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## **Femvertising and its impact on psychological reactance and purchase intention of Mexican female consumers**

*Femvertising y su impacto en la reactancia psicológica e intención de compra de consumidoras mexicanas*

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### ABSTRACT

This work focuses on the study of the femvertising advertising strategy. It references the feminist theories and the theory of psychological reactance to understand the impact of femvertising on Mexican female consumers' psychological reactance and purchase intention. A mixed methodology was applied, with a content analysis and a reception questionnaire (N=666) to Mexican female consumers. The results show a higher purchase intention and a lower psychological reactance in female consumers to femvertising spots. The main conclusion is that the implementation of the femvertising strategy in advertising spots aimed at Mexican women produces an increase in their purchase intention and a decrease in psychological reactance compared to conventional (non-femvertising) ads because femvertising generates a greater identification of the consumers with the ad by projecting the woman in a more authentic and close way.

Keywords: Femvertising; gender; advertising; purchase intention; psychological reactance.

JEL CODE: M37.



**RESUMEN**

Este trabajo se centra en el estudio de la estrategia publicitaria femvertising, y toma como referentes las teorías feministas y la teoría de la reactancia psicológica, esto con el objetivo conocer el impacto de la femvertising en la reactancia psicológica e intención de compra de consumidoras mexicanas. Se aplicó una metodología mixta, con un análisis de contenido y un cuestionario de recepción (N=666) a consumidoras mexicanas. Los resultados evidencian una mayor intención de compra y una menor reactancia psicológica en las consumidoras ante los spots femvertising. La principal conclusión es que la implementación de la estrategia femvertising en los spots publicitarios dirigidos a las mujeres mexicanas, produce un incremento en su intención de compra y una disminución en la reactancia psicológica en comparación con los anuncios convencionales (no femvertising), esto debido a que la femvertising genera una mayor identificación de las consumidoras con el anuncio al proyectar a la mujer de una forma más real y cercana.

Palabras clave: Femvertising; género; publicidad; intención de compra; reactancia psicológica.

## INTRODUCTION

Advertising is present in people's lives daily. As a result, consumers are exposed to increasing advertising impacts. Authors such as Ortega (1997) and Kotler and Armstrong (2013) agree that advertising is a form of communication whose objective is to publicize an idea, service, or product to influence the purchasing decisions of potential consumers.

Guamán (2013) defines advertising as a process that evolves along with the society and culture in which it is carried out. Advertising messages are transmitted through different platforms and/or media. The advertisement/spot in advertising is considered one of the most effective advertising resources (Muriel, 2018), which is why it has served as one of the tools brands use to reach their target audience. However, the fact that advertising reaches its target does not guarantee to purchase the advertised product or service, especially when the content fails to connect with the recipients.

Advertising has used various strategies to highlight the advantages and benefits of its products and services compared to those of its competitors. It uses product elements as a claim or representation of the consumer, seeking to make the target public feel identified and wish to purchase it. Since the emergence of advertising until today, it has used the image of women to promote products and/or services aimed at both women and men.

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According to Navarro & Martín (2011), the representation of the female figure in advertising is mainly based on the use of roles and stereotypes, especially negative ones, as well as on the sexualization and objectification of her body. Among the most common stereotypes in which women are represented in Mexican advertising are housewife women responsible for the children and the home, submissive and self-sacrificing women, weaker sex, woman concerned about her physique and beauty, sexual object women, working women and modern and independent woman (García, 2005; Rimbaud, 2013).

Currently, female consumers disapprove of this form of representation and consider that advertising should stop pigeonholing women in roles and stereotypes such as sexualized women or submissive wives, or exclusively in mother or homemaker since they do not feel identified with this type of representation and they generate disapproval, as they authentically represent them (García & López-Paredes, 2019; García, 2018; Menéndez, 2019b).

Hence the emergence of the advertising strategy called femvertising, which focuses "on one of the most controversial social demands of recent times: feminism"(García & López-Paredes, 2019, p.199).

### FEMVERTISING

To target a specific audience, it needs to know them, but above all, to understand them. Knowing what and how women think is a reality that no business can ignore. Therefore, it is essential to readapt strategies to be present in their mental map of purchasing decisions (puromarketing, 2010).

Although the image of women in advertising has been changing over time, there are still remnants of stereotypes, roles, and archaic discourse, especially regarding products for men or beauty, fashion, and cosmetics. As a result, many advertisements have modified the context in which women interact, but how they are represented remains attached to the traditional canons of beauty (García & López-Paredes, 2019).

According to a 2015 study conducted by Unilever, 40% of the female consumers surveyed indicated that they did not feel identified with the women and situations they see in advertising, in addition to the fact that they consider that the ads show them under a man's perspective and gaze, not their own (Sherman, 2017). These results reflect what consumers think and confirm the need for the messages to represent the target audience more accurately.

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Femvertising was unveiled by the agency SheKnows Media during the panel of top brands and creative minds at Advertising Week, held in New York, United States, in 2014, where the advertising movement in favor of women and what those who seek to sell to them should implement to inspire them and attract their attention was discussed. The term femvertising refers to a form of advertising that challenges the stereotypes and advertising roles traditionally attributed to women (Åkestam et al., 2017) and comes from the union of the Anglo-Saxon terms feminism and advertising, understood as feminist advertising (Becker-Herby, 2016; Mora, 2018; Menéndez, 2019).

Femvertising questions gender stereotypes and promotes female empowerment (Menéndez, 2019a). It seeks, through communication and advertising, to show women under a reality that contrasts with patriarchal paradigms, being now the spokeswoman for equality and empowerment (Carrillo, 2016).

Banet-Weiser (2004), Becker-Herby (2016), Castillo (2014), Condon (2015), Jalakas (2016), Júdez and Cernuda (2014), Menéndez (2019a), and Sirr (2015) consider femvertising as a strategy that provides complementary benefits and affirm that its implementation triggers positive responses in consumers by showing the female figure closer to reality, playing roles that project their empowerment and independence.

In addition to improving women's image in advertising and generating a greater identification with advertising content among consumers, it also benefits brands by connecting with their target audience. It is reflected in an increase in purchase intent and generates the fulfillment of the main objective of advertising, the sale of the product or service.

Femvertising is considered a valuable way to effectively engage with female consumers (Case, 2019) by having a different approach than previously employed and seeking to stop fostering negative stereotypes and attitudes that portray women as weak, dependent, and submissive, as well as denigrating their integrity. Traditional advertising is replaced by one that promotes equality between women and men and represents female consumers positively and realistically. Since it emerged as an advertising proposal in 2014, femvertising has gained significant strength and popularity.

Becker-Herby (2016) states that an advertising strategy to be considered femvertising, it must include five fundamental pillars. The first of these is the diversity of female talents (female diversity), the second is pro-women messages (empowering), the third is the displacement of traditional and mostly negative gender roles and stereotypes, the fourth pillar is the minimization of sexuality (sexuality that does not cater to the male gaze), and finally, the fifth pillar is the authentic representation of women and girls.

Porroche-Escudero (2017) proposes adding to the elements of femvertising the four principles that empowerment should contain: the promotion of the capacity to make decisions critically; the proposal of one's discourse as opposed to that of an expert voice; the incorporation of valuable, relevant, and practical information for consumers; and the promotion of individual and collective political awareness. According to Menéndez (2019a), these nine variables are essential for an advertisement to be considered femvertising. However, in this research, and after an exhaustive literature review, thirteen categories were established, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1  
Elements present in femvertising.

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Content</i>
<i>Category 1</i>	<b>Diversity of female talents</b> Female diversity (presence of women with different characteristics such as complexion, skin color, age, race, size, social class, personality, profession, religion, and preferences.). (Becker-Herby, 2016).
<i>Category 2</i>	<b>Messages in favor of women promote female empowerment.</b> Messages and content that are inspirational, positive, inclusive, and empowering seek to provide consumers with feelings of motivation and self-confidence rather than inferring that they are not good enough and that the product in question is the key to "fixing" their imperfections or flaws. Instead, the message reinforces and celebrates something constructive and positive (Becker-Herby, 2016).
<i>Category 3</i>	<b>Breaking down negative stereotypes or gender mandates</b>

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	Multidimensional women. It shows women contrasting patriarchal paradigms in activities, roles, or situations that were not attributed to them before. Instead, they contain new stereotypes (independent, modern, professional, hard-working, leader, strong, free from social impositions) (Becker-Herby, 2016).
Category 4	<b>Sexuality minimization</b> Sexuality that does not attend to the male gaze, deconstruction of sexism. Women's exposed skin or body attributes are displayed in a relevant and authentic way (for example, female athletes working out in sports bras) (Becker-Herby, 2016).
Category 5	<b>Authentic and natural representation of women</b> The advertisement has the presence of women, products, scenarios, situations, and authentic and transparent messages, showing situations in a natural and non-idealized way (Becker-Herby, 2016).
Category 6	<b>Development of critical decision-making skills</b> Women are the decision-makers. No one decides for them or tells them what to do or how to do it. Instead, they make decisions for themselves (Porroche-Escudero, 2017).
Category 7	<b>Proposal of its discourse as opposed to that of an expert and exogenous voice.</b> Women should be the ones to construct the message in the advertisement, as opposed to conventional advertising, in which, most of the time, the prescriptive and expert voice is male (Porroche-Escudero, 2017).
Category 8	<b>Valuable, relevant, and practical information</b> Advertisements should contain data and information that may be interesting or real for female consumers (Porroche-Escudero, 2017).
Category 9	<b>Promoting political awareness, not only individually but also collectively</b> Collective work, showing women collaborating, working, and fighting together. Shared knowledge and collective efforts are essential for creating feminist messages (Porroche-Escudero, 2017).
Category 10	<b>The positive image of women</b> They show a pro-woman image and project women in a positive light (Halling & Netterman, 2017).
Category 11	<b>Self-identification</b> Appeals are based on emotions, association, and experiential stimuli. They seek that the consumer recognizes herself in character, empathizes, and identifies with the situation or some memory of lived experiences (Abreu, 2016; Jalakas, 2016).
Category 12	<b>Promotion of gender equality</b> They do not show gender inequality in their content; women, men, girls, and boys have the same rights, importance, and roles (Abreu, 2016; Karulkar et al., 2019).
Category 13	<b>Promotion of non-violence against women (physical, psychological, sexual).</b> The advertisements do not contain violence or show violence in situations of subordination or male domination (Carrillo, 2016).

Source: Own elaboration.

Femvertising has been adopted by several companies targeting women, and they have begun to bet on its implementation after realizing that it favors women's response to the advertised product or service as they feel more identified with the representations of their gender contained in the advertisements. Among the brands promulgating the femvertising strategy that are doing an excellent job according to the opinion of female consumers are: Adidas, Always, Asos, Bodyform, Boohoo, Covergirl, Dove, John Lewis, L'Oréal Paris, M&S, Nike, New Look, Olay, Pantene and Venus (Maram, 2017; SheKnows Media, 2016).

Such has been the impact of femvertising in the advertising world that in 2015 the digital media company SHE Media, previously called SheKnows Media, created the Femvertising Awards, whose objective was to reward and recognize those brands with advertising content that challenges the negative roles and stereotypes linked to women and girls. Among the most awarded brands with this recognition between 2015 and 2019 are: Always, Audi, Bumble, Coca-Cola, Dove, Pantene, P&G, and Under Armour (SHE Media, 2020). More and more companies have begun to look towards femvertising as an advertising strategy that should be implemented in their campaigns.

We believe it is important to distance the femvertising strategy from what was called commodity feminism. Goldman (1992) points out that advertising underwent a radical transformation at the end of the 1980s since it faced significant challenges, such as the anger of women who felt constantly pigeonholed in sexual roles and idealized and stereotyped images in advertising.

In the 1990s, "an advertising linked to feminism appears, within the framework of Commodity Feminism, in which gender stereotypes merge with feminist ideals with a commercial objective" (Menéndez, 2019, p.89). Such advertising arises as a response to social demands. Especially those made by women, advertisers were forced to develop a new advertising strategy that tried to incorporate the cultural power of feminism and, in turn, tame the criticism that the feminist movement was making towards advertising.

They linked feminism with advertising through the concept of Commodity Feminism or commercial/mercantile feminism. The term Commodity feminism was introduced by Goldman, Heath, and Smit (1991), who see it as the redefinition of feminism through consumption and purchasing behavior in which products are given meaning and then equated with feminist goals, which dilutes and depoliticizes feminism and allows it to be easily digested by audiences. Ideals merge with feminine stereotypes to form an ironic association, co-opting fundamental feminist principles to sell products to women. Gill (2008) sees this as how feminist ideas and icons are appropriated and adapted for commercial purposes, emptied of their political meaning, and offered to the public in a commodified form, usually turned into advertising.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### *Feminist theories*

The origin of feminist theories dates to the 18th century. However, it was during the Enlightenment when the first positions in favor of the integration of women at the social level were issued. Additionally, the inequality in socially accepted behaviors that gave way to the repression and subjugation of women was evidenced (Amorós, 2005; Villarroel, 2007).

These theories differ from women's studies in their strategic perspective. In addition to analyzing, they explicitly seek ways to transform the situation in society and are among the perspectives that break with traditional schemes (Villarroel, 2007; Gamba, 2008).

They show a different way of understanding the world by incorporating a social sense that improves the human condition without privileging a specific reality (Villarroel, 2007). They question the system of male domination and are a critical approach to power because they seek to eradicate the repression and invisibilization of women. They are also considered a group of ideas that debate the philosophical approaches that position women as weak and inferior beings who depend on men and constantly find themselves in unfavorable situations simply because they are women.

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Feminist theories are based on the assertion that gender is a social and cultural construction that has always been reflected in masculine dominance over feminine" (Martín, 2009). They transfer women's struggles to theoretical grounds from where they criticize, analyze, and make visible gender inequality to generate a change in favor of the situation of women in society and defend the rights and interests of women (Mora, 2013; Sales, 2017).

In their different versions, feminist theories uncover all the ideological structures and mechanisms that reproduce the discrimination or exclusion of women from the different spheres of society. Also, they seek to insert the issue of women into the international agenda. In that sense, their primary criticism is that the whole conception of the world, the categories, and branches of knowledge are biased with a male vision, which leaves aside the way of understanding and seeing things from the perspective of women (Villarroel, 2007).

In addition to raising strong criticism of social relations based on gender inequality, one of the main applications of feminist theories in the field of advertising is the visibility of the way it has used women, expressing severe criticism of the way they are represented, as well as the stereotypes and roles that are assigned to them in advertising messages, seeking that the image projected of them is more realistic and less stereotyped, defending their rights and



interests. Feminist theories provide a critical perspective to the research, starting from the historical context that allows us to visualize the representation of women in advertising over the years.

*Psychological reactance and purchase intention*

The theory of psychological reactance was established by Brehm in 1966, classifying it as a theory that would mainly influence the field of social psychology by contributing to the description of human behavior and how it is related to its perception in each social context.

Brehm (1966) states that individuals highly value their freedom to act and decide so that when they experience the feeling of deprivation, they experience a motivational state of rejection through which they seek to reestablish the freedom they have felt threatened. It often manifests itself in behavior opposite to what was expected due to increased resistance to persuasion.

The degree of psychological reactance will depend on the value assigned by the individual to the behavior he/she has felt threatened. Stanojlovic (2015) states that reactance can mediate a persuasive message's effect and the receivers' various responses, such as attitude change and behavioral intentions.

Psychological reactance is "one of the most potent forms of resistance in persuasion" (Stanojlovic, 2015, p.6). Regarding its application in advertising, Añaños (2011), Ceballos (2018), and Edwards et al. (2002) agree that psychological reactance to an advertisement is characterized by provoking in consumers a feeling of rejection after seeing its message or content, generating a more excellent resistance to the stimuli presented and obtaining a result contrary to that desired by the advertiser.

It usually happens when the advertisements contain representations far from reality, or their persuasive charge is evident (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010; Quick & Stephenson, 2008; Rodríguez, 2016). "The perception of realism decreases reactance, reducing the perception of threat and encouraging narrative transportation and identification with the characters" (Cevallos, 2018, p.89).

Åkestam et al. (2017) have addressed the relationship between femvertising and psychological reactance in their research, obtaining results that lead them to conclude that femvertising positively affects the psychological reactance of those subjected to this type of advertising. Furthermore, because the advertisement's identification level with the consumers is significant and their purchase attitudes improve, the perception of realism reduces the perception of threat and decreases the reactance.

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On the other hand, purchase intention refers to how likely the consumer will purchase a product or service of a particular brand being advertised during the purchase process. Therefore, it serves as a critical indicator of the behavior that will be adopted by the consumer in a genuine purchase when choosing a specific brand or product (Chu & Lu, 2007; Crosno et al., 2009; Dodds et al., 1991; Kim & Kim, 2004; Morwitz & Schmittlein, 1992).

Advertising and the content of its messages, as well as consumer attitudes and perceptions, are among the main factors influencing the construction of purchase intent (Mirabi et al., 2015; Vahdati & Mousavi, 2016).

"The purchase intention is not a behavior that depends exclusively on the quality of the product or service offered but is directly related to the sensations and feelings that it produces in the consumer" (Galvis, 2017, p.30).

It is a future projection of whether an individual is interested in acquiring the product or service offered. Some authors, including Drake (2017) and Karulkar et al. (2019), have addressed in their research the influence of femvertising on purchase intention, observing that femvertising spots generate a better perception among female recipients.

52 Those advertisements that appeal to female empowerment and show women realistically and positively generate in consumers a greater liking and emotional connection, which could positively influence their purchase intention (Prakash, 1992). Therefore, purchase intention will allow us to identify the degree to which Mexican female consumers would be willing to consume or buy a specific product or service that is being advertised.

In this sense, the hypothesis of this research is formulated as follows:

Femvertising ads, by opposing patriarchal paradigms and being more realistic advertising, generate less psychological reactance and greater purchase intention in Mexican female consumers than non-femvertising spots (traditional advertising).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research has allowed us to determine whether implementing the femvertising strategy in advertisements aimed at Mexican female consumers generates a decrease in psychological reactance and an increase in purchase intention as opposed to traditional advertisements (non-femvertising).

For this purpose, a mixed methodology was used, combining qualitative methods of a prospective nature and, later, a quantitative approach. First, through an exhaustive

bibliographic review, the elements that characterize the femvertising advertising strategy and the leading brands that promulgate this strategy were identified and categorized. Then, the most popular brands that had a presence in Mexico were selected: Nike, Dove, L'Oréal Paris, and Pantene. Subsequently, a content analysis was conducted to select spots containing these same brands' femvertising elements and non-femvertising spots (conventional).

The appropriateness of this selection was corroborated by the first questionnaire to female consumers. They were asked several questions about identifying the presence of each of the thirteen categories in the advertisements. We discarded those that did not obtain robust results and kept only those corresponding to the brand's Dove and L'Oréal Paris, from which we proceeded to select a non-femvertising spot.

Finally, to carry out a comparative analysis of both types of advertising, a reception questionnaire was applied in which the two ads per brand were included, one femvertising and the other non-femvertising, and both the purchase intention and the psychological reactance generated by Mexican consumers were measured.

The reception questionnaire contained dichotomous questions specially designed to determine sociodemographic data, the respondent's relationship with the brands evaluated, previous knowledge and opinion about them, to know if there is a change after seeing each spot. In addition, Likert-type questions were also included to evaluate the purchase intention and psychological reactance developed in Mexican consumers when exposed to certain types of advertisements, in this case, femvertising and non-femvertising spots, to identify which of these advertisements generated a better response. Finally, a Manipulation Check question was also included to identify if the respondents attended to the stimuli presented in the questionnaire.

## **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

The thirteen categories in which the elements that characterize femvertising were grouped were used to identify the femvertising spots of the brands that promulgate this advertising strategy, which have a presence in Mexico, allowing us to determine those brands and ads that would be studied in the research.

With the content analysis, it was possible to select four advertisements with femvertising elements. Subsequently, through a questionnaire directed to Mexican consumers, the thirteen femvertising categories in the four selected spots were verified, and the ads with the highest femvertising load were identified.

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Table 2  
Elements in femvertising

<i>Spot</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<i>Nike</i>	3.36
<i>Pantene</i>	3.354
<i>L'Oréal Paris</i>	3.381**
<i>Dove</i>	4.065**

Note: \*\* Higher means.

Source: Own elaboration.

As shown in Table 2, the Dove and L'Oréal Paris ads obtained a more consistent response, so the other ads were discarded. Afterward, a conventional spot was selected for each of the brands (Dove and L'Oréal Paris), which allowed a comparative analysis between femvertising and non-femvertising (conventional) advertising through a questionnaire (N=666) of reception directed to Mexican women between 18 and 65 years old, in which the purchase intention and the psychological reactance that these ads generated in the consumers were measured.

54 The predominant educational level among the participants was a bachelor's degree at 56.76%, followed by a master's degree at 26.43%, high school with 11.26%, doctorate with 4.05%, high school with 1.35%, and elementary school with .15%. Their occupation was also considered; 41.14% of the participants are employed in public or private companies, 22.67% work independently, 19.37% work at home, 10.21% are students, 4.80% are unemployed, 1.50% are retired, and 0.30% are pensioners.

The sample was selected through a purposive or convenience sampling technique, and the questionnaire was applied through an open call on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. A total of 713 questionnaires were obtained, of which those that did not meet the selection criteria were discarded, with a total of 666 questionnaires being considered valid. The processing of the data obtained was carried out through inferential statistics.

To validate the instrument and confirm its reliability, its Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency index was calculated, which allowed us to know to what "degree the instrument measures what it should measure" (García et al., 2019). Considering .70 as the minimum acceptable for each set of questions (Bowling, 2005), we can affirm that the instrument is sufficiently reliable since all the values obtained are above .82, as can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3  
Internal consistency indexes Cronbach's alpha

<i>Femvertising purchase intention L'Oréal</i>	$\alpha=0,947$
<i>Femvertising psychological reactance L'Oréal</i>	$\alpha=0,881$
<i>Non-femvertising purchase intention L'Oréal</i>	$\alpha=0,949$
<i>Non-femvertising psychological reactance L'Oréal</i>	$\alpha=0,893$
<i>Femvertising purchase intention Dove</i>	$\alpha=0,952$
<i>Femvertising psychological reactance Dove</i>	$\alpha=0,822$
<i>Non-femvertising purchase intention Dove</i>	$\alpha=0,954$
<i>Non-femvertising psychological reactance Dove</i>	$\alpha=0,883$

Source: Own elaboration.

Subsequently, it was necessary to unify the brands into a single variable for femvertising psychological reactance and a single variable for femvertising purchase intention, the same for non-femvertising. Four new variables were obtained that facilitated a joint treatment since the hypothesis does not seek to compare brands but to know what happens with Mexican female consumers' psychological reactance and purchase intention when they are exposed to a femvertising spot and a non-femvertising (conventional) spot.

With the new variables, normality tests were performed to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Unfortunately, a significance of less than .05 was obtained in all cases, so we can conclude that the data do not have a normal distribution and nonparametric tests will have to be used.

The Wilcoxon nonparametric tests confirmed the existence of significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the purchase intention and psychological reactance of Mexican female consumers when presented with a femvertising and a non-femvertising advertisement, as can be seen in Table 4, which confirms that the stimuli presented in both types of advertising have different effects on the participants.

Table 4  
Wilcoxon nonparametric tests

<i>Femvertising and non-femvertising purchase intention</i>	Z	-9.770 <sup>b</sup>
	Asymptotic sig. (bilateral)	0
<i>Femvertising and non-femvertising psychological reactance</i>	Z	0-4.596 <sup>b</sup>
	Asymptotic sig. (bilateral)	0

Source: Own elaboration.

Subsequently, a comparison of means was made between the femvertising and non-femvertising purchase intention variables and the femvertising and non-femvertising

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psychological reactance variables. According to the results obtained, sufficient evidence was found to affirm that femvertising ads generate higher purchase intention (higher mean) and lower psychological reactance (lower mean) than non-femvertising ads, as seen in Table 5.

Table 5  
Comparison of mean purchase intention and psychological reactance between femvertising and non-femvertising spots.

<i>Spot</i>	<i>Mean purchase intention</i>	<i>Mean psychological reactance</i>
<i>Femvertising</i>	4.9866**	2.0285**
<i>Non-femvertising</i>	4.4982	2.2693

Source: Own elaboration.

Spearman's correlation was used to estimate the effect of psychological reactance on the purchase intention construct, allowing us to observe that the variables in the case of the femvertising ads correlate by 42% and have a sig. <.001, while the variables in the non-femvertising ads correlate by 39.1% and have a sig. <.001 (see Table 6). Considering as acceptable those correlations between .30 and .50 (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Cohen, 1992), we can affirm that the variables correlate and are associated with each other.

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In both cases, the psychological reactance variable is negatively correlated with purchase intention, which means that when psychological reactance decreases, purchase intention increases and vice versa.

The results obtained in Spearman's correlation provide us with the empirical evidence to accept the hypothesis that when femvertising is used in the advertisements, less psychological reactance and greater purchase intention are generated in Mexican consumers, as opposed to what happens with non-femvertising spots (traditional advertising).

These results are consistent with those obtained in the study by Sternadori and Abitbol (2019), in which they confirmed that consumers favorably impact their attitude toward femvertising ads.

Table 6  
Spearman correlation between purchase intention and psychological reactance femvertising and non-femvertising spots.

Femvertising ads	Correlates at -.420	Sig. <.001
Non-femvertising ads	Correlates at -.391	Sig. <.001

Source: Own elaboration.

## CONCLUSIONS

The reactions generated by advertising in the target audience will depend mainly on their perception of the stimulus to which they are exposed (Åkestam et al., 2017). Therefore, this study was governed under the assumption that femvertising plays a determining role in the decrease of psychological reactance and the increase in purchase intention of Mexican female consumers exposed to this advertising since they feel more identified and represented.

Implementing the femvertising strategy in advertising spots aimed at Mexican women increases their purchase intention compared to non-femvertising ads. It is due to a greater identification with the advertisement and how the woman is projected. Findings support the results obtained in previous studies, such as the one conducted by Drake (2017) and Karulkar et al. (2019), in which they identify that femvertising ads positively impact the purchase intention of the female consumers studied.

Regarding the psychological reactance, this decreases with the implementation of the femvertising strategy in the spots aimed at Mexican female consumers, compared to that produced in conventional advertisements (non-femvertising). The results obtained are consistent with the results obtained by Åkestam et al. (2017) and Teng et al. (2021), in which it is demonstrated that femvertising advertisements generate less psychological reactance in consumers than conventional advertising (non-femvertising), in addition to favorable influencing the responses of consumers. It makes sense when we are aware of the evolution of women's roles in society, seeing with more excellent rejection and a lesser degree of identification those advertisements that do not represent such changes.

According to the results obtained, it has been observed that the femvertising advertising strategy positively influences both the psychological reactance and the purchase intention of the participating Mexican female consumers by producing a higher degree of identification and liking in them.

Therefore, how women are represented in advertising plays a fundamental role in consumers purchasing a product or service. For this reason, brands should not only consider the preferences of their target audience but should also adapt to the social and cultural context. Although the results cannot be generalized since it is a convenience sample, they nevertheless point to a close relationship between femvertising and positive consumer decisions.

This study proposes the thirteen femvertising categories and identifies women's empowerment as the fundamental pillar. In addition, it has been observed that although both brands have a high level of popularity among the participants when shown the non-

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femvertising advertisements, neutral and negative opinions predominated, as well as a higher level of dissatisfaction and rejection of the brand and the advertised product.

It shows that it is not enough to be a recognized brand to generate consumer acceptance. It is necessary to communicate naturally, away from stereotypes and traditional roles, implementing strategies based on gender equity and contributing to women's empowerment, thus connecting with them.

Regarding this study's limitations, it was only possible to analyze some of the existing brands and femvertising spots since the emergence of this strategy up to the present, which would allow us to know if the same results are obtained with all the ads. Moreover, convenience sampling was used, so it is not possible to generalize or projections of the results to the entire population. In addition, the study focused only on Mexico and its female consumers, so a comparison with other countries was not conducted. Nevertheless, it would let us know if the same results would be obtained.

In addition, the analysis of the use of femvertising focused only on audiovisual advertising, so it was not possible to know how effective it is in other types of advertising, such as print or audio ads.

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On the other hand, by identifying and recognizing this study's limitations, future research lines emerge that can be addressed in subsequent studies. Among these areas of opportunity is the realization of studies that include other brands and their femvertising advertisements to determine if the same results are obtained as those used in this study. It is also proposed to conduct studies on femvertising in other countries, including those with more chauvinist traditions. It would allow us to know consumers' perceptions and how they respond to this type of advertising. In this sense, another possible future line of research is the implementation of the cultural context as a study variable.

It is intended that this study will contribute to women's struggle and achieve gender equality and equity, not only in the advertising sector but also in the labor, social and educational sectors, as well as in their rights and opportunities.

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