



Review

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER ROLE AND STEREOTYPES IN PRESENT ADVERTISEMENTS – LEADING RESEARCH QUESTIONS BEFORE AND AFTER 2000

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ABSTRACT

This article has the following objectives: 1) to conduct a critical discourse analysis of gender roles and stereotypes in advertising, covering two periods: from 1970 to 2000 and from 2000 to the present; 2) to increase general knowledge about gender roles during both periods, as well as to identify changes in different consumer segments affected by stereotypical advertising. The methodology includes three-dimensional model of Fairclough for critical discourse analysis, which includes description, interpretation and explanation. When conducting the critical analysis for the first period, it was found that more traditional roles of men and women are present in advertising with the impact of a number of schemes for coding attributes for men and women. Scientific research is united around the view of binary gender representation, as the variety of stereotypical images in print and television advertising is also increasing. In the second period, the topic of the affected consumer segments is examined more critically in terms of self-perception, self-esteem, and the sense of self-control when exposed to stereotypical advertising. The latest empirical evidence indicates reactance among consumers of both genders, as the understanding of gender stereotype in advertising is significantly shifting - from a binary concept to a unisex concept. Therefore, scientific progress is established from defining and determining leading stereotypes, to applying non-stereotypical advertising to stereotypical, as well as to facilitating consumer thinking by introducing unique gender roles - for both men and women. The practical applicability of the study is found in facilitating the work of marketers, advertisers and specialists working for better advertising effectiveness.

Keywords: gender roles, stereotypes, unisex products in advertising, three-dimensional model.

INTRODUCTION

Advertising communication plays a central role in shaping and constructing consumer attitudes, values, and perceptions of the outside world, by conveying ideas about an inappropriate lifestyle that is endorsed by various members of society (e.g., influencers, opinion leaders and others). Advertisers take advantage of this characteristic by offering in advertisements of leading organizations various visual, semiotic and semantic tools, as well as images of people, to direct consumers toward specific consumer behaviours. In this article, the researcher attempts to analyse the gender roles and

stereotypical images appearing in advertisements shown on television and frequently visited social platforms, presenting power relations, professional roles, descriptors of traits and physical characteristics of characters in the advertisements, role behaviours, and more. According to some researchers, each attribute has a male and a female version, which is related to both genders and the formation of their relationships (1). This study also explores how the promoted ideology of a perfect or ideal social role among a specific group of advertising consumers is portrayed in advertisements and subsequently perceived by consumers in order to control consumer behaviour when using products and services. Two periods are presented in chronological order: 1) from 1970 to 2000; 2) from 2000 to the present day, discussing the research problems,

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consumer reactions, as well as the perception, interpretation and impact of various advertisements. To achieve the set goals, television, print and internet advertisements (during the more modern stage) have been selected over the years, analysing different gender roles played by men and women in advertising, with the selection of advertisements from print and electronic media and some internet social platforms – Instagram, Facebook, You Tube and others. Sometimes the same advertisement is present in more than a single medium in order to reach different audiences. The analysis is based on Fairclough's three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis, as it focuses on description, interpretation and explanation, which are key in the perception and interpretation of advertising components (2). The reason for choosing Fairclough's three-dimensional model is that this model is suitable for analysing advertising content, provides a number of explanations from a social and historical perspective, and also comments on the gender roles of men and women in and outside the context of advertising.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on gender roles and gender stereotypes in advertising focuses on three main issues: the emergence of gender roles, the advertising effectiveness of gender roles, and the social effects of gender roles on consumers and society (1). These studies do not distinguish between different periods, which is why the author of this paper tries to clarify. A number of advertising researchers have conducted research on gender roles and stereotypes, emphasizing that individual stereotypes introduced through advertising reinforce gender inequality by promoting “sexism” and distorted symbols of body image as valid and acceptable (3,4). In recent years, women's roles have undergone dramatic changes, with changes in the images presented - from a beautiful female body to a woman in a family environment and vice versa. Studies on the role of men are also being introduced, not only in a professional environment, but also in the family. When analysing the following problems, indicated by Eisend, (2019), some gaps are also found, which any more modern research should try to fill (1). The enormous contribution of this researcher is expressed in the precise formation of the attributes describing gender roles or also called gender stereotypes (1, 5). The main drawback is the lack of a theoretical framework through which to more accurately study gender roles and

stereotypes. In this content analysis, the author of the present scientific work finds some problem areas in the following directions: 1) to determine the leading attributes that characterize gender roles in advertising in order to build a single standard for comparison (to the extent that this is possible in different advertisements offered in different societies), proposed by Eisend (2019) (1); 2) to form accurate moderators for measuring advertising effectiveness by applying gender roles, proposed by Eisend (2019) (1) and solving the problem of consumer reactance to advertising, supplemented by the author of this article; 3) to establish the leading social effects of advertising for a given society, established by Eisend (2019) (1), as well as which gender roles and stereotypes influence specific groups of advertising consumers, supplemented by the author of this article; 4) to seek a connection between product positioning, product category and consumer behaviour when analysing gender roles and stereotypes offered in advertising, proposed by the author of this article. Since the terms gender roles and gender stereotypes are used in the scientific literature, the author of the present content analysis will use these terms very actively, because they name and describe very precisely the two main figures in advertising – male and female, but the author does not seek to indicate and characterize some mixed new roles such as the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) consumer groups that may be present in advertisements (6). These groups of users have not been sufficiently studied and the explanation is that advertisers do not target this user segment very often. Ignoring them can lead to a loss of semantics in advertising, as well as unsuccessful impact of advertising among heterosexual segments. It is assumed that the mutual influence of users, the so-called interaction, is also reduced if we strive to influence only one user segment – for example, heterosexual consumers. The fact that in the wide access to various social platforms, users communicate very actively and they can be influenced by a number of advertising stereotypes, as well as by various social segments, should not be underestimated.

This critical discourse analysis of gender roles and stereotypes comments on which gender roles and stereotypes are used more frequently and in which types of advertisements men and women are presented, describing which ones are the most influential. Another important factor is what are the consequences for certain

social groups after being exposed to advertising, for example, some cultural consequences after the presentation of men and women (6), because the general consensus is that advertising reflects society in a distorted way in order to attract the attention of consumers, as well as exaggerating some aspects of everyday life (7). In scientific circles, some social consequences are also sought after the presentation of stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertising to different groups of consumers (6), as well as what are the negative effects found in advertising research on the side of men and women towards stereotypical advertising, which would significantly reduce the success of advertisements (8). In addition, advertising research on stereotype advertising looks at the relationship between gender roles (1, 9), stereotypes in individual advertisements (10), but also the role of social effects related to the brand and the medium (1, 11). Last but not least, trends in advertising and in society as a whole are also studied, which also determine the use of certain stereotypes in different types of advertisements. Recent research presenting Instagram advertisements, for example, found that the thin bodies of women from previous ads have been replaced by a voluptuous hybrid body (like an hourglass) consisting of full breasts, a thin waist, and a large buttock, which is embedded in the minds of consumers through the presence of celebrities (12). The theme of hierarchization of gender role in advertising images is still relevant, with men previously being portrayed in higher professional positions, while women were portrayed in lower passive professional positions or in passive roles (7). A number of changes are occurring in modern advertising blogs – women can be powerful, present in professional environments, and influence a number of consumer segments. Therefore, the trend in the image of men is a transition from professional roles to the role of housewives, while for women the development is from the presence of housewives in the 60s and 70s to a sexualized image of women in the early 21st century, whose image changes from thin women to an “hourglass” type. Another important part of the research related to the impact of advertisements on social platforms is how they affect the physical and mental well-being of users – men and women (13), because the use of social media as a predictor of stereotypes about the ideal body can cause irreversible consequences on the well-being of individual users, as well as individual social groups. Many researchers have identified

critical moments in adolescents, as well as in adult men and women using social platforms for rapid communication. Therefore, current knowledge on each feature of gender roles and stereotypes reveals several gaps: how stereotypes arise, what are the standards for comparing stereotypical advertising, what are the consequences for advertisers and organizations of the presence of gender roles and stereotypes in advertising, what are the consequences for consumers. In order to fill these gaps and increase the general knowledge about gender roles and the optimization of stereotypical advertising, the author of the present scientific work attempts to analyse and clarify the problem areas in two formed periods: from 1970 to 2000 and from 2000 to the present.

METHODOLOGY

This research study applies Fairclough's three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis, as it focuses on description, interpretation and explanation (2). By applying Fairclough's model (2005), the author of the study believes that the best approach to identifying research gaps over the years can be identified through critical analysis of the content and by comparing the obtained scientific results. On the other hand, the interpretations of the obtained results can be ambiguous over the years and the explanation is that the focus of the study is shifting - from what are the leading stereotypes in advertising to the harmful influence of certain consumer segments and ways to improve the well-being and well-being of consumers of products and services offered in advertising. The comparative analysis is divided into two stages: 1) First stage - from 1970 to 2000; 2) Second stage - from 2000 to the present day. The aim is to identify the main emphases in the study of stereotypical advertising, as well as some psychological, social and cultural consequences found for individual social segments. Fairclough's (2005) three-dimensional model is suitable for analysing advertising content, provides a number of explanations of some social and historical perspectives for individual generations, affecting the historical development of collectivist and individualistic cultures (14). In addition, trends in stereotypical advertising from the end of the last century to the present day are analysed in order to indicate problem areas - leading attributes of stereotypes, social, cultural and historical consequences for individual consumer segments, the physical and mental well-being of consumers - men and women.

DESCRIBING AND INTERPRETATION OF GENDER ROLES AND STEREOTYPES

According to Fairclough's (2005) three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis, we should start by describing the stereotypical and gender roles depicted in advertisements (2) and more specifically, which gender roles and stereotypes are used more often and in which types of advertisements. This is a very difficult task for any researcher, because some indicators must be taken into account: 1) whether print, electronic advertisements are applied or advertisements on the Internet; 2) in which society the advertisements are offered, because some studies prove that the selection of stereotypical advertising is influenced by societies (15); 3) when stereotypes become problematic for society (6). A number of researchers raise the topic of the types of gender roles and stereotypical images in advertising. Nowadays, it can be commented that they undergo changes over the years. Different companies and advertisers take advantage of the idea that the nature of men and women is different to present stories in their advertisements and to promote products and services of different brands. These persuasive images achieve advertising effect over the years because not only do advertisers see men and women differently, but male and female consumers also have different perspectives (16). In contrast to the first research on advertising, in recent years there has been a trend towards offering universal products – “unisex,” as the main goal of advertisers and manufacturers is to meet more needs of consumers. On the one hand, the application of stereotypes in advertising facilitates consumer thinking, because stereotypes are models for quick perception and understanding of advertising content, which in turn facilitates the perception of information codes from advertisements (17). On the other hand, the application of the same stereotypical images will cover certain audiences, but will not achieve impact among new consumer segments. It is also possible to influence often ignored segments of society – lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) consumer groups, which can be present in advertisements. Some authors explain the avoidance of products for these segmented consumers, with the fact that this leads to the loss of already mastered consumer segments such as heterosexual consumers (18,19). Another explanation is that the main point of

view in stereotypical advertising can be shifted, because stereotypes are, for example: a man in a professional role or a woman presented as a housewife, etc. It would be very interesting to see the reaction of consumers – heterosexual and homosexual, who react to mixed roles – a man in the role of a wife, presented as a housewife. These are very unexplored fields. Therefore, the problem areas are many, and the changes over the years are significant.

A number of critical analyses are yet to be made, through which conclusions can be drawn for future research. First of all, stereotypes are defined as “beliefs about a certain social category” (20), and their main task is to differentiate between the genders, according to some authors (21). The main reason for their frequent use is that they facilitate the perception of advertising (17), allowing the perceiver to rely on previously stored knowledge rather than on new information. In the scientific literature, there are several schemes for coding attributes for men and women that are repeated in content analysis, for example, the presence of characters in a work environment or at home (22). According to Taylor and Stern (1997), the stereotype is associated with the cultural context (23), with the most widely applied cultural model in advertising research being Hofstede's (2001), (14). In some more recent views of the authors, stereotypes are widely accepted beliefs about the personal qualities of members of a social category, such as gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation (24). On the other hand, gender roles have changed in our society, some authors claim (5), and this change has been observed from the 1950s to the present day, with researchers seeking to account for the various changes in stereotypical advertising, as well as whether these changes are part of societal changes (5, 16). In advertisements from the 1950s, when the topic of stereotypical advertising is also raised, men are presented in professional roles, women are more present in a domestic setting, that is, in societies where patriarchy is observed, the man is the one who provides food for the family, and the woman takes care of the home and children. The situation is different in more modern societies, in which women also occupy professional roles, that is, we speak of matriarchy, because in advertisements women are presented as sexual objects. Their presence is necessary to facilitate the advertising industry, which offers products and services for women. The images of men also undergo changes, because men in advertisements are also depicted in a family

environment in the 60s and 70s of the last century. An important historical fact, because this is the period in which the conquest of women's rights begins, as well as the entry of women into more professional environments. Therefore, gender roles in modern societies are changing dramatically, taking into account whether these are individualistic or collectivistic cultures (14).

The study of gender roles and advertising stereotypes has developed over the years in research circles and is closely related to the types of societies (1, 25). In advertising communication in the 1970s and 1980s, the concepts of femvertising, that is, the woman who has power (24) and dadvertising, that is, the man who has a family role (26). Over the years, the following scientific results have been established: 1) the gender equality that women initially strive for is being destroyed; 2) scientific evidence is presented for both positive and negative advertising effects on certain social groups; 3) the emergence of unisex products is observed in order to cover more consumer segments. In order to achieve greater authenticity, some advertisements are feminized, which, according to some authors, should be investigated in more depth (6), because the purpose of certain "feminine" messages is to demonstrate the achievements of women in society as a whole, and not to objectify them as sexual objects (27). Similarly,

the presentation of athletic figures of men and women leads to negative effects on teenagers who strive for a perfect vision. The growing awareness among different social groups in different societies helps in the correct understanding and interpretation of stereotypical advertising. On the other hand, more semantic messages are sent to different consumer segments and a strong rejection of modernity or complete acceptance is observed, which leads to negative health consequences. This is the reason why some studies have observed a desire to overcome the negative consequences for youth that stereotypical gender images can cause. For example, a 2018 report by the UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) concluded that "gender stereotypes have the potential to cause harm by inviting assumptions about adults and children that can have negative effects on how they see themselves and how others see them" (28) and therefore called for regulation of the use of gender stereotypes in advertising across media. Based on the above considerations, the aim of this research is to expand knowledge about gender roles and stereotypes in advertising, to clarify the correct understanding of their presence in advertising, and to increase the effectiveness of advertisements containing stereotypes. In order to make a clearer interpretation of gender roles and advertising stereotypes, the author of this study presents the following comparative table, (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Gender stereotypes in advertising from 1970 to 2000.

Researcher, year	Research questions	Scientific findings and results
Courtney, Lockeretz (1971)	Analysis of gender roles, determining the place of women in advertising and in society, offered in print advertisements.	Depictions of women in front of the general public with diverse roles, but the leading role is that of housewife (29).
McArthur, Resko, (1975)	Representation of men and women in television commercials, with male images being predominant, as well as the relationship with products.	Depicting women in an unfavourable manner influences gender role behaviour of both genders (30).
Allison, Golden, Mullet, Coogan, (1980)	Assessing the relationship between gender and gender role perceptions on male and female product perceptions for a spectrum of twenty-four product categories.	The gendering of products is based on gender roles, leading to an interaction between sex in advertising and product stimuli (31).
Ashmore, Del Boca (1981)	Stereotypes and intergroup behaviour from a cognitive perspective. Defining the concept of stereotype.	Acceptance and rejection of the concept of stereotype in a sociocultural, psychodynamic and cognitive environment (21).
Deaux, Lewis, (1984)	Evaluation of gender labelling and different types of component information.	The results suggest that information about one stereotype component may include other components;

		component-specific information may override gender identification (32).
Richins (1991)	Exposure to stereotypical images lowers consumers' self-image, as well as reduces satisfaction with the products and services used.	Idealized images raise comparison standards for attractiveness and lower satisfaction with one's own attractiveness (33).
Martin, Kennedy (1993)	The influence of beautiful images in advertising offered to preadolescence and adolescents.	Exposure to beautiful bodies in both age groups leads to an increase in the comparative standard of attractiveness, with the comparison increasing with increasing age (34).
Jaffe, Berger (1994)	Presentation of superwoman image and egalitarian image in advertising.	Egalitarian portrayal is the most effective role portrayal among many segments of the female market (35).
Garst, Bodenhausen, (1997)	Influence of media images of men on gender role attitudes.	Non-traditional men's gender role attitudes may be rather unstable and susceptible to androgynous models (36).
Martin, Gentry, (1997)	Comparison of an audience segment with models in advertising.	Through social comparison, girls' self-perceptions and self-esteem may be affected. Motive for social comparison moderates results (37).
Ford et al. (1998)	An evaluation of gender role portrayal in print advertisements.	Some traditional female traits have been found to be associated with stereotypes. However, male traits have not been associated with certain stereotypical male traits (38).
Browne (1998)	Stereotypes and their sexual role in television advertising aimed at children.	Boys are portrayed as more knowledgeable, active, aggressive, and helpful than girls (39). Nonverbal behaviours involving dominance and control are more associated with boys.
Lavine et al. (1999)	Exposure to TV ads that portray women as sex objects causes increased body dissatisfaction among women and men.	Women are more influenced by body size than men when exposed to sexist advertising (40).

Source: own elaboration.

The table below presents a number of important themes over the years, with researchers making their first attempts to define gender roles and stereotypes in advertising in the 1970s and 1980s. This was the time when stereotypical advertising was becoming established, but stereotypes were not yet perceived as problematic for different consumer segments, because advertisers were looking for the commercial effects of advertising. During this period, scientific research did not find any consumer segments affected by advertising images, because stereotypes were entering and becoming established. They were not perceived as a threat, because not all their attributes had been formed. Advertising research related to

gender roles and gender stereotypes describes the basic concepts and comments that certain attributes distinguish the images of men and women in advertising (21). The development of several attribute coding schemes for men and women was achieved through content analysis (29), with progress being observed in the first attempts to establish the negative advertising effects for both men and women, consumers of advertised products (30). On the other hand, the attributes depicted in advertisements are idiosyncratic for one of the genders. According to some authors, this is the time when the concept of gender in advertising research was binary, that is, two genders were considered and the studies studied the influence of gender

stereotypes on consumers of the same (binary) gender, (**Table 1**).

In 1990, the focus shifted from defining and specifying stereotypes in advertising to achieving advertising effectiveness by implementing beautiful images in advertising, which are very often idealized by consumers. The variety of stereotypical images in print and television advertisements also increased, with the idea of binary gender still present (1). For the first time, the question of which stereotypes are leading and which are not so significant, and which are expected to disappear (36). In 1993, another consumer segment was included, looking for the adverse effects of stereotypical advertising on preadolescence and adolescents, and establishing an increase in the comparative standard of body attractiveness (34), (**Table 1**). The perception imposed during these years that a woman should always be beautiful, with an attractive appearance, introduces additional problems among advertisers and consumers. There is an egalitarian portrayal of superwomen, which shifts the image of women from the domestic to the professional environment to impose the understanding that this is the proper position of women in modern

societies (35). A critical assessment of some researchers for this period is that few studies have examined how men respond to stereotypical versus non-stereotypical depictions of gender in advertising, and the discourse on the concept of stereotypes has become increasingly nuanced in many societies (1). At the end of the last century, the negative impact of stereotypical advertising on both genders was recognized, with social comparison between consumers of different genders showing that self-perception, self-esteem, and a sense of control were affected in young boys and girls (37, 39), (**Table 1**). The finding of undesirable effects of stereotypical advertising has led to presentations at scientific conferences, restrictions in some European countries, and contradictions observed in the USA between the goals of commercial advertising and the requirements of government and regulatory bodies (40). In order to continue the critical analysis of the discourse according to the Fairclough (2005) model, a second comparative table is presented, which describes and characterizes stereotypes in advertising, reflecting the period from 2000 to the present day (2), (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Gender stereotypes in advertising from 2000 to the present days.

Researcher, year	Research questions	Scientific findings and results
Gulas, McKeage (2000)	An analysis of idealized images of physical attractiveness for men and women and the negative effects of advertising exposure.	The results show a negative effect on physical attractiveness as well as financial success in men's self-esteem (41).
Milner, Collins (2000)	Comparative analysis of television advertisements in countries characterized along the continuum from masculine to feminine according to Hofstede's framework (22).	More depictions of male-female relationships in television commercials from female countries (42).
Orth, Holancova, (2003)	Reactions of men and women to the presentation of gender roles in an advertisement for a mobile operator service.	Prejudice moderates the effects of gender role incongruence on approval and disapproval of emotional dimensions (43).
Lorenzen <i>et al.</i> (2004)	The effect of exposure to ideal muscular bodies on body satisfaction in men.	Men's self-rated body satisfaction decreased after viewing images of muscular men, but did not change after viewing images of average-sized men (44).
Davies, Spencer, Steele (2005)	Vulnerability to stereotype threat leads to avoidance of leadership roles in favour of non-threatening subordinate roles.	Exposure to stereotypical advertisements undermines women's aspirations for subsequent leadership roles (45).
Harper, Tiggemann (2008)	An experimental design to investigate the effects of media images on self-objectification.	The results suggest that self-objectification can be stimulated in women without explicitly focusing attention on their own bodies (46).

Dens, De Pelsmacker, Janssens (2009)	The impact of more candid displays of models' bodies in advertisements on individuals' self-esteem.	Both the skimpy dress of the opposite-sex model and reported sexual arousal influenced body self-esteem. The attractiveness of the model served as a moderator for same-sex models (47).
Zawisza, Cinnirella (2010)	The effectiveness of advertisements that use (non)traditional stereotypes of women or men.	For both male and female versions of the advertisings, paternalistic advertising strategies are more effective than envious ones, supporting the predictions of the stereotypical content model (48).
Knoll, Eisend, Steinhagen, (2011)	A measure of the degree of stereotyping in advertisements is applied, showing some differences between gender stereotypes in advertising between public and private television channels in Germany.	Gender stereotypes in advertising still prevail despite the change in the roles of men and women over the years (10).
Antioco <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Influence of "non-idealized models" and their usefulness for branded products in advertisements.	The presence of stereotypical images leads to lower levels of self-esteem, model trustworthiness, and brand attitudes, which also reduces purchase intention (49).
Eisend <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Influence of humour on images and on the advertising effectiveness of these images.	Humour improves consumer attitudes, especially when a non-traditional stereotype is used instead of a traditional stereotype. Furthermore, humour in stereotypical advertising has a greater impact on women than on men (50).
Windels, (2016)	The understandings and views of US practitioners on stereotypical advertising, as well as reducing their influence.	Practitioners believe that stereotypes are most appropriately used when they are undermined or challenged in advertising messages. Stereotypes are most inappropriate when they reinforce negative perceptions (51).
Åkestam <i>et al.</i> (2017)	The influence of women's roles on their physical performance.	Attitudes toward non-stereotypical advertising influence self-control and the need for uniqueness in women by creating cognitive resistance to novelty (52).
Liljedal <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Stereotypical depictions of professional gender roles are still frequently used in advertising, with some positive effects sought.	Regardless of the gender of the respondents, the effects of non-stereotypical advertising, directly related to the brand and the social effects of non-stereotypical professional portraits are confirmed (53).
Akestam <i>et al.</i> , (2021)	Negative gender effects in the presentation of gender stereotypes in advertising.	Advertising images of women and men have a negative influence on others, leading to higher levels of advertising response, which has a negative impact on brand-related effects (8).
Belmonte, Hopper, Aubrey, (2024)	Influence of the female body and its depiction in advertisements on women's perceptions.	The emergence of a new serial model among women, as the more frequent use of social platforms increases advertising pressure (12).

Source: own elaboration.

Advertising and various media influence a wide range of perceptions, attitudes, values and behaviour of its consumers, changing its focus over the years. This is the reason for the shift in research perspectives in stereotypical advertising. In the period from 1970 to 2000, stereotypes are defined because they enter and are confirmed, attributes are sought through which to correspond to male and female characteristics (21), which puts both genders on an equal footing. In the period from 2000 to the present, the perspective changes because new problem areas are discussed. Along with idealized images of men and women, reactions of men and women to the presentation of gender roles in advertisements (43), as well as the effects of exposure to ideal muscular bodies on male and female audiences (44). A number of authors have found inverse correlations with human body satisfaction in men and women. A decline in satisfaction, self-esteem, and overall perception of the appearance of consumers of different ages has been observed. The standard of attractiveness has also shifted: from idealized beautiful muscular bodies in the first period (34) to cognitive resistance to novelty (52). The change in the roles of men and women over the years has also been established, violating the idea of gender equality. For example, in 2000, the activation of gender stereotypes through advertising led to a decrease in the professional performance of men and women, as well as a decline in aspirations for achievement and positive self-esteem (45). The initially reported gender equality in the first commented stage is violated in the second period, because new images are offered in private media, through which gender inequality in society as a whole is reinforced (10). Scientific results indicate that this causes new negative effects on the part of the opposite gender as a corresponding reaction to images in advertising (8), that is, male consumers exposed to stereotypical advertising containing images of women react negatively, as do female consumers exposed to stereotypical images of men (53, 54). In addition, the most recent research – from 2020 to the present day confirms the effects of non-stereotypical advertising, directly related to the brand and the social effects of non-stereotypical professional portraits. Non-stereotypical advertising moves away from simplified gender stereotypes towards more complex and diverse images (52). According to some authors, this leads to less pressure on consumers of both genders, as well as to a lesser extent compliance with a specific stereotype. Therefore,

stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertising are present and influence sequentially, entering the new dimensions – online advertising in social platforms. This further complicates the situation with the advertising effects achieved by stereotypical advertising, because during the first stage – from 1970 to 2000, research focused only on print and television advertising, while from 2001 to the present day, the focus has shifted to online advertising and social platforms. The emergence of research associated with online platforms offers new formats that differ from traditional advertising formats (4, 55), which causes variations in the depiction of stereotypical images of men and women. The characters in Dove advertisements (mostly women) do not have impeccable features because advertisers are trying to reach the mass consumer, as well as to show that the advertised products are accessible to all consumers. Therefore, changing one point of view, as well as introducing new stereotypical images, can cause new reactions in consumers of advertising. Along with the negative effects of stereotypical advertising such as reactance due to doubts about the physical attractiveness of individuals, low self-esteem and poor self-esteem of young people, dissatisfaction with financial success in more mature consumers, reactance to images of the opposite gender has also been established (8, 56, 57). Researchers comment that both male and female audiences react negatively to stereotypical images of the opposite gender. In addition, representatives of both genders are equally negatively affected by stereotypical advertising, with both genders assuming that the other gender is more strongly affected by images of the opposite gender (8, 52). On the other hand, the attitude towards non-stereotypical advertising affects self-control and the need for uniqueness in women, creating cognitive resistance to novelty. Regardless of the gender of the respondents, the effects of stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertising are confirmed, directly related to the brand and to social effects, with users demonstrating great activity on social platforms. This leads to a stronger advertising influence among different groups of users – teenagers and adults, who perceive or reject certain models of male or female images. Therefore, changes are noted both in the imposition of stereotypical images – from a weak female body to an “hourglass” type, and in the perception of stereotypical advertising, from acceptance of the ideal body to cognitive resistance to new non-standard images. Practice shows that some of the

stereotypical images are imposed among consumers of advertising, under the strong influence of influencers, who are actively present on social platforms and dictate some stereotypical standards.

EXPLANATION OF THE USE OF GENDER ROLES AND STEREOTYPES - RESULTS FOR CUSTOMERS

In critical discourse analysis, which includes description, interpretation and explanation (Fairclough, 2005), an attempt is made to clarify the main research problems, as well as the significance of scientific findings regarding the individual consumer segments affected by advertising (2). With respect to the aim of this article, the significance of the historical context of gender and stereotypical images of men and women has been highlighted, and various scientific findings have been traced over the years. A number of changes occur in the images, because in the first stage the genders are presented in more traditional roles, with a number of schemes for coding attributes for men and women (29). The male characters in advertising are initially presented in a professional environment, which changes in the second period, where they are presented in more different roles, the man in the family who takes care of the children. In a 2024 study, researchers from the University of British Columbia in Canada examined the ideals of heterosexual men and found that there are three types of modern men: 1) neo-traditionalists, who provide resources and associate themselves with positions responsible for the security and safety of the family; 2) egalitarian role, that is, accepting the equality of women with an emphasis on mutual giving and taking of resources in the family; 3) toxic masculinity, or men who have complete control over the family, payments in the family, as well as the imposition of moral norms that were present in the family environment hundreds of years ago (58). Egalitarian men are the largest group, which is evidence that societies: idealistic and collectivist are evolving towards gender equality. These changes also affect the development of advertising over the years, because in today's advertisements, male characters are not only in professional environments, but are presented in elitist roles, in "softer" roles, that is, while interacting with children in the family (6). On the other hand, female images in advertising also undergo significant changes, directly related to social and cultural changes. The change in the role structure in the family and in the professional

environment leads to the emergence of variations for women in society, because even in collectivist societies, women entered the professions and strive for equality with men. This is also established in the images in advertisements, because while in the first period women are at both poles - from the sexy, extremely thin woman to the housewife woman taking care of the family (59). Although in the first stage women are depicted in a lower way compared to their potential and capabilities (6), in the second a positive change in roles is observed, that is, the aspiration for equality of women with men in society, influences the images in advertising positively. The rise of feminism in the 1960s brought about equal opportunities (4) for men and women. Changes in the work environment has led to significant variations in advertising, both in male and female roles (60). On the other hand, changes in family structure, as well as in human relationships, affected the way advertising was perceived. Therefore, pre-formed schemes for coding attributes for men and women are achieved through content analysis (29), and they undergo a new advertising development – they are idiosyncratic for one of the genders. The explanation is that in the first stage, advertisements are still binary, as are the depictions of men and women in them. The variety of stereotypical images in print and television advertisements is also increasing, with the idea of binary gender still present (1). Scientific studies are also not late, which also report some negative consequences for different segment groups influenced by advertising images. The first findings are for young men and women, consumers of advertising, in which an increase in the comparative standard of body attractiveness is established (34). The greater emphasis is on female audiences, who respond positively to egalitarian depictions of superwomen, which shift the image of women from the domestic to the professional environment to impose the understanding that this is the proper position of women in modern societies (35). The results for male audiences are not long in coming, where self-perception, self-esteem and a sense of control are found to be affected in young boys (37, 39). Advertisers have showed even greater ingenuity and during the first analysed period the products in the advertisements had a gender orientation, that is, they were intended only for men or only for women (31), which influenced the male and female perception of the product for a spectrum of different product categories. Therefore,

gender rallies as a binary concept permanently stuck in the first advertisements, as the cognitive perspective for understanding gender, as well as for understanding gender stereotype in advertising significantly shifted - from a binary concept to a unisex concept, which is observed in modern advertising clips offering products suitable for both genders at the same time. In addition, information about one stereotypical component can include other components, because specific information about the component can prevail over gender identification (32). A telling example in this regard is the change in images of women - from a sexy thin woman to an hourglass type, which is scientific evidence that the standards for beauty in this gender changes. Researchers explain this fact with the results of scientific studies, which found that women are more influenced by body size than men when exposed to sexist advertising (40).

Over the years, it has always been sought which stereotypes are leading and which are not so significant, and are expected to fall away (36), because in the second period, scientific evidence regarding the negative effects of advertising increases. Not only teenagers are affected, but also middle-aged users – men and women who actively participate in social platforms. The nuances of stereotypes in many societies (1) further complicate the implementation of advertising communications, as well as the achievement of more advertising effects among certain target groups. New scientific results show a negative effect on physical attractiveness, as well as on financial success in men's self-esteem (41). Mitigated negative effects have been achieved effects among male and female mobile users, when certain gender roles are approved (43), which shows that the change in the perception of certain stereotypes can reproduce positive advertising effectiveness in modern European societies. However, this does not mean that the success of certain advertisements presenting one product category will have a positive effect on others. A number of more recent studies have empirically proven that male self-esteem decreases after viewing images of muscular men, but does not change after viewing images of average men (44). Similar findings are observed for the male audience during the first period, where the self-perception and self-esteem of young boys were affected. From these conclusions, it can be summarized that the presentation of standard images (average men)

in advertisements would lead to greater success among the male audience.

A great deal of scientific discovery has been made between 2010 and 2021 as researchers have attempted to study the negative reactions of men and women to images of the opposite gender. First, gender stereotypes in advertising still prevail despite the change in the roles of men and women over the years (10). Second, stereotypes are most inappropriate when they reinforce negative perceptions among different consumers (51). Third, cognitive resistance to novelty among certain consumer segments is scientific evidence that consumers are more aware, aware of the advertising impact on them, and trying to cope with it. Fourth, advertising images of women and men have a negative impact on others, leading to higher levels of reactance, which has a negative impact on brand-related effects (8).

Previous research has shown that one reason why women react negatively to stereotypical advertising images of women is that they believe that others are negatively affected by such images, some authors have found (61). Similar assumptions are made for male audiences because the explanation for this mechanism is motivational, that is, individuals tend to feel better about themselves when they believe that others are more susceptible to potentially harmful attempts at persuasion (8, 61). This leads to a moderation of the influence achieved among the same gender, that is, women are negatively affected by images of women, and men, respectively, by images of men. The concept in advertising communication is known as the “perceived influence effect (PII) of gender stereotypes” (62), which affects both male and female consumers equally (8). The scientific explanation is that men and women assume that stereotypical images of men and women are as harmful as persuasive attempts through advertising influence (63) and expect “others” to be more influenced by exposure to stereotypical images of men and women than they are themselves (63, 64). Therefore, recommendations for future research will concern the extent to which consumers will be affected by stereotypical images in advertising and how they will demonstrate their reactance to stereotypical images of the other gender. In modern research, scientific results presenting negative reactions of male and female consumers to health-harming products and services such as alcohol advertising (65),

gambling (66) and offensive advertising messages (67) are not far behind.

CONCLUSIONS

Scientific research on gender roles and stereotypes, as well as much of the scientific output, has undergone a number of changes over the years. Empirical evidence that leading stereotypes are changing, as well as their impact on different consumer segments, will always be relevant. The aim of this article is to compare two key periods: from 1970 to 2000 and from 2000 to the present, by applying Fairclough's three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis, as it focuses on description, interpretation and explanation (2). In the descriptive analysis and interpretation of advertising content, basic dependencies between the characteristics of the consumer segment and stereotypical advertising for the first period studied were found. The research questions studied by specialists are related to gender roles in advertising (29), defining the two genders in advertising and in society (30), and the development is in the intergroup behaviour of consumers from a cognitive point of view (21). In some studies, other targeted groups are also studied - preadolescence and adolescents, and findings are made about successful advertising influence among them. When interpreting these scientific results, the author believes that each new study would provide new clarifications on the topics, as the comparative analysis shows that for the first period, the studies cover television and print advertising, commenting on the pursuit of gender equality, as stereotypes of women are more often presented, and nonverbal behaviour including dominance and control is more associated with boys. In the first analysed stage, no emphasis is placed on the targeted consumer segments affected by advertising, because advertisers and researchers are more interested in the achieved advertising effects than in the harmful effects of advertising. In addition, exposure to television advertisements that depict women as sexual objects causes increased body dissatisfaction among both women and men (40). This fact is also confirmed in the second period, in which the perspectives of the research questions shift from shaping the attributes of men and women in advertising to finding negative advertising reactions in certain advertising segments. The fact that in the first stage the public understanding of gender is idiosyncratic, that is, for one of the genders, which changes in the second period with the appearance of unisex

products in some contemporary advertisements, should not be underestimated. The author believes that the emergence of unisex products, as well as unisex advertising, will cause some mixed reactions in certain target groups – for example, negative reactance in men and women towards universal products that are difficult for both genders to perceive. Advertisers and producers of goods and services are trying to install in consumer awareness the gender ideology, according to which there are not two biological sexes, but only one universal sex. This leads to a loss of values and is not accepted by some collectivist and individualist societies. Therefore, the first task of researchers is to define and specify the types of stereotypes by analysing different advertising images of men and women. At the first stage, the authors point out that the idea of binary gender is still present in advertisements (1). There is a lack of research on how male and female consumers react to stereotypical versus non-stereotypical depictions of gender in advertising, and the discourse around the concept of stereotypes is becoming increasingly nuanced in many societies (1).

Critical analysis shows that in the early 2000s, studies began to appear that addressed idealized images of physical attractiveness for men and women and the negative effects of advertising (41), as well as comparative analyses of television advertisements in countries characterized by the continuum from male to female according to Hofstede's framework (14). The novelty is found in posing problems that reflect the affected target groups, which are not only adolescent consumers, but also some mature gender segments. The contributions of researchers working in the second research period, that is, from 2000 to the present, are found in the ways of perceiving one's own body, as well as the satisfaction with the vision of different groups of consumers. It was found that self-assessment of male body satisfaction decreases after viewing images of muscular men, in contrast to the influence of average images of men in advertising (44). Another problem area has been identified among women, because exposure to stereotypical advertisements undermines women's aspirations for subsequent leadership tasks (45). Therefore, both male and female consumers can be equally affected by advertising images of both genders. The depth of the problem is revealed in other modern studies, in which the authors show that exposure to beautiful stereotypical images in advertising affects men

and women equally, creating cognitive resistance to novelty (52). These scientific results significantly shift the perspective of research, because in the first period, novelty is perceived quickly and unconditionally, and in the second period, cognitive resistance is observed, known in research circles as reactance (8, 56, 57). The explanations are as follows: the modern consumer is more informed about the ways in which he is influenced by advertising, which leads to the development of resistance mechanisms in these consumers to stereotypical advertising. In addition, mixed reactions of the enslavers have been found, that is, both male and female audiences react negatively to stereotypical images of the opposite gender. Therefore, representatives of both genders are equally negatively affected by stereotypical advertising, with both genders believing that the other gender is more strongly affected by images of the opposite gender, some modern authors have found (8, 52).

Future research directions should focus on online platforms, or rather, internet advertising, which remains understudied. The scientific findings of Plakoyiannaki et al. (2008) are one exception (4), with many researchers finding that stereotypical images in advertising have a negative impact on both genders (8, 51, 52). The problem of consumer reactance to stereotypical advertising is likely to deepen because it is more intensively discussed in society. A very important research problem is whether stereotypes in women are more common (5, 11) and are more intensively discussed in society (24), making its impact on women more noticeable than for men. Asking these questions can clarify some of the situations affecting gender differences both in advertising and in society, such as: 1) should we emphasize the binary model, that is, accept the existence of a binary gender in society and in advertising (1) or switch to unisex advertising, which is observed in some contemporary European societies; 2) the impact of both genders, as well as some reactive reactions of consumers to stereotypical images, to what extent would it reduce the effectiveness of advertisements; 3) whether the affected consumer segments by stereotypical advertising are activated when exposed to non-stereotypical advertising, and whether there is an increase in consumer activity among these groups of consumers when using specific products and services; 4) are advertisers now targeting ignored consumer segments using unisex advertising: lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transsexuals (LGBT);

5) whether the emergence of unisex products and unisex advertising will lead to the alienation of heterosexual segments (18, 19); 5) with the introduction of unisex products in advertisements, what new stereotypical images are created and what advertising effect is achieved among precisely defined consumer segments. This is only a small part of the research questions that can be posed in future scientific studies. The main findings of this article are that there has been significant progress in research on defining stereotypical advertising, specifying what the main stereotypical images are, the different attributes for men and women, as well as the types of stereotypes - descriptors of traits, physical characteristics, role behaviours and professional statuses (1, 67). The emergence of unisex products has been established to affect more consumer segments. Progress has also been observed in the formation of types of stereotypes for men and women and how these images have changed over the years, which reflects on the impact achieved with stereotypical advertising, as well as on society as a whole. Future research should establish the impact achieved by unisex advertising, as well as what exposure to unisex stereotypes would lead to. In order to fill these gaps and increase the general knowledge about gender roles and the optimization of stereotypical advertising, future research should examine several points: emergence, development, advertising effectiveness, consequences and changes in societies over the years. All these findings would help researchers and advertisers, as well as some marketers, in achieving advertising effectiveness, as well as in properly targeting consumer segments in stereotypical and non-stereotypical advertising.

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