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Stereotypes about women in Spanish high-end women’s magazines during the economic crisis

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Abstract

Introduction: This research study aims to determine whether high-end commercial women’s magazines have adapted the female stereotypes they present in their pages to the new situation of economic crisis that has affected Spain in recent years. **Methods:** The study is based on the content analysis of the advertising and information contents of the four most representative magazines, in terms of readership and circulation: *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, *Elle* and *Vogue*. The analysis focuses on the issues published in July, August and September of 2007, 2011 and 2014. **Results and conclusions:** The results indicate that the advertising and information contents of the sample of magazines no longer promote the archetype of the superwoman, which was predominant during the last century, and now present a new female model, the glamorous and fashionable woman, who is interested in fashion and is sometimes associated with luxury and exclusiveness.

Keywords

Women’s magazines; stereotypes; gender; women; advertising; information.

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1. Introduction

This research focuses on high-end commercial women's magazines, a print medium aimed at women that has been examined by numerous studies and from different perspectives, especially from the gender perspective. These publications are configured as a media product for a specific segment of the population, with great acceptance in the market and capable of generating a model about women in the imaginary of their readers. This research study precisely aims to verify whether this female model or stereotype reflects the current social and economic reality of Spain.

The analysis is limited to specific a spatial context and period: the Spanish economic crisis, which according to many authors dates back to the late 2007 and early 2008, in order to determine whether this situation has influenced the image of women that is implicitly and explicitly present in the information and advertising contents of these female publications, and establish whether this image has changed as a result of the crisis.

1.1. Historical evolution of the women's press in Spain

Commercial women's magazines, as we know them today, emerged in Spain in the 1960s. However, the real revolution of the female press occurred in 1986, with the arrival to our country of large international press groups, motivated by the legislative, political and social change of that time. During this time, the Spanish market saw the emergence of very important publications such as *Elle* (1986), *Vogue* (1988), *Cosmopolitan* (1990) and the Spanish *Woman* (1992), which coexist with other publications that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, such as *Telva* (1963), one of the longest-running Spanish women's magazines still in circulation (Ganzábal 2006, pp. 405-410). Thus, the 1985-1995 decade became one of the most convulsive periods in the women's press in Spain, with the launch of new publications, the transformation of some of the existing ones, and the closing of many other publications in the sector, including some of the most emblematic in the female press of previous decades: *Garbo*, *Ama*, *Greca*, *Prima* and *Dunia* (Gallego, 2008, p. 142-143).

Subsequently, the 21st century was marked by three basic events: the miniaturisation of the female press, the adaptation of the magazines to digital media and the economic crisis that began in 2008.

The reduction of the format of women's magazines was accompanied by the arrival of *Glamour* to our country in 2002 in a pocket-size. This mini format was quickly copied by the rest of the publications and became the format *par excellence* in the female press (Ganzábal, 2008, pp. 91,100), to the extent that practically all high-end female publications, with the exception of *Vogue* [1], use it today.

On the other hand, the rise of the Internet at the end of the last century forced the print media to adapt their structure to the new digital platforms, giving way to new formulas where text and image coexist with audiovisual and hypertext elements and design has been adapted to new media (Nieto, 2015, p. 133). The first high-end magazines to launch their web edition were *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan*, nearly at the same time as newspapers such as *La Vanguardia* and *El País*: in the mid-1990s, when the Internet was an emerging phenomenon in our country and only a minority of the population had access to it (Armentia, Ganzábal and Marín, 2011, p. 2). Today, all print women's magazines have their corresponding website, with formats adapted to the computer screen and later to the screens of tablets and mobile devices. In addition, currently, print women's magazines also have digitised versions available for purchase and download through digital platforms, and are present in the major social networks.

Subsequently, in 2008, the female press had to face the economic crisis that seriously affected all sectors, including the media and, thus, the print media (Gómez, 2012). However, even during this time of economic recession, Spain has witnessed the emergence of new female publications, such as *Harper's Bazaar* (2010), *CuoreStilo*, (2011), *¡Hola! Fashion* (2012), *Grazia* (2013) and *Divinity* (2014) (Gómez de Travesedo, 2015, pp. 398-399). These magazines emerged in the midst of the crisis and, in most cases, focused on the realms of fashion and beauty and adapted their contents to the harsh economic period affecting Spain. However, some of these publications continued to sell luxury and ostentation and to imitate the traditional women's magazines on the market.

1.2. Women's magazines in the context of the Spanish economic crisis

The economic crisis affecting our country since 2008 applies to all economic sectors, including communications. All media have been affected by this harsh economic situation, largely motivated by the decline in advertising spending; especially in the print media, which has also faced the gradual decline of readership as a result, among other factors, of the emergence of digital media, like online newspapers and magazines. These transformations have forced publishing companies to readjust their costs to their incomes, which has resulted in redundancies, the adjustment of products, and even the closing of declining publication to focus on more profitable outlets (Serrano and Calmache, 2010, p. 10).

Madinaveitia (2009, p. 24) argues that the current adverting crisis is the most serious ever faced by the Spanish media industry. This has been confirmed by Calmache, Serrano and Artigas (2010, p. 74), who argue that the decline in advertising spending, which is the main source of income for most media, is the most prominent cause of the endemic ills that affect the market since 2008.

Since the beginning of the crisis, in 2008, 12,200 media jobs have been lost and 375 media outlets have been closed, including newspapers, magazines, news agencies, and television channels. In relation to print media, and magazines in particular, from 2008 to 2015, a total of 1,589 jobs have been lost and 214 publications have been closed. On the other hand, 82 new publications have emerged. A hopeful fact is that 2014 saw a decline in the rate of closure with respect to the previous year, so it can be said that we are witnessing a slowdown in the pace with which jobs were lost and publications were closed, which intensified in 2015 (APM, 2015, pp. 92-93).

On the other hand, the behaviour of the advertising investment also reflects how the economic crisis has affected the traditional media sector, except for the Internet, which saw a significant decrease in investment (-40%) between 2008 and 2013. However, at the same pace of job losses and the closing of publications, there was an increase in advertising spending in media from 2014: 6.4% compared to the previous year. Sunday and weekday newspapers and magazines did not experience this recovery trend, and experienced a decrease in investment of 1% and 2.6% and a scant increase of 0.1%, respectively. The stagnation of the magazine sector is explained by the 3.4% decline of the publications that do not belong to the women's category, celebrity gossip, beauty, general information, men's magazines, decoration and fashion, which overall have increased by 2.6% (Infoadex, 2015).

Women's magazines, especially the high-end category, have suffered the consequences of this economic recession in a different way, since the products and brands that choose them as their advertising platform and the profile of their readers make these publications more resistant to the barrage of the economic crisis, to such an extent that publications such as *Vogue* have actually increased their readership during this period (Gómez de Travesedo, 2015, p. 1339).

Thus, it can be said that advertising investment in the beauty and fashion sectors, especially the high-end categories, does not seem to be affected by the crisis. In fact, women's magazines occupied the top positions in the ranking of advertising investment in the magazines segment in 2014, collecting 25.7% (65,220.303 euros) of all investment in the magazine sector. Seven of the leading magazines in the sector, *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Telva*, *Glamour*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Woman* and *Marie Claire*, represent 20.9% of all the ad investment in the magazine sector (Infoadex, 2015).

This has been confirmed by Serrano and Calmache (2010, p. 15), who found out that high-end advertisers find in these publications their best-suited and most related platform, not only in terms of the technical quality of the editorial product, but also in terms of the profile of the target audience. Moreover, the products that are advertised in these magazines are aspirational and their cost is related to a niche market with greater purchasing power and with consumption habits directly related to high fashion and cosmetics, which places them in a less dangerous position in the context of the crisis of advertisers (Serrano and Calmache, 2010, p. 15).

High-end publications belong to the so-called *consumer magazine* sector, which is aimed at a specific audience that is defined in demographic terms (in this case, middle-class women of 20 to 35 years of age) and is not specialised in business, but mainly in fashion and beauty. The average cost of this type of magazine, 2.5 euros, is insufficient to fund their production, due to the high price of gloss paper, so they survive thanks to advertising: about 27% of their surface consists of ads, normally full-page in size. (Torres, 2007, p. 219)

The reality is that the market of high-end women's magazines has remained quite stable. Thus, due to the idiosyncrasies of their audience and the kind of brands that choose them as advertising platforms, high-end women's magazines have become more immune to the income fluctuations that may affect other print media (Serrano and Calmache, 2010, p. 10).

1.3. Women's magazines from a gender perspective

Women are not the habitual consumer of the print press. For instance, in 2016 women only represented 38.7% of newspapers' readers. However, women are the typical reader of magazines (58.4%) (AIMC, 2016, p.14) and especially of female and gossip publications. The fact that the theme of their pages is traditionally regarded as women's interest is one of the secrets of the success of these publications which, in turn, become producers of gender stereotypes, provoking fascination and rejection at the same time in society (Menéndez and Figueras, 2013, p. 31).

Pendones (1999, p.311) defines the female or feminine theme as that which the female audience is more able to understand than men. Similarly, Stoll (1994, p.9) clarifies that women's magazines "treat topics that are *considered typical of women*: fashion, beauty, personal relationships and home care". When talking about issues 'considered typical' of women, Stoll adds a new dimension: it is not information that has necessarily been of interest to woman, it is issues that have been traditionally considered as feminine. Cabello (1999, p. 135) also refers to the contents of these publications as fashion, beauty, decoration and entertainment.

Thus, the thematic lines present in greater or lesser extent across high-end women's magazines reflect the model of women with which the female reader must identify with (Gallego, 1990, p. 197). For his part, Salicio (2002) argues that these magazines are configured as a showcase or mirror for female readers, who identify with the women depicted on their pages and aspire to be like them. These magazines become a source of knowledge that is sometimes more reliable than reality itself. Thus, "the media should be given the responsibility inherent to their own social influence, since they are able to delay or stimulate the changes demanded by society itself" (Salicio, 2002).

Following Gallego (1990, p. 86-87) we can define various models or recurrent images (as she calls them) of women that have been reflected in women's magazines at different times. These models are not necessarily consecutive in time since they are not a product of a chronological evolution, but correspond to certain moments in history in which one aspect or another has been promoted.

1. The woman as housewife. This model is associated with the roles of mother and spouse, so it would be a female profile with a triple perspective: housewife-mother-spouse. It is the female model most widely used by all the magazines of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century.
2. The woman as mother. This stereotype highlights the role of women in life as a mother, as a biological condition of the female essence. It is the discourse of the female press during the Franco regime.
3. The woman as significant other. Here the woman is depicted as a man's spouse or partner. This woman is given the role of building the story, not independently but as the companion of a man.
4. The woman as rival. It is a rivalry with respect to a man, based on the concept of absolute gender equality, but taking the male model as a reference. Therefore, it is a woman who

threatens with displacing men in society (Plaza, 2005, p. 92) and is configured as their rival.

5. The super woman. It is the new female model proposed by the magazines of the 1980s and 1990s. It is a woman who works outside the home, but also works at home and takes care of the family. Unlike the woman as housewife, in this model the woman has greater self-awareness. For this woman, home, whether she lives alone or with her family, is a “sanctuary” that she must take care of and although domestic work is a task now shared with men, the burden falls on her (Gallego, 1990, pp. 88-90). On the other hand, this super woman is represented on the covers of women’s magazines as beautiful and young, almost perfect. A woman with the seductive ability of a vamp, the work abilities of men, the sexual availability of a prostitute, the physical aspect of a model, intellectual culture, abilities and kindness of the mother.

Based on Gallego’s classification, Roca (2006, p. 150) summarises the three basic media female archetypes in three types: wife-mother-housewife, woman as object of desire and superwoman. The first corresponds to a married woman with children, dedicated to taking care of her children and home. This is the traditional model in which gossip magazines are based. The second archetype describes a woman completely devoted to taking care of her physical appearance and her capacity to attract the opposite sex. The author indicates that this is the typical model depicted in men’s magazines. The third archetype, the superwoman, reflects a woman who has a job outside the home, where she holds a position of some responsibility, but also has time for her children, family and home, and never neglects housework. A woman with time to do everything and take care of her physical appearance.

This last model is the one praised and cheer on by women’s magazines. However, this model deceives the reader as it has little to do with the reality not shown in pages, which according to Salicio (2002) is just “a modernised version of the same unchanging language that characterises any female magazine”.

Soloaga (2007, p. 43) also provides evidence of this dual trend in the advertising of women’s magazines. The author concludes that advertising shows “two distant corners of the real life of women”. Thus, some brands present an aggressive and active woman who is ready to take the lead in her sex and affective life, while other brands present a sensitive, fragile, sick-looking, extremely thin and passive woman”.

This superwoman is also identified by Casado (2009 pp. 14-15), when referring to the current female model proposed by advertising and the media as a woman who, without losing her traditional role of housewife, has education and professional training, as well as a flawless physical appearance, which is an aspect of concern and interest for the woman. This woman is “apparently liberated” but actually has an overload of roles, since she assumes male stereotypes without abandoning her traditional roles, and is required to be perfect inside and outside the home. Thus, the woman of the 21st century is freed from the prison of her predecessors, but walks towards a new prison, which Casado (2012, p.110) calls the “glass prison”.

On the other hand, Yrache (2007, p. 113) considers that 21st century female publications show another type of woman different from the one shown at the beginning of the last century, a woman who “has managed to escape from the historical burden which is the domestic and mother duties”. This is a woman without domestic linkages, independent thanks to her high purchasing power which, nonetheless, makes her a slave to luxury fashion and cosmetics.

Suárez (2006, p. 29) points out quite rightly that the domestic woman is replaced by the superwoman and the smock is replaced by top-brand accessories, which indicates that this woman does not abandon her traditional role of housewife but, thanks to her greater purchasing power, becomes a consumer of new habits.

On the same line, Menéndez and Figueras (2013, p. 43) consider that the woman represented in contemporary women’s magazines is defined by the cult of physical beauty, giving great importance to the articulation of the concept of beauty around the thinness of the body. In fact, the model presented in their pages and covers is emphasised by the advertising of these publications through fashion and beauty brands, which depict women as an “ornament” (Gallego, 1990, p. 198).

Likewise, Soloaga (2007, p. 43) concludes that women’s magazines “are feeding a series of social stereotypes that, although trying to evoke elegance, distinction and elitism, continue to praise values associated with a woman understood as a perfect object that pursues beauty and youth as essential values”. In this regard, Roca (2006, p. 153) identifies as one of the possible causes of this incongruity of discourse, the tyranny that advertising companies exert on the media, which sometimes does not respond to editorial interests. This has also been noted by other authors such as Gallego (1990, p.89), who considers female magazines as a commercial product, and Fallegger (1999, p.1) who highlights the close link between these publications and advertising to the extent that the information structure of the former is configured according to the interests of advertisers.

So, although we note changes in the stereotypes presented in the female press of recent years, the discourse and themes retain their signs of identity, with minimal changes, perpetuating the model of the eternal feminine [2], which although no longer revolves around the role of mother and spouse, has not overcome its “allegiance to the differential society” and pays little attention to the reality and identity of the 21st century woman, turning her discourse into a consumerist discourse (Menéndez and Figueras, 2013, p. 43).

The message comes beautifully wrapped in the glossy paper of the supposedly conquered liberation of women. However, this is only a smokescreen that covers, with flashing sequins, the same nineteenth-century discourse, that has not changed with the wire of time. They [women’s magazines] are not presented openly, as gossip magazines do, but their ideology is masked with the discourse that is more attractive to women, their personal and social fulfilment. For this reason, they are another form of sexism, because they use arguments much more refined, more updated than those traditionally used. The worst that can be said about women’s magazines is that their discourse is not transparent. (Salicio, 2002).

It is clear that the social status of women has changed a lot over the past centuries: their incorporation into the labour market, their social participation as citizens, their access to university

studies, the legalisation of common-law partners, the separation of the concept of marriage attached to maternity, the increased average age of motherhood, etc. And in this context the media and advertising reflect and participate in the new social construction of the female gender in the current century. “Their power as creators of gender images makes them protagonist agents of this new conceptual revolution” (Casado, 2009, p. 1).

However, the advertising view of women seems to have not evolved at the same pace as the political, historical and social events, so that the advertising discourse continues repeating roles from the past centuries, such as the woman as housewife, anchored in a private space dedicated to the care of the family (husband and kids). In this context, advertising offers to women, not mops, brooms, or cleaning products, but smart appliances, robotic vacuums, specific products that seem to make miracle (remove stains and lime scale without rubbing), so that they save effort and time that make chores easier and more bearable and allow women to have time off to go shopping or to the gym. This fact shows that, once again, advertising reflects a vision of a woman who is anchored at home and that the traditional female archetype that relates women with beauty, fashion and home is still perpetuated (Yrache, 2007, pp. 112-113).

Thus, the social representation of women in women’s magazines does not conform to reality, but reinforces certain obsolete parameters and social stereotypes, which place women in the private space of the home, reserving the public sphere to men despite the current social context is characterised by greater gender equality in the distribution of domestic chores (Roca, 2006, p. 153).

2. Methods

2.1. Methodological strategies

Based on the previous conceptual model, the empirical procedure used for the collection and subsequent exploitation of data obtained from the object of research has been content analysis, which allows us to obtain a series of data that can be quantified, analysed, and interpreted. Berelson (1952, p. 18) defines content analysis as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. Krippendorff (1990, p. 28) describes content analysis as “a research technique designed to formulate, based on certain data, reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to their context”. In addition, the selection of this technique is supported by various communication studies that have focused on the universe of women’s magazines and have used the same procedure: Fallegger (1999), Plaza (2005), Figueras (2005), Garrido (2007), Soloaga (2007), Torres (2007) and Orsini (2014), among others.

2.1.2. Population and sample

The object of this research study is high-end commercial, print women’s magazines edited in Spain. The study does not consider other types of publications that are also aimed at women but are not considered as part of the female press, like gossip, health, decoration, cuisine and girl magazines and the female supplements of newspapers, as well as digital women’s magazines that do not have a paper version.

The population of women’s magazines in our country currently consists of a total of 15 publications [3]. This figure was obtained by crossing data from the two agencies responsible for the

measurement of readership and circulation and dissemination of printed publications in Spain: The Association for Media Research (AIMC) through its *General Media Study* (EGM) and the Publications Information and Control, through the Circulation Audit Office (OJD).

The list of commercial women's magazines is composed by the following publications, in alphabetical order: *AR La revista de Ana Rosa Quintana*, *Clara*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Divinity*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Harper's Bazaar España*, *¡Hola! Fashion*, *In Style*, *Marie Claire*, *Mía*, *Stilo/Cuore Stilo* [4], *Telva*, *Vogue*, and *Woman Madame Figaro*.

From the aforementioned magazines, *Clara* and *Mía* have been defined by Plaza (2005, p. 98) as practical mid-range, not high-end, women's magazines. However, we have overlooked this consideration and included these magazines in our classification, since the author based his decision, in part, on the cover price of the publications; which is an irrelevant criterion due to the existence of the mini, price-cut format of high-end magazines and the emergence of new female publications at competitive prices, especially in recent years as a result of the economic crisis.

In short, these magazines constitute in principle the total population of commercial paper-based women's magazines in Spain, and our sample is composed of four publications, selected according to qualitative criteria (theme, periodicity, launch, print-format and target audience of these publications) and quantitative criteria (circulation and readership) to make sure the selected publications are as representative as possible, given the large number of publications of the same genre available in the market.

These criteria allow us to unify the variables present in the selected sample and to reduce it to commercial, high-end, monthly paper-based women's fashion and beauty magazines published in Spain and launched before 2006 and active until late 2014, targeting middle, upper-middle and upper-class women, aged 25 to 44 years.

The year of launch of the publications is an important fact and has been considered in the selection of publications intended for the empirical analysis. Since we focus on a specific period of time, from 2007 to 2014, it is necessary for the sample of magazines to meet the following criteria: first, they have to be edited throughout the period of analysis, and, second, they had to be in circulation at least two years before the crisis started. In other words, the sample had to include magazines that are consolidated in the market, to determine whether the representation of women has changed as a result of the new economic situation.

In terms of quantitative criteria, we have calculated the average circulation and readership during the entire period of analysis (2007-2014) of the publications that meet the aforementioned qualitative criteria. However, as we can see in table 1, which highlights in red the highest circulation and readership figures, although in both cases *Elle* and *Glamour* are among the four highest figures, there is no agreement with the other two publications. Thus, we proceeded with the selection, taking into account the readership criteria, which according to Perry (1995, p. 263) is more representative than circulation when there are discrepancies between the evolution of the circulation and readership. In the same vein, Gabardo and Frías (2000) consider that circulation data are not innocent, since the editor can manipulate them or influence them through price, free circulation and promotions. In addition, their ability to influence readership is less direct and predictable.

Table 1. Average readership and circulation from 2007 to 2014 [5]

PUBLICATIONS	Readership (000)	Circulation
<i>AR</i>	323	106.429
<i>Clara</i>	396	132.560
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	749	127.240
<i>Elle</i>	674	167.161
<i>Glamour</i>	561	212.896
<i>Telva</i>	429	173.366
<i>Vogue</i>	832	112.281
<i>Woman MF</i>	335	157.794

Source: Authors' own creation, EGM (2007-2014), OJD (2007-2014).

Finally, the women's magazines that make up the study sample are: *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour* and *Vogue* (sorted alphabetically). These four magazines meet all the criteria listed above. In addition, their selection also responds to readership criteria, so we chose the most representative publications in terms of readers. Plus, all of them also have high circulation rates.

Regarding the format, it was impossible to find uniformity given that *Vogue* is not published in a reduced format and *Glamour* did not have a large format until 2014. However, this is a marginal feature that will not pose any problems during the analysis of the sample data, since both formats, the standard and pocket-size, have the same contents and page design.

2.1.3. Period of analysis

To determine whether stereotypes about women included in high-end commercial women's magazines have experienced a substantial change during the Spanish economic crisis, the analysis period covered the year immediately prior to the crisis and the years of the economic recession, but only until 2014 for the purposes of focus. Thus, the period is wide and covers eight years. To refine the research, the analysis has focused on three years: the year prior to the crisis (2007), an intermediate year (2011), and the last year of this period of research (2014).

However, given that the analysis considers the advertising and information contents of such magazines, separately, and given the magnitude of the sample, we only selected three months from each of the selected years. Thus, a total of 36 publications were analysed.

For the selection of the months we did not find a uniform approach to identify the months with greater dissemination or readership in the three annual periods. Given the lack of monthly readership data, we analysed the circulation of the four publications selected during the three years. The months with the highest circulation based on the frequency of repetition are June, July, August and September, especially these last two. For the analysis we chose July, August and September, as they

are consecutive months. In addition, the selection includes the September issue, which according to Cristófol and Méndiz (2010, p. 1) is a special number in all women's magazines. Thus, the sample is composed of the issues of *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour* and *Vogue* published in July, August and September of 2007, 2011 and 2014.

2.1.4. Data collection instruments

Content analysis was carried out with a coding sheet that facilitated data collection and ensure objectivity, systematisation and quantification by the aforementioned authors (Berelson, 1952 and Bardin, 1996). The coding sheet was pilot-tested and adapted to the special circumstances of the magazines.

The data collection sheet distinguishes the profiles of women reflected in the advertising and information contents in a differentiated way. To define the stereotypes or profiles used to portray women in the advertising content we used the following categories: housewife, worker-student, mother, significant other, glamorous woman, famous woman, unclear and other (for profiles not included above). The 'famous' option was included later, after observing that part of the advertising content included famous women as the image of certain cosmetic and food brands.

Glamour is a term that has been used for a long time to refer to the dressing choices and lifestyles of certain people, and it is used to refer to the appearance of several Hollywood stars. In this context, the term is used to refer to those women who stand out from the rest and their surroundings for their beauty, sophistication and elegance. Thus, we associate this female model with luxury and refinement. In this way, we use the term to refer to the images of women that show their high social status through their environment (luxury cars, mansions, domestic service...) or their appearance (high fashion, jewellery, makeup and hairstyle).

With regards to the women's profiles reflected in the information contents of these publications, we used the categories used for the analysis of the advertising content, plus two new profiles: the chic or fashionable woman and the superwoman. The first of these two profiles is included because these magazines focus on fashion and it is quite likely they include clear references to women who dress, do their hair and makeup or choose chic travel destinations. The last category, superwoman, has been sufficiently defined in the theoretical framework as the perfect woman in all respects.

These two categories were not considered in the analysis of advertising content because the first of them is present in most of the fashion ads which would complicate reading, preventing the identification of other profiles, while the second is difficult to identify through the simple analysis of the advertising image.

3. Results

3.1. Stereotypes about women in advertising contents

Considering the previously defined profiles, we can see that in the vast majority of cases the female models that the advertising content is trying to represent are unclear or undifferentiated.

The archetype of the working woman appears normally associated with ads of training courses, master's degree programmes, and fairs or events dedicated to professionals. There are also ads that show women in a work environment through the *mise-en-scène* and the disposition of women.

With regards to the profile of woman as mother, it is reflected in ads which show women as part of a family or ads of products intended for children or babies (fashion or childcare), as well as in ads of family magazines and some products for mothers, such as stretch-mark treatments (Vogue, July 2014, p. 87). In general, the presence of the family is scarce in this type of magazines, which is confirmed with the analysis of the model of woman as mother, which appears rarely.

The woman as housewife neither appears frequently: it was detected in only ten out of 2,033 ads. When it appears, it is normally associated with ads about appliances and kitchen and cleaning products.

Though it may seem otherwise, the woman as significant other (spouse, girlfriend, etc.) or friend is neither shown. In most cases, women appear alone, despite being surrounded by other people, as an advertising model itself. Thus, these representations in most cases have been included in the category of 'unclear'.

The analysis by year indicates that in 2007 no female profile can be differentiated in 84% of cases, which often show female models posing next to certain products, without any elements that allow us to place her in any of the aforementioned categories. In addition, in most cases, the texts accompanying advertising are merely descriptive of the characteristics of the product, and provide little information about the model of woman represented.

In almost 5% (4.98%) of the cases the female image that is presented is a glamorous woman, i.e., a woman who stands out from others for being surrounded by luxury, which is almost always reflected by the surrounding environment or accompanying elements that give her that peculiar air of exquisiteness and distinction. A famous woman appears in 3.13% of the cases.

The profile of the woman as worker, significant other and mother appears on rare occasions (in 1.97%, 1.39% and 1.27% of cases, respectively), while the woman as housewife or friend appears very marginally (in 0.7% and 0.93% of cases, respectively). This last figure is very strange, especially considering that the discourse of these magazines addresses female readers as intimate friends. In 1.6% of cases the female image shown by advertising is another: athlete, artist, etc.

In 2011 the distribution of profiles in the advertising content was very similar to the previous period. In most cases, in 80% of ads, no specific profile can be identified, while 5.48% of ads present women as glamorous, which is slightly higher than in 2007. The presence of the archetype of the famous woman also increased by 1.22% (4.53%).

However, there is a significant increase in the archetypes of woman as friend (going from 0.93% in 2007 to 3.71% in 2011), as significant other (2.42%) and even as mother (2.10%). However, the profiles of woman as worker and housewife decreased.

Regarding the last year analysed, the data are very similar to the data from the previous year analysed. However, there is a decreasing presence of almost all the female profiles, with the

exception of the woman as worker, which is the only one which increases with respect to the previous period (from 1.29% to 2.91%), together with the category “unclear”, which applies to 86% of the analysed ads.

It is interesting that in the midst of the crisis, it was precisely the profile of woman as worker which increases the most, when the Spanish society is going through a delicate time with large unemployment figures.

In general terms and bearing in mind the whole period of analysis, the profiles that appear in most ads (aside from the vast majority of cases in which no profile is clear) are the glamorous woman and the famous woman.

Table 2. Percentage variation of the female profiles presented during the period of analysis

Female Profiles	2007	2011	Variation 07-11	2014	Variation 11-14	Variation 07-14
Unclear	84.01%	80.0%	-4.77%	86.0%	7.50%	2.37%
Famous	3.13%	4.35%	39.19%	2.91%	-33.20%	-7.02%
Glamorous	4.98%	5.48%	10.06%	1.64%	-70.16%	-67.16%
Friend	0.93%	3.71%	300.18%	1.82%	-50.99%	96.14%
Significant other	1.39%	2.42%	73.99%	1.82%	-24.85%	30.76%
Mother	1.27%	2.10%	64.50%	0.55%	-73.99%	-57.21%
Worker	1.97%	1.29%	-34.50%	2.91%	125.45%	47.68%
Housewife	0.70%	0.48%	-30.40%	0.18%	-62.42%	-73.85%
Other	1.62%	0.16%	-90.06%	2.18%	1253.73%	34.49%

Source: Authors’ own creation.

The analysis of the percentage variation by periods (Table 2, shows the negative variations in red) indicates that from 2007 to 2014 the profiles of woman as friend, significant other, and worker increased, while the profile of the woman as housewife, mother and glamorous woman decreased.

Thus, for example, in the analysed period we can see a positive percentage variation of 96% in terms of the representation of women as friend and almost of 48% in the representation of women as working women in advertising and a decrease of 73.85% in the representation of women as housewife; and of 57.21% in the representation of women as mother. Thus, magazines abandon the model of women as mother and housewife, as the data show. In contrast, the advertising content analysed defines women more as worker, friend and significant other.

However, there is a decrease of 67% in the presence of the glamorous woman; so that the advertising model reflected by women’s magazines moves away, especially in recent years, from the tendency to

sophistication and glamour as a sign of social and economic distinction. In contrast, the profile of the famous woman replaces the archetype of the glamorous woman, since, although there is a decline in the period analysed, it represents the highest percentage (2.91%) of all the identified profiles.

3.2. Stereotypes about women in information contents

With regards to the profile of women presented on the information contents of women’s magazines in 2007, 35.63% of cases do not show a differentiated female profile, 34.63% of cases show a woman interested in fashion and following trends, 10.20% of cases show a glamorous woman, who stands out for her exclusive clothes and products and for visiting nice destinations. Famous women are represented in 7.18% of the analysed cases. The rest of the defined profiles appear in a minority of cases: woman as significant other in 4.31% of cases, the working woman in 2.44%, the mother in 1.58% and the superwoman in only 0.57% of cases. The woman as friend or housewife is not represented.

The situation does not vary significantly in 2011, although this time the percentage of “unclear” profile decreases and the profile of the chic or fashionable woman increases to 38.01%. The famous woman and the glamorous woman have an equal presence (9.81%), followed by the woman as significant other, in 7.08% of cases, and as a worker, in 2.45% of cases. The role of the superwoman appears again in just a marginal percentage of 0.82%, and there is a significant decrease of the profile of the woman as mother, with respect to 2007, with 0.14% (a single textual unit that refers to a woman in that role).

Table 3. Female profiles in information contents

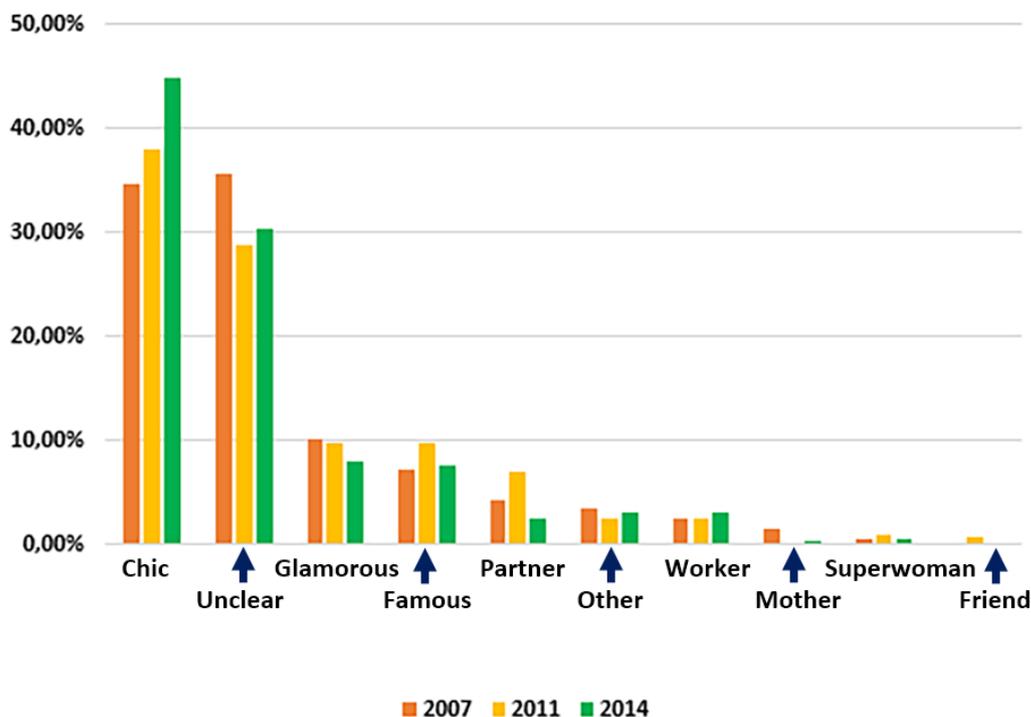
Female Profiles	2007	2011	2014	Total period
Chic or fashionable	34.63%	38.01%	44.79%	39.09%
Unclear	35.63%	28.75%	30.36%	31.54%
Glamorous	10.20%	9.81%	7.89%	9.32%
Famous	7.18%	9.81%	7.59%	8.23%
Significant other	4.31%	7.08%	2.38%	4.66%
Other	3.45%	2.45%	3.13%	3.00%
Worker	2.44%	2.45%	2.98%	2.62%
Mother	1.58%	0.14%	0,30%	0.67%
Superhuman	0.57%	0.82%	0.45%	0.62%
Friend	0.00%	0.68%	0.15%	0.29%
Housewife	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Authors’ own creation

In 2014 the most marked declines occurred in the profiles of woman as friend, significant other, superwoman, famous and glamorous. The most significant increase is the profile of the chic or fashionable woman, which was present in almost 45% of the units (44.79%). That is, almost half of the information contents of these magazines present a woman interested in all areas of fashion.

In conclusion, these magazines do not represent women in their role as housewife, and their profile as mother has also decreased significantly, so it can be argued that these publications disregard the concept of mother and family, which the analysis of the advertising content has shown on several occasions. Overall, the presence of all profiles has decreased, except for the chic woman, the working woman and the famous woman, although the behaviours of these profiles and the rest of the patterns are irregular in the analysed period. The largest increase corresponds to the role of the chic or fashionable women, which experienced an increase of 29.34% throughout the period analysed.

Figure 1. Evolution of female profiles during the period analysed.



Source: Authors' own creation

The analysis of these magazines has also shown a decrease of 22.65% of the profile of the glamorous woman, which is a concept closely related to luxury and high fashion and cosmetics. There has also been a decrease in the presence of the profile of woman as significant other and superwoman. However, the latter profiles reached its highest percentage in 2011 but decreased once again in 2014. The role of woman as friend was not present in 2007 but appeared in 2011 and dropped significantly in 2014, although the figures do not exceed 0.7%. Figure 1 shows that the presence of the archetype

of the chic women increased during the years of the economic crisis, while the presence of the archetype of the glamorous woman decreased.

In any case, the most common profile in these publications, in those cases in which a profile is identified, is the chic or fashionable woman, followed by the glamorous woman, the famous woman and the woman as significant other. The category “other” encompasses other roles or profiles that can be identified are not included in the predefined categories, including the lone woman, the sports woman, etc.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The traditional model of woman as housewife-mother-spouse, has been replaced by the profile of woman as worker-friend-significant other, with great concern for her appearance. This new model of the working woman, who likes to go out and enjoy her friends but also to have a partner, is perfectly reflected in the advertising content. However, the information contents, without losing sight, focus on a woman who has left aside the glamour that distinguished her (which is also reflected in the advertising content) but emerges as a woman who follows fashion trends and is concerned about her physical appearance.

The winner is the new model of the chic or fashionable woman, who follows the latest trends taking as reference famous women, which is a model depicted in the advertising and information contents, and aspires to become one of the women she admires and imitates (in terms of clothing and lifestyles, for example). Glamour does not disappear completely but is transformed: women do not need to have money and class but to follow trends and stay updated.

The woman as housewife and mother disappear entirely, despite the age of the target audience of these publications is within the average age in which women become mothers in Spain [6]. So women abandon domestic roles (the private space) to find their position in the work environment (the public space); also losing their status as mother, which is a role magazines don't pay attention to, not even from the advertising or informative point of view; women are separated completely from that concept of maternity, which is presented as a barrier, impediment or distraction to achieve their ultimate.

These magazines present a woman who is preferably single and childless, in such a way that she is fully independent and has nothing and nobody to stop her from reaching her goal, which is to look pretty and fashionable, which in turn requires all of her effort, i.e., time and money, which would be impossible to do if she had a family and therefore other priorities.

In addition, home is rarely depicted, and when it is shown, the contents focus on the decoration, linking it with such concepts as luxury and glamour, reflected in the homes of designers and celebrities.

Women's magazines understand that the ideological model of woman as housewife, mother and spouse is obsolete and, thus, replace it with a new model they are interested in promoting: a consumerist woman, who consumes everything, but mainly fashion and beauty. The woman is

reflected outside the home and becomes, what the magazines call, a *fashion victim*, who devotes her time and money to fashion.

Obviously, the profile of women presented in these publications is consistent with the fundamental pillars of these magazines, so they distance themselves from the superwoman archetype identified by the academic literature. Women have already become aware of their role change in society; they already know they bear a double and heavy burden: the work and home environments and all each of them entails. Accordingly, women's magazines do not believe it is necessary to remind their female readers about that yoke (although they do it in some occasions) and try to present a world where the home and the work in it do not exist.

The analysis of the evolution of the information contents of these magazines shows that the presence of the archetypes of the chic woman and the glamorous woman has decreased, but the final frequency of these profiles continues to be among the highest of all the analysed profiles. Thus, these magazines neglect completely the profile of the housewife and hardly pay any attention to the profiles of the mother, highlighting her fashion and beauty interests and, to a lesser extent, the working woman and the friend woman. The new female model reflected in these magazines can be defined as a professional woman, who works outside the home, but does not necessarily occupy positions of great responsibility. This woman also aspires to reach the Western standards of beauty and follows fashion trends, to the point of becoming a slave of fashion. This woman does not aim to be a mother; she is a woman who takes care of herself and enjoys the pleasures of life.

The same occurs in the advertising content. However, in this type of content there is an increase in the presence of the profile of the working woman at a time of the economic recession, in which the unemployment rate is very high. On the other hand, there a decrease in the presence of the profile of the glamorous woman. The interpretation is that during the crisis women's magazines also try to reduce to some extent the concept of glamour associated with luxury, although this does not disappear completely and continues to represent significant percentages of presence both in advertising and information contents.

On the other hand, we detected the presence of the famous woman, which indicates the importance granted by these publications to the world of celebrities. Although their treatment differs from the one given by gossip magazines, women's magazines are aware of the relevance of certain characters from the world of fashion, film and television for their female readers. Thus, they talk about the outfits and destination choices of female celebrities.

Thus, we can conclude that there has been an evolution of the model of woman that characterised the female press of the 20th century towards a woman that is a slave to beauty and fashion. This new model is represented in magazines since the beginning of the century, as shown by the analysis of the publications in 2007. The model of superwoman, which was outlined by the specialised literature and was present before the economic crisis, did not disappear completely from the female press. However, a new model emerges: the woman who is too concerned about her physical appearance and her fashion choices, as elements that make her feel better and prettier; a woman who takes the famous woman as a model of reference; a woman who is prepared to spend large sums of money to

stand out from the crowd, and, although she does not abandon the glamour that used to characterised her before the economic crisis, she seeks more economic alternatives.

5. Notes

[1] *Vogue* belongs to the same publishing group as *Glamour* (a pioneer in the introduction of that format), but has resisted the mini format. However, for Ganzábal (2008, p. 103), it is only a matter of time before *Vogue* adopts the small format.

[2] The prototype of “the eternal feminine” corresponds to a mythical woman who combines beauty, kindness, purity, love, tenderness, and an angelical nature (Perinat and Marrades, 1980, p. 171).

[3] The study took into account the publications considered by both agencies in August 2015.

[4] This publication has undergone changes in the title of its cover. Currently, the editor herself calls it *Stilo*, but its website’s name is *cuorestilo*, while OJD and EGM call it *Cuore Stilo*.

[5] *In Style* and *Marie Claire* have been omitted because there are no data about their readership during the whole period.

[6] The average age at which Spanish women become mother for the first time is 31 years (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015).

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