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THE CONSUMPTION OF JUNK FOOD AND ADVERTISING IN
MEXICAN YOUTH

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Abstract

This article presents a research breakthrough "Advertising and obesity, regulation and self-regulation", refers to the habits of consumption of foods of low nutritional value, exposure to media and advertising in Bachelor students of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico. Results of two surveys of students are presented and contrasted with the studies of consumption of audiovisual media carried out by the Federal Institute of Telecommunications. In the past 40 years, obesity has become a health problem, the 36.3% of adolescents and 72.5% of adults are overweight or obese. Mexico ranks first place in childhood obesity, and second in the world in obesity in adults. Diet of Mexicans has become from the increase in the sale of processed foods and fast food, a central element of this is the intervention of advertising spread models and stereotypes that are associated with the consumption of products of low nutritional value, which has resulted in the formation of consumer habits from an early age in young Mexicans. Advertising operates together with the distribution of these products and their availability for purchase, has contributed to highlighting values such as success, immediacy, flavor, fun or fashion, which are presented as more important than the nutritional and form images and proposals for identification from the real and symbolic consumption.

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1. Introduction

Since the last two decades of the 20th century, advertising has shown changes in their languages, their supports and segments which is directed; It highlights the global nature of the advertising industry that finds new trends in the Mexican market, in areas that have access to the consumer and which take forms of actual consumption and symbolic values. New conditions in societies, especially in the urban environment, have led to changes in life forms and structures; apparent democratization has taken place in the family structure that decisions of consumption in children and adolescents, and this leads to its increased incidence in family purchases. Greater segmentation of the market has resulted in the design of products that are placed on the market, especially considering the tastes and preferences of children and young people.

The emergence of new markets derives specific advertising proposals and cultural proposals that translate into languages, fashions and values such as hedonism, modernity, freedom, self-determination, rebellion, enjoyment, fashion full and all those linked to pleasure in consumption, Presenteeism that characterizes certain segments of contemporary society. In this context, it has changed the way in which occur, obtain and consume food, increasingly are more relied on forms of production which increase the quantity and the speed with which products of low nutritional quality, with a high content of flavoring are made dyes, artificial and conservative.

In recent decades the diet of Mexicans has been transformed, just like in the rest of Latin America, where the consumption of these foods is impacting on the increase in average body weight and obesity rates. In 1980, seven percent of Mexicans were obese, a figure that it has tripled in 20.3% by 2016, says the Institute of measures and evaluation of health at the University of Washington (Jacobs and Richtel, 2018), data from the Ministry of Health show that the 36.3% of adolescents and 72.5% of adults are overweight or obese. These figures far lower have risen from 2012 to 2016 (National Survey on Health). Mexico ranks second in the world in the first place in childhood obesity and obesity in adults.

The model of industrial production has changed habits and schedules for consumption in urban areas, resulting in the increase of obesity that has become a public health problem. In addition, within the causes that lead to obesity is family and community environments, sedentariness, availability, the time devoted to your purchase and preparation and advertising. Snacks, the pastries, soft drinks, sweets, and sugary cereals, in the same way that fast food have been incorporated into the diet of the Mexican, mainly in urban areas, without implying that they are not consumed in the agricultural sectors.

Between 1992 and 1993 was already observed the growth of fast-food franchises going in a year from 386 to one thousand 773 points of sale (Garcia, 2014, p.134), these stores went to capture consumers who used to feeding in stalls. In addition, PAHO (Organización Panamericana de la Salud, 2015) in Latin America report exposes the most processed products are sold in stores of neighborhood or retail, supermarkets and hypermarkets. "*The sales of these products increase with urbanization and when national Governments are open to foreign investment and eliminated the regulation of the markets*" (p. 10).

2. Problem Statement

The food companies have specialized in producing taste and pleasant texture, easy to eat, and durable, with a distribution system that allows you to sell them in many places, at the same time hire

advertising which highlights situations in which the product is consumed and related styles and models of life. Processed food advertising encourages the consumption of snacks, it presents them as tasty, they mimic the characteristics of food of higher nutritional value, some ads feature them as healthy products, even when conservatives and substances added are otherwise (Gutiérrez, 2014, p. 138) and almost addictive, according to Moss (2016) there is a chemical reaction in the body to stimuli salty, sweet or fat.

Fast-food companies apparently provide a meal "cheap and popular classes half of urban centres, but are too faces for the poor in those countries," are intervening to change traditional diets. Schlosser, (2007, p. 9) located the fast food chains at the top of the food industrial complex, along with the snacking, this is eating for immediate gratification. A volume of advertising messages is aimed at children and adolescents, since they are interested to establish faithfulness of brand from an early age, so that later become long-lasting consumer habits.

2.1. Media consumption habits

Reflects clear of new markets and their integration through new technologies is given with forms of advertising which combine various media and that associated with technical advances, such as sales by phone, television, telemarketing and all systems of promotion that are linked through the use of internet and social networks.

Television continues to be the most used, the 98.3% of households have television, in the cities of 99% and 97% rural communities; the 76.3% have cell phone and the 32.1% have a computer or laptop (Encuesta Nacional de Consumo de Contenidos Audiovisuales, 2015).

Most of the advertising investment goes to television, 48.7% in broadcast television, 11.6% on pay-TV, among both 60.3%; as investment in digital platforms reaches 5.2% (Estudio anual de inversión en medios 2018, 2018).

The advantage posed by mobile devices is portability for users creating a new type of flexible space for the consumer whose only limit is the connectivity to the internet.

2.2. Advertising Investment in México 2017

Table 01. Advertising Investment in México. Total value: 82,898 million pesos.

Broadcast television	Pay television	Radio	Magazines	Newspapers	Exteriors	Cinema	Internet
42.12 34,922mp	13.54% 11,231 mp	8.42% 6,986 mp	2.27% 1884 mp	2.550% 2119 mp	8.33% 6907 mp	1.89% 1570 mp	15.71% 13,030 mp

Source: Merca 2.0. (Estudio anual de inversión en medios 2018, 2018) April 2018.

In 2017, 10.8% of the Mexican population consisted of 13.3 million teenagers (12-18 years), who see daily an average of 1 hour and 48 minutes television and use the internet in 7 hours and 48 minutes a day (IFETEL, 2018). Currently advertising is not only on television, but in physical and virtual spaces where the life of young people is developed (De Sebastian, 2009, p. 197). Advertising strategies seek to refer also to children in digital media, sites of brands where promotions and games are derived, most frequently used web pages, offer contests and interactive games (Garcia, 2014). Advertising uses the space of entertainment, videogames, applications, audiovisual pieces designed to be shared on social networks through mobile devices, advergaming and experiential marketing have become practices usual. This in

addition to offers and promotions of collectibles to encourage repeat purchase, sponsorships of sporting events children's and youth and proposals for higher content of product packaging or refillable.

Advertising to children and young people are also targeting internet sites this same warns in the studies conducted in the United States: children are advertising on schedules for adults and advertising agencies have increased direct marketing product placement, sponsorship of events and the foray into social networking sites like You Tube and Facebook (Nestlé, 2015, p. 135).

The price of food and beverages of low nutritional value and the multiplicity of sites selling makes accessible products for broad sectors, while advertising promotes the idea that the nutrient is not as important and "it is better to eat something fun tasty and fine texture" (García, 2014; Romero, 2010). The MC ENSANUT (Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición, 2016) reports that the 81.6% of the adult population accepts that the taste of the sugary drinks, like even though they are aware of the damage to their health. Young the Mexican bachillerato expressed that they consume the food by its price, availability, coexistence and the flavor.

3. Research Questions

At what age opens the consumption of foods of low nutritional value in young people from high school.

How are the products of low nutritional value in the daily life of the families, as the family table at parties or as rewards?

Would relate to the wide distribution of products and their accessibility with increased consumption of these products in the young?

The advertising of these products it is compatible with situations and values consumption?

What role has the advertising on television and in internet?

4. Purpose of the Study

Establish a correlation between consumption patterns of food of low nutritional value, media consumption and consumption of advertising on young people of the Mexican high school (ages 15-18). Identify patterns of consumption, the age in which initiated the consumption and the situations that encourage the intake of products of low nutritional value among the young, as well as his relationship with the media where the advertising is presented.

5. Research Methods

For information about the extent and nature of obesity were considered data from the Health Sector in the field of obesity in Mexico, the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization and the National Survey of Health 2016; for the theoretical support of the advertising content of foods of low nutritional value targeting young people was considered the recent literature in academic publications that highlight the relevance of the topic. Romero (2010), García (2014, 2017), Rivera, Hernández, Aguilar, Vadillo, & Murayama (2012), Theodore, (2014) and Colchero, Rivera, Popkin, & Shu (2017), the latest information on media consumption had been consulted (IFETEL, 2018; Encuesta Nacional de Consumo de

Contenidos Audiovisuales, 2015) and advertising spending in media. Rose two surveys to young high school system of the National Autonomous University of Mexico with ages between 15 and 18 years (in 2017 applied 900 questionnaires in the nine campuses of the national preparatory school and 600 in the four campuses of the College of Sciences and Humanities) on habits of consumption of products of low nutritional value, to identify the type of food purchasing, frequency of consumption, the age at which initiated the consumption and situations that encourage the intake of products of low nutritional value among youth in secondary education.

6. Findings

Habits formed during their daily lives, are reflected in the consumption of young people from high school of UNAM, whose central activity is the school, so that is the difference in how they organize their activity during the week and weekend where they found more time for recreational activities. However, in both scenarios is notorious the presence of mobile devices, almost 9 of every 10 respondents said having one, the main activity is connected to the internet to access social networks to share photos, memes and videos and youtube content.

If the school is its central activity in the week, young people from high school of UNAM structured his life and part of its consumption in it or around it, have cafes within the campuses, which are crowded and the price is higher to the of the foods that are sold outside the school, abundant local food, grocery stores and the informal trade, jobs of tacos, hot dogs, pizzas, hamburgers, cakes, French fries, pork rinds, and to a lesser extent, salads or fruits.

Young people point to as a factor to prefer the stalls: the speed in the preparation of food, the lower price and the variety in the type of products offered. They express that they initiated the consumption of soft drinks between 8 and 12 years, because soft drinks are at the family table on a daily basis or associated with times of feast or entertainment and sports events. Surveyed young people designated to have initiated the consumption of snacks at parties or family gatherings and the consumption of sweets at home or at school, or as a reward.

Mexico is one of the main consumers of soft drinks in the world (111 liters' consumption per capita in 2014) there are approximately 100 brands of soft drinks, 66% of tail and 34% of flavors; stresses the great number of presentations in non-returnable container. Market studies emphasize that the main consumers are under the age of 21, in recent years to soft drinks sugary drinks (fruit juices and lemonades) production, joins both Coca-Cola and Pepsi have dabbled in the supply of bottled water, drinks sports and drinks vending machines (Garcia, 2014).

Commonly known as *Choco krispis*, *Corn flakes* and *Zucaritas* cereals are part of the breakfast from early ages, breast associated with healthy consumption and more than 50 percent of respondent's recall having started to consume them in childhood and generate an emotional relationship with the product from characters such as the tone Tiger or elephant Melvin. Both the IFETEL data and surveys conducted at the UNAM is possible to warn as teens watching less TV and receive audiovisual content on the internet and streaming systems, so advertising is redirecting to these spaces to they occupy a central place in the lives of young people.

7. Conclusion

For some social groups advertising is a reflection of society, and its aspirations in a world ideal and desirable framework, since it shares a certain vision of the world; usually corresponding to patterns of life, values, representations and social pictures; It occupies a place in the daily life of young people and the use of leisure time spread along with messages of entertainment outside of the school spaces. It is a process closely related to the interests and objective conditioned by personal motivations and the conditions of life of the receiver.

In the case of Mexico, in accordance with the global nature of advertising, there is a tendency of contact, in the spaces where to develop their everyday life and on mobile devices. The advertising proposal highlights values such as success, immediacy, and fashion as factors of recognition and identification. Young people live and are looking for values that have received instruction from small, as are that Pérez Tornero (1995) called how existential and playful, which based its existence in the pursuit of luxury, pleasure, beauty and abundance.

The consumption of foods of low nutritional value and fast food is associated with aspects promoted by advertising immediate satisfaction. This is essential in the present day, a message that results in the recognition of codes and languages, appeals to the emotions and the visual impact. Responses of young people highlights their perception of reality and reproduction of relations where they face spaces and images that appeal to a social order and a representation of what culturally has been considered as own them: fun, emotion, live a day, worry for the here and now, as well as a need for acceptance by friends and group integration. So are the scenarios of the party, school, House as central elements where began the consumption of fast foods, either as part of the ordinary or exceptional (the party and reward).

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