

# Differential approach to analyzing gender campaigns in the newspaper *El Tiempo*, Colombia

## Enfoque diferencial en el análisis de campañas de género del periódico *El Tiempo*, Colombia

### *Abordagem diferencial na análise de campanhas de gênero do jornal El Tiempo, Colômbia*

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**ABSTRACT** | The discussion of the differentiated approach, gender representation, and women's empowerment serves as a basis for introducing a method of analysis applicable to brand communication. This text aims to identify characteristics, that considered gendered in the campaigns of the newspaper *El Tiempo*, the only medium that has oriented its communication from the perspective of gender equality and women's empowerment in Colombia, and to determine the percentage of compliance with these characteristics in the message. It is important to highlight that there is also a fundamental conceptual and methodological objective: the construction of the analysis matrix. The methodology used is mixed, and is based on a literature review and content analysis. Based on the former, a matrix with three operationalized analysis variables comprising nine indicators is created. A measurement system based on percentage analysis is proposed, and aims to determine the degree of agreement with the analysis variables. The case study shows a very high degree of compliance (94%), which addresses issues such as gender-based occupational segregation and sexism in the media. The results obtained offer a methodological way to analyze gender-specific communication campaigns and propose a measurement system to assess compliance with this approach within the message. We argue for the urgent need to implement a formal methodology for the gender approach in the practice of strategic communication, as this is still an emerging topic in Colombia and Latin America.

**KEYWORDS:** Women; gender; gender differential approach; inclusive communication; media and gender; femvertising

#### HOW TO CITE

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**RESUMEN** | La discusión sobre enfoque diferencial, representaciones de género y empoderamiento femenino sirve de base para presentar un método de análisis aplicable a la comunicación de marca. Este texto tiene dos objetivos: identificar las características de enfoque de género presentes en las campañas del periódico *El Tiempo* –único medio que ha enfocado su comunicación desde la perspectiva de género y el empoderamiento femenino en Colombia–, así como el porcentaje de cumplimiento de estas características en el mensaje. Es importante subrayar que además existe un objetivo conceptual-metodológico fundamental: la construcción de la matriz de análisis. La metodología es mixta, basada en una revisión bibliográfica y un análisis de contenido. A partir de la primera se construye una matriz con tres variables de análisis operacionalizadas en nueve indicadores. Se propone un sistema de medición basado en el análisis porcentual para identificar el grado de cumplimiento de las variables de análisis. Encontramos que el caso estudiado tiene un muy alto grado de cumplimiento (94%), que aborda problemáticas como segregación laboral por género y sexismo en los medios de comunicación. Los resultados proporcionan una ruta metodológica para analizar campañas de comunicación de género y proponer un sistema de medición para analizar y evaluar el cumplimiento de este enfoque dentro del mensaje. Se plantea la urgencia de implementar una metodología formal del enfoque de género en el ejercicio de la comunicación estratégica, pues aún es un tema incipiente en Colombia y en latinoamérica.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Mujeres; género; enfoque diferencial de género; comunicación inclusiva; medios de comunicación y género; publicidad feminista

**RESUMO** | A discussão sobre a abordagem diferencial, representações de gênero e empoderamento feminino serve como base para apresentar um método de análise aplicável à comunicação de marca. Este texto tem como objetivos: 1. Identificar características consideradas como focadas em gênero presentes nas campanhas do jornal *El Tiempo*, o único meio que orientou sua comunicação a partir da perspectiva de gênero e empoderamento feminino na Colômbia. 2. Determinar a porcentagem de conformidade com essas características na mensagem. É crucial enfatizar que há também um objetivo conceitual-metodológico fundamental: o desenvolvimento da matriz de análise. A metodologia utilizada é mista, fundamentada em revisão bibliográfica e análise de conteúdo. A partir da revisão bibliográfica, é construída uma matriz com três variáveis de análise operacionalizadas em nove indicadores. Propõe-se um sistema de medição baseado na análise percentual, visando identificar o grau de conformidade com as variáveis de análise. O estudo de caso revela um grau muito alto de conformidade (94%), abordando questões como segregação ocupacional por gênero e sexismo na mídia. Os resultados obtidos proporcionam uma rota metodológica para analisar campanhas de comunicação focadas em gênero e propõem um sistema de medição para avaliar a conformidade com essa abordagem dentro da mensagem. Argumentamos pela necessidade urgente de implementar uma metodologia formal para a abordagem de gênero na prática da comunicação estratégica, uma vez que ainda é um tópico emergente na Colômbia e na América Latina.

**PALAVRAS CHAVE:** Mulheres; gênero; abordagem diferencial de gênero; comunicação inclusiva; mídia e gênero; publicidade feminista

## INTRODUCTION

The fight for gender equality is a debate that is being waged not only by governmental and non-governmental organizations, but also by various players in the advertising industry. In Colombia, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the National Association of Advertisers (ANDA) have begun to regulate gender-specific elements in female images and representations in advertising communication. However, this is an area without many theoretical-practical references in Latin America.

In response, this article analyzes the role of the press as an advertising medium in the construction of non-stereotypical and egalitarian identities using gendered communication, female representations and empowerment.

The general objective is to identify which characteristics of the gender approach are present in the analyzed campaigns of the newspaper *El Tiempo*, and the specific objective is to determine the degree of their correspondence. The conceptual and methodological objective is the construction of the analysis matrix.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Communication, an agent of sociocultural transformation

Communication has been considered as a mediator of social and cultural change, based on its informative and persuasive function (Pellicer Jordá, 2017; Sheen Moreno & Arbaiza, 2020) and as a key element in the construction, transmission and permanence of the values that underpin society (Pellicer Jordá, 2017) and its cultural imaginaries (Rodríguez Ferrándiz, 2008). This is because it not only plays an important role in the construction and transformation of cultural meanings, but also interprets the existing ones and incorporates them into its system of signs (Sheen Moreno & Arbaiza, 2020).

Societies with a predominantly male power tend to reflect the gender stereotype in communication and culturally blur the image of women (Uribe et al., 2008). A culture that prioritizes gender equality will not preserve negative images that perpetuate a patriarchal culture that naturalizes misogyny and gender-based violence as socially accepted practices (Trujillo Cristoffanini, 2019) and promotes sexism (Velandia-Morales & Rincón, 2014) – understood as the entrenchment of negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviors based on notions of women's inferiority as a social group (Berganza Conde & Hoyo Hurtado, 2006; Velandia-Morales & Rincón, 2014) – and which makes women a minority (Uribe et al., 2008).

### Media and culture

The press and the media are instruments for the socialization and reproduction of values and social representations of culture (Ochoa-Chaves et al., 2017), spaces of visibility and scenarios in which the productive logic is interwoven and which, when

associated with the market, simultaneously create circuits of legitimacy before their audiences (Racioppe, 2014). In their role as informants and opinion leaders, they are a factor of social change (Gutiérrez-Guerrero et al., 2018) and a social space in which new discourses on gender relations are constructed (Ludec, 2017). The media represent and interpret culture, emphasizing the codified, polysemic, polycultural and negotiated nature of the messages that circulate through them, as well as the active interpretation on the part of the recipients (Hall, 1997).

Currently, the combination of technology, communication and creativity enables other forms of content production, distribution and cultural representation (Racioppe, 2014), linking the gender perspective with the production of branded content that promotes social inclusion and diversity (Lorite García, 2021; Ugena Candel & González D'Ambrosio, 2022).

### **GENDER DIFFERENTIAL APPROACH**

Gender as a category of analysis in the social sciences is one of the most important contributions of contemporary feminism (Pautassi, 2011). Simone de Beauvoir (1949) posits it as a fundamental form of power relations in which society and culture are constructs that promote opposing interpretations of masculine and feminine. It refers to a system for capturing information about gender differentiation and how it affects social relations and political rights (Balaban-Sali & Esin Erben, 2016).

Historically, gender representations have established binary systems under the principles of social, hierarchical and hegemonic inequality (Barquet, 2002; Lamas, 2013), where gender roles and stereotypes are concepts, behaviors and beliefs that have culturally defined – usually false – images of men and women (Hernando-Gómez et al., 2013; Mollo Brisco et al., 2014; Moya et al., 2006).

The differentiated approach to gender is a demand for equality between genders in the social, political, economic and cultural spheres (Arteaga, 2012); a methodology of social and political analysis and intervention that identifies and recognizes gender differences and seeks to eliminate manifestations of subordination, violation, discrimination and social, political or economic asymmetry in relation to gender, ethnic origin, age, physical or mental condition, social class and sexual orientation (Botero Querubín & Collazos Aldana, 2011; Fritz & Valdés, 2006; Gallo Restrepo et al., 2014), based on the principles of equality and social justice (Montealegre Mongrovejo & Urrego Rodríguez, 2011).

### **Gender focus and communication**

Due to its public nature, the differentiated approach has been developed in the context of public policies in Colombia; guaranteeing women's human rights is a

cross-cutting issue that is gradually being taken up in institutional and persuasive communication and public relations. For Hernando-Gomez and colleagues (2013), there are significant problems in conveying messages on gender equality policies in advertising, cinema and television, as their content contains stereotypes that intersect with other, more important issues such as gender-based violence.

Here, gender equality policy needs to understand the two-way, participatory and cultural nature of communication (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007) and direct it towards sustainable development, media literacy, empowerment and the social construction of meaning (Benítez Eysaguirre, 2012). In this context, the right to communicate articulates other rights such as access to information and freedom of opinion, expression and dissemination (Gumucio-Dagron, 2018).

It is necessary that advertisers and media understand their active role in disseminating messages within the framework of a relational model based on gender equality, democratic coexistence and respect for women's rights (Ordóñez Laclé, 2021).

### **Gender representation and inclusion in communication**

Communication, advertising and the media have great amplifying power (de Francisco Heredero, 2019) and a privileged position in the social construction of meanings (Navarro Beltrá & Martín Llaguno, 2011). They are reproducers and creators of normative patterns of society (Rodríguez et al., 2016), including those of gender, where we find the imaginaries about femininity that have been historically and patriarchally socialized, established and maintained (Sojo-Mora, 2020).

Therefore, governments, international organizations and the advertising sector have begun to advocate for a more egalitarian discursive system, away from stereotypes and the sexist and hegemonic representations of commercial discourse (Asociación Nacional de Anunciantes de Colombia, 2020) and in line with two concepts that have developed strongly in recent years: inclusive advertising and femvertising.

The first focuses on diversity, equality and the recognition of individual and collective subjects under the focus of participation and respect for differences, excluding discrimination and stereotypes in its language (Alvarado López et al., 2017). In this way, they distance themselves from the defaults and gender conditioning that have prevailed in past centuries (Ugena Candel & González D'Ambrosio, 2022) and embrace different identities and phenotypes (Lorite García, 2021), managing to connect verbally and non-verbally with plural recipients, creating an intercultural dynamic (Lorite García et al., 2018).

Femvertising is a type of advertising that describes itself as feminist and expresses its discourse in favor of women's empowerment (Hernández-Rodríguez & Sepúlveda-Ríos, 2021; Menéndez Menéndez, 2019; Ruiz-Sánchez & Gallardo-Echenique, 2020; Varghese & Kumar, 2020). It provides an inspiring message and avoids offensive language about women that appeals to stereotypes (Menéndez Menéndez, 2019), and it is often a very successful empowerment and social awareness strategy for brands targeting women (Åkestam et al., 2017).

Publicly tackling sexism in communication means recognizing gender inequality as a social problem (de Francisco Heredero, 2019). In developed societies, this is a social and scientific problem (Navarro Beltrá & Martín Llaguno, 2011).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Design and method**

This type of research belongs to academic gender studies, which is a newer field of research within women's studies and gender relations at the Latin American level (Torres Falcón, 2019).

Our question is: How can gender-sensitive communication characteristics be identified? The general objective is to find out which characteristics of the gender approach are present in the campaigns of the newspaper *El Tiempo* and the specific objective is to identify the degree of their consistency in the message.

The methodology is mixed and is in the exploratory phase. The methodological design combines literature review and content analysis applied to a case study. A review of academic and scholarly publications in Ebsco and Scopus was conducted to identify the characteristics of communication with a gender focus and then the variables of content analysis. Keywords, concepts, authors and methodological approaches were recorded. Thus, 158 articles in Spanish related to communication and gender were identified between 2018 and 2023.

In Scopus, 122 articles were found under keywords such as gender (86), women (18), gender studies (13), feminism (12), advertising (11) and gender stereotypes (11). The countries with the most publications are Spain (104), Mexico (11), Argentina (4), Colombia (3) and Ecuador (3).

In Ebsco, 36 academic publications on communication and media were found under keywords such as gender (4), gender inequality (3), gender studies (3), digital technology (2), equality (2) and gender stereotypes (2). The countries from which these publications originate are Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Spain.

Databases used	Ebsco and Scopus
Subject areas	Communication and Social Sciences
Search terms	*Gender AND Communication* *Gender AND Advertising*
Language	Spanish
Document type	Article
Date of publications	2018-2023
Date of inquiry	September 2023
Total references	158

**Table 1. Parameters configured in the literature review on advertising and gender**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

Analysis variables	Authors
Gender differential approach	Quirós Ramírez (2019).
Gender representations	Asociación Nacional de Anunciantes de Colombia (2020).
Female empowerment	Hernández-Rodríguez & Sepúlveda-Ríos (2021); Varghese & Kumar (2020).

**Table 2. Operationalization of analysis variables**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

Spain is the Spanish-speaking country with the most scientific and academic productions on the subject of communication and gender; then there are productions in Mexico, Argentina and Colombia, although to a lesser extent. The most common keywords are gender, gender studies, gender stereotypes, feminism and advertising.

Using this input, the data were regrouped and interpreted, and the scope for identifying study variables was estimated based on the filter of keywords in terms of their frequency, selecting those with the greatest repetition. This input was then triangulated with the concepts of the theoretical framework, grouping the keywords under three analysis variables: 1) gender, gender studies (variable gender differential approach), 2) gender stereotypes (variable gender representations) and 3) feminism and advertising (variable femvertising that we will call female empowerment in communication). Inclusive language was not included as an analysis variable because it did not appear in the keywords of the literature search and because it is one of the principles of female empowerment (table 3).

In this way, three analysis variables were selected: gender-differentiated approach, gender representations and female empowerment in the message; operationalized through nine analysis indicators identified thanks to the concepts and authors of the theoretical framework.

### Variables and indicators of analysis

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#### Gender-differentiated approach in communications:

1. The piece recognizes one or more of the types of differentiation.
  2. The piece highlights some type of exclusion, social inequality, or discrimination against women.
  3. The message offers special guarantees and protections for women.
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#### Gender representation in communications:

1. The piece does not denigrate or ridicule people based on their gender or sexual orientation. In other words, it ensures a correct use of the image of women so that the message is not stigmatized, demeaned or undermined on the basis of gender.
  2. The piece does not discriminate or treat people unequally because of their gender or sexual orientation. Discrimination refers to treating differently people who deserve to be treated equally with others, harming or affecting them for no other than differences in gender, race, sex, political and religious affiliation, etc.
  3. Gender roles are addressed in the piece without portraying the subordination, abuse or objectification of women.
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#### Female empowerment in communications:

1. The message is inspiring, inclusive, empowering, and generates feelings of affirmation and motivation.
  2. The pieces show women in an authentic way and in line with the culture and values of the advertised product or service.
  3. The message downplays sexuality as a central female theme.
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The data from the content analysis was systematized for subsequent measurement in Excel.

#### **Table 3. Matrix for the analysis of the gender approach in communications**

*Source: Own elaboration based on Asociación Nacional de Anunciantes de Colombia (2020), Hernández-Rodríguez and Sepúlveda-Ríos (2021), Quirós Ramírez (2019), and Varghese and Kumar (2020).*

These data were part of a template showing the descriptive analysis of the information from the literature review, the so-called analysis matrix of the gender approach in communication (table 3), which was created according to the principles of systematization, objectivity and quantification (Arzaluz Solano, 2005; Bardin, 2002; Berelson, 1952).

The choice of content analysis is based on research focused on analyzing the image of women in the media, which was used as an empirical method of data collection (Almansa-Martínez & Gómez de Travesedo-Rojas, 2018; Brito-Rhor, 2019; Menéndez Menéndez & Figueras Maz, 2013; Tsai et al., 2021; Uribe et al., 2008).

#### **Quantitative measurement of content analysis**

Each analysis variable has the same weight in the measurement, since it is a research whose methodological development is still exploratory and allows to study the behavior of the phenomenon. All nine indicators were nominally coded with a value of zero (0) if it does not comply and a value of one (1) if it does (Hernández



Sampieri et al., 2010). This information was processed as a percentage using a statistical analysis. The resulting percentage was evaluated using the rating scale of the only previous study in Colombia on communication from a gender perspective (Quirós Ramírez, 2019), which indicates the conformity value of the analyzed variables in each campaign as follows:

Percentage	Degree of compliance
85%-100%	Very high
71%-84%	High
61%-70%	Acceptable
0%-60%	Does not comply

**Table 4. Values of compliance with the gender-differentiated approach in communication**

*Source: Quirós Ramírez (2019).*

### Sample

Communication campaigns published in Colombia that address the gender approach were analyzed. They were identified by analyzing the Effie Awards Colombia's ranking of effective advertisers, taking into account that they are also advertisers that have an impact on advertising festivals.

Thus, as part of this review, we found four advertisers that met the following selection variables: communication campaigns published in Colombia between 2018 and 2020 with explicitly gendered messages in their communication that were awarded at influential advertising festivals worldwide.

The window for observation is between 2018 and 2020, as it is during this period that the gender aspects in communication in the country will be regulated with specific regulations such as Resolution 92696 of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism (2018). Resolution 92696 calls on the media and advertisers not to violate women's rights and to strive for a culture free of sexism, which gives rise to the application of another demarcation parameter focused on the media. Consequently, the newspaper *El Tiempo* is identified as the only media outlet that advertises on gender issues in Colombia with the campaigns *Invisible Woman* and *Women Rewrite Women*, published in 2018 and conducted by MullenLowe SSP3.

For this study, the videocases of both campaigns submitted to festivals were analyzed, as they allow us to understand the message and its intended communication from the perspective of the communication agency and the advertiser.

Year	Advertiser
2019- 2020	Bavaria
2019-2020	Alpina
2019	Belcorp
2018	<i>El Tiempo</i>

**Table 5. Advertisers of gender campaigns published in Colombia, 2018 to 2020**

*Source: Own elaboration based on Effie Awards Colombia (2020).*

### Invisible Woman

This campaign won silver in the Print category and bronze in the Outdoor category at Cannes Lions (Young Lions Colombia, 2018). Under the slogan “More gender equality” and the headline *The problem is not seeing the problem*, the aim was to highlight gender inequality in international political and public positions.

Through four pieces, the campaign portrays the low participation of women in positions of power traditionally held by men, with cases of international scope in four public spheres historically considered spaces of power: the United States, China, Russia and Turkey.

The agency explains:

The fight for gender equality is an increasingly important issue thanks to many organizations around the world. As a result of this daily effort, more women are represented in important positions of power around the world. But that is still not enough. Because for gender equality to truly exist, we need more women making important decisions. That’s why we are not going to celebrate equality, but rather highlight the inequality that still exists and that we cannot ignore (Young Lions Colombia, 2018).

Figure 1 contextualizes the message:



**Figure 1. Invisible Woman campaign**

*Source: Young Lions Colombia (2018).*

## Women Rewrite Women

This campaign was awarded at various festivals, most notably El Dorado, where it received the Grand Prix (“MullenLowe SSP”, 2018).

To show that gender discrimination can even be found in the headlines, on Women’s Day, female journalists in the country were asked to rewrite sexist headlines published by the media, which were then printed in a special edition of the newspaper under the slogan “It looks normal until it’s rewritten”.

The agency explains:

Despite society’s efforts, sexism against women continues to be a major problem around the world, especially in Latin America. Unfortunately, the press does not escape this reality and we continue to see news with sexist headlines (Clio Awards, 2018).

This PR campaign was supported by the hashtag #WomenRewriteWomen and in emails to target journalists, who wrote 602 new headlines in response. Figure 2 contextualizes the message:



**Figure 2. Women Rewrite Women campaign**

*Source: Clio Awards (2018).*

## FINDINGS

The content analysis showed that the Invisible Woman campaign fulfilled 89% of the identified characteristics. The Women Rewrite Women campaign, on the other hand, scored 100%, resulting in an average match of 94% for the entire sample. In other words, the campaigns published by *El Tiempo* in 2018 show a very high degree of compliance with the identified characteristics of a gender-differentiated perspective in communication.

Analysis variable	Indicator	Invisible Woman	Women Rewrite Women
Gender-differentiated approach	The piece recognizes one or more of the types of differentiation.	100%	100%
	The piece highlights some type of exclusion, social inequality, or discrimination against women.	100%	100%
	The message offers special guarantees and protections for women.		100%
	Total	67%	100%
Gender representations	The piece does not denigrate or ridicule people based on their gender or sexual orientation. In other words, it ensures a correct use of the image of women so that the message is not stigmatized, demeaned or undermined on the basis of gender.	100%	100%
	The piece does not discriminate or treat people unequally because of their gender or sexual orientation. Discrimination refers to treating differently people who deserve to be treated equally with others, harming or affecting them for no other than differences in gender, race, sex, political and religious affiliation, etc.	100%	100%
	Gender roles are addressed in the piece without portraying the subordination, abuse or objectification of women.	100%	100%
	Total	100%	100%
Women empowerment	The message is inspiring, inclusive, empowering, and generates feelings of affirmation and motivation.	100%	100%
	The pieces show women in an authentic way and in line with the culture and values of the advertised product or service.	100%	100%
	The message downplays sexuality as a central female theme.	100%	100%
	Total	100%	100%

**Table 6. Research findings by campaign**

*Source: Own elaboration.*



**Figure 3. Overall results of the gender approach in the campaigns of the newspaper El Tiempo**

Source: Own elaboration.

The analysis variable with which the Invisible Woman campaign did not achieve full compliance was the gender-differentiated approach, which was acceptable at 67% in the campaign and 83% in the sample as a whole (figure 3).

**Gender-differentiated approach in the communication**

This analysis variable was achieved with 83%, a high level of compliance according to the ordinal scale used. From the perspective of differentiation, both campaigns fully recognize gender differentiation in the message, identifying women as a population subject to differentiation. Other types of differentiation mentioned in the analytical methodology of the differential approach are not differentiated, such as age, social class, mental health or ethnicity.

Both campaigns address issues such as exclusion, social inequality and gender discrimination against women in areas traditionally occupied by men. The Invisible Woman campaign is particularly concerned with the inequality of women’s access to positions of power and decision-making in the economic, political and social spheres. This type of inequality is referred to as gender segregation in the workplace.

Each of the pieces features a presidential or government cabinet in which the president and his staff are mostly male. In none of the scenes is the most powerful post occupied by a woman or is there more than one woman, which the campaign denounces: the invisibility of women in positions of power.

The Women Rewrite Women campaign tackles inequality through sexist and androcentric language that makes women and their achievements invisible in areas such as sport, work and politics. Therefore, the latter is identified as a cross-cutting theme between the campaigns, a context in which *El Tiempo* highlights the inequality and invisibility of women.

Women Rewrite Women is broader than the previous campaign in terms of gender inequality issues. It goes beyond the political and professional scenario and even addresses gender-based violence. It emphasizes how language makes the responsibility of the male gender invisible in cases such as femicide and domestic violence.

In this sense, it was found that topics such as politics and gender-based violence are undeniably newsworthy content that *El Tiempo* uses to carry out its communication campaigns and PR actions in favor of the gender approach. Of the three indicators analyzed in this variable, the third, which aimed to determine whether the message provides guarantees and special measures of non-discrimination or protection for the exposed group, was not fully met in the sample; it was only observed in the Women Rewrite Women campaign. This means that in half of the sample.

Thus, although in all cases in Invisible Woman the problems of women are denounced or made visible, no actionable measures were offered in the campaign's message to counteract them. In other words, a social asymmetry suffered by women was made visible, but no guarantees of intervention were given. Nor did the pieces encourage the audience to participate in the campaign with contact points such as a hotline, website or email address, which are also ways to get citizens to take action.

In contrast, the message of Women Rewrite Women succeeded in offering guarantees and specific non-discrimination measures for the exposed group, as it highlighted a situation of inequality in the headlines and called on other women to change this. Thus, she mobilized the country's female journalists, who responded by rewriting the headlines without gender bias and stereotypes, giving visibility to women in the news. The newspaper then published a special edition in which it collected around 600 headlines that empowered and gave visibility to women.

### **The representation of women in the campaigns**

This analysis variable was achieved 100%. The campaigns are in line with the commitments of appropriate gender representation in commercial communication: they do not denigrate, discriminate or mock on the basis of gender and do not portray women in a way that leads the audience to perceive women as subordinate, abused or objectified.

In *Invisible Woman*, gender representations are directly related to images of women not only practicing a profession in areas of power, but doing so without falling into stereotypes or limited representations of gender.

In *Women Rewrite Women*, unlike the first campaign, appropriate representation was achieved through words without images. In other words, the new wording of the headlines describes the way women should be portrayed without using images. Words are used that portray women respectfully and equally in the context in which the news takes place.

### **Women empowerment in the message**

This analysis variable was also achieved with 100%. In line with the concept of femvertising, both campaigns fully met the three indicators of this analysis variable, meaning that the message was inspiring, inclusive and empowering, evoking feelings of affirmation and motivation while downplaying the importance of sexuality as a central female issue.

In its institutional communication, *El Tiempo* thus appealed to the female figure in social, cultural, sporting and political contexts in line with the message themes it developed. In *Invisible Woman*, the empowerment comes from the visibility of the problem, in *Women Rewrite Women* from the visibility and the call to action.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

In this study, the characteristics of the gender approach were identified and its compliance in communication was evaluated using the specific case of the analysis of the newspaper *El Tiempo*. Three study variables were identified: the gender-differentiated approach, gender representation and female empowerment in communication. The variable with the least compliance was the gendered approach.

Both campaigns easily addressed the analysis of social differences and highlighted the gendered division of labor and sexism in the headlines as issues that affect women as a diverse population. However, they did not address the second component of the differentiated approach: social or political action (Arteaga, 2012; Montealegre Mongrovejo & Urrego Rodríguez, 2011) and citizen participation

(Servaes & Malikhao, 2007). This is in contrast to the conceptualization of the differentiated approach as a method not only to make inequalities or asymmetries between genders visible, but also to change them (Fritz & Valdés, 2006)

With a highly qualified result, it stands out for being the only newspaper in Colombia that is beginning to create conversations about gender positions in its communication, although there is no formal methodology for building communication campaigns with a gender differential approach in the country to date and in line with the concept of the medium as a space for the construction of new discourses on gender relations (Ludec, 2017).

If we consider *El Tiempo* not only as a media outlet but also as an advertiser, its commitment to presenting its campaigns at festivals and winning awards stands out, organically spreading the message through other media, especially digital media. In this regard, the fact that it is a media company that has been awarded for this type of campaign is proof of its commitment to inclusive communication and its link with corporate social responsibility (CSR). In this sense, Rodríguez Ferrándiz (2008) warns that the advertisement nominated for an award becomes an advertising product in itself, which is related to the notion of the medium as a stage on which the updated productive logic generates legitimacy before users (Racioppe, 2014).

We find that the concept of differentiated approach, usually limited to the communication of public policies, should not be alien to other communication dynamics such as advertising. This study supports the implementation of the gender differential approach, the adequate representation of gender, and the empowerment of women in the message as a triad that explains the gender perspective in communication.

Given the relative novelty of the object of study and the scarcity of academic material available in Latin America, this concept must be familiar to advertising and public relations professionals working on campaigns from a gender perspective. For other social actors such as academia and the media, an important challenge is to socialize this concept both in their role as consensus builders and in their critical position as citizens; this in close connection with theories of cultural studies that place them in a valuable conceptual framework for understanding the intersection of power, ideology and meaning production (Hall, 1997).

The proposed methodology represents a major step forward for the gender approach as an object of study in the advertising industry. The identification of the variables, the design of the instrument and the methodological way to assess compliance with gender indicators in communication are the main results of this



study. Ultimately, these results will allow the field of research on the gender message in the country to become more complex, not only for the media as advertisers, but as a greater challenge for the entire industry.

Regarding the limitations of the study and the new lines of research, it would be interesting to replicate the work with a larger sample; however, this is not possible at this time, as *El Tiempo* is the only Colombian media that has published campaigns of this type to date. New lines of gender research could be pursued not only in persuasive communication and public relations, but also in corporate communication, institutional communication and brand communication.

The proposed methodology can be used in two ways: for the analysis of campaigns, but also for the design and implementation of inclusive communication as an effective strategy in terms of brands' corporate engagement with vulnerable groups. To this end, it is recommended that professionals understand the application of the method in two ways, moving from the area of visibility to the area of social intervention of gender issues from strategic communication. Only then can we move from campaigns that raise awareness to campaigns that mobilize.

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