



JLMUN 2021 IMUNA Online International Conference

Study Guide: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

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Welcome Letter

Honorable delegates,

It is with great delight that we welcome you to the sixth edition of the Jerusalem Model of United Nations, and specifically to our committee, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality, also known as UN Women.

We would like to warmly receive you from the dais of the committee. We are Noor Habib, from Israel, Dimitra Psychari, from Greece and Aina Patiño, from Spain. In March 2021 we will be the chairpersons of a committee that is dedicated to the search for gender equality and the empowerment of women, goals that we three hugely advocate for.

Our agenda for March 2021 includes two topics. First, the global pandemic of COVID-19 and its impact on the situation of women who face domestic violence. After having revised the evolution since the beginning of the spreading of the disease around the world until nowadays, your objective will consist of analyzing the current data and the measures taken by every single government in order to develop new mechanisms to solve this situation of social injustice.

Other than that, your aim is to confront the topic of the paper of women in advertising and other social media. The discussion of points such as how the role of women in advertisements has changed over the years with the purpose to sell more products or the creation of physical stereotypes that indirectly induces the society to believe that we should all follow, among others, will drive the committee to debate about how we can show the woman as she is: realistic and showing her in all her shapes.

Coming together from all sites of the globe, we believe that in the following session of JLMUN 2021 we will work on our future through challenging debates, we will think beyond borders, and we will build new bridges to find solutions to the difficulties that women must face every single day.

We look forward to soon greeting you in person!

Yours faithfully,

Noor, Dimitra and Aina

Meet the Chairs

Chair - Aina



Aina studies Law at the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona. Her interest in law and international relations has led her to participate in the European Youth Parliament for high schoolers. After enrolling to the university, she has joined the UNSA Barcelona association and has represented it in different MUNs around Europe ever since, scoring several awards. In her free time, she enjoys practicing sports, trail running with her dog, reading books and travelling with her friends to discover new places in cities and villages.

Vice Chair – Dimitra Psychari



Dimitra Psychari comes from Athens, Greece. Having previously studied law in the United Kingdom, she is currently studying Hebrew at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, hoping to enroll in the Israel Studies Masters Programme next year. She first participated in Model UN in High School, and during the last 8 years she has participated in a large number of conferences, at many different positions. She enjoys MUN because it gave her the chance to meet so many interesting people from many different backgrounds and develop her skills while learning how the different UN organs and regional organizations work. In her free time, she helps different organizations who defend human rights and tackle antisemitism or ableism. She also enjoys playing video games and watching gymnastics.

Vice Chair – Noor Habib



Noor Habib majors in Political Science and the English language and Literature at the University of Haifa. She has been a part of MUN for four consecutive years. The first year she participated as a delegate, the following two years she served as the marketing and social media director in her society, for this year she is the academic director of her society as well. She is very passionate about international relations and how the world dynamic works, she is even more passionate about women's rights given that she is a woman herself (sense the sarcasm).



Academic Advisor – Yara Khayat

Yara Khayat is undergoing the third year of her B.A. at the University of Haifa majoring in Political Science and English Language and Literature.

This is her third year as part of the Haifa University Model UN society (HaiMUN). In the first two years she served as a delegate in her society. and in her third year she will serve as the HR and Conference Director. This is also her second year in IMUNA's Academic Team.

Introduction to the Committee

In July 2010, the creation of the UN Women entity was done by the United Nations General Assembly with the purpose of facing the challenges of gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide. The creation of the entity was done as part of the UN reform agenda. With that, there are four primary focuses in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women:

1. Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
2. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)
3. Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)
4. United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)¹

The establishment of UN Women as an entity in the United Nations was done in order to meet the needs of women and girls worldwide and to aim for gender equality and women empowerment overall. UN Women reinforces UN Member States in regard to their international goal of achieving gender equality and works with government bodies to draft laws, programs, policies and services that are required to ensure that the standards are sufficiently executed and genuinely benefit women and girls worldwide. It works for the purpose of making the “Sustainable Development Goals” a reality for women and girls globally.² The UN Women entity supports the equal participation of women globally and from all perspectives of life, highlighting five important perspectives:

1. Emphasizing on women voices, authority, and involvements.
2. Diminishing violence towards women and girls.
3. Reinforcing women’s complete involvement in dispute resolution and peace procedures.
4. Improving women’s economic strength.
5. Centralizing gender equality in the realm of domestic development arrangements and budgets.³

¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women>

² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women>

³ <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/for-later/our-mandate>

History of TOPIC A: The impact of Covid-19 on women's rights, especially domestic violence

The impact of Covid-19 on women's rights is an issue that developed very recently, but this does not mean that it is of minor importance.

On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organization (hereinafter will be referred as the WHO) was informed about a series of cases of pneumonia, caused by an unknown case in Wuhan, China. In samples obtained from the patients, a novel coronavirus was identified, that was suggested that was the cause of the outbreak. The virus is known as SARS-CoV-2 and the associated disease is known as COVID-19. By the end of 2020, more than 71 million cases were reported, with more than 1,6 million deaths.⁴

The virus is mainly transmitted when an infected person is in close contact with another person. According to the WHO "Current evidence suggests that the main way the virus spreads is by respiratory droplets among people who are in close contact with each other". However, it is also possible for the virus to spread "after infected people sneeze, cough on, or touch surfaces, or objects, such as tables, doorknobs and handrails" and other people touching their eyes, noses or mouths after having touched these surfaces without the sanitization of the hands.⁵

Aside from the use of masks and proper sanitization, with no vaccine available, one of the main measures for reducing the transmission of the virus is social distancing. However, in order to achieve the latter, in places where the viral load is high, strict measures are taken, known as lockdowns.

The first lockdown was applied in Wuhan, China, on 23rd January 2020 in the form of complete prohibition of entering and exiting the city. Other Chinese cities followed with measures such as restriction of road traffic, self-isolation of the citizens and home and reduction of gatherings and group activities.⁶ On March 11th COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic. After the example of China, other countries followed with lockdowns as well. Some of the first countries that entered national lockdowns were the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, Australia, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Mexico, Greece, Russia and many others.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-background-information/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-epidemiology-virology-and-clinical-features>

⁵ <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-how-is-it-transmitted>

⁶ <https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/98/7/20-254045/en/>

However, lockdowns, however helpful they might be in the reduction of the spread of the virus, they have serious adverse effects, mainly deterioration of mental health and increase in household violence.

According to UN Women, in general, one in three women or girls are experiencing violence of sexual or physical nature. Though, since the outbreak of COVID-19 and the lockdowns, all types of violence against women and girls have intensified, especially domestic violence.⁷

This phenomenon is known as the “Shadow Pandemic”. Women and girls, due to the lockdowns are spending more time in the house, which means they can potentially be exposed for more hours of the day in abusive and domestic violence behaviors. In addition, services like helplines and domestic violence centers have reached capacity, with result many women and children being trapped in situations potentially dangerous for their physical and mental health but also their lives.

Some examples of increased violence against women are Argentina, where between 20th and 31st of March, the calls in helplines for gender-based violence increased by 39%, while in Mexico, in the first four months of 2020 the calls increased by 53%.^{8 9}

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>

<https://www.argentina.gob.ar/generos/linea-144/informacion-estadistica>.⁸

<https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/558770/vcm-indicadores911.pdf>.⁹

Current Situation of TOPIC A: The impact of Covid-19 on women's rights, especially domestic violence

The COVID-19 pandemic is magnifying gender inequality worldwide, highlighting the gaps in social, economic and political systems which are also contributing to intensifying the effect of the pandemic. The effect is aggravated for women and girls solely due to their gender in spectrums such as health, social protection, economy and security in general¹⁰. The economic impact on girls and women are felt specifically, for those who generally earn less, have insecure professions, and living in poverty. Resulting from the restriction that the pandemic has created in all spectrums mentioned, “gender-based violence” (GBV) or domestic violence is amplifying rampantly since the lockdown is forcing women to remain home with their abusers while simultaneously suffering from inaccessible support services to survivors.¹¹

“Domestic violence is abusive behavior occurring in a family or a couple relationship that presupposes cohabitation.” According to the World Health Organization (WHO), violence can take place in many ways such as physical, sexual, psychological, economic and stalking.¹²

Gender based violence is increasing globally and domestically as the pandemic is impacting social and economic structures which restrict contact and movement. The factors that are contributing to violence are crowded houses, substance abuse, restricted access to services and decreased peer support. In pre-pandemic times, it was approximated that one in three women go through abuse in their life, during the pandemic, these women are confined in their homes with their abusers. Although data continuously being collected, reports showcase an increase in gender-based violence cases with some reports indicating a 25% increase in countries with functioning reporting systems. In other countries, reported cases have doubled. This date is limited due to the restricted access of private safe spaces that women can use to call for support or to seek help.¹³ additional universal data indicates that nearly 18% of females from the ages of 15 to 49 have experienced physical or sexual violence

¹⁰<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>

¹¹<https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406>

¹² <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0025817220930553>

¹³<https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406>

from their partner in the last 12 months. This percentage increases by 30% when considering various partners in a woman's lifetime in total.¹⁴

In addition, the virus is being used as a threat by many abusers who use the inability of women to request help or escape, therefore many women are at risk of being thrown out of the house with no shelter to resort to. In addition, 1 out of 10 survivors claim that abusers use lockdown rules and restrictions as a method to stop the survivors from leaving, moreover, 20% of survivors attempted to escape during the lockdown yet were unable to find a safe place to shelter them.¹⁵ Simultaneously, judicial, authoritative and Health services are struggling with the overwhelming number of women who seek help, moreover, they have either changed their priorities or are unable to help in general. Local groups of society have been affected from the lockdown which resulted in a reallocation of sources. Many domestic violence shelters are full, some were forced to close, and some were turned into health facilities.¹⁶ According to data, 61% of women who live in the same space with their abusers claimed that the abuse has only worsened since the lockdown started and more than 68% said that they felt like there is nowhere to turn to.¹⁷

Subsequently, the distribution of health and social care is creating an ever-deeper gap in inequalities and is shifting priorities of public, private and social sectors including the distribution of funds. Women in general have been affected by this, specifically ones who experience disadvantages in income, age, race, geographical location, migration status and more. These inequalities in distribution are generating tensions and worries of security, health and money in many households which results in increased violent experiences.¹⁸

The Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women and Girls and COVID-19

Globally,

243 million



women and girls aged 15-49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.

The number is likely to INCREASE as security, health, and money worries heighten tensions and strains are accentuated by cramped and confined living conditions.

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and particularly domestic violence, has INTENSIFIED.

Below are just a few of the dozens of countries reporting an increase in violence against women

In **France**, reports of domestic violence have increased by **30%** since the lockdown on March 17.

In **Cyprus and Singapore** helplines have registered an increase in calls of **30%** and **35%**, respectively.

In **Argentina** emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by **25%** since the lockdown on March 20.

Increased cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter have also been reported in **Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.**

As stay-at-home orders expand to contain the spread of the virus, women with violent partners increasingly find themselves isolated from the people and resources that can help them.

87,000 women were intentionally killed in 2017. The majority of these killings were committed by an intimate partner or family member of the victim.

Violence against women and girls is pervasive but at the same time widely under-reported. Less than **40%** of women who experience violence report these crimes or seek help of any sort.

The global cost of violence against women had previously been estimated at approximately:

US\$1.5 trillion
That figure can only be rising as violence increases now, and continues in the aftermath of the pandemic.

<https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/policy-brief-covid-19-and-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf>¹⁴

¹⁵ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/a-perfect-storm-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-domestic-abuse-survivors-and-the-services-supporting-them/>

¹⁶ Ibid

** the picture is taken from; <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406>

¹⁷ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/a-perfect-storm-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-domestic-abuse-survivors-and-the-services-supporting-them/>

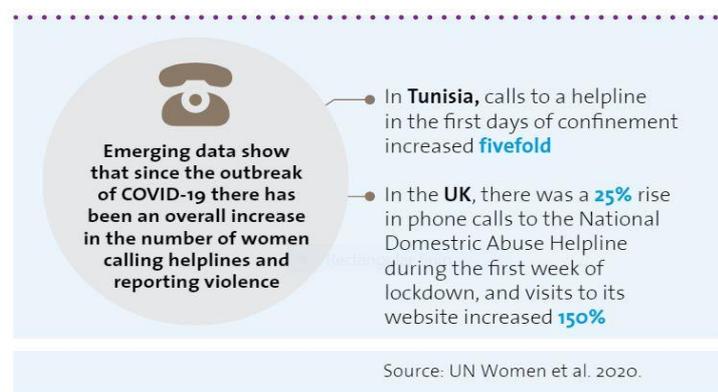
¹⁸ <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/policy-brief-covid-19-and-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf>

Furthermore, the pandemic is also affecting the educational aspect of the topic. In March, UNESCO “estimated that the pandemic was preventing 1.52 billion children from attending school, with some never returning to schools. Thus, increasing the risk of young girls suffering from genital mutilation, early marriage and other forms of abuse. School for young girls is a safe space that protects them from certain forms of abuse, and with the restrictions of the pandemic and the lockdown, this protection is lost, and their health condition is in danger. Continuously, due to this situation and in combination with the negative economic impact of the pandemic, the responsibility of the children falls on the women.¹⁹

Women and girls experience and fear various types of sexual violence in different public spaces



With the escalation of the domestic violence cases against women, there is also an escalation in the request for help from women through hotlines and services. As an example, in Argentina, there is an increase of 67% in emergency calls regarding cases since the lockdown started. In Cyprus and Singapore, helplines have increased by 30% and 33% respectively. In Australia, a survey indicates that there is a 40% uprise in requests for help by survivors, and 70% of the cases have amplified in complexity during the pandemic. Moreover, many organizations and groups from countries such as Brazil, Canada, Chile, Lebanon, the United States, the United Kingdom and more have reported a massive increase in domestic violence cases and a massive increase for emergency shelters during the Covid-19 outbreak²⁰.



¹⁹ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30568-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30568-5/fulltext)

²⁰ <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/policy-brief-covid-19-and-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf>

Past Actions of TOPIC A: The impact of Covid-19 on women's rights, especially domestic violence

There have not been actual resolutions/pieces of legislation in order to tackle the issue of women's rights in the context of COVID-19.

However, the United Nations have released powerful statements and guidelines condemning such incidents and helping to tackle such incidents.

- UN WOMEN:

Firstly, and most importantly, the UN WOMEN committee has been working to tackle the “shadow pandemic” by focusing in six (6) main areas:

- Prevention and awareness-raising.
- Access to essential services, including helplines and shelters.
- Violence against women in public spaces.
- Online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls.
- Support for rapid assessments and data collection.
- The “duty of care” of the private sector to protect employees;²¹

Furthermore, the committee has issued a publication titled “COVID-19 and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls”, that contains data, important information and resources, with the aim to raise awareness regarding the importance of the issue. In addition, it includes information regarding the responses that have been taken in many different countries. Last but not least, it includes recommendations for action, both for 1) Governments – United Nations Agencies and b) Civil Society Organizations – United Nations Agencies.²²

In addition, in their website they include useful resources that can be of crucial importance for women and children that are been affected in such ways during the pandemic.²³

- UN Secretary-General António Guterres

On April 5th, 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General called for a “global ceasefire and an end to all violence so that we can focus our attention and resources on stopping this pandemic”.

²¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>

²² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls#view>

²³ <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5006>

On April 9th 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General introduced the UN Policy Brief regarding the impact of COVID-19 to women. In the presentation of this Policy Brief, he called to “Put women and girls at the center of efforts to recover from COVID-19”.²⁴

The 21-page long document includes information, data, and proposed solutions regarding five specific areas in which women have been affected during the pandemic, but also what the United Nations can do to help. These areas are:

- a) Economic Impacts
- b) Health Impacts
- c) Unpaid Care Work
- d) Gender-Based Violence
- e) Impacts in Humanitarian and Fragile Settings and on Human Rights

Regarding Gender-Based Violence, according to this report, the focus must be drawn on how can national response plans prioritize support for women, with measures that have been already proven effective. Such measures are a) integrating prevention efforts and services to respond to violence against women into COVID-19 response plans, b) the designation of domestic violence shelters as essential services, c) expanding the capacity of shelters by taking advantage of empty spaces, d) designating safe spaces for the reporting of abuse e) moving services online and f) stepping up advocacy.²⁵

²⁴ <https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/put-women-and-girls-centre-efforts-recover-covid-19>

²⁵ <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf?la=en&vs=1406>

Conclusion of TOPIC A: The impact of Covid-19 on women's rights, especially domestic violence

Till this day, all countries are collectively trying to collect data in regard to the virus. Moreover, countries, governments and social bodies are putting effort into daily decision making in regard to the people of each country and are trying to obtain a healthy lifestyle during the pandemic. As females of all ages are a significant part of the population, it is essential to view and solve the issues that are obtained from the pandemic, as it is concluded that both the pandemic and the lockdown regulations are projecting a negative effect on female lives, both on the short and long term. As an international body, the UN is also aware of the situation and its negative impacts therefore making it a worldwide problem that requires the attention of countries and their government officials.

Guiding questions

1. How does international regulations and rules affect a country's decision in regard to the pandemic?
2. How does funding affect the issue at hand? Are there any issues that are considered more essential in terms of funding during the pandemic?
3. What main policies have countries implemented in regard to the Covid-19 virus?
4. What specific policies and/or services have countries implemented in order to help resolve the issue of domestic violence against women?
5. Is there any new data that might shift the perspective of the topic?
6. Is collecting data beneficial in understanding your country's policy in regard to the pandemic?
7. Has the number of domestic violence cases increased during the pandemic period? If it has, what actions did the government implement in order to reduce the number?
8. What possible solution could there be to minimize the number of cases?
9. Has the UN issued a plan in order to help raise awareness on the topic and does it include any possible solutions?

History of TOPIC B: Representation of women in advertising and other media

The portrayal of women, in general has developed with the time and is adapting and reflecting the cultural and sociological changes. However, still, stereotyping is apparent in many cases, in other countries more, in other countries less, and it depends on the sector we are talking about. One thing is sure, we cannot say that it has been eliminated.

On the other hand, media has a crucial impact on how social and cultural norms relating to women and to gender form evolve.²⁶ Therefore, the elimination of sexism in media, and the stereotyping of women is of utmost importance, as the media reflect our society, and our society is influenced up to some point by the media.

In 1976, George Gerbner used the definition of “Symbolic Annihilation” in order to describe the absence of representation or underrepresentation of specific groups of people in the media. In 1978, Gaye Tuchman divided the concept in *omission*, *trivialization* and *condemnation*. He has expressed that women are less represented than males, and their roles are usually portrayed negatively. Feminist scholars have used this definition in order to describe the misrepresentation and/or absence of women in the media.

In order to represent what has been mentioned before we would like to remember, from one side the historical representation of female characters in Disney movies, the classic female characters are sexualized, yet delicate princesses who need to be rescued by a strong male character²⁷. From the other, in advertisements we can observe images which are completely different from reality, specifically regarding the stereotypes concerning the role and functions of women and men in society. We have been able to watch vulgarized chiefly women in advertisements or maybe represented as sexual objects.

We have to remember that international and national trademarks exercise an important responsibility, due to the fact that the impact of the advertisements on the audience have long-term consequences.

²⁶ <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/X2H-Xref-ViewHTML.asp?FileID=11518&lang=EN>

²⁷ <https://rm.coe.int/1680590587>

Current Situation of TOPIC B: Representation of women in advertising and other media

Since the beginning of advertisements, women both have accompanied the product or have explained its usefulness having as a consequence the materialization of the female figure as an object of desire to encourage purchase.

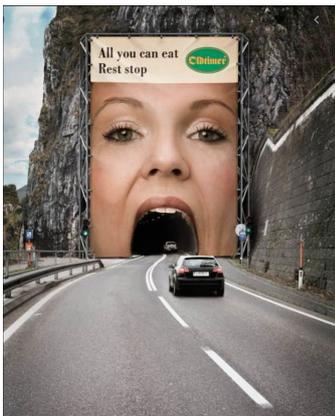
Advertising is by our side at all hours: on television, walls of the streets, on pages of newspapers, on billboards... Wherever we are, we receive the suggestive messages which try to catch our eyes and stimulate our intention to buy. Marketing specialists know that women constitute the most important, numerous, polymorphic and active consumers: around 80% of all purchases are made by and for women.²⁸

There are advertisements for women and with women, in which her body is given for the connotation of products, whether the female collective is the final direct recipient or not. With this initial exposition is indeed to affirm the following sentence: women are the great characters of and for advertising.

Paper of women in advertising: frequencies and percentages

Nowadays, approximately 70% of advertisements are linked with traditional feminine elements: 28% taking care home, 18.7% cosmetics, 13.3 showing and cooking food and 12% medicines.

Current studies prove that women appear reflected in three big scopes: the stereotypical advertisement in the traditional roles of men and women, the advertisements that idealize female beauty and, the advertisements that objectify female sexuality.²⁹



A study which analyzed the results of 30 different researches, has stressed the difference in representation of men and women in commercials by four different criteria (Furnham and Paltzer, 2010, pp. 217-218). One of the used criterions was credentials, analyzed from the

²⁸ <https://www.factoriacreativabarcelona.es/blog/papael-las-mujeres-la-publicidad/>

²⁹ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264749596_Women_in_Advertising_Representations_Repercussions_Responses

aspect of expert vs. user, which men or women could assume in commercials.³⁰

In the majority of European countries, women were predominantly represented as users of products which were being advertised. However, when it comes to men, both the roles of users and authorities (experts) were equally evident. In other words, 42.9% of men were portrayed in the role of a product user, while in 38.1% cases, they were represented as experts. The only exception to the rule was Russia, where men assumed the role of product users in more cases than women (Furnham and Paltzer, 2010, 217-218).



Studies which were conducted in Europe have found considerable differences in the engagement of protagonists from certain age groups in commercials³¹. The

most common protagonists of commercials were young women (60%) in Russia, Turkey, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria and Asia, while, in Austria, for example, commercials featured 64.1% of middle-aged men (Furnham and Paltzer, 2010, 217-218).

Idealization of women: standardization and roles

Today, advertising portrayals vary based on the medium in which they appear and, for broadcast media, the times of the day when the advertisement is appearing. During the workday, for example, the primary TV audiences are retired persons and women with children. During daytime programming, most of the women commercials are shown in traditional homemaker roles. Men are rarely seen in the commercials as husbands, professionals, or spokespeople. During prime-time television, when the TV audience is more balanced, women are shown more often in positions of authority and in settings away from home. Thus, during prime-time television, portrayals of men and women are more equitable (Craig, 1992).

Intentionally, advertising still conforms to traditional gender portrayals. A meta-analysis of advertising globally found that women are much more likely to be pictured as dependent on advertising, and much more likely to be pictured at home than males (Paek, Nelson, & Viella, 2011). These traditional gender portrayals are transmitted to the whole society that: watches TV, to Internet consumers, everyone that walks in the streets observing in every single step advertisement in billboards... According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children under the age of 8 do not understand the purpose of the advertisements. They do not perceive it as an attempt to sell a product by a brand, but they absorb uncontrollably all the information that is coming to them. Care should be

³⁰ <https://drprem.com/business/oldtimer-restaurants-all-you-can-eat-rest-stop>

³¹ <https://daxueconsulting.com/know-chinas-advertising-law/>

taken to keep children away from advertisements because they are more vulnerable to them. For this reason, on the one hand, they indicate that they can increase childhood obesity, eating problems and increased consumption of alcohol and tobacco in young people, and on the other, assume the gender roles showed up in the advertisements.³²

Today, cultural norms in the United States continue to promote the importance of an individual's physical attractiveness, beginning in infancy and continuing through childhood and adolescence. For women, beauty has been institutionalized to the point where an entire industry devoted to beauty has been created. We can see it not only in advertisements, but also in the position of women in TV series/movies and in real life with, for example, the importance in some cultures of the beauty contests.

In several cultures, an important part of the beauty ideal today includes a thin body type, young and white skinned. In fact, researchers have demonstrated that there has been an increasing attitude to show up a thinner woman body. There is a cultural taboo against large, old and/or black female bodies, and advertisements often present women with this physical appearance with negative stereotypes such as: limitation of their wardrobes, complication in social engagements...

In order to put a clear example, we could highlight what some critics have mentioned: women's fashion and beauty magazines are one of the most influential and potentially damaging media channels because they are directly concerned with the cultural ideal of beauty.

The type of women portrayed in these magazines, both in advertising and editorial pages, are parts of the unattainable beauty ideal. So as to indicate some numbers, the average woman in the United States is 5 feet 3 inches tall and weighs 164 pounds (CDC, 2004), but the average model is 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighs 115 pounds (Tung, 2002).

Finally, it is important to mention that we have arrived at a point where the objectification of bodies has overlapped with reality. Objectification is defined as any representation emphasizing sexually suggestive body parts, resulting in individuals losing their humanity and becoming objects. In many cases, the body parts highlighted in advertisements suggest that the person becomes a sexual object and often, objectification occurs at its worst when there is no role-product congruity.

Consequences of stereotyping women

Goodman, (2002, p. 703), intimates: 'Because the media are the main information source about social processes and images and self-presentation, women are likely to attend to and use media images as guides for their attitudes and behaviors'.

³² https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/57153_book_item_57153.pdf

This sentence describes what different studies have proved that advertising has a very high influence in terms of having a weight in the social behaviors and character of purchasers, being it visible both rationally and emotionally. The psychological effects created by advertising have also led to the emergence of a moral and ethical conflict over the standards on which society should be based.

We can see how throughout all kinds of television advertising, social media and in other media the woman is represented in a stereotyped way, including images of a businesswoman without family, a housewife or even as an ornament.

The image and stereotyping are linked with the concern for physical appearance. Image is no longer something centralized in women or latent in the world of men, because we have been able to see that in recent decades, man has entered the "game" of aesthetic concern and has been influenced by the canons laid out for him. While socially women are led towards the pursuit of a slim, ectomorph and stylized body, men are led towards mesomorphism, muscular development and body definition. Due to the idealization of a perfect body standard, advertising and the media are causes of favoring the appearance of eating disorders in adolescents (also in other age groups, although with less direct impact). Normally, this age group goes easily through moments of low self-esteem in which they need social acceptance and are united in the image of a good physical appearance like the models in the ads, with the idea of happiness.³³

Anorexia, bulimia, binge eating disorder or vigorexia are usually the main eating disorders (TAC). On many websites people can find the information they need to assert themselves that they do not have a disease, but rather that they lead a "lifestyle", while being bombarded at the same moment by advertising images that make them to think that what they see is not edited by Photoshop and that it is as perfect as it seems.

Adolescence specifically is a critical time for the development of disorders because there is a time of physical, psychological and emotional changes. This results in low self-esteem, altered body image, phobia of weight gain and refusal to maintain a healthy weight, as well as weight loss and malnutrition. All these behaviors lead to great emotional and psychological discomfort, which can lead to self-injurious behaviors.

³³ <https://doi.org/10.1108/02634509710177305>

AGE AND GENDER BREAKS, DESKTOP AND MOBILE



target demographic	DESKTOP			MOBILE		
	P	M	F	P	M	F
18 → 99	95%	-	42%	76%	-	59%
18 → 99	92%	86%	64%	93%	78%	74%
18 → 49	70%	57%	45%	64%	50%	53%
18 → 34	53%	43%	29%	63%	44%	41%
18 → 24	30%	22%	-	56%	17%	28%
21 → 34	46%	36%	26%	48%	32%	-
25 → 34	57%	45%	37%	65%	52%	53%
25 → 49	50%	41%	33%	50%	44%	53%
25 → 44	42%	27%	30%	64%	22%	52%
35 → 64	55%	38%	42%	54%	19%	38%
35 → 54	38%	26%	22%	49%	-	34%

In this table we can see how the percentage of ads and their target is aimed at a certain age group: from 18 to 34. Specifically, it is also the age group that has an impact and a higher arrival rate than the rest, which also matches the age group of women and men who normally appear more frequently in ads. The idea of what is wanted to convey in this table is that no matter how much the age group does not receive these images

for which they have been made, the rest of the population does see them, and it affects them.

The average person will spend more than 78,000 hours in front of the television over their lifetime, following a new study commissioned by LG electronics in which it has surveyed 2,000 British adults about their viewing habits. Researchers determined that viewers watch an average of 3,639 movies and 31,507 episodes of television, amounting to staggering 78,705 hours according to findings released by OnePoll.³⁴

This means that we spend a lot of time in front of any screen where we are subjected to stereotypes and the constant idea that we are not like the people chosen to act in TV series, movies... As a summary of this section, we should ask ourselves whether the use of the image of the woman, which is often desirable especially to show its supposed perfection, even if it may not have much connection with the product or service that it's being promoted, it's the best way we have to have more sales.

Opposite movements

The sexualization and reification of women entails not only the basic problem that is already important enough, but it also entails the false belief that the role that women play in advertising, social media and other media is reality. With the objectification of women, others believe in the right to act with impunity and transfer the appearance we can see on the screens of our phones or computers to reality.

³⁴ <https://www.acrwwebsite.org/volumes/11157/volumes/e03/E-03>

As a sign of going against these actions carried out both in anonymity and even in public, in the autumn of 2017 the statements of sexual harassment and abuse that had suffered actresses and others were made public by professionals in the film industry, especially in Hollywood. It was in newspapers such as the New York Times that these allegations began to be published, although the movement was started in 2006 by Tarana Burke.

The movement has encouraged other women to publicly denounce and expose the treatment they suffered at the hands of others who degraded them as human beings at the same time by placing them at the level of an object.³⁵

In addition, as a sign of the fatigue of the world's women's collective, we must highlight the increase in participation in demonstrations around the world every March 8th to defend and seek equality and parity between women's and men's rights.³⁶

To transfer this discomfort to the realm of advertising, there have been allegations of extremely sexist advertisements to the point that companies have sometimes been forced to withdraw their campaigns. Nonetheless, sexist ads are latent in a large majority of age groups and areas such as: housework, sports, beauty products...³⁷



Despite what we have shown, as a sign of an approach to reality, we have begun to see women with curves appearing in advertising campaigns. The main idea is to point out “real” women and bodies of different shapes, colors and sizes without fear of their physique and self-confidence. Dove’s 2004 campaign titled “Campaign for Real Beauty ” was the result with the aim to convert the study called The Real Truth About Beauty: of the total women interviewed, only 2% of these felt beautiful.³⁸

After these alarming results, based on the indirect obligation that is instilled in us to be perfect 24 hours a day, the "curvy" movement began to emerge. Today we see how different ads for clothing brands known worldwide as Mango, and others of lingerie such as Victoria Secret have been forced, for reasons of commercial sale, to include models with very different characteristics to young, tall, thin women which follow the prototype of *donna angelicata*.

³⁵ <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/22407>

³⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2019/apr/14/sexism-in-advertising-industry-gender-pay-gap-diversity>

³⁷ <https://georgia.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/12/where-marketing-fails-gender-stereotypes-in-creative-communications>

³⁸ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1740144515000960>

The last step we have been able to observe in advertising has been "femvertising", advertising that is dedicated to the encouragement and empowerment of women. For years it was thought that to make a product "for women" marketing and creative directors only had to develop campaigns with the idea of "shrink it, and pink it". Even today we find the pink and blue corridors in the back to school or for the Christmas campaigns, or recent controversies with objects for women such as pink pens and calculators. Nonetheless, big international CEOs have realized that returning to basic values, communicating from transparency and emotion, humanizing, being inclusive, feeling empath... as guidelines to develop their advertisements will help them to arrive at more consumers.

To conclude, it would be appropriate to mention that there can be enterprises that are appealing to "femvertising" to gain more benefits, however, it is not easy to fib society. The audience is unforgiving with those brands that target the gender cause for cosmetic reasons. It is the so-called femiwashing: "a company that makes feminist advertisements, but does not have conciliation measures or women managers, can backfire".

Past Actions of TOPIC B: Representation of women in advertising and other media

If we should start from any point, we would like to highlight the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York (CEDAW), 18 December 1979, ratified by 189 states. According to Article 5 of the CEDAW, parties must take all appropriate measures, including legislation, “to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women.” It is noteworthy that gender stereotypes are, in this context, defined as gender discrimination.

Nonetheless, it is necessary to mention that one of the states that never ratified CEDAW is the United States, and that many states prepared reservations in the treaty.

Apart from this text, more declarations from the UN had been passed over the years. An example is the UN Beijing Platform for Action from 1995, although not a legal text, provides a commitment by its signatories. It calls for action against gender stereotypes in public and private life and has a separate objective concerning the promotion of a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

In fact, to make further progress, the UN suggests that an increase in women's participation in media requires the continued provision of formal and technical vocational education and training, including in the areas of management and leadership. To ensure women's position within the media, governments should ensure equal pay, appropriate working conditions, policies to enable the rapprochement of work and family responsibilities and ensuring safe work environments.

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has been a major actor in setting rules in the ever-changing landscape of modern marketing and advertising since 1937. The main advocacy focus of the ICC Commission on Marketing and Advertising is to promote effective self-regulation around the globe and to function as an instrument of self-regulation in economic and business life, with the intention of creating a high ethical standard in all advertising. According to the article 4 of the Advertising Code Social Responsibility” of the Code states: “Marketing communications should respect human dignity and should not incite or condone any form of discrimination, including that based upon race, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.

Owing to the fact that we have been able to see these international rules, to put an example of specific regulations, we would like to highlight the different resolutions passed by the organisms of the European Union. They focus on how advertising affects equality between women and men,

and how deeply stereotypes presented via advertising can be rooted. In addition, many EU directives have brought about the development of national regulation concerning gender equality.³⁹

Finally, to highlight some movements that also want to put their giant of sand, there is the existence of projects such as the SIAMURA. This Project is a “networking” on the study and investigation of the use of the image of women in advertising in the field of Law and Commercial Communications. This technological resource, framed in the digital society, allows interaction in the different academic, associative, institutional and business spheres, thus expanding its potential and new forms of distance relationships. SIAMURA encourages lawsuits to be filed in the courts to create jurisprudence on the matter, which does not yet exist.

We have been able to see that the main objective of the different legal norms and projects are based on advising companies in the use of the image of women in advertising so that it is truthful, loyal, honest and legal.

³⁹The Council Resolution of 5 October 1995 on the image of women and men portrayed in advertising and the media, OJ C 296, 10.11.1995, p. 15–16; The Parliament resolution of 25 July 1997 on discrimination against women in advertising, OJ C 304, 6.10.1997, p. 60; Resolution 1557 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, “Image of Women in Advertising” 26.7.2007; European Parliament resolution of 3 September 2008 on how marketing and advertising affect equality between women and men, OJ C 295E, 4.12.2009, p. 43–46.

Conclusion of TOPIC B: Representation of women in advertising and other media

In modern societies the advertising industry plays a major role in the media landscape. As we have been able to see, during the last years there has been a change in the advertisement: some kinds of industries are trying to empower women, to show her as real in all her shapes and to expose her beautifulness in any form. Nonetheless, it has not been enough because when in some parts of the globe we have been able to see this break of the line, this attempt to change the course of objectification of women, we have a lot more to do.⁴⁰

While many people might want to make a difference on issues of diversity, there is little concrete change. Shifting out of the sense that “things should be different” to asking “what can *I* do differently” is key. Bystanders observe a wrong attitude but tend to be relatively unlikely to address it because they question whether they are the right person to act, whether it is the right time, or whether someone else will step up. Those who confront, on the other hand, act on the wrongs they see.⁴¹

This is the reason why we should ask ourselves if our position is the bystander or the confronter one, in order to tackle the different issues that have been exposed in this paper.

⁴⁰ <https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/six-stereotypes-women-advertising/1426391>

⁴¹ <https://hbr.org/2019/06/tackling-the-underrepresentation-of-women-in-media>

Guiding Questions

1. Should we follow the marketing model used to this day even if selling the product or service has no connection with the image of the woman who appears in the ads?
2. Do companies use sexist advertisements in order to talk about them?
3. Is enough for the audience a gender-friendly message in advertisements?
4. Comparing the evolution of advertisements in history, what can society do in order to define the role of women in them?
5. Should governments intervene and adopt resolutions with specific legislation to forbid some kind of images in advertisements?
6. Is education a good instrument to show adolescents and other age groups which are the realities and false points of advertisements?
7. Should professional guidelines and codes of conduct be developed and implemented?

Further Reading

Topic A

- Amnesty International | Guidelines for Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls During the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AMR0121412020ENGLISH.PDF>
- Council of Europe | Women's rights and the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/women-s-rights-and-covid-19>
- European Parliament | Improving gender equality during and after the COVID-19 crisis: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210115IPR95718/improving-gender-equality-during-and-after-the-covid-19-crisis>
- UNHRC | 7 Possible Actions – Women's Rights and COVID 19: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/COVID-19_and_Women_Rights_7_Possible_Actions.pdf
- United Nations | the Impact of COVID-19 on Women: <https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/impact-covid-19-women>
- UN Women | UN Secretary – General's policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>

Topic B

- Council of Europe | Women in Media: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/women-in-media>
- Global Women's Issues: Women in the World Today, Extended Version | Chapter 10: Women in the Media: <https://opentextbc.ca/womenintheworld/chapter/chapter-10-women-and-the-media/>
- Harvard Business Review | Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media: <https://hbr.org/2019/06/tackling-the-underrepresentation-of-women-in-media>
- Internews | Impact: Women and Media <https://internews.org/impact/women>
- UN Women | The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20: <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/media>
- UN Women | Women and media: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women/2014/media>

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- Rattan, A., Chilazi, S., Georgeac, O. and Bohnet, I. (2019). *Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media*. Harvard Business Review.

Information of pictures and other sources

Picture 1: Poster for "Oldtimer", a big Austrian motorway rest stops (2019)

Picture 2: Advertising for Crest toothpaste, following the China's New Advertising Law of 2015 (2019)

Picture 3: Sports Illustrated Cover.

Picture 4: Table

Picture 5: AXE's advertisement

Picture 6: Dove's advertisement of 2004. The starting point of the curvy movement in advertisements.

UN Women, *The autocomplete truth* (2013): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkNlGuW-0g8>

The dangerous ways ads see women | Jean Kilbourne | TEDxLafayetteCollege (2014):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy8yLaoWybk>