

Stereotypical Representations of Gender Roles in Romanian Pharmaceutical Advertising

<https://doi.org/10.31178/SC.15.2.01>

Meda MUCUNDORFEANU¹, Assoc. Prof., Ph.D.
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
mucundorfeanu@fspac.ro

Julia SZAMBOLICS², Lecturer, Ph.D.
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
szambolics@fspac.ro

Abstract: The present study is set out to determine the way in which video advertisements for pharmaceutical products, published online, depicted female, and male consumers, respectively. The paper offers an overview of the gender roles which have been used in Romanian pharmaceutical advertisements, this being the most promoted category of products on TV in the last years. We conducted a content analysis where we included the television commercials of the top ten pharmaceutical companies, as determined by ad ratings, aired on Romanian television during the year 2019. The findings show that more female gender roles than male gender roles have been used in the ads. However, the types of gender roles which have been mostly used are similar, the most common being the career woman/ career man, the mother/ father, the beautiful woman/ attractive man.

Keywords: female representation; gender roles; male representation; pharmaceutical advertising; TV commercials.

1. Introduction

One important facet of the healthcare sector is pharmaceutical advertising, which has the capacity to affect individuals' choices regarding their health. Inaccurate impressions of medical diseases and treatments might be caused by stereotypical gender roles used in advertising. Pharmaceutical advertisements may reinforce negative gender stereotypes and worsen gender inequality, or can add to the stigmatization of some illnesses, such as mental health issues, by frequently linking it to a particular gender.

The use of stereotypical gender roles in pharmaceutical advertising warrants more study since it has the potential to affect patients' health decisions, reinforce negative gender stereotypes, and exacerbate gender inequity. Research on this topic can contribute to developing a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system that supports the health and well-being of all people.

¹ <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8842-9551>

² <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0066-9292>

Since the rise of gender studies in the 1970s, most research focused on the representation of women, the representation of men being mostly neglected until the year 2000 (Wörsching, 2009). Research on gender stereotypes and gender roles specifically in the field of advertising started with the rise of feminism, where equal opportunities for men and women were demanded, and with the gradual change in occupational opportunities for women, changes which were then reflected by the advertising industry (Zotos & Lysonski, 1994).

Following increased complaints by consumers, EU institutions, such as the European Advertising Standard Alliance (EASA), began working on their ethical guidelines regarding gender representations in advertising (Grau & Zotos, 2016). In 2008 an EU resolution was adopted regarding the effects of advertising on the equality between men and women (Svensson, 2008). Also, scientific research is attempting to find out whether gender stereotyping and the gender roles presented in advertising are a reflection of the values of a society or whether it is the other way around and the members of society are influenced by the gender roles portrayed in the media and in advertisements.

2. Literature review and research questions

There is a long-standing debate in specialized literature about the consequences of using gender roles and stereotypes in advertisements. Two opposing points of view have been formulated so far: the “mirror” and the “mold” argument. The “mirror” argument states that advertising simply reflects the values and gender roles which are existent and dominant in a society at a given time and that advertisers simply make use of them in order to promote their goods and services (Holbrook, 1987). Therefore, the impact of advertising in shaping people’s opinions regarding gender roles would be not very significant, advertising being just a reflection of the dominant gender roles existing in society (Zotos & Tschla, 2014). On the other hand, the “mold” argument states that exposure to the gender roles and values which are presented in advertisements is able to shape the values, and furthermore the attitude and behavior of the audience (Pollay, 1986; 1987). The mold argument is in line with the cultivation theory, which states that the duration of the exposure to certain stimuli or content presented in the media can cultivate the audiences’ beliefs and values to be more consistent with the world showed in the media than with the real world (Gerbner et. al, 2002).

One study which dealt with an analysis of several studies (N=64) on gender roles and stereotypes revealed that the mirror argument is more likely to be valid: advertising experts are aware of gender-related developments and values in society and use them to promote their brands, rather than try to alter them (Eisend, 2010). According to the same author, it is very difficult to prove the “mold” argument, as it would require experimental approaches, which would however not exclude the possibility of validating this argument.

Irrespective of which of the two arguments is valid, it is necessary to look into advertising and its portrayal of gender roles, since both arguments talk about the presence

of a direct relationship between the values and roles which are existent in a society and those which are used in advertising.

According to Grau and Zotos (2016), who analyzed other studies on the depiction of stereotypes and gender roles, it is necessary that researchers focus their attention towards analyzing the depiction of gender portrayals on online platforms, since time spent online has increased to a great extent in recent years. Hence, the present analysis revolves around promotional video ads published on the very popular online platform *YouTube*.

There are several recent scientific papers on drug advertising in Romania which analyze TV advertisements, but, to our knowledge, with a different focus from gender roles portrayals, such as: the communicational strategies used in over-the-counter drug advertising (Chiribucă & Hanță, 2013), or how promotional activities of pharmaceutical companies are perceived by Romanian consumers (Ruse et al., 2018), or the impact of exposure to television advertising for pharmaceutical products on Romanian consumers (Marinescu, 2019).

The aim of the present paper is to analyze the way in which video advertisements for pharmaceutical products, published online, depicted female and male consumers, respectively. Therefore, three research questions have been formulated:

RQ1: Which gender is predominantly present in Romanian commercials used for promoting pharmaceutical goods?

RQ2: What are the most dominant gender roles used for female and for male representation in commercials?

RQ3: Is there a significant statistical difference between the amount of female gender representation and the male gender representation in the analyzed sample?

3. Methodology

The present study employed a content analysis methodology to examine the television commercials of the top ten pharmaceutical companies, as determined by ad ratings broadcast on Romanian television throughout the year 2019, according to the Romanian edition of *Forbes* magazine (Barbu, 2020). The pharmaceutical field was chosen based on a study which showed that, in Romania, the pharmaceutical industry was the leader regarding its estimated net media investments in 2019 (Media Fact Book, 2019). All things considered, it seems reasonable to assume that a study using this sample could give us statistically valuable answers to the research questions that have been previously formulated.

A total of N=93 advertisements promoting pharmaceutical products from these companies comprised the sample for analysis. The source for data collection was the YouTube channels of the respective pharmaceutical companies, where all TV ads were readily available.

Table 1. Top 10 pharmaceutical companies with the highest TV ratings for their advertisements in Romania (Source: Forbes Romania)

<i>Pharmaceutical company</i>	GRP '30	Nr. of ads for the sample
<i>Zdrovit</i>	109.060	42
<i>Sanofi-Aventis</i>	40.019	8
<i>Glaxosmithkline</i>	37.745	8
<i>Biofarm</i>	32.136	3
<i>Naturpharma Products</i>	24.145	13
<i>Terapia SA</i>	24.096	8
<i>Sandoz</i>	18.125	4
<i>Catena</i>	14.194	Was excluded from the sample, due to lack of relevance for this study ³
<i>Berlin-Chemie</i>	13.536	5
<i>Johnson & Johnson</i>	12.881	2

The sample initially included the most recent video commercials for each of the companies mentioned above, which were available on their YouTube channels. From this initial sample we excluded all advertisements which were difficult to code or unclear, for example advertisements containing animations or which showed only parts of the human body, not an entire person. The final sample included a total number of 93 video commercials (N= 93) from all sources.

Coding was performed manually by the two authors of the present paper and the analysis has been carried out with the computer program SPSS. Both coders were instructed to code for the presence (1) or absence (0) of the variables under investigation for the majority of questions.

To determine the intercoder reliability, a random sample of approx. 20% (n= 19 ads) of the total number of articles was analyzed. This is consistent with the recommendation of calculating the intercoder reliability on a subsample of between 10-20% of the total sample (Weathers et al., 2014). Krippendorff's alpha was used for the calculation and the result for this subsample. The value was .89. This reliability coefficient was chosen because, according to its developers, it can be used irrespective of the number of coders or the sample sizes (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007, p. 77).

Several scales developed by different researchers were used in order to assess which gender roles were present in the analyzed sample of commercials. This deductive approach was completed with an inductive one, the coders having added some new variables during the coding process. In the end, for assessing the presence or absence of female gender roles, we used the following variables for female gender roles:

³ Eligibility criteria required pharmaceutical companies to have video commercials for their own products. Catena was excluded on the basis of not having commercials promoting goods produced by Catena, but by other companies.

- Kohlweiß (2006): the housewife, the mother, the beauty, the sex object, the athletic woman, the career woman, the multitasking wonder;
- Litzka (2001): the bon vivant, the luxurious woman, the young woman, the seducer, the funny woman;
- Own addition: the know-it-all, the senior.

In order to assess the presence or absence of male gender roles, the coders used the following variables for male gender roles:

- Zurstiege (1998): the all-round man, the career man, the attractive man, the handyman, the bon vivant, the artist, the father;
- Dreßler (2008): the funny man, the adventurous man, the serious man;
- Pelinka (2005): the metrosexual man;
- Own addition: the athletic man, the senior

This entire process resulted in two large scales, one for measuring female gender roles, and the other for measuring male gender roles. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to measure the internal consistency for the two scales values. The results indicated that the scales were reliable: the female gender roles scale consisting of 14 items ($\alpha = .131$) and the male gender roles scale consisting of 13 items ($\alpha = .214$).

4. Results

The analysis has been carried out in SPSS. The first results indicated that the most common products present in the chosen sample of video commercials are for very common issues related to: digestion, the common cold, the immune system, muscle and bone aches and for wound treatment, followed by many others, as shown in figure 1 below.

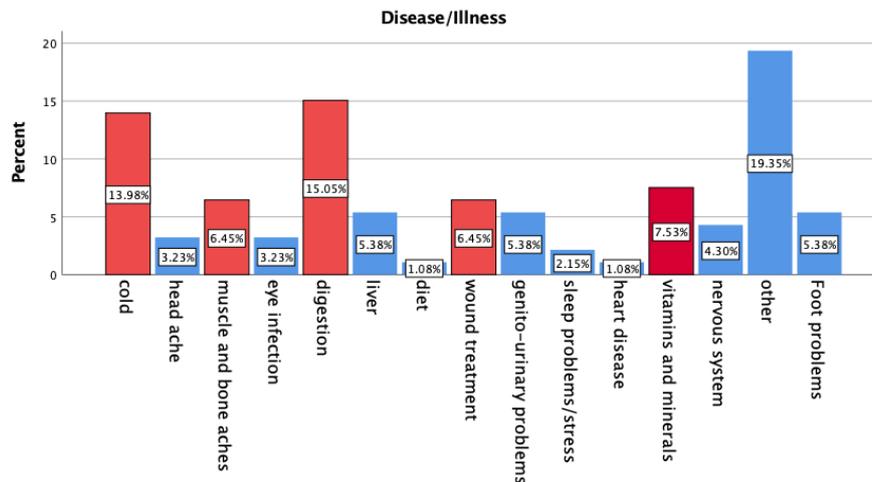


Figure 1. Promoted pharmaceutical products

A small number of products are for problems which are specific for a certain gender (10.75% for women and 3.23% for men), while most of the products (86.02%) are not gender-specific, as shown in figure 2.

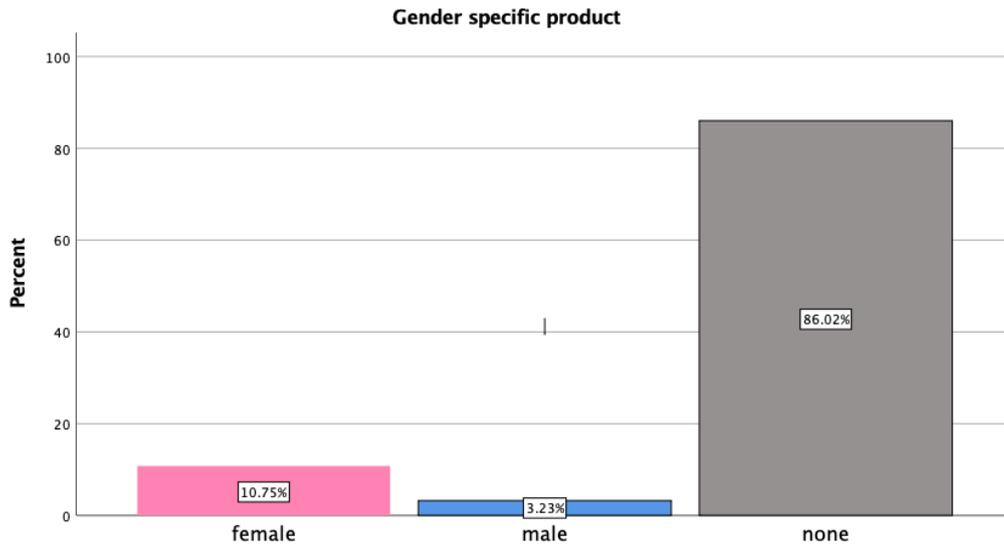


Figure 2. Gender-specific pharmaceutical products

Since so many products are not aimed towards solving medical problems which are specific to a certain gender, the next step consisted in answering RQ1 by looking at the gender of the actors present in the commercials and seeing which gender is predominant in the analyzed sample. The overview can be seen in figure 3 below. Almost half of the TV advertisements included either both genders (48.39%) or exclusively female actors (40.86%), while only 10% of the analyzed advertisements included just male actors. From this we can draw that female characters or actors were predominantly used in the ads. Consequently, the coders could identify two times more female gender roles (105), compared to male gender roles.

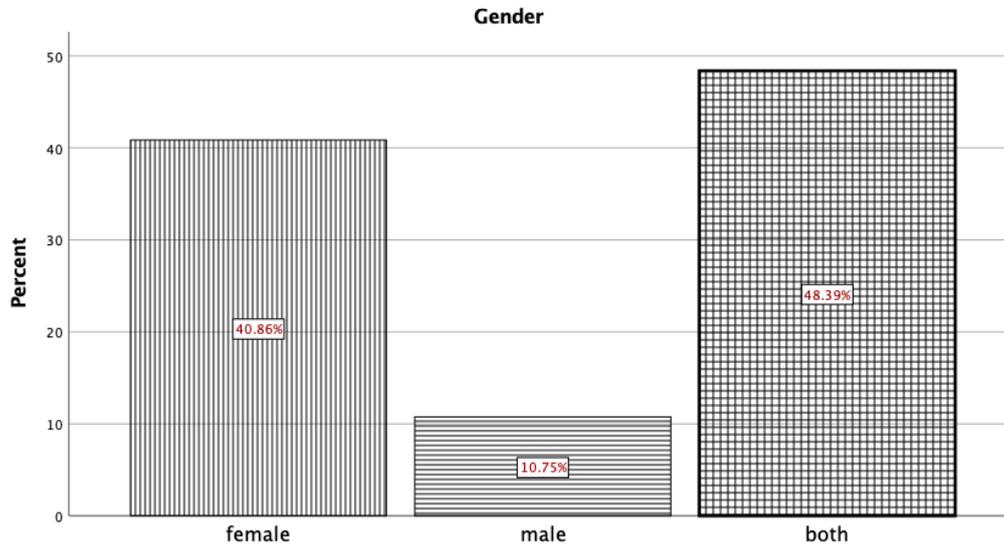


Figure 3. Gender of actors present in the advertisements

A cross-tabulation between the gender-specific products and the gender of the character/ actor in the commercial showed that in the ads where female products were advertised, female actors were used exclusively. There were only three advertisements promoting male products, two of them using male actors and the third using both a male and a female. In the advertisements where the products were not gender-specific, more than half (55%) included both male and female actors, while 35% of these ads included only female actors and 10% only male actors. A general conclusion in this regard might be that female actors have been predominantly used to advertise for gender-specific, as well as for gender-unspecific pharmaceutical products.

Another aspect, which the authors considered to be important, was the age group of the actors present in the ads, which might be an indication of the age group of the target audience of the ads or the presented products. According to the chart below, the most frequently used age group was that of young adults, between 17 and 34 (52.69 %), followed by the age group 35-54 (36.56%), then by the age group 55-74 (9.68%), while the least represented age group was that of children with the ages between 0-16 (1,08%). The age groups were defined based on a study conducted by the National Institute of Statistics on Internet usage and from our point of view these age groups can define the target audience of the presented products, even if the TV viewer profile would consist in more differentiated age groups (Media Fact Book, 2019).

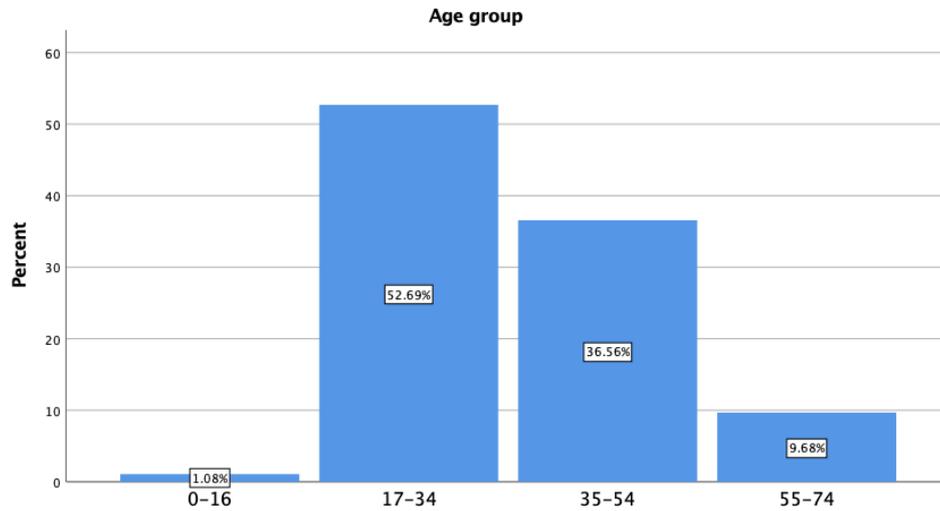


Figure 4. Age group of actors present in the advertisements

Another important aspect refers to the level of emotionalization used in the ads. Emotionalization can be defined as the intentional evoking of emotion (Flemming et al, 2018). According to Leidenberger (2015), there are three forms of emotionalization in the media, namely textual, visual and emotionalization transmitted through music. We have taken into consideration all three types of emotionalization in the current study and examined the presence of distress, since we are aware that distress is an active driver of persuasion-induced behavioral change (Hill et al., 1998). In these specific cases, where the promoted goods are pharmaceutical products aimed at reducing pain or discomfort, we looked into whether the characters presented in the scenes showed obvious distress, which would then be eliminated by the promoted goods. Almost 60% of the ads resorted to this technique, aimed at making the audience empathize with the characters in the ads, and showed them in obvious distress or pain. Less than half of the advertisements did not present their characters in obviously painful situations.

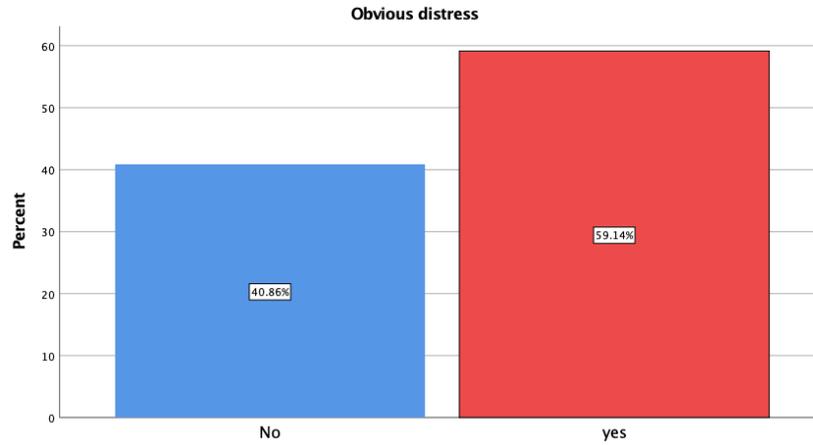


Figure 5. Obvious distress in advertisements

Referring to RQ2 regarding the gender roles attributed to the female and to the male characters present in the ads, respectively, table 2 and table 3 render a good overview.

The most dominant gender roles used for female representations in the selected advertisements are the career woman ($M=.20$), followed by the beauty ($M=.17$), the housewife ($M=.14$), the mother ($M=.12$), the young woman ($M=.11$), and the senior ($M=.11$).

Table 2. Intensity of Female Gender Roles Variables

Female Gender Roles	Mean	N.	St. Deviation
The career woman	.20	93	.40
The beauty	.17	93	.37
The housewife	.14	93	.34
The mother	.12	93	.32
The young woman	.11	93	.31
The senior	.11	93	.31
The athletic woman	.09	93	.28
The know-it-all	.06	93	.24
The bon vivant	.04	93	.20
The funny woman	.02	93	.14
The multitasking wonder	.02	93	.14
The luxurious woman	.02	93	.14
The seducer	.01	93	.10
The sex object	.01	93	.10

The most dominant gender roles used for male representations in the selected advertisements are the career man ($M=.12$), followed by the senior ($M=.11$), the father ($M=.05$), the attractive man ($M=.05$), the athletic man ($M=.05$), and the serious man ($M=.04$).

Table 3. Intensity of Male Gender Roles Variables

Male Gender Roles	Mean	N.	St. Deviation
The career man	.12	93	.32
The senior	.11	93	.31
The father	.05	93	.22
The attractive man	.05	93	.22
The athletic man	.05	93	.22
The serious man	.04	93	.20
The all-round man	.03	93	.17
The funny man	.03	93	.17
The bon vivant	.02	93	.14
The artist	.02	93	.14
The handyman	.01	93	.10
The metrosexual man	.00	93	.00
The adventurous man	.00	93	.00

While there is clear overlapping between the most popular male and female gender roles present in the analyzed sample, a significant observation must be made, which is that two of the most common male gender roles described in the specialized literature have not been found at all in the commercials containing male actors.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to answer RQ3, which examined the difference between the use of female and male gender roles respectively. The analysis indicated that the difference between female ($M=.08$, $SD=.076$) and male gender roles ($M=.04$, $SD=.061$) was not significant $t(74) = -1.89$, $p=.062$.

5. Discussion

In line with previous studies (Asadi & Shah, 2023), women have been predominantly present in pharmaceutical advertising compared to men. Female actors have been predominantly used to advertise pharmaceutical products for several reasons. First off, women are frequently the ones who make most family healthcare decisions. They may also be more likely to use and buy healthcare services and products. Thus, using female actresses in pharmaceutical advertising may be a successful strategy for reaching the target market and boosting sales. Secondly, women are frequently perceived as being more sympathetic and caring than men, which may help promote healthcare items more successfully. The inclusion of female actors can contribute to the creation of a

more compassionate and sympathetic image for the product since pharmaceutical advertising frequently focuses on generating a sense of trust and security. On the other hand, the usage of female actresses in pharmaceutical advertising could reinforce negative gender stereotypes and worsen gender inequality. It may also perpetuate the notion that women make the majority of healthcare choices and restrict the options available to men working in the healthcare sector.

Unlike in previous studies (Hansen & Osborne, 1995) where elderly were overrepresented in pharmaceutical advertising, in the case of the present study the most frequently used age group to advertise pharmaceutical products was that of young adults between 17 and 34. One reason might be that they are frequently seen as the most self-conscious age group. Young adults are more inclined to seek out healthcare services and supplies to preserve their physical appearance and general health. They may also be more open to experimenting with new products, formulas, and therapies, thus they might be seen as appealing target audiences for pharmaceutical companies. Another reason might be the fact that this age group is frequently more technologically skilled and more likely to use social media and online resources to explore, among others, pharmaceutical products, and the examined commercials were online videos. Finally, because young adults might use healthcare products and treatments for a longer period of time than older age groups, who may have more chronic health concerns, this age group might, sometimes, be considered to be the most lucrative for pharmaceutical businesses. However, it is crucial for marketers to consider that if pharmaceutical advertising relies too heavily on this age group, it may ignore the healthcare requirements of older age groups, who may have specific healthcare needs. It is crucial to advertise healthcare services and solutions that are appropriate for people of all ages and avoid ageist cliches.

Our findings show that the age group 55-74 is the least targeted group by pharmaceutical advertising, except children. Our belief is that one reason for this might be that people in this age range have more chronic health concerns and may already be accustomed to certain healthcare procedures. They might already follow a specific regimen of medical supplies and treatments that they are unlikely to alter, which makes them less responsive to novel pharmaceuticals. This age group may be harder to reach through online video advertisements since they are less likely to be engaged on social media and other online platforms. The younger age groups who are more active on these platforms may be the ones that pharmaceutical corporations target more frequently. Another reason why this was the least targeted age group might be because they might not spend as much money on healthcare and treatments, this age group may not be as profitable as others for pharmaceutical companies to market to.

Knoll et al. (2011) found that usually women in advertising are more likely to be younger and depicted as product users with domestic products and more likely to be portrayed at home in dependent roles, while men are more likely depicted as authoritarian and older and are more likely to be portrayed outside of the home in independent roles. Our results are partially consistent with previous findings, since traditional representations of women were not the norm in the analyzed ads. The most common female gender role that

has been used in the advertisements included in our sample was the career woman.

There may be a variety of dominating gender roles utilized to depict women in pharmaceutical commercials. Yet, the career woman, followed by the beauty, and the housewife are the common gender roles employed for female portrayals, according to our examination of pharmaceutical advertisements in Romania. Pharmaceutical advertisements frequently show women in professional situations, showing them as accomplished and successful people. Women who prioritize their careers and look for products that keep them focused and productive are the target audience for these advertisements. Pharmaceutical businesses promote their medicines as necessary instruments for success while empowering and inspiring their female audience by portraying women as career-oriented. Another common gender stereotype that is used for female representations in pharmaceutical commercials is the beauty stereotype, which places a significant focus on physical attractiveness and appearance. The beauty archetype appeals to women who value their looks and want to maintain or enhance it. By promoting cosmetic items and treatments, pharmaceutical companies prey on women's anxieties and social pressure to seem young and attractive. The housewife gender role is still present in pharmaceutical advertisements, despite being less prevalent than the business woman and beauty stereotypes. Pharmaceutical businesses capitalize on the conventional gender roles and home responsibilities of women by advertising household treatments and family-oriented goods.

The most dominant gender roles used for male representations in the selected pharmaceutical advertisements were: the career man, followed by the senior, the father, the attractive man. The belief that achievement and success are necessary qualities of manhood is reinforced by the stereotype of the career man. The senior stereotype appeals to older men who are looking for solutions to help them preserve their health and vitality as they age since it places an emphasis on age, knowledge, and experience. The father stereotype also perpetuates the conventional male roles of protector and provider. Pharmacies capitalize on men's desire to protect and support their families by advertising family-oriented goods and treatments. The expectation of society for men to appear young and fit is reflected in the stereotype of the attractive man.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to determine the way in which video advertisements for pharmaceutical products, published online, depicted female and male consumers, respectively.

The data shown above is an indication of the fact that the gender roles distributed among male and female characters are quite similar, the most common being the career woman/man, the mother/ father, the beautiful woman/ the attractive man. What is uneven is the number of gender roles representations for women (105) and men (51) that the coders identified in the sample.

Another important finding was that even when the advertised pharmaceutical products were not gender-specific, female actors were still more often presented in ads

for pharmaceutical products than male actors. The use of female actresses in pharmaceutical advertising can be effective in drawing in the target audience, building comfort and trust, and pushing products geared primarily at women. The possible drawbacks of overusing female actors in advertising must be considered in order to ensure that gender is represented equally and inclusively in pharmaceutical advertising.

Pharmaceutical advertising in Romania is mostly addressing young adults between the ages of 17 and 34, because they represent a socially active, technologically aware, and financially rewarding target audience. The 55–74 age group did not receive as much attention from pharmaceutical advertising due to established healthcare routines and lesser spending power. However, it is crucial to guarantee that this age group has access to the healthcare services and goods they require. The special healthcare requirements of this age group should be taken into account by pharmaceutical companies as they try to develop more inclusive and fair healthcare marketing strategies.

In order to be appealing to the female target group and reflect the diverse needs and opinions of women, pharmaceutical advertisements frequently use the three female gender roles: the businesswoman, the beauty, and the housewife. The dominant gender roles used for male representations in Romanian pharmaceutical advertisements, such as the career man, the senior, the father, and the attractive man, reflect the societal expectations and norms associated with masculinity, which include among others success, authority, responsibility, and physical attractiveness. The use of stereotypes can provide a platform for critical analysis and discussion on gender portrayal in advertising, but at the same time it is also restricting and reinforces gender stereotypes.

These findings contribute in several ways to our understanding of gender roles in advertising and provide a basis for further studies. The results of this research provide insights into how the industry which invests the most in advertising is using gender roles to communicate their message and to sustain the consumption of pharmaceutical products.

In 2019, there were over 4000 pharmacies operating in Romania, and they generated a profit of over 20 billion RON. The number of pharmacies has increased to over 9000 in 2021 (Melenciuc, 2022). Every month 150 new medicinal products are introduced on the Romanian market (Stirile ProTV, 2019) and the behavior of the Romanian consumer makes this industry, without any doubt, a convenient one for the advertising market. According to medical experts, 8 out of 10 Romanians take over-the-counter medical products when they exhibit mild symptoms of the flu or the common cold, and 62% of Romanians take medical products without prescription for minor afflictions (Mediafax, 2020).

One of the limitations of the present study is that the authors used just one sociological method, namely content analysis. Further research in this area might shed more light on gender representation and its effects on the end users. Research results might also be used to promote more inclusive advertising techniques. These findings may assist marketers in the pharmaceutical industries in developing inclusive and diverse advertising campaigns, which might lead to a more accurate representation of gender roles in the healthcare industry and eventually help undermining harmful gender norms and expectations.

Another limitation is the small number of cases, which may affect the generalizability of our results. To address this limitation, our intent is to continue our analysis and expand the number of analyzed commercials. Additionally, we plan to examine pharmaceutical advertisements over a longer time span to identify potential changes in communication patterns regarding the employed stereotypes. This will increase the sample size and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence advertising communication. By expanding our analysis, we aim to increase the validity and reliability of our findings and improve the generalizability of our results to a larger population.

References

- Asadi, L. K., & Shah, A. A. (2023). Gender bias in antidepressant direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, *123*(152384), 152384. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2023.152384>
- Barbu, P. (2020). *Topul companiilor farmaceutice și de retail de medicamente cu cele mai mari audiențe pentru reclamele TV în anul 2019.* [Top pharmaceutical and drug retail companies with highest TV ad ratings in 2019.] Forbes. <https://www.forbes.ro/topul-companiilor-farmaceutice-si-de-retail-de-medicamente-cu-cele-mai-mari-audiente-pentru-reclamele-tv-anul-2019-152823>
- Chiribucă, D., & Hanță, A. (2013). Drug advertising – Configuring factors and communication strategies: A case study on television broadcasted advertisements in Romania. *Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială*, *41*, 7–27.
- Dreßler, R. (2008). Vom Patriarchat zum androgynen Lustobjekt — 50 Jahre Männer im *Stern*. [From patriarchy to androgynous object of desire - 50 years of men in the *Star*.] In C. Holtz-Bacha (Eds), *Stereotype? [Stereotypes?]* (pp. 124–154). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Eisend, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *38*(4), 418–440. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-009-0181-x>
- Flemming, D., Cress, U., Kimmig, S., Brandt, M., & Kimmerle, J. (2018). Emotionalization in science communication: The impact of narratives and visual representations on knowledge gain and risk perception. *Frontiers in Communication*, *3*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2018.00003>
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., Signorielli, N., & Shanahan, J. (2002). Growing up with television: Cultivation processes. In J. Bryant, & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 43–67). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Grau, S. L., & Zotos, Y. C. (2016). Gender stereotypes in advertising: a review of current research. *International Journal of Advertising*, *35*(5), 761–770. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2016.1203556>
- Hansen, F. J., & Osborne, D. (1995). Portrayal of women and elderly patients in psychotropic drug advertisements. *Women & Therapy*, *16*(1), 129–141. https://doi.org/10.1300/j015v16n01_08
- Hayes, A. F., & Krippendorff, K. (2007). Answering the call for a standard reliability measure for coding data. *Communication Methods and Measures*, *1*(1), 77–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19312450709336664>

- Hill, D., Chapman, S., & Donovan, R. (1998). The return of scare tactics. *Tobacco Control*, 7(1), 5–8. <https://doi.org/10.1136/tc.7.1.5>
- Holbrook, M. B. (1987). Mirror, mirror, on the wall, what's unfair in the reflections on advertising? *Journal of Marketing*, 51(3), 95–103. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251650>
- Knoll, S., Eisend, M., & Steinhagen, J. (2011). Gender roles in advertising: Measuring and comparing gender stereotyping on public and private TV channels in Germany. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(5), 867–888.
- Kohlweiß, U. (2006). *Frauen in der Werbung. Realismus vs. Idealismus – Wie sieht sich die Zielgruppe lieber?*. [Women in advertising. Realism vs. idealism - How does the target group prefer to see itself?] München: Grin Verlag.
- Leidenberger, J. (2015). *Boulevardisierung von Fernsehnachrichten. Eine Inhaltsanalyse deutscher und französischer Hauptnachrichtensendungen*. [Tabloidization of television news. A content analysis of German and French mainstream news programmes.] Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Litzka, S. (2001). *Frauenbilder – Die Konstruktion von Weiblichkeit in österreichischer Magazinwerbung*. [Images of women - The construction of femininity in Austrian magazine advertising.] Diplomarbeit. <http://metameta.org/~susi/frauen-bilder.pdf>
- Marinescu, V. (2019). Advertising and health in Romania. *Revista de Științe Politice*, 63, 72–81.
- Media Fact Book. (2019). Media Fact Book Report 2019. <http://www.mediafactbook.ro/>.
- Mediafax (2020). „Scăpați de sub control”: 62% dintre români iau medicamente fără rețetă pentru afecțiuni minore. [“Out of control”: 62% of Romanians take over-the-counter medicines for minor ailments.] Mediafax. <https://www.mediafax.ro/social/scapati-de-sub-control-62-dintre-romani-iau-medicamente-fara-reteta-pentru-afectiuni-minore-18872720>
- Melenciuc, S. (2022). Numărul de farmacii din România a crescut în 2021, după doi ani de scădere. [The number of pharmacies in Romania increased in 2021 after two years of decline.] 360medical.ro. <https://360medical.ro/stiri/numarul-de-farmacii-din-romania-a-crescut-in-2021-dupa-doi-ani-de-scadere/2022/07/01/>
- Pelinka, P. (2005): Vom Marlboro-Mann zum Metrosexuellen? Das gewandelte Männerbild in den Medien. [From Marlboro man to metrosexual? The changing image of men in the media.] In H. Krall, (Ed.), *Jungen- und Männerarbeit – Bildung, Beratung und Begegnung auf der „Baustelle Mann“* [Boys' and men's work - education, counselling and encounters on the "construction site of men".] (pp.13–25). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Pollay, R. W. (1986). The distorted mirror: Reflections on the unintended consequences of advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 50, 18–38. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251597>
- Pollay, R. W. (1987). On the value of reflections on the values in “The Distorted Mirror”. *Journal of Marketing*, 51, 104–109. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251651>
- Ruse A. V., Cristea, M. A., & Constantinescu, V. G. (2018). Too much drug advertising? A qualitative perspective of Romanian pharmaceutical market. *Annals of Faculty of Economics, University of Oradea, Faculty of Economics*, 1(1), 479–486.
- Stirile ProTV (2019). *Pastilele cu care românii își riscă viața. Mii de suplimente alimentare nu sunt verificate*. [The pills Romanians risk their lives with. Thousands of dietary supplements go unchecked.] Stirile ProTV. <https://stirileprotv.ro/stiri/sanatate/pastilele-cu-care-romanii-isi-risca-viata-mii-de-suplimente-alimentare-nu-sunt-verificate.html>
- Svensson, E.-B. (2008). *Report on how marketing and advertising affect equality between women and men*. European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-6-2008-0199_EN.html

- Weathers, M., Sanderson, J., Matthey, P., Grevious, A., Warren, S., & Tehan, M. (2014). The tweet life of Erin and Kirk: A gendered analysis of professional sports broadcasters' self-presentation on Twitter. *Journal of Sports Media*, 9(2), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsm.2014.0008>.
- Wörsching, M. (2009). Gender and images of nature and sport in British and German news magazines: The global and the national in images of advertising. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, 5(3), 217–232. https://doi.org/10.1386/macp.5.3.217_1
- Zotos, Y. C., & Lysonski, S. (1994). Gender representations: The case of Greek magazine advertisements. *Journal of Euromarketing*, 3(2), 27–47. https://doi.org/10.1300/j037v03n02_03
- Zotos, Y., & Tsihla, E. (2014). Snapshots of men and women in interaction: An investigation of stereotypes in print advertisement relationship portrayals. *Journal of Euromarketing*, 23(3), 035–058. <https://doi.org/10.9768/0023.03.035>
- Zurstiege, G. (1998). *Mannsbilder – Männlichkeit in der Werbung: Zur Darstellung von Männern in der Anzeigenwerbung der 50er, 70er und 90er Jahre*. [Images of men - masculinity in advertising: On the representation of men in advertising in the 50s, 70s and 90s.] Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.