious sexual content, hence it can be connected to the myth of the Whore, the bad girl who men sees as a sexual object and want to sleep with. The woman in figure 6.11 has as well a facial expression that connotes a stereotypical Bad girl. Her intense gaze into the camera, the way she is biting the band (which also can be connected as a sexual act) and her wrinkled nose contributes to a roughly angry look. Her short hair dares the stereotypical portrayal of women, whom usually have long, wavy hair.

6.2.5 Victoria's Secret Angel



Figure 6.12 Intimissimi

As several researchers have claimed, women are portrayed as sex objects in advertisements, which further suggest an idea that being a woman is directly connected with being sexy (Cortese, 2008; APA, 2010; Merskin, 2006). Further, sexualization in advertisement occurs among other when “a person’s value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclusion of other characteristics” and “a person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness with being sexy” (APA, 2010, p. 1). This narrow view of beauty and female characteristics can be found within the stereotypical Victoria’s Secret angel, which is a woman with an ideal body that is not representing the actual bodies

that women have. The VS-angel is skinny, but still with the “accurate” curves and is representing a female body without any flaws or body fat, with a slim waist, long legs and a well-trained appearance. They are the stereotypes pertain to directly sexual objectification; only portrayed in recreational and decorative roles where their physical attractiveness and their perfect bodies are the only attributes that matters and what represent a woman.

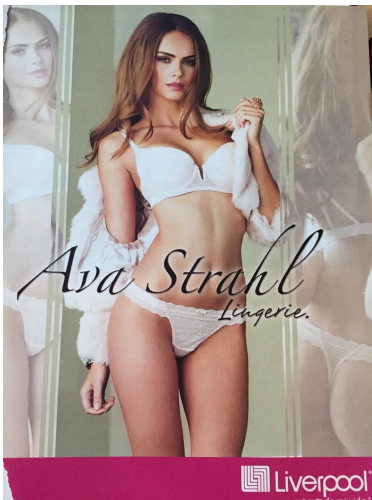


Figure 6.14 Ava Strahl, Liverpool

From the basis of Reichert's (2003) model of different types of sexual content in advertising research, the advertisements are all sexualized with nudity, sexual behavior and physical attractiveness. Altogether they try to sell the product with the help of showing the woman's body, which in this case is not bizarre as the advertisements are for lingerie; however the remarkable is the portrayal of the perfectly attractive,

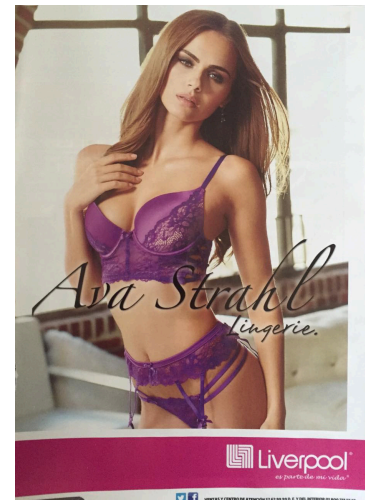


Figure 6.13 Ava Strahl, Liverpool

sexy and beautiful woman with the ultimate body. As Cohan (2001) claimed, one of the ethical issues in women's advertising is that the ideals of women in advertisements change the perspective from something natural to an ideal that cannot be achieved. Moreover, the woman's body parts become the most important attribute, more important than a woman's personality (Cohan, 2001). This issue can be found in these advertisements with the stereotype of a VS-angel, especially as most of the women are White even though the advertisements are aimed at the Mexican population.

Furthermore, all the women in the advertisements have a seductive gaze and almost sexually desiring facial expression. They can be connoted as sexy seductresses; even if the advertisements are addressed to women it is still the opposite gender that should be attracted to the women and the opposite gender that should be attracted to the sexy lingerie. The question that remains is, are they trying to sell sex to men or underwear to women? As Cortese (2008) brings up, sex in advertisements is a way to produce empty promises; if you buy these underwear you will turn exactly as beautiful, young and, the most vital, you become as sexy as the women promoting them. These advertisements does not only sell lingerie, they also sell a whole concept of sexuality.

6.2.6 Happy Housewife



Figure 6.15 Huggies



Figure 6.16 Huggies

In both figure 6.15 and figure 6.16 the women are portrayed as a happy mom, representing the myth that women should be taking care of the children. They are the ideal mothers that are happily taking care of their babies while the father probably is at work. In the images the mother is happy and so are the baby. In figure 6.17 the woman is portrayed as a happy housewife as well, with the domestic task to paint. Even though painting may be connected as a male task, the advertisement still shows that a woman's role should be at home. Exactly as Lindner (2004) claims, this creates a wrong image of the role of being a woman in society.

The Happy housewife can also be connected to the Madonna-Whore complex, where this stereotype can be seen as a Madonna. The Madonna is the adequate and respected partner

who cannot be desired as the Whore, she is not typical sexy but still obtains the social standards of beauty (Hartmann, 2009). The women in the advertisements are all good-looking and have bodies that go with the societal ideal of how a woman should look. An interesting aspect is that all the advertisements that portray women within the myth of the stereotypical domesticated woman is from Mexican brands. Even though all the advertisements are from Mexican brands, the portrayed women are White. Further, according to Plakoyjannaki and Zotos (2009) sexualization also emerges when women are represented as inferior when related to her capabilities and potential, generating in a



Figure 6.17 Comex

patronizing female ideal, as the case of the Happy housewife, which is symbolized by giving the woman a traditional, clichéd and decorative part in the advertisement (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014).

6.2.7 Qualitative Conclusion

Our result shows that a high degree of the advertisements in Mexican magazines constructs an ideal female, where the most important qualities is to be sexy, beautiful and obtain an attractive appearance. Cortese (2008) is bringing up how advertisers have a narrow ideal of women and femininity, which can be explained by the concept of the young, flawless and attractive provocateur, who always portrays with a sexual appeal, except of the Happy housewife. This provocateur can be found in all the different stereotypes in our result. Further, we found that many advertisements try to portray women in more powerful and independent positions, however they are still portrayed in a sexist way.

7. Discussion

In the following chapter we will draw conclusions and discuss the content of aforesaid chapter through the theoretical framework and earlier research that form the basis of our research.

From a gender theory perspective, advertising is one of the greatest sources of gender display and misrepresented stereotypes (Cortese, 2008; Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2009) and according to feminism theorists advertising is the strongest force of creating, maintaining and stimulating the female stereotypes and sexism (Courtney & Whipple, 1983). As Connell and Pease (2015) argue, gender is often taken for granted and the arrangements and rules within the society become so familiar that they are assumed to be something of nature or something fixed. The stereotypical portrayals of the gender that arrives through advertisements can simply be defined as a misleading generalization of people (Karan & Khoo, 2007). Further, they become a myth, an ideographic system created by mankind (Barthes, 1957).

The sexy ideal

Comparable to what several other researchers claim (Cortese, 2008; APA, 2010; Merskin, 2006) our research strongly indicates that the sexualization and stereotyping of women in media have not decreased over time, it rather appears as a socially accepted phenomena in the Latin culture of Mexico. Our quantitative result shows a high frequency of sexualization and stereotyping of women in the biggest fashion magazines in Mexico, which further means that men and women in Mexico are highly exposed to those kinds of female portrayals. According to Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) stereotypes are conceptions and thoughts of characteristics, qualities and behaviors of people in a certain group. The women in our analyzed advertisements are stereotypically portrayed in the way they pose, their gaze, facial expressions, body structure, clothes, skin colour as well as the environment around them and their role towards the product. Overall, the women are characterized by a facial expression showing desire, seduction and pleasure seeking. She indicates autoerotism or invites to interaction where the masculine gaze is essential. The women wear clothes that enhance her femininity and are not afraid of exposing naked skin. She is portrayed in several poses that connotes and indicates sexual referents and fantasies and is mostly portrayed with a sexual and playful behavior. Further the women are mainly portrayed as an object where she is contemplated by a distinct masculine gaze, which Cortese (2008), APA (2010) and Merskin (2006) claim in their researches too.

Even though we could find several kinds of stereotypes, our result still demonstrate a monotonous portrayal of women. We can widely conclude that within advertisements in

Mexico the most common ways of portraying women are stereotypically, sexually and as White females. The advertisers produce stereotypical, Western-oriented representations of women where no one is ugly, overweight, unfortunate or physically/mentally restricted and where the intrinsically attribute for generating femininity is to be attractive, which is attained through being desirable in a sexualized way. As Gill (2008) claims it has been a shift from a women's domestic position to women's bodies. Today it is woman's body parts that represent the woman and becomes the key resources of identity, which is a distinct trend in Mexican advertisements. Almost all the stereotypes found in our analyzed material show upon that women should be physical attractive as well as a hidden message to women in the society that: "You are not good enough" and that women are shapeable. Women should be beautiful, good-looking, have a flawless and slim body, be sexy and obtain a facial perfection, as well as being happy and satisfied. The women in real life, on other hand, are always too fat, not in a good shape and not beautiful or happy enough. This ideal woman can be connected to Cortese's (2008) concept of the provocateur, a perfectly portrayed woman far away from a representation of the reality.

From fair-skinned to Happy housewives

As the traditional stereotypes are too easy to recognize by consumers, the advertisers figure out new stereotypical images of women in media (Cortese, 2008). Through our qualitative analysis we could discover six different concepts of stereotypes portrayed in contemporary Mexican advertisements; the Hot lesbian/the Midriff, Miss fairytale, Femme fatale, Bad girl, Victoria's Secret angel and Happy housewife. These stereotypical portrayals are still going with the traditional stereotypes, however the differences we could find are that the sexualized imageries are more hidden than before.

Lin and Yeh (2009) and Cortese (2008) claim that the representations in advertisements create and push myths of what is needed, myths of what are feminine and masculine. This means that our analyzed advertisements portray stereotypes and further create and maintain the myths of women and which female attributes she should obtain. The stereotypical Midriff creates a myth that women should be young, playful and sexy. As Gill (2008) argues, the Midriff is a new type of female representation where women are fun, fearless and powerful which can be connected to a more post-feminist philosophy. Miss fairytale show upon the beauty myth that women should have a facial perfection, with soft, flawless skin and the Bad girl represent the myth that women should be sexually desirable and be a person that men wants to sleep with, the mythical Whore. The Victoria's Secret angel symbolizes the societal myth about women's body, which should be slim and have the accurate curves. One major change observed are seen in the use of the more independent Femme fatale portrayals that

goes with the feminist ideals, however they still show a high amount of sexualization. Even though advertisers start to portray women in more powerful and independent roles and “hide” the obvious sexualization, there is still a huge gap between these portrayals and real life women.

Happy housewife is the only stereotype that stick out from the stereotypically sexualization, as it goes with the old school myth that women should be home doing the domestic chores. An interesting aspect when it comes to the Happy housewife is that, even though most of the advertisements in Mexican fashion magazines are from international brands, all the advertisements that show the stereotypical Happy housewife are from Mexican brands. This is a remarkable aspect as it reflects the culture within the country. Cortese (2008) states that advertisements reproduce a culture’s traditional myths, beliefs, tales and practices, which mean that the myth of the domesticated woman is still alive in the Mexican culture, even though many countries have moved forward from this stereotypical portrayal.

A Western Ideal in a Latin Culture

An interesting aspect of the portrayal of women in contemporary magazine advertisements is the unequal representation of White and women of colour. First of all, numerous researchers have elucidated the lack of studies within how Black are portrayed in advertisements, however the issue is rather the recognizable larger proportion of White women represented in advertisements than Black (Baker, 2005; Gill, 2008; Merskin, 2006). We reached a similar result from a Latin American perspective; 71% of the women portrayed in the advertisements in Mexican fashion magazines were White and only 7% were dark skinned, even though women in Mexico have a darker pigment.

Both gender theory and feminist theory discuss how certain identities emerge from representations (Butler & Almqvist, 2007). This means and leads us to the conclusion that Mexican women would, through the advertisements, try to find females whom they identify themselves with. Thus, as our result show upon a main representation of white-skinned females this aggravates the creation of an unrealistic ideal, since Mexican females most often are found within the category of brown skinned. Hence, our research shows upon a strong misrepresentation of the women of Mexico and further a skewed normalization of female ideal and standards. This since the representations does not lie within the Mexican culture, but within a western culture of white-skinned, blond-haired and blue-eyed females. Our result establishes the presence of the stereotypical attribute of White, western women in the advertisements in Mexico, which generates the idea and ideal that a beautiful, socially accepted woman is white-skinned with western heritage (ibid.).

Consequences for the Mexican society

Both Courtney and Whipple (1983) and Lin and Yeh (2009) claim that advertisement can be compared to a mirror where cultural meaning, values of the society and personal dreams are reflected and constructed, which leads us to an assumption that the sexualization in the Mexican advertisements both creates and represents the Mexican culture's existing expectations, values and ideals of females. As our result shows the majority of the advertisements portray women in a sexualized way where women are misrepresented, hence the way women and men look upon women become based on their sex and erotic attraction rather than gender (Beauvoir, 2002; Dozier, 2005). Furthermore, as these facts are reflecting on society, culture and values of Mexico, we can assume that they may be related to the existing gender inequality in the country, where females have a far lower power position than men. This can also be related to Tartaglia and Rollero's (2015) finding that more masculine and gender-unequal countries have greater sexualization than the more gender equal countries, as Mexico is seen as a highly masculine country with a long way to go before attaining gender equality. Further our study may be connected to the Gender Gap Index provided by The World Economic Forum (2014), since Mexico is ranked as a rather unequal society when it comes to gender this may affect the way the advertisements are framed and how the women are portrayed.

Moreover, the sexualization has a huge impact on the society and a country's culture. Women may harm their self-esteem, body satisfaction, mental and physical health etcetera and men get an unrealistic image of the "perfect" woman and the expectations and attitudes against gender roles and sexuality get affected (APA, 2010). According to the male gaze the women are portrayed as a result of expectations from the male viewer (Zetterman, 2004). This means, when women strive for and attain an illusive ideal through the female misrepresentations, it subconsciously gives women a subordinated power position towards men (Ibid.). Our investigation leads to a conclusion that within the Mexican culture men have an objectifying gaze and attitude towards women as the women frequently are portrayed as sexual objects in advertisements.

In summary, the advertisements create the myth that Mexican women should be sexy, slimmed and most important, they should be White and preferable with blue eyes and blonde hair; characteristics and physical attributes that their genetics do not allow. Connell and Pease (2015) explain that the ideals, which advertising creates, become a part of the gender, meaning that these sexualized and misrepresented ideals of female have a big influence to Mexican women when creating their own gender. Perhaps the main impact of the women in

Mexico is not the sexualization itself, but more this stereotypical White ideal that is portrayed in media. The vicious circle of a continuous use of fair-skinned women in advertisements within the Mexican society creates a subconscious myth that the fair-skinned women are “better” and more beautiful. As we seen in our results, even though women with Mexican ethnicity are represented in media they are still portrayed as fair-skinned. This results in a society where most portrayed females in advertising are White and also a prominent and seemingly “successful” Mexican heritage-women are the ones with fair-skin. So, by the way of conclusion, the question that remains is; if the ideal of women in Mexico never changes, will the country ever develop and reach a gender equal society?

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Appendix 1

Coding scheme

CODING FORM

V1 V2 V3 V4 V5 V6 V7 V8 V9 V10 V11 V12 V13 V14 V15 V16 V17 V18

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Code Book

V1. Magazines

1. Vogue México (female)
2. Elle México (female)
3. Cosmopolitan México (female)
4. Vogue Hombre (men)
5. GQ México (men)
6. Open (men)
7. Glamour (female)

Coding instruction: Definition of the magazine. The magazine's target audience is either females or men.

V2. Commercial product

1. Fashion (clothes, shoes, glasses, sunglasses, accessories etc.)
2. Perfume
3. Hair care and styling (shampoo, conditioner, hairspray, hair oil etc.)
4. Makeup and nail care (foundation, eye makeup, lip makeup etc.)
5. Skin care and shaving (cleaning product, facial product, facial cream, skin cream etc.)
6. Sport (health product, sportswear, sport equipment etc.)
7. Technique
8. Vehicle
9. Home and household (kitchen products, interior decorating etc.)
10. Product line (several products in the same advertisement)
11. Intimate and hygiene (toothpaste, soap, sanitary articles etc.)
12. Other product (food, drinks, leisure, events etc)

Coding instruction: Only one of the categories can be chosen. The variable lead up to that the coder, through the visual layout and formation, will categorize the advertisements product category. By categorize this; it is further possible to identify the advertisements considered target audience.

V3. Age

1. Young adult (16-34)
2. Mid adult (35-50)
3. Older (50+)
4. Mixed

Coding instruction: The age of the model. In advertisements where several models exist we will use the variable that is find most appropriate to the age of the majority. If a majority cannot be defined it will be coded as “Mixed”.

V4. The products target audience

1. Women
2. Men
3. Both women and men

Coding instruction: The variable investigates if the advertised product is aimed at men, women or at both. The product’s target audience is determined by: the end user, which type of product, its visual expression, the model that is represented in the advertisement, and/or other relevant information in the advertisement (informative copy etc.). Since the coder has evaluated type of magazine and product category earlier stage the target audience will also be coded in relation to earlier coded variables: V1 and V2.

V5. Approach to the product

1. Active (the product is used by the model/models)
2. Passive (the product is a part of the advertisement but is not used by the model/models)
3. No approach to the product (the product is not a part of the advertisement)

*Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to observe a connection between the commercial product, the model and the advertisements main message. The coder will evaluate if the model is using the product – **Active** (this includes: the correct and intended usage of the product, and wearing and/or holding the product), if the product only is a part of the advertisement but not used – **Passive** (this includes: if the product is used in a fictional or incorrect way, is in a realistic way a part of the environment but not used by the model and if the product is put in the advertisement as a picture) or if the product is not a part of the advertisement at all – **No approach to the product**.*

V6. Distance to the camera

1. Long-distance (the model shows the whole body and a large amount of the background environment)

2. Medium-distance (the same amount of the model and the background environment)
3. Close-up (the head and shoulder are in focus)
4. Extreme close-up (the face and its details are in focus)
5. A specific body part/parts

Coding instructions: The coder will evaluate in which degree the model/models are covering the advertisement in relation to how much of the/their body/bodies that can be seen in the picture. Resulting in a realistic coding of the distance to the camera. When coding an advertisement including several models the distance will be defined only through the amount of the model that is represented in the picture. The variables 1-3 are approximations of the distance based on their following descriptions.

V7. Number of models

1. One
2. Several

Coding instruction: The variables tell if there are only one model or several. "Several" includes all the cases where there are more than one model in the advertisement. If there is only a close-up of a body part the variable will be coded as: 2. Several.

V8. Gender

1. Female
2. Male
3. Both

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to decode the gender in the advertisement. Depending on which type of advertisement and the gender of the model, the bottom line may lead to how respective gender are represented and which product/products that are associated with feminine/masculine in the magazine's advertisements.

V9. The most characteristic gender

1. Female
2. Male
3. Both

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to interpret which gender that considers the most characteristic in the advertisement. Therefore the variable will only be coded if there are both a female and a male model in the advertisement (coded earlier in V8. Gender). In the advertisements where several models are figuring, the judgment will be done from without the gender that is in a higher degree absorbs the viewer's interest. For an example it could

be a person who takes up more space than the other/s in the advertisements. This is mainly coded based on gaze, movement, power position and clothing.

V10. Power position

1. Dominant women
2. Submissive women
3. Neutral (when the positioning of the group is equal, the advertisement is taken in ocular height)
4. Cannot be coded (when the positioning is diffuse or when it is only a specific body part)

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to analyze the model's position in the advertisement in order to appreciate how men respective women in the magazine are related to different power positions. To determine if the position is dominant or submissive, the coder will analyze the physical expressions (gaze, body posture, facial expressions, the perspective of the image etc.). Advertisements taken from below, low angle, will be interpreted as a dominant power position. Advertisements taken from above, bird's eye view, will be interpreted as a submissive position.

V11. Body position

1. Horizontal
2. Seated
3. Standing
4. Movement
5. Leaning
6. Cannot be coded (for example: when the model/models are too close or only a body part is portrayed)

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to interpret in how the model/models has/have been selected to be posing. In those cases where a group is figuring in the advertisement, the variable that considers to accord with the body position of the majority will be picked. If the advertisement include both a man and a female and that are positioned in two different ways the female position will be coded. If it is unclear if the model is standing, sitting or leaning the most representing will be coded (for example when the model is leaning while standing the body position will be coded as: Leaning).

V12. Gaze

1. Focus on the viewer
2. Focus on the product
3. Focus on something else

4. No focus (hidden gaze, sunglasses, closed eyes etc.)
5. Cannot be coded (the distance “a specific body part prevent us to see the gaze)

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to perceive an over all cohesion of the advertisement in the how the advertisement is performed in between the variables; gaze, gender and body position. The gaze will be coded within the variables above. If there are both a male and female represented in the ad it is the female’s gaze that will be coded. “3 Focus on something else” also include if the models are looking at each other or if the coded female is looking at the other model.

V13. Main message

1. To sell (the price is shown)
2. To encourage (no price, only the logotype)
3. To inform (a information text can be seen in the advertisement)

Coding instruction: The variable “Main message” is mainly aimed to the message that the advertisement is mediating to the viewer. The advertisement may have several messages, therefore the coder will, with the aid of text and image, determine the main message. When the copy is minor and without specific information and/or is a slogan the main message will still be coded as “2. To encourage” and not “3. To inform”.

V14. Dressing code

1. Dressed (everyday clothes, sportswear etc.)
2. Dressed up (formalwear)
3. Thinly dressed (a lot of skin is shown)
4. Underwear/Swim wear
5. Undressed
6. Cannot be coded (if unsure or only a specific body part is shown)

Coding instruction: In cases where there exists a group in the advertisement, the variable that accord to the majority’s dressing code will be picked. If the dress code in any way is unclear (for example when only the shoulder/shoulders is/are shown or a specific body part) the dress code will be coded as “6. Cannot be coded”.

V15. Skin colour

1. Fair skinned (very light skinned to light skinned)
2. Medium/olive skinned (medium light – olive/light brown skinned)
3. Brown skinned
4. Dark skinned

Coding instructions: The female model's skin colour will be coded as one of the 4 variables above. In cases where there exist several models the variable that accord to the majority's skin colour will be picket. If it exists a more characteristic model, this model's skin colour will be coded. Fair skinned represents a very light skinned person, for example with easy tendency of sunburn. Medium/olive skinned represents a medium light skinned to olive/light brown skinned person, for example with higher tolerance against sunburn than variable 1. Brown skinned represents a brown skinned person, for example with high tolerance against sunburn - higher than variable 1 and 2. Dark skinned represent a dark brown to very dark skinned person, for example with very high tolerance to no tendency of sunburn. If the ad is in black and white, the skin colour will still be coded if it is discernable to one of the variables.

V16. Hair color

1. Blonde (light blonde – medium blonde)
2. Brunette (dark blonde – medium brown)
3. Dark (dark brown – black)
4. Red
5. Other color (white, grey, pink etc.)
6. Cannot be coded (cannot see the hair)

Coding instruction: The female model's hair colour will be coded as one of the 6 variables above. In cases where there exists several models in the advertisement, the variable that accord to the majority's hair color will be coded. In cases where one female model is most characteristic, this model's hair color will be coded. If the ad is black and white the hair colour will be coded if it is discernable to one of the variables.

V17. Eye color

1. Blue
2. Green
3. Brown
4. Cannot be coded

Coding instruction: In cases where there exists several models in the advertisement, the variable that accord to the majority's eye color will be coded. In cases where one model is more characteristic, this model's hair color will be coded. If the ad is in black and white the eyes will be defined and coded if it is discernable to one of the variables.

V18. The environment

1. Work environment
2. Home and household
3. Outdoors (the beach, the city, in the nature etc.)

4. Indoors (does not refer to work environment or home and household)
5. Leisure (recreational activities, beauty salon etc.)
6. Studio (photo studio, plain background, surrealistic environment etc.)
7. Other environment
8. Cannot be coded

Coding instructions: The environment will be coded to one of the variables above. If there exists any doubt about coding of the environment the variable "8. Cannot be coded" will be coded. If there is unclear weather the model/models is/are in Home and/or household it will be coded as "4. Indoors". Variable "5. Leisure" includes all activities and environments related to leisure, and is coded in relation to "V2. Commercial product".

V19. Facial expression

1. Frowned (angry, mad etc).
2. Smiling with mouth open (incl. laughing etc)
3. Smiling with mouth closed
4. Open mouth (Neutral face, posing, starring, seductive look)
5. Closed mouth (Neutral face, posing, starring, seductive look)
6. Cannot be coded (there is not face in the advertisement)

Coding instruction: The variable is aimed to analyze the facial expression of the female model/models with coding of the mouth and/or forehead (for example if frowning). In later relation to "V21. Over all expression" the over all expression of the ad and model can be defined. In cases where there exist several models in the advertisement, the facial expression that accord to the majority will be coded. In cases where one female model is more characteristic, this model's facial expression will be coded.

V20. Over all expression

1. Happy/having fun (playing, etc.)
2. Seductive (touching self or/and man/other female seductively, etc.)
3. Formal (business, sophisticated, strict, etc.)
4. Powerful (possession, energy, strength, etc.)
5. Melancholic (sad, etc.)
6. Neutral (looking bored, active in neutral way, lack of specific feeling in ad, etc.)
7. Caretaking/mother

Coding instructions: The variables is aimed to analyze and code the over all expression that the model/models conveys/convey to the viewer. The coder will analyze the model/models in relation to each other (if several models) and the earlier coded variables: V10, V11, V12, V14, V19 and V20. In cases where there exist several models in the advertisement, the over all expression that accords to the majority will be coded.

V21. Color tone

1. Cold tones (blue/green colors)
2. Warm tones (red/yellow colors)
3. Black and white

Coding instruction: Different color tones can be perceived as warm or cold. To put the advertisements color in relation to each other and study the skin color we can define the color of the advertisement. In cases where coding is unclear the coder will in relation to earlier coded variables (all) define the tone of the ad depending on most characteristic (warm or cold) feelings to the ad.

Appendix 2

Types of Sexual Content Identified in Advertising Research.

Type	Description
Nudity/Dress	Amount and style of clothing worn by models. Examples include revealing displays of the body, ranging from tight-fitting clothing, to underwear and lingerie, to nudity.
Sexual Behavior	Individual and interpersonal sexual behavior. Includes flirting, eye contact, posturing, and movement (body language, nonverbal and verbal communication). Sexual interaction between two or more people typically includes hugging, kissing, voyeurism, and more intimate forms of sexual behavior.
Physical Attractiveness	General level of model's physical beauty. Often incorporates facial beauty, complexion, hair, and physique.
Sexual Referents	Allusions and references to objects and events that have sexual meaning by means of double entendre and innuendo. Also includes facilitating factors that enhance or contribute to sexual meaning, such as setting, music, lighting, design elements, camera techniques, and editing.
Sexual Embeds	Content interpreted as sexual at the subconscious level. Includes words like sex, nonsexual perceptible objects that can connote sexual body parts and sexual actions, and small images of genitalia, body parts, and people.

Reichert (2003, p 14)

Appendix 3

“The Provocateur” – characterizes of signs and symbols that refers to sexuality

Denotation	Connotation
Exposure of naked skin	Stimulates the sexual appetite and increases sales as it sexually appeals the opposite gender
Slim waist	A sign of vulnerability that appeals to the establishment of men’s ego image (as a protector)
Youthful	An indicator of health and sexual attractiveness
Long legs	Exaggerated length of the legs refers to a grown-up and sexual impression
Smile	Symbolizes a kind of acceptance and attractiveness
Big pupils	Is a sign that considers being sexual appealing
Hair flow	Long hair as a flow is a sign of attractiveness and femininity
Breast cleavage and bottom	Considers as having a sexual symbolic
Female breasts	Represent a central part of the female sexuality, as the cleavage is an epicenter for sexual interest
Big and plumped lips	Considers sexual as it is connected with the female sexual organ
Red lips	Symbolizes sexual arousal
Pink cheeks, a blush	Conveys innocence

(Cortese, 2008)