

Examining the Utilization of Model Characteristics and Culture as Appeals by Advertisers in Cosmopolitan and Latina Magazines

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Abstract: Given the limited research on cultural targeting of Latinas in consumer advertising, this study adds to the literature on this topic. The study explores if ads in Hispanic women's magazines are more culturally targeted than those appearing in general U.S. audience magazines. Based on the concept of cultural distinctiveness, the research examines how advertisers employ cultural strategies to appeal to Hispanic female consumers by comparing the primary models and cultural attributes in advertisements placed in a Hispanic ethnic magazine (Latina) and a general audience magazine (Cosmopolitan). A content analysis of 1,167 advertisements in Cosmopolitan (N=739) and Latina (N=428) reveals important differences. Latina ads featured racially and ethnically diverse models with darker skin tones and larger body sizes. Additionally, sociocultural cues such as racial pride, collectivism, and cultural application were more prevalent in Latina-targeted ads. There was little representation of Asian Americans or American Indians in either magazine. Advertisers in Latina magazine used cultural appeals in less than half the ads suggesting business could invest more in cultural tailoring efforts. These findings emphasize the importance of cultural appeals to Latina audiences through ethnic media. The research contributes to understanding cultural targeting in Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines and to providing insights into how advertisers engage and connect with Latina consumers. The study highlights the recognition that society and businesses assign value to social groups, partly based on their perceived value as consumers, and there is opportunity for advertisers to expand their efforts.

Keywords: Advertising, Culture, Distinctiveness theory, Ethnic media, Latina, Magazines

1. Introduction

Census 2022 data show Hispanics are now the largest U.S. ethnic minority group estimated to comprise 19.1 percent of Americans[1]. Marketing books instruct readers how to capitalize on this “new growth” market[2][3]. While comparative studies of advertising messages examine how advertisements may differ between magazines that are created for African American and White women[4-6], fewer investigate messages made for Latinas[7][8]. How corporate America values consumers is reflected, in part, by its financial investments in attracting societal groups as consumers. Considering the limited research on cultural targeting and on Latinas in consumer advertising, further investigation is warranted. In line with the significance of the research problem, this study explores the specific strategies magazine

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advertisers use to appeal to Hispanic female consumers. By addressing this research need, the study sheds light on the underexplored area of cultural targeting and provides valuable insights for advertisers.

Many studies have looked at media and the advertising content of women's magazines to determine how they shape and influence women's lives—i.e., women's roles, women's rights, concepts of beauty[9]. This approach is central in understanding what it means to be a woman. The interest of this research relates not only to ideas of being female, but also with representation of cultural identity. Previous research that has tested distinctiveness theory has found support for the idea that racial and ethnic minority group members pay more attention to exemplars of people of their own race/ethnicity than do members of the majority[10]. According to this theory, it would benefit advertisers to use images and messages that specifically appeal to ethnic consumers in media rather than use the same advertising created for general market audiences. Therefore, this study investigates whether magazine advertisers actually employ different strategies.

Based on the idea of cultural distinctiveness, this research compares the cultural characteristics of main models in advertisements featured in a Hispanic-focused magazine (Latina) to those in a general audience magazine (Cosmopolitan) and investigates whether advertisers use cultural strategies to attract Hispanic female consumers. More specifically, this study examines two full years of advertisements from Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines (2007 to 2008) that feature models. It studies how advertisers implement strategies to display cultural distinctiveness through the portrayal of the models (body size, race, ethnicity, hair color) and the utilization of sociocultural variables (collectivism, racial pride, and cultural application). This study enhances understanding of cultural targeting in Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines, identifying if there is an alignment of advertising strategies with magazine audiences. Critically, this tells us about whether companies are approaching efforts at equity, diversity and inclusion in earnest.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Distinctiveness Theory

The first application of McGuire's distinctiveness theory in advertising research looked at the effect of ethnic/racial (Hispanic/White) identification on perceptions of spokesperson trustworthiness and brand attitudes[10]. The authors explain that distinctiveness theory hypothesizes that when a minority group member is in a situation where they are a numerical minority, their group identification will increase in salience. For instance, Deshpandé and Stayman (1994)[10] examined Latinos and Whites and found that for both racial/ethnic groups, their numerical minority ethnic situation influenced their spontaneous racial/ethnic identification, which in turn increased their perceptions of trustworthiness of a spokesperson of the same ethnicity/race. The outcome was that it increased their positive attitudes toward the brand. Other research supports the distinctiveness hypothesis in African American and gay/lesbian target populations[11]. Torres and Briggs[12] also found support for the hypothesis that ethnic targeting in advertising has stronger effects on those with higher ethnic identification when the product is low involvement. In terms of products advertised in women's magazines, such as beauty and fashion, it can be expected that ethnic targeting would be effective because the products are relatively low-involvement products. Furthermore, Latinas do not often show up in media messages so seeing oneself in the media might increase salience according to distinctiveness theory.

In determining the ethnic situation of a consumer based on their minority status, it is important to consider other factors that may influence consumer perceptions. While a brand spokesperson lends an air of credibility or trustworthiness to an ad, the models used in advertising can also contribute to consumer perceptions. It would stand to reason, based on distinctiveness theory, that if advertising included racial/ethnic models in advertising that were perceived to come from the same targeted ethnic

group that the advertising would be more effective. Therefore, it would be expected that advertisers in ethnic media would use ethnic targeting.

2.2 Ethnic Media and Hispanic Women's Magazines

Research has explored how Hispanic media serve their consumers, with the idea that they might inform advertisers how to promote their products to their audiences. Early research on Hispanic media suggests that they serve assimilation functions as well as support cultural maintenance[13]. Researchers have looked specifically at the role of Hispanic women's magazines. Johnson[7] studied articles in Latina women's magazines and concluded the magazines served two functions—assimilation and pluralism. She noted the magazines assimilate Latinas to U.S. cultural norms such as focusing on the future, the individual, and valuing modernity. This is done mainly through an emphasis on consumption. On the other hand, Johnson also argues that Hispanic women's ethnic magazines also serve the function of ethnic preservation.

In a separate qualitative analysis of Latina magazine articles and interviews with magazine staff, Martínez[14] determined that the magazine acculturates Latinas to understand and identify with a pluralistic "Hispanic" identity that incorporates cultural information from numerous Latin countries. She furthermore points out that the magazine also turns a critical eye on issues relevant to Hispanic identity and culture (e.g., why are "White" features prized over more ethnic looks?). If these are the goals of Hispanic women's magazines, one might expect that advertisers who choose to place their advertising in such media would likewise focus on promoting consumerism while also giving tribute to the maintenance of Hispanic cultures through representing models with "Hispanic" cultural looks and by using sociocultural cues.

2.3 General Audience Magazines and Their Portrayal of Race/Ethnicity

It has been argued that women of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups are not portrayed as often[15] or as favorably as White women in U.S. mainstream magazine advertising or television advertising[16] and that they are portrayed differently[17]. Studies that have analyzed the content of general audience magazines have focused on body size, the skin color of women in the ads, the power status in representations of women, and racial/ethnic depictions. Other studies have included comparative analyses.

The literature that has included comparisons of ethnic models does not provide a clear guideline as to whether one should expect more Latina women or more non-Latina women to appear in the ads in ethnic media. However, based on the fact that advertisers would be expected to use more ethnic targeting in an ethnic magazine, thus cueing ethnic distinctiveness, it would seem reasonable to expect more images of Hispanics in Latina than in Cosmopolitan. While examinations of the race/ethnicity of models in advertising are necessary to understanding how magazine ads portray ethnic diversity, other model attributes, such as body size and skin tone, may provide ethnic cues as well.

2.4 Magazines and Model Body Size

One characteristic that may cue ethnic identification is the model's body size. Studies have demonstrated varying cultural perceptions of body self-image. For instance, a national survey of U.S. high school students[18] found that Hispanic students were significantly less prone to weight control behaviors than were Whites. This supports studies finding that advertising influences perceptions of body image among White women more than it does among Black women or Latinas[8]. Other research [19] shows that Latina women find a full-figured woman more attractive than do non-Hispanic Whites,

while other research suggests that that finding does not hold true for second-generation Latina women. In sum, how Latina women perceive body size is inconclusive. Nonetheless, if perceptions of ideal body size differ among various cultural groups, advertising targeted at different cultural audiences might reflect these distinctions.

2.5 Skin Tone of Models

Skin color is another cultural characteristic that may influence perceptions of distinctiveness. Since the development of the “what is beautiful is good” syndrome[20], lighter skin, generally, still seems considered more beautiful and rewarded in U.S. society. Researchers[21][22] studied how skin color works in the social and educational lives of many U.S. women of varying ethnic and racial groups. One study[21] found that lighter skinned women are more privileged than darker skinned women in both African and Mexican American cultures when it comes to education and income. Research on hiring shows[22] fair-skinned job applicants were given preference in hiring decisions.

Scholars have examined skin tones of models in advertising. Most of the research conducted on skin color focuses mainly on portrayals of African Americans. For example, a study of African American models in Ebony magazine found that most African American models had Caucasian features[5]. Also, in an analysis of ads from both mainstream and Black women’s and business magazines[4], found that across magazines, ads used images of African-Americans with lighter skin tones and Caucasian features compared to the pictures accompanying magazine stories. A study of fashion magazines[20] found that African American models had lighter skin tones in fashion magazine ads than in sports magazine ads, although there were a greater proportion of darker skinned models than were found in previous research. Studies on skin tone of models in women’s magazines tend to show that lighter-skinned African American and Hispanic models are preferred in both ethnic and general audience women’s magazines.

This type of skin color preference has also been prevalent in Latin-American based telenovelas, or television soap operas[23]. Similar to African-American cultures, Hispanic culture has tended to prefer lighter skin over darker skin. Correspondingly, a lighter hair color symbolizes more of a European heritage, even when hair color is dyed and not natural color.

2.6 Product Categories and Women’s Magazines

There has been some research on women’s magazines and the products they advertise. Findings tend to show that the ads focus more on feminine products (e.g., fashion and beauty rather than technology or appliances). For example, Mastin, Coe, Hamilton and Tarr[6], examined ads in Ladies’ Home Journal (LHJ) and Essence and found that LHJ featured ads most often about beauty products (24.7%) and fashion (13.9%), while Essence, a magazine targeting Blacks, carried more ads about fashion (28.5%) and then beauty products (21.1%). In neither magazine were there many ads for technology products, cleaning products, transportation, financial services or appliances. Again, the product categories illustrate cultural assumptions about where women should invest their money.

2.7 Sociocultural Characteristics

Three final factors were included in the analysis that may shed light on how Latina women view their distinctiveness based on sociocultural factors. These three factors are: collectivism, racial pride, and cultural application/recommendations.

Collectivism is a concept that gained prominence in communication when it was identified in Hofstede’s work examining global corporate cultures in his pioneering study of IBM employees. According to Ting-Toomey[24], collectivism “refers to the broad value tendency of a culture in

emphasizing the importance of the ‘we’ identity over the ‘I’ identity, group rights over individual rights, and in-group-oriented needs over individual wants and desires.” In Hofstede’s work collectivism has been most prevalent in non-U.S. and non-European cultures, with the highest collectivist cultures in Central and South America[24].

The concept of racial pride has been defined by Kreuter et al.[25] as “interest and involvement in traditional practices and holding positive attitudes about one’s race.” This study focuses on the manifestation of these emotional appeals in actual advertisements predicated on the assumption that advertisers use such emotive appeals to connect with consumers on a cultural level.

The concept of cultural recommendations/applications in advertising messages relates to whether products are recommended in culturally appropriate ways. For example, hair relaxers are primarily used culturally by African Americans and Afro-Latinas and therefore the product would have a cultural application. In appealing to Hispanic culture, products may also offer cultural recommendations for their use based on the context of the ad. For instance, in advertising teen formal wear, the ad could refer to a quinceañera (girl’s 15-year-old birthday celebration), or, in the case of candy and confections, show the products in the context of a piñata (a colorful paper mâché container) used at a child’s party in many Hispanic cultures.

Research on cultural tailoring has been done using personalized magazines containing health information. The findings are inconclusive as to whether these appeals influence minority readers, although it appears to increase liking for the materials[25]. In terms of distinctiveness theory, using sociocultural indicators may provide additional ways to define the ethnic situation.

3. Hypotheses and Research Questions

The research explores whether advertisers use model characteristics and sociocultural cues in designing their ads for a female Hispanic magazine audience. Based on a review of the literature, the following hypotheses and research questions are posed.

3.1 Hypotheses

H1: There will be a greater proportion of primary models in Latina magazine advertisements that have a body size of “average” and “overweight,” than in Cosmopolitan magazine. Conversely, a greater proportion of primary models in Cosmopolitan magazine ads will be “underweight” compared with models used in Latina magazine ads.

H2a: There will be a greater proportion of racially diverse primary models in Latina advertisements in comparison with Cosmopolitan advertisements.

H2b: There will be a greater proportion of ethnically diverse primary models in Latina advertisements in comparison with Cosmopolitan advertisements.

H2c: There will be a greater proportion of primary models with blond hair color in Cosmopolitan advertisements in comparison with Latina advertisements.

H3: There will be a greater proportion of primary models in Latina advertisements that are dark in skin tone compared to Cosmopolitan.

H4: There will be more collectivism in Latina advertisements compared to Cosmopolitan advertisements.

H5: There will be more racial pride in Latina advertisements compared to Cosmopolitan advertisements.

H6: There will be more cultural application/recommendations in Latina advertisements compared to Cosmopolitan advertisements.

3.2 Research Questions

RQ1: What are the most common ad product categories in which female models appear in Cosmopolitan and Latina?

RQ2: Is there an association between body size and product category?

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This research employed content analysis of advertisements in Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines to fulfill the research objectives. Two years of advertisements from Latina (issues spanning from Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007 to Dec. 2008/Jan. 2009) and Cosmopolitan (issues spanning from Jan. 2007 – Dec. 2008) were analyzed. In total, 1,167 ads were coded, 739 from Cosmopolitan and 428 from Latina. Latina, a bilingual, English-dominant, magazine at the time of the study was published 10 times a year (June/July and Dec./Jan. are combined issues) and Cosmopolitan was published monthly. Therefore, 44 issues were analyzed.

Latina and Cosmopolitan were selected for their large circulation and influence. Latina was a top-rated women's magazine aimed at bicultural college-educated Latinas and ranked No. 1 in total advertising pages among 38 Hispanic publications since 2005[26]. Also, Latina had gained academic attention for acknowledging the diversity of Latina experiences, portrayals of beauty and opinions since its creation[14]. Cosmopolitan had the largest monthly circulation in women's magazine category and targeted a general audience[27]. Beyond a difference of the ethnic focus of magazines, these two magazines' content and audience demographics were comparable in age and income.

4.2 Data Gathering Procedures

Before ads were coded, inclusion criteria were determined. The unit of analysis was all full-page ads (color, black & white and duo tone) that contained a female model from the waist/thighs up. Headshots were excluded as they would not allow for accurate coding of body size. The primary model was defined as "the model who is in front in the photo, in the center, or is given the most focus." The physical size and central location of the model was used to determine the primary model.

Two graduate student researchers identified ads for sample inclusion. Two Latina and two Cosmopolitan issues were selected and contained 336 ads. Intercoder reliability, using the Ir formula[28], was .96 for selecting ads that met inclusion criteria. Of the total number of ads, 55, or 16 percent met the criteria for inclusion (full-page ads showing the model from the waist/thigh and up). For those ads, reliability for identifying the primary model was $Ir = .94$. A citation analysis[29] indicates that the Perrault and Leigh formula is the most commonly-used method of calculating reliability in advertising publications.

With inclusion completed, four researchers underwent two hours of training, and each practice coded more than 120 ads from outside the study sample. All coders were female. Two coders were Asian, one was a bilingual Latina and one was White with knowledge of Spanish. The bilingual coder translated the text of the handful of ads that were in Spanish for intercoder reliability. Final intercoder reliability was calculated on 10 percent of the total sample from both magazines ($n = 117$). Overall reliability was $Ir = .86$. Reliability for individual variables was: model's race (.96), model's ethnicity (.75), model's body size (.82), model's skin tone (.71), model's hair color (.83), product category (.92), racial pride (.97), collectivism (.85), and cultural application/recommendations (.97).

4.3 Research Instrument

Coding categories were created based on common definitions of race and ethnicity and previous literature. In addition to the textual definitions, visuals and color charts were used. For coding model body size, a color diagram was created featuring 6 models that had been identified in a pilot test with 118 female undergraduate students at a Midwestern university as models being underweight, average or overweight. Also, to identify skin tone color, a ruler of the blocks of Pantone colors was created for coders. Ads were coded using the following operational definitions.

4.3.1 Model's Race

The model's race was coded according to Office of Management and Budget guidelines[30]. These categories included American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black or African American, White, and can't tell.

4.3.2 Model's Ethnicity

Models were coded as Hispanic, not-Hispanic, or can't tell[30]. Coders used color photographs of Latin American women and Miss Universe contestants to compare to model images in coding.

4.3.3 Body Size

The models' body size was coded based on color pictures presented in a diagram identified through a pilot test with 118 female undergraduate students, and by using a Figure Rating Scale (FRS)[31] and an adaptation of a three-category coding system[32]. Using the FRS scale, coders categorized models as "Underweight" (Figures 1 and 2), "Average", (Figures 3 and 4) and "Overweight" (Figures 5 through 9).

4.3.4 Skin Tone

Skin color was coded using the Pantone Matching System (PMS)[4][20]. The categories used for coding were: Light skin tone (PMS 468PC, 719PC, 727PC), Medium skin tone (PMS 728PC, 729PC, PMS 730PC), Dark skin tone (PMS 732C, PMS 497PC, PMS 439PC), or can't tell.

4.3.5 Hair Color

Hair color was categorized into six categories: blond, brown, black, red/reddish brown/orange, grey/white, other color (e.g., green, pink, blue), or can't tell.

4.3.6 Product Category

The main product in the ads was coded according to previous criteria[33] as well as through examination of magazine issues not included in the study sample. There were 13 categories: alcoholic beverages; beauty & personal care; cleaning products; clothing & personal accessories; leisure activities, entertainment & information; food & nonalcoholic beverages; technology & household appliances; pharmaceutical ads; financial & insurance services; automobile and personal vehicle ads; cigarettes and tobacco; department store ads; and miscellaneous.

4.3.7 Collectivism

Ads were coded for the presence of references to collectivism (yes or no) based on previous work[26]. This was defined as the belief that the family or group, not the individual, is the basic unit of society. Ads mentioning or depicting family, friends, group, neighborhood, community, etc. were coded as demonstrating collectivism.

4.3.8 Racial Pride

This sociocultural variable was adapted from Kreuter et al.[25] and referred to instances in the text or visuals that demonstrated positive attitudes toward one’s racial or ethnic cultural group and its traditional practices. Ads that indicated an interest or involvement in cultural traditions (e.g., Mexico’s Day of the Dead), positive words about one’s ethnicity (“Latina actresses to love”) or doing something to improve the status of one’s ethnic group (Support the National Council of La Raza) were coded as racial pride.

4.3.9 Cultural Application/Recommendations

Coders identified whether there were cultural applications or recommendations, which could include specific references to products that cater specifically to racial or ethnic cultural needs, such as providing further information resources in Spanish.

4.4 Statistical Tools for Analysis

Data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, cross tabulations and chi-square statistics using SPSS 21.0. Z-scores were calculated to examine differences among proportions in cross tabulations.

5. Findings

H1 predicted that there would be a difference in the body size of the models by magazine type. Chi-square analysis showed that there was an association between body size and magazine advertisements, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,165) = 2.81, p < .001$, Cramer’s $V = .12$, however an examination of proportion differences using z-scores indicated the hypothesis was only partially supported (see [Table 1]). As predicted, Cosmopolitan (C) had a greater proportion of models who were underweight (C = 14.9%; L = 10.3%, $z = -2.25, p < .05$), while Latina (L) had a greater proportion of models who were overweight (L = 7.2%; C = 2.8%, $z = 3.48, p < .001$). However, it was predicted that Latina would have a greater proportion of average sized models and this was not supported (L = 82.5%; C = 82.2%, $z = 0.11, p = .46$).

[Table 1] Percentage of Primary Models by Body Size by Magazine

Body Size	Latina	Cosmopolitan
Underweight	10.3% (44)	14.92% (110)
Average	82.5% (353)	82.22% (606)
Overweight	7.2% (31)	2.85% (21)
Total %:	100%(428)	100%(737)

Note: $\chi^2 = 16.131, df=2, p < .0001$.

There were several parts to H2. First, it was determined whether there was a greater proportion of racially diverse primary models in Latina ads compared with Cosmopolitan ads. Analysis showed a significant association between the primary model’s race and magazine, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,166) = 27.60, p < .001$, Cramer’s $V = .15$, but an examination of proportions shows that the hypothesis is only partially supported (see [Table 2]). Cosmopolitan had a greater proportion of models who were Asian (C = 2.2%; L = 0.5%, $z = 2.28, p < .05$) and White (C = 90.4%; L = 83.6%, $z = 3.42, p < .001$), while Latina had a greater proportion of models who were Black/African American (L = 15.9%; C = 7.2%, $z = 4.74, p < .001$). Neither magazine differed in the depictions of American Indians (C = .3%; L = 0%, $z = 0.11, p = .43$) because they were virtually absent. Next, the hypothesis that a greater proportion of ethnically diverse (Hispanic) models would appear in Latina compared to Cosmopolitan was examined.

[Table 2] Percentage of Primary Models by Race by Magazine

Body Size	Latina	Cosmopolitan
American Indian/Alaska Native	0% (0)	3% (2)
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.5% (2)	2.2% (16)
Black/African-American	15.9% (68)	2.85% (21)
White	83.6% (357)	90.4%
Total %:	100%(427)	100%(739)

Note: $\chi^2 = 27.601, df=3, p < .0001$.

This hypothesis was supported $\chi^2(2, N = 1,164) = 196.26, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .41 (see [Table 3]). Latina had a greater proportion of Hispanic models than did Cosmopolitan (L = 45.7%; C = 10.9%). The final analysis examined whether there was a greater proportion of models with blond hair color in Cosmopolitan ads in comparison with Latina ads. Chi-square analysis showed that there was an association between hair color and magazine advertisements, $\chi^2(4, N = 1,167) = 45.01, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .20. Specifically, the hypothesis was supported in that Cosmopolitan ads displayed a greater proportion of models who were blond (C = 34.5%; L = 16.6%, $z = 20.84, p < .001$).

[Table 3] Percentage of Primary Models by Ethnicity by Magazine

Body Size	Latina	Cosmopolitan
Hispanic	45.7% (195)	10.9% (80)
Non-Hispanic	52.0% (222)	88.7% (654)
Can't Tell	2.3% (10)	0.4% (3)
Total %:	100%(427)	100%(737)

Note: $\chi^2 = 196.26, df=1, p < .0001$.

H3 predicted that a greater proportion of models in Latina ads would have darker skin. Chi-square analysis indicated an association between skin tone and magazine ads, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,166) = 16.27, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .12. Examination of z-scores for proportion differences illustrates that Latina had a greater proportion of models who had medium (L = 62.3%; C = 53.7%, $z = 3.083, p < .01$); and dark skin (L = 8.2%; C = 5.4%, $z = 1.87, p < .05$).

The next hypotheses examined whether the ads contained the sociocultural variables of collectivism, racial pride, and cultural applications/recommendations, and predicted that they would appear most often in Latina ads. H4 examined whether Latina ads would contain a greater proportion of collectivism than Cosmopolitan ads. The data support this hypothesis $\chi^2(2, N = 1,167) = 90.09, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .28. Twenty percent (n = 86) of ads in Latina depicted collectivism compared with 3.2 percent (n = 24) of ads in Cosmopolitan. H5 predicted that Latina ads would also include more appeals to racial/ethnic pride than would Cosmopolitan ads, and this was supported $\chi^2(2, N = 1,167) = 47.72, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .20. None of the ads in Cosmopolitan contained racial/ethnic pride appeals, while 6.3 per cent (n = 27) of ads in Latina did. Lastly, the prevalence of cultural application /recommendations in Latina compared to Cosmopolitan was examined. H6 was supported $\chi^2(2, N = 1,167) = 75.24, p < .001$, Cramer's V = .25. Latina depicted cultural application/recommendations in 10.3 percent (n = 44) of ads compared with 0.1 percent (n = 1) of ads in Cosmopolitan.

In addition to the hypotheses, research questions looked at product categories and body size. First, the researchers examined the most common ad product categories that appeared in Cosmopolitan and Latina. Chi-square analysis showed a significant association between product category and magazine, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,167) = 122.26, p < .001$. Descriptive statistics show that there was a greater diversity of products advertised in Latina compared with Cosmopolitan. The top four categories for ads in Cosmopolitan were: beauty and personal care (52.8%), clothing and personal accessories (24.8%),

pharmaceutical ads (7.8%), and leisure activities, entertainment & information (5.4%). The top four categories for Latina were similar, but the proportions were different: beauty and personal care (33.2%), clothing and personal accessories (31.1%), leisure activities, entertainment & information (7.5%) and department store ads (6.3%).

The second research question asked whether there was an association between body size and product category in magazines overall. Results showed there was an association, $\chi^2(12, N = 1,165) = 47.31, p < .001$. A majority of underweight models appeared in ads for clothing and personal accessories (44.2%) compared with average weight (24.1%) and overweight models (32.7%). Also, a greater proportion of average (46.5%) and underweight (42.2%) models appeared in ads for beauty and personal care products than did overweight (36.5%) models.

6. Discussion

This research adds to the literature of whether advertisers use cultural targeting in magazines created for Latinas more often compared to general audience magazines. The findings support the hypotheses, indicating that advertisers in Latina magazine depict more varied race, ethnicity, hair color, and skin color. Notably, Latina magazine includes more African American models than Cosmopolitan, but representation of Asian Americans is limited. This highlights advertisers' acknowledgment of the diversity within Hispanic culture while possibly lagging in identifying Asian Latinas. Also, related to distinctiveness theory, advertisers' use of Latina women in ads in both Latina and Cosmopolitan magazines indicates that advertisers are attempting to culturally target their message to appeal to Hispanic women. The proportion of Hispanic-looking women was lower in Cosmopolitan than in Latina, with Latinas represented at 10.9 per cent in Cosmopolitan, which is a smaller than the 2008 average of 14.5 percent in the U.S. population.

The study found differences in the body size of models between Latina magazine and Cosmopolitan, but the actual differences were not substantial. Latina magazine had a higher proportion of large-sized models, while Cosmopolitan had a higher proportion of undersized models. This suggests that advertisers perceive larger-sized models as more acceptable in Hispanic culture. The use of average-sized models in both magazines is not surprising and may reflect a shift away from ultra-thin models due to research indicating the impact of media images on women's body satisfaction[34]. Additionally, the focus on second-generation Latinas by Latina advertisers, as supported by recent research[7][8], may contribute to the preference for a thinner body type among these women rather than a heavier, more curvy body. Interestingly, in Latina magazine, advertisers were found to include Latinas as primary models in only 45.7% of the ads, representing a numerical minority. This may actually benefit advertisers utilizing cultural targeting by making their ads stand out. It raises the question of the threshold for consumers to perceive the ethnic situation and whether using more ethnic models in ads would diminish the impact or increase positive feelings. Research suggests that culturally targeting the majority does not significantly affect them when consumers view themselves as the majority[35], but it remains unknown if the same holds true for advertising in ethnic magazines. These questions require further investigation. Future studies could explore how the inclusion of models from diverse ethnicities/races affects consumers' perceived ethnic situation. Additionally, studying distinctiveness within the broader Hispanic culture, such as microtargeting specific subgroups, would be interesting. Limitations of this study include focusing solely on ad content analysis and not measuring audience perceptions. It must be acknowledged that as the U.S. becomes a more multicultural society, it is harder to conduct these types of content analyses as one cannot know how models perceive their own ethnic identities. Thus, this work focuses on how audiences may ascribe a particular identity to the model. Operationalizing variables like ethnicity and skin color poses challenges, and caution should be exercised when interpreting the results. The study acknowledges that its conceptualization of Hispanic

is U.S.-centric and social categorizations in Latin America may be more distinct based on the racialized social structure of a specific country[36]. Notwithstanding the limitations of this specific study, the findings demonstrate that advertisers are using cultural targeting to reach Latinas, which may reflect their cultural identities as well as reinforce them through consumerism.

7. Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to explore the extent to which ads in Hispanic women's magazines are more culturally targeted compared to ads created for a general U.S. audience. The content analysis of 1,167 advertisements in Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines revealed differences in cultural targeting. Latina-targeted ads featured more racially and ethnically diverse models with darker skin tones and larger body sizes. Furthermore, these ads incorporated sociocultural cues such as racial pride, collectivism, and cultural application more frequently. Advertisers can improve their strategies by aligning with cultural preferences, thus enhancing the relevance of their advertising campaigns. The study contributes to the understanding of cultural targeting in Cosmopolitan and Latina magazines. This research underscores the recognition that some businesses make in showing consumers they value them. The findings show there is still room for advertisers to increase their cultural targeting. By recognizing the cultural preferences of Latina consumers, advertisers can create more meaningful connections and drive greater impact. In conclusion, this study sheds light on the underexplored area of cultural targeting in Latina consumer advertising. It emphasizes the importance of cultural tailoring, provides insights into advertising strategies engaged in by advertisers, and highlights how companies appeal to Latina audiences through ethnic media. The implications of this research extend to marketers, advertisers, and businesses seeking to engage with and serve the growing Hispanic population in the United States.

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