A Study of New Generation Consumers' Preferences on Advertising through Digital Media in Mexico

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Extant research points to changing characteristics as well as digital media behaviors and preferences of new generation consumers in relation to advertising. Our study among 402 new generation consumers in Mexico comprised both qualitative and quantitative research. We examined the effect of belonging to a particular segment, on Ad Skepticism among such consumers. In addition, we investigated the impact of segment, gender, and Ad Skepticism on consumers' preference for Transformational and Informational ads. Results indicated a significant effect of segment on Ad Skepticism, with Modern Woman being more skeptical among the three segments. Further, women showed a significantly higher preference for Informational ads over Transformational ads. In addition, a significant effect of segment was seen in the preference for Informational ads based on credibility and product preference. Moreover, no significant impact of Ad Skepticism on preference for type of ad was found. We also describe some implications for research and practice, and discuss study limitations.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Digital Advertising, Advertising Skepticism, Transformational Ad, Informational Ad, Market Segmentation and Targeting, Mexico

1. Introduction

Mexico represents an attractive market for a large range of consumer products for global marketers. The economy expressed as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was US$ 1.3 trillion, with a significant growth over the last two decades since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect (The World Factbook 2014). Mexico had a per capita income in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) of US $18000 per capita. Mexico's imports were over US$ 400 billion, of which almost half were from the US, making it the second-largest export market for its northern neighbor. The country has a relatively young population of 121 million, with over a third age group below 24 years, and median age of 27.6 years. Further, over 41% of the population comprised Internet users. In addition, it is of note that that the country culture is highly collectivist, in contrast to the US, which may present some challenges to global marketers.

In recent years, there has been renewed interest among marketers in understanding the consumer perception of advertisements, and more credible ways to get their attention. There are numerous possible reasons why traditional advertising has lost

consumer interest. One explanation is that the attraction of traditional media is eroded due to the number of hours that consumers spent in front of television sets and computers. Advertising must engage more with the new lifestyle of the consumer. Undoubtedly, the increasing role of technology in advertising is related to Ad Skepticism toward advertising. The result is a new variant of advertising strategy with a sharp focus on consumers in the new digital era. The increase in online advertising investments is a global trend. Digital investments are up in markets like the U.S., the U.K. and Brazil, due in large part to increased confidence in the Internet as a platform for advertising. However, there is scant research attention on digital advertising in Mexico, and its importance to marketers and researchers. As an example, in 2012, approximately US$492 million (6.4 billion Mexican pesos) were invested in online advertising in Mexico, a 38% increase from the year before. The industries that most increased their budgets for online advertising in 2012 are Drinks (61%), Beauty and Hygiene (38%), and Transportation, Travel and Tourism (31%) (Herrera 2013).

However, despite the above, digital advertising in Mexico among the new generation of consumers is a neglected area in research. We fill this research gap by investigating new generation consumers' preferences on advertising through digital media in Mexico. It would be important to determine these consumers' credibility in advertising messages, what types of ads do new generation consumers prefer, and the relationship with the level of Ad Skepticism toward advertising and preference of the type of ad. In this research, we explore the relationship between segment of the new generation of customers in Mexico, and the level of Ad Skepticism. We also investigate the preference for type of ad preferred (Transformational or Informational), and its association with gender, segment, and the level of Ad Skepticism. Key research questions include: What is the impact of belonging to a particular new generation digital segment on Ad Skepticism? What is the effect of segment on preference for the type of ad? Does gender affect preference of the type of ad? Does the level of Ad Skepticism affect preference for the type of ad?

This research, which is the first study of this nature to be conducted in Mexico, will contribute toward understanding differences in Ad Skepticism among digital consumer segments in Mexico. Our study will also provide an increased comprehension of the influence of type of messages (transformational and informational) toward Ad Skepticism amongst adolescents and mature target audiences who have more sophisticated lifestyles in the digital era. The study focus is specifically on Internet as a medium of advertising, which supports a strong motivation to purchase, and which at the same time faces the challenge of consumer Ad Skepticism toward media ads. The digital medium of advertising thus provides an appropriate environment for the study.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this section, we discuss the theoretical bases of this research, including the generational cohort theory (Abramson and Inglehart 1995, Inglehart 1977), Ad Skepticism toward advertising (Obermiller and Spangenberg 1998, Obermiller, Spangenberg and MacLachlan 2005), and two types of ad messages, Transformational and Informational (Obermiller, Spangenberg and MacLachlan 2005, Puto and Wells 1984, Wells 1980).

The Theory of Generations

Inglehart's (1977) generational cohort theory holds that new generational cohorts result from changes in social order and values brought about by historical events having national impact. Socio-economic conditions experienced as a part of growing up are mirrored in values of adults; however, changes in socio-economic conditions do not impact the relative importance of values. This is the first assumption, or socialization hypothesis. In addition, if cohorts faced a shortage of supply of socioeconomic resources in their growing years, such resources gain the highest subjective value within the cohort. This is the scarcity hypothesis. Successive cohorts exhibit the biggest changes in values, attitudes, and lifestyles among nations that faced the greatest economic growth (Abramson and Inglehart 1995). With Mexico facing rapid economic growth in recent decades, particularly from regional economic groupings, both these hypotheses appear to be relevant, and literature supports the unique characteristics of generational cohorts "X" and "Y" as discussed below.

Generation X*:* Born between 1966-1976, they are in 35 to 47 Gen X is often characterized by high levels of Ad Skepticism, "what's in it for me" attitudes and a reputation for some of the worst music to ever gain popularity. Now, moving into adulthood Howe and Strauss (1992) cited the childhood divorce of many Gen Xers as "one of the most decisive experiences influencing how Gen Xers will shape their own families". Gen Xers are arguably the best educated generation with 29% obtaining a bachelor's degree or higher (6% higher than the previous cohort). And, with that education and a growing maturity they are starting to form families with a higher level of caution and pragmatism than their parents demonstrated. Concerns run high over avoiding broken homes, kids growing up without a parent around, and financial planning.

Generation Y: Born in the mid-1980's and later, Generation Y are in their 30's. They are recent entrants into the workforce, comprising about 26.8% of the total population in Mexico, (INEGI 2012). Marketers cannot ignore the needs, desires and attitudes of this significantly large consumer segment. For marketers, the Generation Y represent a challenge, beyond their demographic diversity, marketers need to recognize distinct behaviors, preferences, attitudes, and values that set this group apart from the rest. They are known as incredibly sophisticated, technology wise, immune to most traditional marketing. They have been accustomed to using computers from an early age and therefore make intensive use of electronic media, they seek diverse communities online and offline, are idealistic and socially conscious, and they use the Internet, as part of the purchase decision process reason why they are much more segmented as an audience aided by the rapid expansion in Cable TV channels, satellite radio, the Internet Generation Y is a generation where "creativity" is part of its days; friendship groups are defined by it; this is a generation who has found new avenues for self-expression (Noble, Haytko, and Phillips 2009), making and sharing their own photos, films, music, websites and blogs. Brands become the set of symbols available for consumers to use in constructing and communicating notions of self (Schau and Gilly 2003).

Advertising targeted at this group is changing, since they interact through brand communities. A brand community is "a specialized, non-geographically bound

community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). Marketers need to let consumers come up with their own ideas and product design as well as ways to make them happen and bring the product to life in the market place. Brand communities are the avenue that allow young people involve themselves much earlier in the innovation and marketing process and keeps them involved for much longer with the brand. Generation Y are less brand loyal and the speed of the Internet has led the cohort to be similarly flexible and changing in its fashion, style consciousness and where and how it is communicated with.

New Generation of Mexican Consumers

Further, we discuss below three profiles of Mexican consumers that correspond to secondary data from the 2012 edition of the Merca 2.0, a marketing research publication which collated various studies and evaluated different ways to segment the Mexican market (Irigoyen and Garcia 2012). Merca2.0 covered men and women 15 to 40 years old, which included those aged from 15 to 24 that are new to the process of buying and those aged from 25 to 40, possibly having completed professional studies and already integrated into the workforce, this segment is making commitments that lead them to decision making of purchasing items that require more involvement and which involve spending large amounts of money and possibly the creation of long-term commitments. In the following section, we will discuss the characteristics of those consumers.

According to Irigoyen and Garcia (2012), Merca2.0 created five segments that are grouped by specific characteristics; of these, we picked three that had a greater exposure to digital advertising, which is the point of interest of this study, as described in the sections below. The modern consumer is multifunctional, who, while taking a look to email, is simultaneously talking on a smartphone, or checking social networks, as a result paying less attention to the ads. It is more difficult to get a message through to such a consumer, which underlines the need to segment the market, and approach each consumer in an appropriate manner (Irigoyen and Garcia 2012).

Youth: Eight out of ten are students, and 85% are dependent on digital theme. All of them possess a mobile, of which 90% considered important to have a smartphone while only 82% have one. They are between 15 and 24 years old, 50% live with their parents or relatives. They spend about $ 1,500 pesos monthly in clothes and 10% have an employment. Their income varies between $ 500 and $ 1,000 pesos no work experience, and between $5,000 and $ 8,000 with work experience. Ninety- nine percent of them have a Facebook account. Preferred brands include Apple, Axe, Ben and Jerry's, Beetle (Volkswagen), Carl´s Junior, Levis, Converse, Coca-Cola Zero, Monster, MTV, Nike, Pantene, Pepe Jeans, Puma, Quaker, Ray Ban, Red Bull, Rexona, Gatorade, Pull and Bear, Snickers, Saba, Swatch Starbucks, and Zara.

Modern Woman: This woman is characterized by the purchase designer clothes and liking to be well groomed. Her monthly average expenditure on clothes' purchase between is three thousand pesos and five thousand in shoes, and she is used to buying monthly plans or rebates. The Modern Woman has between 25 and 35 years old, 90% of them have a mobile (80% of these are smartphones); 80% use Facebook

and 85% use Twitter. Her monthly income varies between 10,000 to 60,000 pesos. Preferred brands include Apple (iPhone), Body Shop, Carolina Herrera, Christian Dior, Ciel, Coach, DKNY, Estée Lauder, Fuller, Guess, Lancôme, L'Oréal, Mango, Mac (cosmetics), Mazda, Mossimo, Dutti, Nine West, Oysho, Pantene, Revlon, Soho, Special K (Kellogg's), Toyota (Yaris), Uterque, and Women's' Secret.

Modern Man*:* Five out of ten have a completed bachelor degree, 4% have a graduate degree. They spend $ 1,200 pesos monthly in a gym. Three out of ten are currently in a relationship. They are between 25 and 40 years old, they have a monthly income between 15,000-100,000 pesos; 70% have smartphone, 93% have a Facebook account and 39% use Twitter. Preferred brands include Audi, Bvlgari, Calvin Klein, Ego (shampoo), Emporio Armani, Eucerin Men, Givenchy, Grupo Modelo, Hugo Boss, Johnnie Walker, Lacoste, Mini Cooper, Moschino, Nautica, Nespresso, Paco Rabanne, Ralph Lauren, Rolex, Samsung, Seat, Sony, and Springfield

The primary function of advertising is to persuade people to buy something. Consequently, understanding how advertising influences people is an exercise in understanding how persuasion techniques are used in advertising to trigger buying decisions. Persuasion techniques can be either rational, irrational or a combination of both.

Ad Skepticism

Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998) defined Ad Skepticism as the tendency toward disbelief in advertising claims. These researchers developed a nine-item Likert-type scale to measure consumers' Ad Skepticism. Literature supports the prevalence of a high level of Ad Skepticism, which is positively related to having a more mature understanding of advertising tactics (Boush, Friestad, and Rose 1994). Some researchers take a socialization approach toward Ad Skepticism among Youth, which is high due to interaction with agents such as parents, peers, and media. Specifically, the type of communication received from the family, susceptibility to influence of peers, and exposure to television viewing time, are directly related to Ad Skepticism (Mangleburg and Bristol 1998).

Types of Ad Messages- Transformational and Informational

Previous researches have defined information and transformation as two descriptive constructs for classifying advertisements according to the way in which they affect consumers' perception of their content (Swaminathan, Zinkhan, and Reddy 1996). A transformational appeal elaborates on a non-product-related benefit or image. It might depict what kind of person uses a brand or what kind of experience results from the brand. Transformational appeals often attempt to stir up emotions that will motivate purchase. On the other hand, an informational appeal elaborates on product or service attributes or benefits (Aaker and Norris 1982). Examples in advertising are problem-solution ads, product demonstration ads, product comparison ads and testimonials from unknown or celebrity endorses Informational appeals assume very rational processing of the communication on the part of the consumer. Wells (1980) proposed that some media (e.g., radio and television) are more suitable for transformational advertising than others (e.g., print). Puto and Wells (1984) suggest that television commercials are capable of functioning as a transformational medium.

In addition, consumers with a higher level of Ad Skepticism are not only persuaded by informational ads than are consumers with lower level of Ad Skepticism; but they are also less persuaded by informational ads than they are by emotional ads (Obermiller, Spangenberg, and McLachlan, 2005).

- In the absence of prior studies conducted in Mexico, and based on the above, we state the following research hypotheses:
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H1_0}$: Belonging to a particular segment does not affect Ad Skepticism among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H1_1}$: Belonging to a particular segment affects Ad Skepticism among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2a_0}$: Belonging to a particular segment does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2a_1}$: Belonging to a particular segment affects preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2b_0}$: Gender does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2b_1}$: Gender affects preference of the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2c_0}$: Ad skepticism does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.
- Hypothesis $\mathbf{H2c_1}$: Ad skepticism affects preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.

3. Methodology

The research approach was mixed, since it called for performing qualitative research, followed by quantitative research.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was used in order to explore preferences towards digital advertising, identify the platforms to which consumers are exposed, and the type of message that is more credible for the consumer, specifically via the focus group technique. As discussed above, three segments were identified- "Youth", "Modern Woman", and "Modern Man" respectively. The participation in the focus groups was limited to the fulfillment of three conditions: the first was to have age within the range corresponding to the segment participating in the focus group, the second to have a smartphone and the last condition was that have used at least three brands as established as representative of each segment.

Focus group sessions were chaired by a facilitator, who began by introducing the form and explaining the reasons for our study. Each discussion commenced with asking participants to give their initial impressions of advertising. The participants were asked which digital media they are using more frequently, giving the number "1" to the most used and a "5" to the one they use the least. Later on ten different ads were shown, asking participants for comments or any points regarding credibility or Ad Skepticism using different Internet media such as personal email, mobile, search engines and social networks. These discussions were very detailed, focusing on precise wordings and possible meanings of questions, explanations and guidance.

For each Internet medium two ads were presented, one using an Informational message and the other using a Transformational message. In order control brand references or existing brand associations, we used hypothetical brands. For each ad, the participants had to rate how skeptical they feel about the advertisements they were presented. We used a range from "1" to "5", considering that the number "1" is non - skeptical, while closer to the "5" is considered very skeptical to the advertising displayed.

The third focus group presentation was modified, placing ten ads for men and ten for women with their respective iconic brands, trying to find out if the brands have an effect in the level of Ad Skepticism. For each ad the participants were asked to rate how skeptical they were to the advertisements that were displayed, using the same methodology as in the previous focus groups. As a result of qualitative research insights were obtained and they were used a resource of quantitative research.

Quantitative Research

For quantitative research the sample comprised 402 participants, with 134 participants in each of the three segments, "Youth", "Modern Woman" and "Modern Man". To be considered as subjects for the study was necessary that they met three characteristics, similar to the ones that qualified participants in the focus groups: belonging the age range for the segment, using at least three of the brands that identifies each segment, having a mobile device with Internet access (i.e., a Smartphone), and self-reported proficiency in English being above 60%.

Data were collected at several metropolitan locations populated by affluent consumers belonging to the three different segments of interest. Once again, to ensure an appropriate respondent profile, questionnaires had three filters (age, Smartphone ownership, and the use of brands mentioned earlier). The survey instrument included a nine-item, 7-point Likert-type scale of Ad Skepticism where 1 represents "strongly disagree" (high Ad Skepticism) while 7 represents "strongly agree" (low Ad Skepticism). Further, four questions were presented to assess preference for the two types of messages. They were shown two different ads, prepared for each segment, with Transformational (Ad A) and Informational (Ad B) messages for their evaluation on credibility, preference, convincing power, and purchase intention. In order to ensure that the message displayed effectively corresponded to the type of message, a pilot test was performed using the Puto and Wells (1984) scale, which consists of 23 items to identify whether the messages are Transformational or Informational. The items were measured a 7 points Likert-type scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree", while the seven represents "strongly agree". Once verified, the ads corresponding to each type of message were used for the survey. General and demographic information was also included.

Data were processed with SPSS 22. The nine-item modified Ad Skepticism scale (Obermiller and Spangenberg 1998) was examined for reliability and unidimensionality. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Chi-square tests were used to analyze data.

Description of the Sample

The total sample of 402 was distributed equally over the three segments under study, with 134 respondents each from the Youth segment, the Modern Man segment, and the Modern Woman segment. The sample included 198 males and 203 females, each

being about 50% of the sample. Overall, Ad Skepticism was found to be neutral (mean= 3.7, standard deviation= 1.05). (Table 1). The average of nine items on the Ad Skepticism scale was the lowest for Youth (mean= 3.81, SD=1.04), followed by Modern Man (mean=3.67, SD=1.08), and highest for Modern Woman segment (mean= 3.52, SD=1.04).

Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	Category	Number	%	Mean/Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
Segment	Total	402	100.0	1		2
	Youth	134	33.3			
	Modern Woman	134	33.3			
	Modern Man	134	33.3			
Ad Skepticism	Total	402	100.0	3.66	1.06	5.78
	High Ad Skepticism	193	48.0			1
	Low Ad Skepticism	209	52.0			
Type of ad- Credibility	Total	402	100.0	Ad B		1
	Ad A	126	31.3			
	Ad B	276	68.7			
Type of ad- Product Preference	Total	402	100.0	Ad B		1
	Ad A	159	39.6			
	Ad B	243	60.4			
Type of ad- Conviction	Total	402	100.0	Ad B		1
	Ad A	154	38.3			
	Ad B	248	61.7			
Type of ad- Purchase intent	Total	402	100.0	Ad B		1
	Ad A	173	43.0			
	Ad B	229	57.0			

Reliability, Validity, and Descriptive Statistics

Gender was highly correlated with segment; this is because of some overlap in classification. Preference for type of ad (Transformational or Informational) based on credibility, conviction, and purchase intent was found to be related to segment, as well as gender. Preference for the type of ad based on four characteristics (i.e., credibility, preference, conviction, and purchase intent) was found to be correlated among each other. Also the significance of the correlation between paired constructs was less than 1, indicating discriminant validity as described by Bagozzi, Yi, and Phillips (1991).

The nine-item Ad Skepticism was found to be highly reliable, as it exceeded the .07 criterion requirement of Bagozzi and Yi, and Phillips 1991 (Cronbach's α= .894, n=9, N=402). The scale mean was 32.97, SD= 9.5, and grand mean= 3.66 (F=77.08,

df= 8, ρ=.000) (Table 2). In addition, factor analysis conducted with PCA extraction (see Table 3), yielded a scale unidimensionality through a single rotated solution item loadings exceeded the .05 level of significance, indicating convergent validity prescribed by Bagozzi et al. (KMO measure of sampling adequacy= .900, Bartlett's test of sphericity= 1823.63, df= 36, ρ= .000).

Table 2 *Ad Skepticism Scale Item Statistics*

Item	Mean	SD	N
We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising	3.62	1.436	402
Advertising´s aim is to inform the consumer	4.31	1.778	402
I believe advertising is informative	4.25	1.491	402
Advertising is generally truthful	3.50	1.337	402
Advertising is a reliable source of information about the quality and performance of products	3.32	1.361	402
Advertising is truth well told	2.93	1.362	402
In general advertising presents a true picture of the product being advertised	3.51	1.331	402
I feel I've been accurately informed after viewing most advertisements	3.51	1.260	402
Most advertising provides consumers with essential information	4.03	1.502	402

Table 3 *Component Matrix*[a]

	Component
	1
We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising	.714
Advertising´s aim is to inform the consumer	.652
I believe advertising is informative	.672
Advertising is generally truthful	.737
Advertising is a reliable source of information about the quality and performance of products	.794
Advertising is truth well told	.759
In general advertising presents a true picture of the product being advertised	.807
I feel I've been accurately informed after viewing most advertisements	.811
Most advertising provides consumers with essential information	.730

N= 402
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.[a]
a. 1 components extracted.

4. Analysis and Results

Effect of Segment on Ad Skepticism

We examined means, and conducted ANOVA analysis to test Hypothesis $H1_0$, which stated that belonging to a particular segment does not affect Ad Skepticism among the new generation of consumers in Mexico. As shown in Table 4, Ad Skepticism was found to be the highest among Modern Woman (mean= 3.98), followed by

Modern Man (mean=4.13). It was the lowest among Youth (mean=4.30). ANOVA analysis revealed a significant difference in Ad Skepticism among segments ($F_{2, 399}$=2.52, ρ=.08). At the .10 level of significance, the level of Ad Skepticism in Modern Woman is significantly higher than in other segments. Based on the above, we reject the null Hypothesis $H1_0$, and accept altenative Hypothesis $H1_1$, that belonging to a particular segment affects Ad Skepticism among the new generation of consumers in Mexico. Further, post-hoc Scheffe tests of multiple comparisons indicated a contrast at the .10 level of significance, between Youth and Modern Woman segments (mean difference=.32, standard error=.14, ρ=.082). This difference needs to be further investigated.

Table 4 *ANOVA- Means of Ad Skepticism among Segments*

Segment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Youth	134	4.30	1.15
Modern Woman	134	3.98	1.16
Modern Man	134	4.13	1.21
Total	402	4.14	1.18

Effect of Segment on Type of Ad Preferred

According to our Hypothesis $H2a_0$, belonging to a particular segment does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico. However, between segments, significant differences were observed in the type of ad preferred owing to certain ad characteristics. The characteristics were credibility (χ^2= 18.80, df= 2, ρ= .000), and conviction (χ^2= 6.84, df= 2, ρ= .033). On account of this, we reject the null hypothesis, and accept Hypothesis $H2a_1$ which states that belonging to a particular segment affects preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.

Effect of Gender on Type of Ad Preferred

Overall, results evidenced that a high proportion (68.7%) of total respondents felt that Informational ads are more credible than Transformational ads. The null Hypothesis $H2b_0$ stated that gender does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico. As can be seen in Table 5, compared to males, females showed a significantly higher preference for the Informational ad, based on all four ad characteristics. These were credibility (χ^2= 11.29, df= 1, ρ= .001), product preference (χ^2= 8.50, df= 1, ρ= .004), conviction (χ^2= 4.88, df=1, ρ=.027), and purchase intent (χ^2= 4.36, df= 1, ρ= .037). Hence, we reject the null Hypothesis $H2b_0$, in favor of Hypothesis $H2b_1$ which states that gender affects preference of the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.

Effect of Ad Skepticism on Type of Ad Preferred

In formulating null Hypothesis $H2c_0$, we held that ad skepticism does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico. In

order to test this hypothesis, we split the sample into "High" and "Low" based on the sample mean of Ad Skepticism. After conducting χ^2 tests (see Table 5), we did not detect any significant differences in the type of ad preferred, stemming from the four ad characteristics. Hence we fail to reject the null hypothesis, and conclude that ad skepticism does not affect preference for the type of ad among the new generation of consumers in Mexico.

Table 5 *Effect of Gender, Segment and Ad Skepticism on Type of Ad Preferred*

Factor	Measure	$\chi 2$	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	N
Gender	Preferred Ad- Credibility	11.29	1	.001*	402
	Preferred Ad- Preference	8.50	1	.004*	402
	Preferred Ad- Conviction	4.88	1	.027*	402
	Preferred Ad- Purchase Intent	4.36	1	.037*	402
Segment	Preferred Ad- Credibility	18.80	2	.000*	402
	Preferred Ad- Preference	3.808	2	.149	402
	Preferred Ad- Conviction	6.84	2	.033*	402
	Preferred Ad- Purchase Intent	.14	2	.931	402
Ad Skepticism	Preferred Ad- Credibility	1.40	2	.237	402
	Preferred Ad- Preference	.46	2	.496	402
	Preferred Ad- Conviction	.000	2	.989	402
	Preferred Ad- Purchase Intent	.05	2	.831	402

* Significant at $p \leq .05$

5. Discussion and Conclusions

In the present research, we have drawn on several research streams relating to the new generation of consumers in Mexico, and the digital media that can be marshalled to reach them. The use of scales from the literature, as well as a large sample size, ensures validity and reliability of findings. Several research questions have been formulated and addressed.

Several of our findings have implications for research. The contrast between means of Ad Skepticism of Youth and Modern Woman was found to be significant at the .10 level of significance. This finding runs contrary to Mangleberg and Bristol's (1998) study finding that Youth have higher levels of Ad Skepticism due to socialization through family, peers, and media influences.

Further, the preference for Informational ads over Transformational ads is significantly higher in the overall sample. Also, as discussed above, we did not detect any significant differences between level of Ad Skepticism and the type of ad preferred, stemming from the four ad characteristics. This finding is contrary to extant literature which evidenced that consumers with a higher level of Ad Skepticism are less persuaded by informational ads than they are by emotional ads (Obermiller, Spangenberg, and McLachlan 2005).

In addition, while there is a preference for Informational ads across both genders, this preference is significantly higher among females. This finding extends current

research, and is a valuable addition to extant knowledge. Further, as stated above, consumers with a higher level of Ad Skepticism are less persuaded by informational ads than they are by emotional ads (Obermiller, Spangenberg, and McLachlan 2005).This is borne out by findings of our study, which revealed that Youth had lower levels of Ad Skepticism than Modern Woman, segment. Also, among Youth, we detected a significantly higher preference for Informational ads.

Our findings have implications for marketing practitioners as well. In general, many successful brands rely on highly emotional-oriented advertising, which can be described as Transformational in nature. An explanation for the preference in creating Transformational advertising might be the use of a dual strategy, which relies on "combination" or "mixed" appeals that are partly emotional, and partly information-based. This effect can be achieved through differential emphasis of ad elements (such as copy, visuals, color, and music), towards an overall brand image (Clow and Baack 2010). Consumers might be not sensitive to, or even be consciously aware of, this subtle mix of appeals.

A limitation of this research might be social desirability bias, which is survey respondents' tendency to provide answer they believe others will favorably receive (Crowne and Marlow 1960). Respondents tend to stress on their "good behavior", and underplay "bad behavior". Self-report survey instruments typically suffer from the resultant bias in means. Some examples Respondents might believe that it is more socially desirable to appear "rational" rather than "emotional". As an example, advertising may include sensual, sexual, and other hedonistic appeals, that a respondent might not feel comfortable with, while participating in a focus group or survey. A pattern of biased responses results in masking individual differences in research. Future studies may include a social desirability scale (Marlowe and Crowne 1960) to unmask true individual differences. Besides, the culture of Mexico is highly collectivist in nature, which may account for some differences in results (e.g., Hofstede 2001, Joonas and Dávila Ruiz 2014). Country culture may be included as a factor in future studies.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the present research extends current knowledge, and would merit a deeper investigation into the determinants of Ad Skepticism. It is the first study of its nature to be conducted in Mexico, a country of importance to global marketers. However, even if we have scratched the surface, we were successful in preparing the ground for future studies. If global marketers want to grow the profitability of their business in Mexico, they can communicate appropriate messages through appropriate digital media to the new generation of consumers, towards building brand equity.

6. References

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