

STEREOTYPES OF OLD AGE: VIEWS ON THE ELDERLY IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT *Ageing, more than a demographic phenomenon (a consolidated process in Europe, still a recent one in Brazil), is a social construction influenced by the media. Advertising, which simultaneously reflects and contributes to the construction of social values, uses stereotypes as a tool for creating easily identifiable characters. This study aims at identifying aspects explored by advertising messages using stereotypes to portray older people. The sample consists of nineteen pieces selected from more than 4,500 posts on Facebook and Youtube by the ten companies with the largest advertising spending in Brazil from July 2017 to June 2018. Among the 104 pieces that feature elderly people, nineteen did use stereotypes. In twelve of them, positive stereotypes, always related to longlife accumulated experience, while seven included negative traits, such as elderly people losing touch with reality, having difficulties with technology, poor social interaction, physical impairments, or old-fashioned clothing. Negative stereotyping reflects an outdated perspective of the ageing process.*

KEYWORDS

ADVERTISING, AGEING, STEREOTYPES, BRAZIL, ADVERTISERS

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INTRODUCTION

The complexity of ageing makes it possible to develop different interpretations of related phenomena. In this study, we have chosen to consider this diversity of theoretical perspectives, but with an emphasis on the sociological understanding that ageing is a social construction (Caldas, 2007; Leite and Gomes, 2007; Debert, 2012; Lipovetsky, 2016). Advertising is related to this process to the extent that it is developed from what is socially understood as true, while contributing to the solidification of concepts or the change of paradigms concerning various topics (Pinto, 1997; Rocha, 2006; Castro, 2018) – ageing is included among them.

Taking this starting point, we consider the processes of elaboration and production of advertising messages, paying special attention to the way stereotypes are used for the construction of characters (Carrascoza, 2007; Lysardo-Dias, 2007; Debert, 2003; Williams *et al.*, 2010). The original study, part of a doctoral thesis, had a broader sampling from the collection of more than 4,500 materials. For this study, among the materials that included the elderly, those with stereotypical approaches were observed.

This research seeks to address which aspects are explored by advertising messages that use stereotypes to portray older adults? We hypothesize that long-standing negative stereotypes (Beauvoir, 1970; Limón Mendizábal, 1997) are more present and less subtle than positive ones.

This text begins with the contextualisation of ageing as a social construction, addressing the contribution of advertising to the phenomenon. It then presents the demographic context of Brazil, and the criteria for the creation of categories for analysis, for the selection of the sample and the classification of the advertising pieces into categories. From this methodology, materials that contain stereotypical approaches to ageing will be analysed.

THE MEDIA AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF AGEING

The concept of old age is a complex subject which is discussed by a large number of theories, all of which consider ageing a heterogeneous process – even the view of biological ageing is made from diverse theoretical points of view.

The theories on ageing developed during the 20th century (Caldas, 2007), when, with the generalisation of retirement, the focus of studies on the subject changed. The initial concern with the standard of living of the elderly and their survival conditions is now focused on quality of life and lifestyles, and the elderly are seen as a consumer market (Debert, 2012).

Psychology, sociology, and anthropology complement each other in the understanding that ageing goes far beyond the biological issues derived from the passage of years.

Psychological theories consider several interconnected phenomena, which have some connection with chronological age but are not directly linked and relate subjectively to the individual interpretation of what ageing is all about (Papaléo Netto, 2007).

Sociological theories, in turn, observe the social construction of the concept of ageing. Among them, there are opposing understandings about what it would be like to age in the mid-twentieth century. On the one hand, disengagement theory suggests that old age brings about a reduction in social interaction and some isolation, and considers that voluntarily moving away from one's activities leads to a happier ageing; on the other hand, the activity theory proposes that maintenance of activities and search for new social roles improve the quality of life of the elderly (Neri, 2007). However, as Guita Grin Debert points out, both theories, which were very strong until the 1960s, start from the concept that ageing is losing social roles, understanding "how personal adjustment to this situation defined as one of 'loss' occurs" (Debert, 2012: 72).

These perspectives were followed by other generations of sociological theories seeking to understand the complex and heterogeneous process of ageing, and to explain the ways in which social relations of the elderly take place, approaching old age from various angles. Anita Liberalesso Neri (2007) points to the need for constant revision of the theoretical views on the phenomenon of ageing. This makes sense when considering that the structures of societies change significantly due to the influence of new demographic compositions.

Another relevant aspect for the understanding of this scenario is the heterogeneity of the ageing process – which is excessively simplified by some of the theories that attempt to explain it. Ageing may be associated with physical limitations and intellectual decline, but also may be marked by vigour and preserved abilities. Debert (2012) points out that recent theories include various approaches respecting this heterogeneity. Even so, the author identifies a dichotomy. The "new" theories, according to her, assume that the elderly live in one of two extreme situations: situations of loss, abandonment, and poverty, or a lot of activity, breaking stereotypes in such a way that, to a certain extent, "rejects the very idea of old age by considering that age is not a pertinent marker in defining lived experiences" (Debert, 2012: 73).

More recently, the idea of *active ageing* has gained relevance in age-related studies. The concept was built over time from other older theories that emerged in the mid-twentieth century, as presented by Asghar Zaidi and Kenneth Howse (2017). As already presented, at that time ageing was understood as a period of reduced engagement with social life. The disengagement theory, now viewed as old and prejudiced, indicated that retirement was the answer to a natural process of withdrawal and disinterest in social life. From the middle of the twentieth century, other theories emerged from the critique of the idea that ageing is becoming dependent. They seek to understand the role of social activity in the satisfaction of the elderly, or the role of work (in the concept of *productive ageing*) as capable of generating financial independence, thus preventing older people from being a burden to the state. Finally, the authors present the idea of *successful ageing*,

understood as the maintenance of social engagement, health, and the ability to adapt to changes brought about by age.

Thus, the concept of active aging, created by the *World Health Organization (WHO)*, describes “the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” (World Health Organization, 2002: 12). The intention of the *WHO* is to influence the formulation of policies in a multidimensional way by integrating ideas of health and social activity that result in the search to reduce the dependence of the elderly on the family and the state: “Policy is to be shaped in a way that combines the promotion of individual well-being with the achievement of benefits to the wider society” (Zaidi and Howse, 2017: 3). The *WHO* considers that active ageing is determined by various aspects: culture, gender, health, social service, behaviour, personal factors, physical and social environment, and economic.

To summarise the changes in the *zeitgeist* regarding ageing and to demonstrate the multiple concepts of old age in a temporal sense, we resort to two authors: Simone de Beauvoir and Gilles Lipovetsky.

Simone de Beauvoir (1970), in her classic work on old age, presents several examples on the suffering that characterises/characterised the life of individuals of advanced age. Her view is pessimistic in most cases, and old age is portrayed as a rather frightening period of loss, limitation, and especially less happy than youth.

Lipovetsky’s view on ageing considers the contemporary context in which medicine and technology have advanced to offer extended longevity and improved quality of life. For the author, until the eighteenth century, “physical suffering affected everyone” (Lipovetsky, 2016: 78). However, it has changed: In the current scenario, “old age no longer has the same meaning. It, except at the end of life, is increasingly less synonymous with physical degradation” (*ibid.*).

It is perceived, then, that interpretations of the meanings of youth and old age are influenced by the social context and the nature of each society and each age. Eduardo Leite and Mayra Gomes identify “the concern to date, metricate, separate, and characterise phases of life” (Leite and Gomes, 2007: 85) as a cultural characteristic.

The difficulty many people have with recognising themselves as elders is an old stereotype, but it is still relevant in contemporary times (Debert, 2003, 2012; Butler, 2009). This can be understood as a reflection of the poor acceptance of old age in society. The appreciation of youth, very much associated with the image of a country like Brazil, is a worldwide phenomenon (which happens in opposition to population ageing) greatly influenced by the media. It is important to consider the social function of these messages in the construction of ageing-related concepts.

Among all media manifestations – news, advertisements, entertainment content, speeches on social networks – advertising has the clearest purposes of causing changes

in (consumption) behaviour. With carefully constructed messages, advertising is seen by many authors as a reasonably faithful portrayal of the time and place in which it is produced (Rocha, 2006; Castro, 2018). However, besides portraying the cultural characteristics of the environment in which it is placed, advertising influences these characteristics. Alexandra Guedes Pinto (1997: 36) states that it not only "reflects the reference systems of a cultural group" but "also contributes to shaping the collective imagination, currently establishing itself as one of the most influential existing means of socialisation" (Pinto, 1997: 37).

Taking into account this understanding, it is possible to state that if there are elderly people being portrayed in a prejudiced or stereotypical manner, this is due to the fact that this ageist discourse is recognised as true by the people who receive the message. At the same time, the stereotyped advertising messages create (or maintain) the understanding that such treatment of the elderly is correct, or at least acceptable.

AGEING IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

In a publication about the Brazilian advertising market, Mariana Barbosa (2017) makes a quick survey of examples from past decades. Her text features a famous 1970s campaign in which an animation shows a grandmother sitting in a rocking chair, sewing. The image is that of a traditional elderly person with no social life, whose occupation comes down to activities at home.

The example of the next decade is that of an appliance brand commercial, in which a woman refers to two older women as "old-fashioned" and compares them to old appliances. They are knitting while the third is complaining, and their behaviour is disconnected from the reality that surrounds them: they do not interact and seem hard of hearing.

The example from the 1990s is that of a bank: an elderly woman comes home bringing a stereo that the couple wanted for many years, but the husband is now almost deaf. Old age is shown as a phase of losses.

In the 2000s, we begin to see examples of older people shown more autonomously in situations of consumption and interaction with technology. But the humour feature is often present, making use of stereotyped images that reinforce prejudices that could be challenged. Barbosa sums it up: "In past decades, when they appeared, they were portrayed as decrepit, incapable and with hearing problems. More recently, they have even entered the digital age, but they are still mocked or depicted humorously" (Barbosa, 2017: 1).

In a study done at the beginning of this century, Debert (2003) identified profiles of ageing in advertisements, some with a strong stereotype burden. In a first group, older adults were negatively shown as traditional, conservative, dependent, isolated, and insecure people. In a second group, there are the elderly whose description symbolises

'power, wealth, insight, social prestige', a profile presented by Brandão (2007: 827) as a relatively recent phenomenon.

Debert reports a statement by an advertiser interviewed within a survey about the presence of stereotypes to characterise senior citizens in the early twenty-first century: "We work on the stereotypes people are given. We also work hard to break expectations. Often the idea of a great commercial is to subvert the order of the stereotypes that people already have" (Debert, 2003: 140). Brazilian advertising is changing, and stereotypes are an important part of the way this change occurs.

CREATIVE STRATEGIES IN ADVERTISING: STEREOTYPES AS A PERSUASION TOOL

The role of advertising in social constructions is considered during the process of planning and creating an advertising campaign. These aspects are presented and discussed by authors such as Pinto (1997), Marcélia Lupetti (2007), Thomas C. O'Guinn *et al.*, (2008), George Belch and Michael Belch (2014), and so many others. All of them present the need for an analysis work that leads to a deep understanding of the market in which the brand operates before starting the development of an advertising campaign.

From this diagnosis of the current brand situation, strategies are developed. They articulate brand objectives and methods to achieve them (Lupetti, 2007; O'Guinn *et al.*, 2008). The use of stereotypes is one of the ways to apply these decisions when creating messages. Stereotypes are here understood as 'prior knowledge socially shared' (from the discursive process), a set of "preconceived images that crystallise into a social group" (from the perspective of Moscovici's social psychology). From a sociological perspective, they are "a collective mental image that determines an individual's ways of thinking, acting, and even feeling", as presented by Dylia Lysardo-Dias (2007: 26-27). They have the function of generating immediate identification of contents and characters. In advertising, with little time to convey a message, stereotypes are useful in creating awareness and direct attention to the content that the brand needs to convey without wasting time on contextualisation (Carrascoza, 2007; Neri, 2015).

Thus, stereotypes are capable of aggregating social constructions and promoting "categorisation, generalisation, and prediction" (Lysardo-Dias, 2007: 27). Provided they are used without excesses, which would reinforce prejudices, they constitute an important tool for advertising creation.

To understand which aspects are present in stereotypes regarding ageing in advertising messages, before moving on to empirical study, other perspectives on the subject must be identified.

One of the most relevant studies was conducted by Angie Williams *et al.* (2010). The authors observe the types of images – positive or negative – in magazine ads and the

presence of stereotypes. In this research, they point out that, although no advertiser wishes to associate negative impressions with their products, the presence of older people in situations that devalue them is not uncommon. They also point out that there are different stereotypes, negative or positive, and identify categories such as 'perfect grandparent', 'mentor', and 'celebrity endorser' (Williams *et al.*, 2010:10-11).

To observe in more detail the prejudices against old age, we resort to María Rosario Limón Mendizábal (1997), who identifies some 'myths', which are very present stereotypes. In many ways, they are similar to the first set of descriptions of ageing identified by Debert – all very negative and often belied by gerontology. By analysing the work of Beauvoir (1970), it is possible to realise that the classical approach to old age coincides with almost all of them. The elders described by Beauvoir have all the characteristics classified by Limón Mendizábal, three decades later, as stereotypes still present in the imagination of that time, but which no longer always corresponded to reality. Comparing these views with that of Lipovetsky (2016), which is more recent, there is a new interpretation given to the roles of the elderly. For almost all the stereotypes identified by Limón Mendizábal (1997), it is possible to find in the author's text elements that belie them or at least which allow us to question their validity in contemporary times. The 'myths' identified by the author concern characteristics such as unproductivity, disengagement, inflexibility, conservatism, asexuality, and others (Limón Mendizábal, 1997).

Whether as understandings already surpassed, or as manifestations still present in today's imagination, it is necessary to observe these stereotypes more closely and verify which of them are present in advertising. First, however, it is relevant to contextualise the demographic scenario in which data collection and analysis were performed.

BRAZIL: LATE AGEING

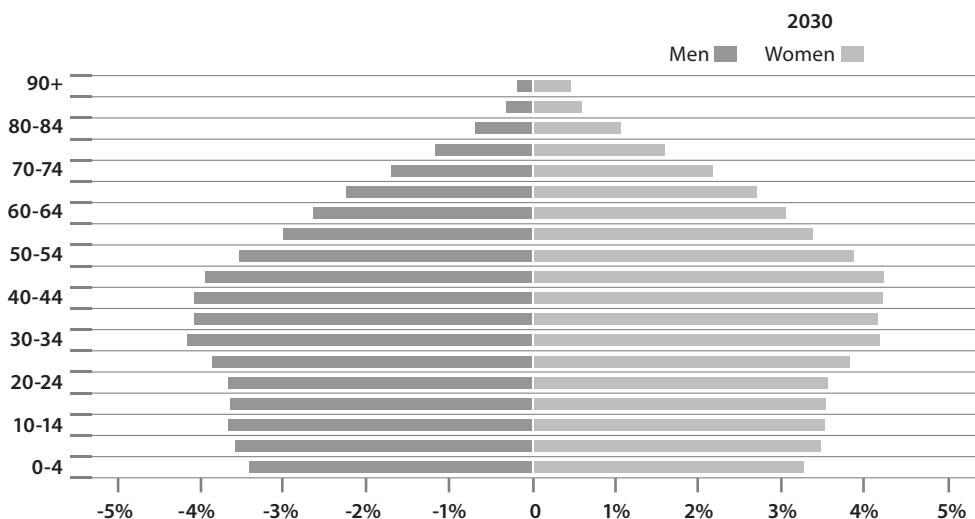
Besides the conceptual changes over time, strongly identified in the already explored views of Beauvoir and Lipovetsky, it should be considered that the process of change in demographic structure varies according to the region.

The ageing of the world population began in Europe and has taken about 200 years to its present stage. In Asia and Latin America, this phenomenon began to occur at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century and will be completed in less than 100 years. Africa is currently at the beginning of this process. Despite time differences, the scenario in all three realities has similar patterns of economic development, as well as of falling child mortality and fertility rates (Harper, 2017).

The elderly population has been growing in Brazil both in absolute numbers and percentages. In 2015, there were about 24 million people over the age of sixty – about twelve percent of the population – and projections consider 66.5 million of them by 2050, which will correspond to more than 29 percent of the population. "Brazil is already

beginning to face some of the issues that currently affect the European countries” (Simões, 2016: 102). The evolution in population distribution by age groups can be observed in Figure 1.





▲ Figure 1. Brazilian population in 2000 and 2015, and projected for 2030 by age groups and gender. Source: *Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE*, for its acronym in Portuguese, 2017

It is in the context of this demographic scenario, in an environment of appreciation of youth and identifying ageing as a complex and heterogeneous process, that this study about the ways in which advertising – a fundamental piece of social constructions concerning old age and ageing – shows such a process, was carried out.

EMPIRICAL STUDY: STEREOTYPES IN BRAZILIAN ADVERTISING

This research project began with a pilot study conducted from October to December 2017. The pilot study aimed at qualitatively understanding the presence of different approaches to ageing in Brazilian advertising. At that time, the material for analysis was collected using convenience sampling, through the collection of any advertising pieces (ads, films, posts, posters) identified in that period, as long as they showed older people, or had elements that allowed identifying them as targeted at the elderly audience.

Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique which allows material collection to be terminated as soon as materials no longer have different characteristics, according to the saturation criterion (Bodgan and Biklen, 1994). Its results cannot be quantitatively generalized, since it is an unrepresentative sample. They were used to support the qualitative study, allowing the understanding of which positive and negative aspects are present in advertising messages.

The selected materials were classified into categories. Methods pointed out by Bardin (1977) are the first stage of content analysis. As a basis, we considered authors who previously had studied similar topics – especially Debert (2003). From the perspective of these authors – and observing the diversity of materials collected in this first sample – seven categories were established, two of which carry stereotypes. The categories are:

- a) *Negative Stereotype*: Materials that show elders in a situation of inferiority due to characteristics, behaviours, or conditions considered as typical of people in this age group, thus reinforcing ageist stereotypes. These characteristics are very similar to the traditional view of ageing presented by Beauvoir (1970) and Limón Mendizábal (1997), in which the elderly are less capable of social interaction, have physical limitations and little independence.
- b) *Subversion of Traditional Standards*: Materials that show elders in situations that break with standards traditionally associated with ageing. These patterns often come close to negative stereotypes, but this does not necessarily mean that their subversion brings a positive approach to ageing.
- c) *Neutral Approach*: Materials that do not show elements of appreciation nor devaluation of the figure of the elderly. The elderly are present, sometimes in supporting roles, and it is the lack of prominence that allows classifying these materials into this category.
- d) *Positive Approach without Stereotypes*: Materials that value the presence of the elderly or show them in a situation of superiority in relation to the other age groups, but do not reinforce characteristics of the age for the construction of this valorisation.
- e) *Positive Stereotype*: Materials that use elements that are often associated with elders to build a positive view of them. Some of these elements were discussed by Debert (2003) and Williams *et al.* (2010).
- f) *Empowerment of All Ages*: Materials that present activist content regarding rights, visibility, and search for respect for the elderly.
- g) *Message Targeted at the Elderly*: Materials containing elements of text or image that addresses the elderly – this category is designed to identify messages that had seniors as recipients, regardless of approach. For this reason, all messages targeted at the elderly were also classified into some of the other categories.

After the categories were established, the pilot phase of this study was terminated and the definitive sample was collected: Videos on *YouTube* channels and posts on *Facebook* pages of the brands of the ten companies with the largest advertising spending in Brazil¹, which were published from July 2017 to June 2018. We observed 4,733 materials (732 *YouTube* videos and 4,001 *Facebook* posts), of which 104 – 2.2 percent – showed elders. Twelve different messages were classified into the *Positive Stereotype* category and five into the *Negative Stereotype* category. Besides these, two of the messages in the category *Message Targeted at the Elderly* carried negative stereotypes. All of them will be analysed qualitatively below, using content analysis methods. The description of each material is

¹ The ten largest advertisers were selected considering data from the *Kantar IBOPE Media Institute* (2017). These ten companies are responsible for 244 brands. Of them, 222 did not have either *YouTube* channels or *Facebook* pages, or did not publish content in the period analysed. Only 22 brands had materials published in that period and analysed in this study.

complemented with evaluations regarding aspects that identify stereotypes observed in the works of the authors previously presented. This study has no quantitative purposes and does not intend to discuss the frequency of presence of stereotypes in Brazilian advertising, but to understand the ways in which this occurs.

Positive stereotypes:

There are twelve videos or posts that were identified for using stereotypes to construct a positive view on ageing. They portray seniors in situations that value them because of specific characteristics typically associated with old age: wisdom, tradition, and life experience. Already in the 1970s, the presence of these positive stereotypes was noticed: "It is rare, but the case that old age is considered the golden key to existence may occur" (Beauvoir, 1970: 260). More recently, Debert (2003) indicates that experience is an element often used in advertising when showing seniors.

The following table summarises the analyses made to enable the classification of materials into categories. It presents the elderly characters and briefly describes the material, indicating which stereotypical characteristics were explored.

Table 1. Summary of the analyses of cases that show positive stereotypes

No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
Brand and Advertiser		
<i>Antarctica (AB InBev)</i>		
1	Aunt Surica, a local celebrity of the city of Rio de Janeiro, from the "old guard" of the Portela school of samba.	She speaks on Portela's traditional <i>feijoada</i> , served to over 3,000 people, and reports the recognition she receives from the community. The experience with the successful <i>feijoada</i> is a highlight.
2	Actor Guti Fraga, the owner of the NGO and theatre group <i>Nós do Morro</i> , in the community of Vidigal (City of Rio de Janeiro).	A testimonial about the character that the actor played in one of Antarctica's web series, similar to his own life story. The piece values experience and achievements.
3	<i>Seu</i> (an informal Brazilian Portuguese term for <i>Mister</i>) Zé, a senior who used to have difficulties in dealing with technology, turns out to be a renowned waiter.	The second episode of the web series <i>No Curso de Garçom (The Waiter's Course)</i> . The elderly gain protagonism, their experience being valued.
<i>Brahma (AB InBev)</i>		
4	An employee described as 'Grandpa' Ponce, 28 years of Brahma."	A consumer visits the Brahma factory and meets a family of employees. One of them, an elder, shows physical limitations but is valued for his time and experience in the company.



No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
Brand and Advertiser		
<i>Colorado Brewery (AB InBev)</i>		
5	'Grandma' Edma Eluf, a participant of <i>The Soul Kitchen Project</i> , thus described: "Eight grandmothers, eight life stories, eight luncheons".	The film highlights the importance of cooking in the history of a family. There is an association of grandmothers' life stories (experience, accumulated knowledge) with the quality of what they cook.
<i>Goose Island (AB InBev)</i>		
6	John Hall, the company founder.	It is a film that celebrates the brand's 30 th anniversary, with a testimonial from the founder. The piece values the experience and success of both the founder and the brand.
<i>Stella Artois (AB InBev)</i>		
7	Parents whose adult children were not present at remarkable moments. A calligrapher who makes custom chalices for <i>toasts that never occurred</i> .	Female voiceover: "For some reason, several important toasts were not made with your father. However, now they can happen". Close-up images refer to achievements and celebrations; Handwritten texts by a calligrapher appear on screen: "Became grandpa"; "Your first book," among others. There are scenes of affection between adult children and parents: Hugs, looks of joy, smiles. The film values experience.
<i>Ultrafarma (a Brazilian drugstore chain)</i>		
8 to 11	Celebrities: Elderly actors and television presenters.	Commercials announce Ultrafarma's "Sidney Oliveira" line of food supplements, named after the company's owner. The poster boys, all over 60 years old at the time of the campaign, are: Film 8: Actor Fúlvio Stefanini. Film 9: TV host Raul Gil. Film 10: TV presenter Amaury Jr. Film 11: TV reporter Gil Gomes.
<i>Caixa Econômica Federal or simply Caixa (a major Brazilian public bank)</i>		
12	When the voiceover talks about personal assets, seniors are shown at the door of their homes.	Young male voiceover speaks on reasons why someone could save money. The images describe the same ideas: Buying a gift, taking a trip, building and protecting personal assets. Ageing is shown as an accumulation not only of experiences but also of material goods.

The use of stereotypes, as seen above, is not only frequent but also plays an important role in advertising to identify character profiles. It is possible to draw parallels with the classifications adopted by other authors, especially Williams *et al.* (2010). In the cases of

this sample, the renowned waiter in film 3 (*Antarctica*) can be understood as an example of 'mentor'. Film 5 (*Colorado Brewery*) is built on the concept of the 'perfect grandparent' stereotype. Also, the testimonial strategy used in films 8 to 11 (by *Ultrafarma*) is intended to attract attention and generate credibility (O'Guinn *et al.*, 2008), using what Williams *et al.* (2010) classifies as 'Celebrity Endorser'. Although different profiles can be identified in these stereotypes, there is a common point among them: ageing brings the advantages of accumulating experiences and from them, knowledge, wisdom, authority, and even material goods.

In film 12 (by *Caixa*), the elderly man leaning against the door of his house with an air of accomplishment, refers to what Neri (2007) identifies as *contemplation*, a feature rejected by the current pace of life, and that can only be recovered in old age.

Thus, the topic of ageing brings some consensus on what the positive characteristics of the elderly would be. In relation to negative stereotypes, it usually raises different perspectives, as already extensively addressed here and as will be demonstrated in the following analyses.

Negative stereotypes:

Among the seven categories established for the analysis, the positive messages could value the elderly without using arguments or stereotyped characterisations to identify them. However, for negative approaches to ageing, there are no cases without stereotypes. Again, we emphasise that the use of stereotypes does not always generate prejudice, and can be an efficient way to identify characters. But in the messages analysed here, stereotypical aspects discredit the image of the elderly, and ageing is shown in a way similar to that described by Beauvoir (1970) and what Limón Mendizábal (1997) calls 'myths'.

There are only five cases in this category, and all are *YouTube* videos. Besides, two other cases in the *Message Targeted at the Elderly* category also had negative stereotypes. The following table provides the essential elements from the analyses of these messages.

The relationship between stereotypes and ageist prejudices is evident in several of the materials analysed, especially films 13 (*Axe*), 15 (*Budweiser*) and 16 (*Stella Artois*).

The materials that use graphic animation resources are the ones that perpetuate stereotypes about costume design and body posture of the elderly the most. In film 17 (*Claro*, a senior woman in a queue), two interpretations exist: The inclusion of an elder among customers is something positive because there is no inferiority in the role she plays in relation to other characters. The second is that, due to the characteristics of the advertising message and the simplicity of production (an animation video, without actors), the only way to effect inclusion is through stereotypes. They are negative but it does not mean the brand has a negative attitude towards the elderly. It is possible to condemn the material for being stereotyped and praise it for being inclusive at the same time.

Table 2. Summary of the analyses of cases that show negative stereotypes

No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
Brand and Advertiser		
<i>Axe (Unilever)</i>		
13	An elderly man is leaning against the back seat of an Uber car, looking at his hands all the time, and apparently disconnected from reality.	The brand sponsors a music festival targeted at young audiences. In the promotion, Uber passengers should interact using a song to win tickets. The image of the senior shares the screen with that of a young woman who wins the ticket. The comparison identifies the elder as unable to pay attention to music and to interact at the same time. Even though he plays a supporting role in the film, there is a connotation of inferiority attached to the elderly for not belonging to the music festival's audience, which indicates ageism, although subtle.
<i>Antarctica (AB InBev)</i>		
14	An elderly waiter shows lack of knowledge of technologies when to use a mobile application: "When I jotted down orders on a pad of paper, everything was easier."	An episode of the web series <i>No Curso de Garçon (The Waiter's Course)</i> . A younger waiter treats the elder with condescension, suggesting that he mentally compose a song with the ordered items when he feels unable to use the technology. The elder speaks little and shows displeasure. The dynamism of the young man contrasts with the difficulty and slowness of the elderly.
<i>Budweiser (AB InBev)</i>		
15	Supporting character: A white-haired lady with a suspicious look. She does not smile like the other younger soccer fans.	It was a film for the 2018 Football World Cup. Its visual language refers to science fiction movies: Drones travel by handing out beer bottles. One of them appears in a subway car where there is a senior woman. After that, at the stadium, it hands the bottle to a young woman. The difference in age and body posture, and the senior woman's appearance of disconnection from the world indicate ageism.
<i>Stella Artois (AB InBev)</i>		
16	Supporting character: An elderly man suspiciously watches the "star hunter" collect the light from the shooting star and distribute it as a Christmas present.	The film <i>O Caçador de Estrelas (The Star Hunter)</i> shows a man who, upon seeing a shooting star, goes to where the light has fallen and collects it in a bottle. In the end, he arrives at a Christmas party and distributes the bottles filled with the starlight to the guests. There is prejudice: Elders are regarded as people with social interaction difficulties.
<i>Claro (a telecommunications company of the América Móvil group)</i>		
17	An old lady with grey hair and glasses leans on a cane, shivering.	Animated movie: People are waiting for a bank teller (the brand promises that customers do not need to "waste time in a bank queue"); their faces and body postures indicate dissatisfaction and impatience. The piece uses stereotypical costume design and body posture resources.



No.	Character	Description and Stereotyped Characteristics
Brand and Advertiser		
<i>Ultrafarma</i>		
18	Four illustrations of a couple of 'grandparents'. Both are white-haired and wear glasses, as well as traditional clothes: Suspenders, calf-length dress, scarf around the neck. They lean on a cane or a walker.	The text addresses the elderly: "Happy Grandparents' Day". The images are accompanied by words: 'affection', 'love', 'fun', 'togetherness'. It is only in the "fun" image that the characters do not hold their walking sticks. They have their arms up and wear accessories (birthday hats, party whistles, and colourful masks). The connotation is that having fun is not something that goes with so many physical limitations; perhaps something restricted to younger people. (This material is classified into the <i>Message Targeted at the Elderly</i> category.)
<i>Caixa (Caixa Econômica Federal)</i>		
19	Seventy-year-olds: A woman wearing her hair in a bun and leaning on a cane; a white-moustached man with white hair on the sides of his head and bald at the top, wearing suspenders.	Information animated video. The representation of the audience over the age of seventy uses stereotypical costume design and body-posture resources. (This material is classified into the <i>Message Targeted at the Elderly</i> category.)

Ultrafarma's film 18 uses similar characterisations, but further reinforces stereotypes. Although characters are friendly and smiling figures, associated with positive values (the words in each frame), the message carries negative stereotypes related to physical decrepitude, to identify what 'grandparents' would be.

Contrary to the positively stereotyped view of ageing, the negative stereotypes are constructed from different aspects, thus confirming what the authors cited in this study pointed out concerning the diversity of prejudiced views on the phenomenon.

DISCUSSION

Although they do not represent the majority of the entire sample surveyed, the messages containing stereotypes deserve specific analysis because they carry a strong judgment burden regarding ageing.

Regarding the profile of these stereotypes, it can be seen that the positive ones are very similar to each other. Contrary to the different stereotypes identified by Williams *et al.* (2010), the cases in this sample have the appreciation of life experience as their common element. From it, it is possible to identify cases that are close to some other characterisation, as in film 5, where the good cook is presented as a 'perfect grandmother'.

In other cases (such as films 2 and 3), there are aspects of 'mentor', another of the classifications proposed by Williams *et al.* (2010).

Unlike the positively stereotyped view of aging, negative stereotypes are constructed from several aspects, confirming what the authors cited in this study indicated regarding the diversity of prejudiced views on the phenomenon of ageing. The analysed cases also differ as to the effect caused by the presence of the elderly in the final result of the materials.

Two of the elderly portrayed appear so disconnected from reality (films 13 and 15) that their presence in commercials brings some humour to the plots. In these cases, they are supporting characters which identify the audiences to whom the message is intended through the exclusion of those to whom it is not intended (the elderly). In film 14, the elder is among the protagonists; through the stereotype of the difficulty in using technology, the depreciation of him is central to the plot – although, in another episode of the web series, redemption happens through a positive stereotype (analysed in film 3). In film 16, the depreciation is more subtle, and the difficulty in social interaction is perceived through body posture, distrust in the eyes, and a certain distance from younger people. All these characteristics are very close to the 'myths' described by Limón Mendizábal (1997).

Stereotypes in costume design and body posture are present in the three materials that used illustrations and not actors. In these cases, the stereotype was used as a resource for creation and production. Since they are illustrations, the simplicity of production makes it necessary to identify the elderly through graphic resources that, without details or any deepening, eventually resort to stereotypes.

CONCLUSION

Ageing is a current and relevant theme in Brazilian society, which has been undergoing rapid changes in its demographic structure. Thus, it is important to seek to understand aspects that influence social constructs about ageing in this context. Media – and in this study specifically advertising – contribute to these social understandings, hence the relevance of studying the ways in which older people are portrayed in these messages.

One must consider the entire sample to answer the question from which this study was built, and thus verify which aspects are explored by advertising messages that use stereotypes to portray older adults.

Considering the hypothesis that negative stereotypes are more present and less subtle than positive ones, it is possible to verify that the hypothesis raised was partially accepted: positive stereotypes were the most frequent in this study, but indeed these were more subtle than the negative ones.

There are more materials with positive stereotypes (twelve cases, versus seven negative ones). As already discussed, these twelve cases are very similar in terms of which stereotyped aspects are addressed in the messages, which makes its effects on how people view the subject of ageing less powerful.

Regarding the aspect considered in the hypothesis – that the negative stereotypes would be less subtle than the positive ones – one can consider that this is indeed the case. There is a diversity of negative stereotypical approaches: disconnection from reality, difficulty in using technology and in social interaction, stereotyped clothing and body posture. All these aspects reinforce ageism and for this reason their effect on social constructions of ageing is most noticeable.

Thus, it is noteworthy that Brazilian advertising still carries superficial and simplified views of ageing, which gives room for the use of the stereotypes analysed here. Considering the nature of the messages and their social role, already discussed in this text, one can infer that ageism is also present in the country.

From this study, it is possible to open new research fronts in exploring which aspects are present in the other analysis categories identified from the collected sample. This would allow an even broader understanding of the ways Brazilian advertising portrays ageing and the elderly. Similarly, equivalent studies can be applied in societies with different demographic makeups – such as European countries, where the population is relatively older. In these contexts, the research could verify if the greater presence of the elderly in a given society leads to less stereotyped looks by the advertising brands. Regardless of the location and demographic scenario, it is important to take into account the role of advertising, which at the same time reflects reality and has the power to influence contemporary social relations.

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STEREOTIPI VEZANI UZ STARIJU DOB: POGLED NA STARIJE U BRAZILSKOM OGLAŠAVANJU

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SAŽETAK Starenje (proces koji je već duboko zahvatio Europu, a sada i Brazil) više od ostalih demografskih fenomena predstavlja socijalnu konstrukciju koja je pod utjecajem medija. Oglašavanje, koje istovremeno reflektira društvene vrijednosti i doprinosi konstrukciji društvenih vrijednosti, koristi stereotipe kao alat za kreiranje prepoznatljivih likova. Cilj ovog istraživanja jest identificirati aspekte oglašivačkih poruka koje koriste stereotipe u portretiranju starijih ljudi. Uzorak se sastojao od devetnaest jedinica oglasa odabranih između 4,500 objava na Facebooku i Youtubeu deset kompanija s najvećom potrošnjom na oglašavanje u Brazilu, u razdoblju od srpnja 2017. do lipnja 2018. Od 104 oglasa koji prikazuju starije ljude, 19 je koristilo stereotipe. U njih 12 koristili su se pozitivni stereotipi u smislu životnog iskustva koje dolazi s godinama, dok ih je 7 prikazivalo negativne osobine koje se vezuju uz starost: gubitak osjećaja za stvarnost kod starijih osoba, teškoće s tehnologijom, siromašna socijalna interakcija, fizičke teškoće ili staromodno odijevanje. Negativni stereotipi odražavaju zastarjelu percepciju procesa starenja.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI

OGLAŠAVANJE, STARENJE, STEREOTIPI, BRAZIL, OGLAŠIVAČI

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