

Effects of feminist self-identification on femvertising strategy in Mexico

Efectos de la autoidentificación feminista en la estrategia de *femvertising* en México

Efeitos da autoidentificação feminista na estratégia de femvertising no México

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ABSTRACT | In recent years, advertising that communicates women's empowerment and aims to eliminate gender stereotypes (*femvertising*) has become more important for several companies to target and appeal to female audiences. The purpose of this study is twofold: first, to analyze the impact of feminist self-identification on the trust and congruence of the *femvertising* brand. Second, to examine the impact of trust and congruence in *femvertising* on attitudes toward *femvertising* and its subsequent impact on brand purchase intent. A quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional study was conducted among 401 female Millennial consumers of a bottled water brand that engages in *femvertising* as part of its promotional communication. Structural equation analysis results show that feminist self-identification negatively affects brand trust and perceived congruence of *femvertising* advertising. However, brand trust and perceived congruence have a positive impact on attitudes towards *femvertising*, which in turn has a positive impact on purchase intention. More research is still needed in the field of *femvertising* to develop more effective communication strategies for this target group.

KEYWORDS: *femvertising*, feminist self-identification, confidence, congruence, attitude, purchase intention.

HOW TO CITE

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RESUMEN | En los últimos años, la publicidad que comunica empoderamiento de la mujer y pretende eliminar los estereotipos de género (*femvertising*) ha cobrado importancia para varias empresas como forma de acercarse y conectar con el público femenino. Este estudio tiene dos objetivos; primero, analizar el efecto de la autoidentificación feminista sobre la confianza y la congruencia de la *femvertising* de una marca y, segundo, analizar el efecto de la confianza y la congruencia de la *femvertising* en la actitud hacia la *femvertising* y el efecto de esta sobre la intención de compra de la marca. Se desarrolló una investigación cuantitativa, explicativa y transversal en 401 mujeres pertenecientes a la generación centennial, consumidoras de una marca de agua embotellada que realiza *femvertising* como parte de su comunicación publicitaria. Mediante un análisis con ecuaciones estructurales, los resultados evidencian que la autoidentificación feminista impacta negativamente sobre la confianza y la congruencia percibida de la *femvertising* de la marca. Sin embargo, la confianza y la congruencia percibida de la marca influyen positivamente en la actitud hacia la *femvertising*, la cual muestra un efecto positivo hacia la intención de compra. Es necesario profundizar la investigación en la *femvertising* para desarrollar estrategias de comunicación más eficientes hacia esta audiencia.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *femvertising*, autoidentificación feminista, confianza, congruencia, actitud, intención de compra.

RESUMO | Nos últimos anos, a publicidade que promove o empoderamento das mulheres e busca eliminar os estereótipos de gênero (*femvertising*) tem ganhado importância para várias empresas como uma forma de se aproximar e se conectar com o público feminino. O presente estudo tem dois objetivos: primeiro, analisar o efeito da autoidentificação feminista na confiança e congruência do *femvertising* de uma marca e, em segundo lugar, analisar o efeito da confiança e congruência do *femvertising* na atitude face ao *femvertising* e o efeito desta na intenção de compra da marca. Foi realizada uma pesquisa quantitativa, explicativa e transversal junto de 401 mulheres pertencentes à geração centennial, consumidoras de uma marca de água engarrafada que usa o *femvertising* como parte da sua comunicação publicitária. Por meio de uma análise com equações estruturais, os resultados mostram que a autoidentificação feminista tem um impacto negativo na confiança e na congruência percebida do *femvertising* da marca. No entanto, a confiança e a congruência percebida da marca influenciam positivamente a atitude em relação ao *femvertising*, e isso tem um efeito positivo na intenção de compra. Ainda é necessário aprofundar a pesquisa no *femvertising* para desenvolver estratégias de comunicação mais eficientes para esse público.

PALABRAS-CHAVE: *femvertising*; autoidentificação feminista; confiança; congruência; atitude; intenção de compra.

INTRODUCTION

The second decade of the 21st century has brought feminism to the fore (Menéndez Menéndez, 2020). It is a global, intergenerational and massive movement that proposes to reflect on the awareness of social inequality between men and women (Cobo, 2019) and that advocates the elimination of a patriarchal system in which hegemonic masculinity prevails (Alvarado Urizar et al., 2022). Given the need to study the behavior of markets and explore how companies connect with their audiences, feminist perspectives have played an important role in marketing studies, especially in those brands that target a female audience (De la Vega, 2019; Menéndez Menéndez, 2021).

Given the demands of the market, where feminism and marketing converge, the concept of femvertising is emerging, a strategy defined as advertising with social responsibility that uses texts and images of female empowerment, leaving behind the representation of women in a sexist and stereotypical way (Mamuric, 2019; Menéndez Menéndez, 2019; Hainneville et al., 2023). Femvertising is used by companies as a strategy to engage in brand activism with a social focus aimed at promoting equality, supporting women's empowerment and recognizing female leadership (Varghese & Kumar, 2020). Although previous studies have proven that femvertising has a positive impact on commercial communication efforts (Hernández Willoughby, 2021), this type of advertising is still little used in marketing strategies in Latin America, unlike in Europe and the United States, where it has become very popular (López-Paredes & García, 2019).

In addition, researchers have found that there is still a lack of studies focusing on younger generations analyzing the relationship between femvertising and female consumer behavior (Jinah, 2022; Elhajjar, 2022), as not all groups of people perceive, interpret and react to femvertising in the same way (Sternadori & Abitol, 2019). Therefore, it is important to analyze the impact of feminist advertising (Menéndez Menéndez, 2019) and its effectiveness for female consumers who are increasingly making informed purchasing decisions (Varghese & Kumar, 2020). Therefore, this study has two objectives:

First, to analyze the effect of feminist self-identification on brand trust and brand femvertising congruence; second, to analyze the effect of brand trust and brand femvertising congruence on attitudes toward femvertising and the impact of these on brand purchase intention.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

The construction of identity is the result of a process in which the individual experiences and forms his consciousness (Dura, 2022). Two components are necessary for this identity development: firstly, the awareness of belonging, i.e. self-identification as a member of a group, and secondly, a personal evaluation of this belonging (Tajfel, 1982). From a feminist perspective, a person identifies as such if they adhere to their feminist stance, are aware of sexism and participate in the activist movement (Lee & Wessel, 2022), but at the same time assume that the solution to the gender problem lies in collective action (Moore & Stathi, 2020). Not all people who support the feminist cause define themselves in this way (Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019), as the term has historically been used in a pejorative way, which has led to resistance to identifying as part of this group (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2020, McLaughlin & Aikman, 2020).

In contrast, trust in a brand is defined as a consumer's willingness to believe that the brand is able to fulfill the functions it has expressed in its sales promises (Haudi et al., 2022); this consumer assurance occurs through a relationship of trustworthiness established through direct experience between an individual and the brand (Marliawati & Cahyaningdyah, 2020). Consumer self-identification with an ideology is expected to impact variables such as trust in a brand. Previous academic research in other disciplines has proven that self-identity has a positive impact on brand trust (Khare & Pandey, 2017). Even in the field of ideologies, self-identification with a belief has been found to be a key element influencing trust in consumption (Nath et al., 2013). Therefore, this effect is expected to be replicated in the domain of feminism, meaning that:

H1. Feminist self-identification has a positive influence on trust in a brand that has developed femvertising.

Women who self-identify as feminists align themselves with feminism and the behavior of other people who also identify as feminists (Lee & Wessel, 2022). This convergence in ideas encourages self-identification of belonging to this group and promotes feminist activism (Moore & Stathi, 2020). It has been noted that some women voice their opinions on femvertising campaigns and share them on their social networks to amplify the movement (Kapoor & Munjal, 2019), as a way of thanking companies for joining the change (Soler, 2019).

Feminist self-identification can influence the audience's perception of the congruence of a brand proposing a campaign focused on femvertising. Congruence refers to the agreement or degree of congruence between two or more entities or activities (Um, 2021). When applied to femvertising, it implies the degree to

which the audience perceives the synchronicity of the advertising messages with the company's support for women's empowerment (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2019).

Previous research has shown that consumers' identification with brands and products has an impact on the congruence of their strategy (Alrawadieh et al., 2019; Siahtiri et al., 2022). Under this premise, it is expected that consumers who identify with a particular ideology, brand, product or service are likely to choose one that appears to be congruent with their identity (Bueyuekdağ & Kitapci, 2021; Klabi & Binzafrah, 2022). Thus, this relationship may be replicated in femvertising, which is why it is suggested that:

H2. Feminist self-identification has a positive effect on the congruence of brand femvertising.

Trust in the brand reduces consumers' uncertainty in an environment where they feel vulnerable (Benhardy et al., 2020); this calmness creates connections that bring people closer to the companies (Kim & Chao, 2019). On the other hand, an attitude, whether negative or positive, can be defined as a general evaluation towards an element (Rheu, 2020). Thus, since the application of marketing, attitude towards advertising has been defined as the tendency to react positively or negatively to a particular advertising message in a given situation (Rasyid, 2019).

Previous research has proven that trust in the brand positively influences the attitude towards one of its advertising messages (Okazaki, 2008; Parker, 2015), showing a relationship of engagement between the consumer and the brand (Fournier, 1998). It is expected that this effect will also occur with femvertising, therefore it is suggested that:

H3. Trust in the brand has a positive effect on attitudes towards femvertising.

It is also assumed that congruence in advertising discourse influences attitudes towards advertising. In the field of marketing, it has been investigated that congruence can direct consumers' attention to commercial communication (Moorman et al., 2002) and have positive effects on the evaluation of advertising (Germelmann et al., 2020), as it facilitates the automatic association of advertising stimuli and favors a positive attitude towards them (Kim & Chao, 2019). Previous work in the field of femvertising has found that congruence between the advertising message and the brand positively influences attitudes towards this type of advertising (Um, 2021), therefore it is suggested that:

H4. Brand femvertising congruence has a positive effect on attitudes towards femvertising.

Attitudes towards advertising encompass the feelings and opinions that consumers have towards commercial communication (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009) and their tendency to respond positively to an advertising stimulus (Phelps & Hoy, 1996). This type of attitude is expected to have a positive effect on purchase intention. This refers to people's determination to buy a particular product or service based on a previous evaluation (Kapoor & Mujal, 2019).

Furthermore, it has been proven that the purchase intention for a brand or product is determined by consumers' perceptions, behavior and attitudes (Sánchez-Feijoo & Bonisoli, 2022), so it is likely that a positive attitude will translate into positive behavior (Yanti et al., 2020). In this way, it can be argued that people who have a positive attitude towards a brand's advertisement are also interested in buying it (Shah et al., 2012; Singh & Banerjee, 2018). Attitude towards femvertising has also been found to have a positive impact on purchase intention (Kapoor & Mujal, 2019; Um, 2021), therefore it is suggested that:

H5. The attitude towards femvertising positively influences the purchase intention of the brand.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in the Mexican context with women belonging to the *centennial* generation, i.e., *post-millennial* people born between 1997 and 2016 (Jasrotia et al., 2023) and who stated that they knew the brand Bonafont®, a leading company in the bottled natural water sector in Mexico, belonging to Danone® Group which has been working with UN Women since 2018 to implement social programs in the most vulnerable areas (Bonafont, n.d.). Today, this generation of young women is the protagonist of the feminist movement in Mexico, heirs of a struggle that has established itself with greater force in the center of the country and, through their skills, such as the mastery of social networks, has continued the achievements of their predecessors (Álvarez Enríquez, 2020; Rosso, 2020), while at the same time they have gained visibility as political subjects that mark a phenomenon of transformation (Tomasini, 2022). For this reason, it is a particularly interesting segment to observe in its relationship with advertising strategies with feminist content.

In order to approach this phenomenon, a quantitative, non-experimental, transversal and explanatory study was developed. An electronic survey was conducted, the instrument of which was developed in a Google® form. A

non-probabilistic random selection was made with 401 women belonging to the centennial generation. The instrument was developed on the basis of scales validated in the literature. In a first section, filter questions were included to allow the questionnaire to be answered only by women who were under 26 years of age and, if they were minors, had the informed consent of their father, mother or guardian to answer the survey. In a second section, feminist self-identification was measured by adapting Sternadori and Abitbol's (2019) scale with seven items. The video of the 2020 Bonafont® campaign supported by femvertising was then presented, which was carried out by the advertising agency VMLY&R®.

After the screening, they were asked to respond to statements that included an adaptation of the following scales: Trust towards the brand by Kabadayi and Alan (2012), perceived congruence towards the femvertising brand developed by Um (2021), and purchase intention by Teng and colleagues (2021), each with three items. Finally, the attitude towards femvertising scale developed by Sternadori and Abitbol (2019) was included with 11 items (table 1). All statements were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

In order to check the content validity of the scales and the internal validity, a pilot test was first carried out with 40 participants and a Cronbach's alpha analysis was performed to check that all constructs had values of over 0.80. An exploratory factor analysis was also carried out. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was also carried out to check whether the loadings of the items were greater than 0.50 and whether they belonged to their respective construct (Bandalos & Finney, 2018). The SmartPLS 4.0 statistical software was used to analyze the structural equations and 5000 iterations were performed (<https://www.smartpls.com/>).

The fieldwork was conducted between October and December 2022. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis technique was used to measure the proposed model. This technique has been applied in management and advertising issues when estimating complex statistical models that emphasize causal explanation or prediction (Hair et al., 2019).

Characteristics of the participants. The average age was 19.5 years, with a deviation of 3.49 years; the range was between 10 and 25 years. 98.3% were single, 85% reported being students, 3.2% were dedicated to providing independent services and 11% were employees. Moreover, 60.3% of respondents were pursuing a bachelor's degree, while 38.9% were attending high school (table 2).

Feminist self-identification	Brand trust	Perceived congruence towards brand femvertising
<p>F1. I don't consider myself a feminist at all and think that feminists harm family life and undermine relationships between men and women.</p> <p>F2. I do not consider myself a feminist.</p> <p>F3. I agree with some of the goals of the feminist movement, but I do not consider myself a feminist.</p> <p>F4. I agree with most of the goals of the feminist movement, but I do not consider myself a feminist.</p> <p>F5. I consider myself a feminist in my private life, but I do not call myself a feminist in front of others.</p> <p>F6. I call myself a feminist in front of others.</p> <p>F7. I describe myself as a feminist to others and am currently actively involved in the women's movement.</p>	<p>C1. I trust Bonafont.</p> <p>C2. I have the feeling that I can fully trust Bonafont.</p> <p>C3. I feel safe when I buy Bonafont because I know it will never let me down.</p>	<p>CP1. Bonafont and the feminist message in advertising go well together.</p> <p>CP2. Bonafont combines well with the feminist advertising message.</p> <p>CP3. In my opinion, the message of Bonafont's feminist advertising is very appropriate for this brand.</p>
Attitude towards brand femvertising	Purchase intent	
<p>AF1. This feminist ad by Bonafont is moving.</p> <p>AF2. I am very interested in this feminist ad by Bonafont.</p> <p>AF3. This feminist ad by Bonafont makes me feel good.</p> <p>AF4. I think this Bonafont ad helps to promote the autonomy and success of women in Mexican society.</p> <p>AF5. This feminist Bonafont ad makes me want to buy the brand.</p> <p>AF6. I like this feminist Bonafont ad.</p> <p>AF7. This feminist Bonafont ad is wonderful.</p> <p>AF8. This is the kind of Bonafont ad you do not forget easily.</p> <p>AF9. This feminist ad by Bonafont is fascinating.</p> <p>AF10. I can not get enough of this kind of feminist ad from Bonafont.</p> <p>AF11. This feminist ad by Bonafont shocks me.</p>	<p>IC1. I will choose Bonafont over other similar brands.</p> <p>IC2. I am interested in Bonafont.</p> <p>IC3. I would like to buy Bonafont in the future.</p>	

Table 1. Scales used in the study*Source: Own elaboration.*

Age	Frequencies	%	Civil Status	Frequencies	%
10 a 15	44	10.98	Single	394	98.25
16 a 20	194	48.38	Married	6	1.5
21 a 25	163	40.64	Divorced	1	0.25
<i>n</i>	401	100	<i>n</i>	401	100
Occupation	Frequencies	%	Education	Frequencies	%
Student	341	85.03	Elementary	14	3.5
Employee	44	10.98	Junior high school	12	3
Independent Serv.	13	3.24	Senior high school	130	32.41
Businesswoman	1	0.25	Bachelor's degree	242	60.34
Homework	2	0.5	Postgraduate	3	0.75
<i>n</i>	401	100	<i>n</i>	401	100

Table 2. Sociodemographic variables

Source: Own elaboration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Common method bias. It refers to the condition that the data of the variables are obtained from a source with similar characteristics and in the same measurement context, so that it must be checked whether the deviations in the responses are not caused by the instrument (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015). For this reason, Harman's one-factor technique was applied and the variance inflation factor (VIF) values were checked. The first one showed that a single factor explains 41.61% of the variance, which shows that it is below the tolerable limit of 50%. Furthermore, all VIF values are less than five (Rigle et al., 2015), so there is no problematic collinearity or common method bias.

Measurement model. The conceptual formulation of the model was reflective, as all construct statements reflected a specific concept and had similarities in meaning. First, the loadings of the statements were checked and it was determined that seven of them should be eliminated (F1, F4, F5, C2, AF6, AF7, IC2) as they did not meet the minimum loading for an acceptable measurement (0.708). Convergent and discriminant validity analysis was then performed to assess the quality of the model. For this purpose, the standardized factor loadings were squared, which exceeded the value of 0.50 in all cases.

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Average extracted variance (AEV)
Attitude towards femvertising	0.951	0.953	0.721
Feminist self-identification	0.857	0.866	0.697
Brand trust	0.878	0.885	0.891
Brand femvertising congruence	0.920	0.923	0.862
Purchase intention	0.867	0.870	0.882

Table 3. Convergent validity

Source: Own elaboration.

	Attitude towards femvertising	Feminist self-identification	Brand trust	Brand femvertising congruence	Purchase intention
Attitude towards femvertising					
Feminist self-identification	0.153				
Brand trust	0.506	0.348			
Brand femvertising congruence	0.847	0.148	0.489		
Purchase intention	0.707	0.164	0.747	0.653	

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait-Ratio Matrix (HTMT)

Source: Own elaboration.

In terms of convergent validity, the indicators Cronbach's alpha, Rho_a and the average extracted variance (AEV) exceeded the minimum acceptable criteria, as the values of Cronbach's alpha and Rho_a were above 0.70, while all AEVs of the constructs had values above 0.50 (table 3).

Discriminant validity was confirmed using the HTMT criterion, which is considered the most reliable method for detecting problems of this type of validity; moreover, it is recommended that its value should be below 0.85 and its confidence interval should not include the value 1.0 (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 4 shows the results of the HTMT matrix.

Age and constructs correlation	Feminist self-identification	Brand trust	Brand femvertising congruence	Attitude towards femvertising	Purchase intention
Pearson	0.174	-0.151	-0.181	-0.198	-0.162
Sig. [dos lados]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
n	401	401	401	401	401

Table 5. Correlation between age and model constructs

Source: Self-made.

In addition, the nomological validity was determined by correlating the values of the model constructs with the age variable (table 5). All correlations were significant ($p < 0.0001$) and consistent with other research that has included these constructs, although it is worth noting that in some papers related to other subjects, the signs of the correlations were different (Mourad et al., 2012; Lissitsa & Kol, 2021; Elhajjar, 2022).

Structural analysis. The hypothesized relationships between the proposed variables were tested and evaluated using 5000 subsamples: 1) path coefficients (β), 2) coefficients of determination R^2 (variance explained in the model), 3) predictive relevance Q^2 and 4) effect size (f^2) (Hair et al., 2021). The path coefficients (β) indicate the significance of the coefficient of each of the proposed hypotheses, therefore they were tested statistically. The results showed that all hypotheses were proven as the t-values were greater than 1.96 and the significance level was less than 0.05 (Hair et al., 2011). The results of the path coefficients are shown in table 6.

Furthermore, the coefficients of determination R^2 for the endogenous variables of the model were evaluated, revealing the predictive ability of the model and the combined effect of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables. Values below 0.10 are considered very weak (Hair et al., 2021), while values above 0.75 are considered significant. Values around 0.50 are considered moderate and values close to 0.25 are considered weak (Hair et al., 2013). The results show that both brand trust and brand femvertising congruence have low predictive power for feminist self-identification; however, both attitude towards femvertising and purchase intention show moderate predictive power (table 7, figure 1). Similarly, the Q^2 values assess the predictive relevance of the structural model: as the Q^2 indices were greater than zero, it can be concluded that the model has predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2021).

Hypothesis	Coefficient β	Statistic t	Value p	Result
H1. Feminist self-identification -> Brand trust	-0.310	6.959	0.000	Significant, but β in the unexpected direction
H2. Feminist self-identification -> Brand femvertising congruence	-0.139	2.805	0.005	Significant but β in the unexpected direction
H3. Brand trust -> Attitude towards femvertising	0.143	3.749	0.000	Significant and β in the expected direction
H4. Brand femvertising congruence -> Attitude towards femvertising	0.732	22.542	0.000	Significant and β in the expected direction
H5. Attitude towards femvertising -> Purchase intention	0.645	20.051	0.000	Significant and β in the expected direction

Table 6. Path coefficients and results of the proposed hypotheses

Source: Own elaboration.

Constructs	R2 tight	Q2
Attitude towards femvertising	0.647	0.015
Brand trust	0.094	0.088
Brand femvertising congruence	0.017	0.013
Purchase intention	0.414	0.016

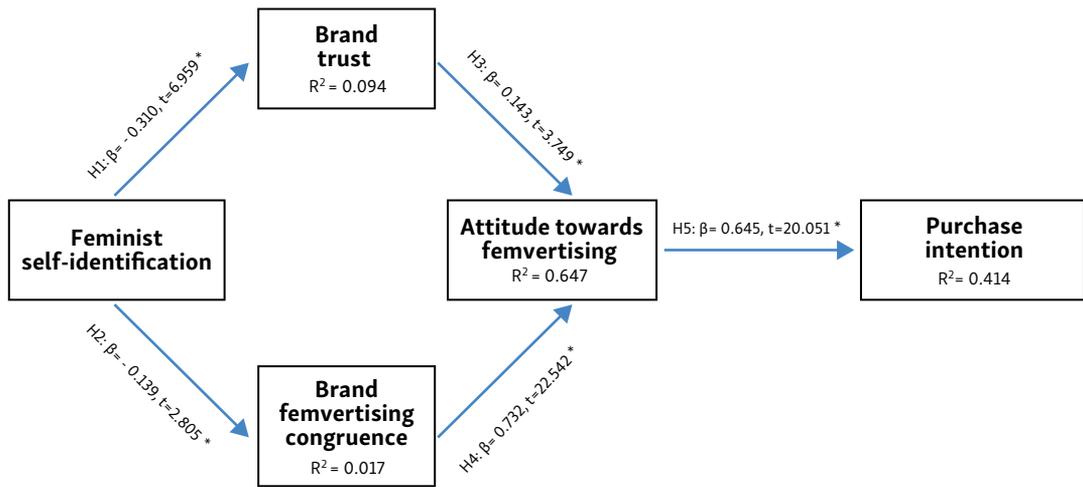
Table 7. R2 and Q2 Results

Source: Own elaboration.

	Attitude towards femvertising	Brand trust	Brand femvertising congruence	Purchase intention
Attitude towards femvertising				0.711
Feminist self-identification		0.107	0.020	
Brand trust	0.047			
Brand femvertising congruence	1.231			

Table 8. f2 Values

Source: Own elaboration.



* $p < 0,001$

Figure 1. Structural model

Source: Self-made

Indirect effect	β	Statistic t	Value p	Results
Feminist self-identification -> Attitude towards femvertising	-0.146	3.669	0.000	Significant, but β in the unexpected direction
Feminist self-identification -> Purchase intention	-0.094	3.463	0.001	Significant, but β in the unexpected direction
Brand trust -> Purchase intention	0.092	3.569	0.000	Significant and β in the expected direction
Congruence of brand femvertising -> Purchase intention	0.472	15.308	0.000	Significant and β in the expected direction

Table 9. Indirect effects in the model

Source: Own elaboration.

The effect size or f^2 indicates how much an independent latent variable contributes to the R^2 of a dependent latent variable. Thus, a value around 0.02 indicates a weak effect, 0.15 a moderate effect and 0.35 a large effect (Hair et al., 2017). The results show that the strength of the relationship between the latent variables for this model is between 0.020 (insignificant) and 1.23 (very large).

Figure 1 presents the contrasted structural model.

Indirect effects. Table 9 shows the four indirect effects of the model, all of which were significant. Feminist self-identification indirectly and negatively influenced attitude towards femvertising ($\beta = -0.146$) and purchase intention of the brand that ran the femvertising campaign, although this last indirect effect was very

small ($\beta=-0.094$). Similarly, trust in the brand ($\beta=0.092$) and in the congruence of the brand's femvertising ($\beta=0.472$) were found to have an indirect and positive influence on purchase intention, although trust had a very small influence compared to congruence.

The results showed that self-identification as a feminist negatively influenced both trust and congruence of the femvertising of the brand studied, so H1 and H2 were not supported because, although significant, a positive influence was expected for both hypotheses. Research in other domains supports a positive relationship between self-identification and the constructs of confidence (Khare & Pandey, 2017) and congruence (Büyükdag & Kitapci, 2021; Klabi & Binzafrah, 2022); however, when it comes to feminist self-identification, this has not been demonstrated. Possible explanations allude to the fact that critical thinking is related to self-identification as a feminist (Myers, 2022) and feminists have labeled marketing as part of a system of exploitation of women (Catteral et al., 2000), so despite a brand's efforts to empathize with them, this group may distrust femvertising and perceive it as incongruent.

Trust in the brand was shown to positively influence attitudes towards femvertising, thus supporting hypothesis three. This finding is consistent with previous research that indicated a similar effect with other types of advertising (Okazaki, 2008; Parker, 2015). Similarly, hypothesis four was confirmed since it was found that the congruence of the brand's femvertising has a positive and significant impact on attitude towards femvertising, which is consistent with the results of previous research (Um, 2021). Finally, in line with previous findings (Kapoor & Mujal, 2019; Um, 2021), it was confirmed that attitude towards femvertising exerts a positive influence on brand purchase intention, so hypothesis five was also accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

Femvertising faces the challenge of appealing to female consumers, especially those who describe themselves as feminists, a growing market (Fernández Hasan, 2019) with which advertising has historically had a complex relationship, as feminists describe it as part of the capitalist system that has perpetuated gender stereotypes (Menéndez Menéndez, 2019). Although femvertising claims to be feminist advertising, this premise is called into question when thinking about the commercial objectives that an advertiser pursues by developing this type of advertising that promotes individual consumption, which is contrary to the inherently political and social concerns of feminism (Menéndez Menéndez, 2021). In addition, some brands have used femvertising in an inauthentic and superfluous

way, namely as femwashing, which has caused skepticism among consumers about this type of strategy (Hainneville et al., 2023).

This study shows that the more feminist a woman perceives herself to be, the less she trusts the brand and her perception of the congruence of femvertising also decreases; nevertheless, trust in the brand and congruence positively influence attitudes towards femvertising and this has a favorable impact on purchase intention. In times of feminist media demand, driven mainly by social networks and movements such as #Metoo, brands must adapt and respond more effectively to the demands of a changing society made up of women who are increasingly critical and informed. Given this scenario, it will be important for companies using femvertising as an advertising strategy to demonstrate congruence between their messages and actions in order to build long-term relationships of trust with their audiences, as this will have a positive impact on the attitudes of the companies' female consumers towards femvertising, which may ultimately translate into positive purchase intent for brands.

This research can be useful both for the academic community studying this field of knowledge and for marketing professionals in Mexico, as it provides useful information for the development of effective femvertising strategies. Like other works, this one has some limitations, since only the femvertising of one brand in Mexico was included; also, a cross-sectional study was conducted, focusing on a single generation of consumers. Also, for reasons of convenience, the sampling was not probabilistic, so the results cannot be generalized.

The implications of this study for future research could be to extend the scope of the study to other generations of consumers. It is also recommended to experiment with communication strategies to increase the levels of trust and congruence of the feminist market in the brand. Furthermore, it is advisable to replicate the study in femvertising campaigns for different types of products or services, with a specific focus on other consumer generations such as Generation X and millennials.

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