

# Advertising and the ideal of “minimum effort”

## La publicidad y el ideal del “mínimo esfuerzo”

### A publicidade e o ideal do “esforço mínimo”

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the attitudes and patterns acquired in the social environment of the inhabitants of the city of Monterrey, Mexico, as determining factors for personal and professional development. The hypothesis is to establish whether individual's professional success or failure is determined by advertisements. This premise that was rejected due to the fact that, according to the project results, the vision of success or failure is formed from the nuclear family and social ties (friends, colleagues and partners), although media content also influences through shows, soap operas, and not exclusively advertising.

**Keywords:** Communication, language, advertising, marketing, Monterrey.

#### RESUMEN

*Este trabajo explora las actitudes y patrones adquiridos en el entorno social de los habitantes de la Ciudad de Monterrey, México, como factores determinantes para su desarrollo personal y profesional. La hipótesis de trabajo fue que la concepción del éxito o fracaso personal y profesional de las personas es determinada por los mensajes publicitarios, supuesto que fue rechazado, ya que, según los resultados del proyecto, la visión del éxito o el fracaso se conforma desde el núcleo familiar y los lazos sociales (amigos, compañeros, parejas), aunque también incide el contenido mediático a través de programas, telenovelas, y no exclusivamente de la publicidad.*

**Palabras clave:** Comunicación, lenguaje, publicidad, marketing, Monterrey.

#### RESUMO

Este trabalho explora as atitudes e padrões adquiridos no entorno social dos habitantes da Cidade de Monterrey, México, como fatores determinantes para seu desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional. A hipótese do trabalho foi que a concepção do sucesso ou fracasso pessoal e profissional das pessoas é determinada pelas mensagens publicitárias, suposição que foi rejeitada, pois conforme os resultados do projeto, a visão do sucesso ou do fracasso é conformado a partir do núcleo familiar e dos laços sociais (amigos, companheiros, casais), embora também incide o conteúdo mediático a través de programas, telenovelas, e não exclusivamente da publicidade.

**Palavras-chave:** Comunicação, linguagem, publicidade, marketing, Monterrey.

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication, as a fundamental social process, has become an attractive field of research and theory. The interest of psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, politicians, scientists, economists, mathematicians, historians and linguists could lead to assume that its study is more an auxiliary discipline than a science in itself. However, the focus of such diverse disciplines make the analysis of communication – with an important basis of media research in both expressions and catalysts of human behavior and society – is currently a fundamental part in the cultural, economic and social development.

A key component in the media, basic and indispensable element both in business *marketing* as well as business culture, is advertising, which as a first concept, is a language and, as such, has its own codes. Like all language, it serves to communicate something, usually to incite to consume some product or service, or to create and project an institutional image, though, in particular, it seeks to provoke a change in attitudes. Currently, advertising not only serves to inform and persuade, but also to transmit certain forms of seeing or understanding life. From said potential is that this article appears.

Advertising implies a very complex process where numerous and various factors intervene, most of which are beyond the control of the advertiser, because in fact, they escape the reach of the advertisement and are situated in very distant contexts, mutually independent. This circumstance is precisely why, on the one hand, social investigation becomes an instrument of enormous interest for the practitioner of advertising and, on the other hand, is a fact that, at the same time, determines that advertisement exceeds the simple practice of the trade, specifying its unquestionable presence and effect on social life and media. (Benavides, 1997, p. 521)

Advertising as a cultural and communicative model aims to speak the same language as the receiver, its same level, tone and style, encoding all information added through symbols and words full of meaning and, above all, of signification and sense.

From this conceptual framework, the objective of this work is to get to know the attitudes and patterns acquired in the social environment of the residents in the Metropolitan Area of the city of Monterrey [Área Metropolitana de la Ciudad de Monterrey] (AMM), Mexico, such as determining factors in their personal and professional development, in order to establish whether

their success or failure is based on the unconscious assimilation of hedonistic advertising messages that relate happiness with the law of minimal effort, or if both possibilities are linked to the subjectivity of social ties. The perspective given to the project is of a quantitative experimental type, and uses deductive reasoning to arrive to the verification of the hypothesis determined in the objective; meaning that we have tried to verify the influence that advertising messages have in the involuntary projection of people focused on the achievement of a purpose through a nearly zero effort.

Monterrey, the study field of this work, aims to be an international city. According to the latest report from the Mexican Institute of Competitiveness A.C. [Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad A.C.] (IMCO), Monterrey is the most competitive city in Mexico<sup>1</sup>. In 2008, according to *América Economía*<sup>2</sup> [*Economy America*], it was the sixth most important city for doing business in America (González López, 2012, p. 85).

Much of the achievements that the City has had are due to the great tenacity of some few and the unquestionable support of its population. (...) The economic influence and the quality of life are non-linguistic communication factors that the citizens of Monterrey ["regiomontanos"] have very aware within their social patterns. (González López, 2012, p. 86)

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The growth of industrial societies, the division of labor, the concentration of urban population and the automated production of goods, made theoreticians suppose that the social and family ties people had either disappeared or weakened greatly, isolating them and turning them into a passive crowd, non-thinking and easy to handle. The "theory of the hypodermic needle," behavioral in nature, was the first to try to explain the effect of the mass media on the population. Wright (1975) states, "each member of the mass public is personal and directly "attacked" by the message" (p. 77).

According to Juanola i Hospital (2014), "the law of minimal effort (...) is based on the concept *homo economicus*. According to this, we accurately rationalize how to get the most satisfaction with the least possible effort" (NP). "The principle of minimal effort governs all of our behavior in the course of everyday life", point out Moles y Costa (2005, p. 120).

"We all have a similar brain, we all have the ability to dream and imagine, and we all have doubts and fears.

There are no physical difference between a successful person and a poor one. However, there is a mental difference: successful people have learned to focus their creative mind, their imagination, in an objective and then give the first basic steps that appear before them", mentions Marc Allen (2007), the author of the best selling book "*The Type-Z guide to success. A lazy person's manifesto for wealth and fulfillment*".

The ideal of minimal effort has achieved great importance in recent years. Although it is not in itself negative, it is changing the style and quality of life of people who adhere to it. "We talk about minimum effort when what you are looking for is to conserve power - Velasco, Zautra, A. & Zautra, E. (2014) point out – Cognitive researchers mention that if there are several ways to achieve the same objective, we chose the one that demands less action" (p. 23).

In our society, as in any group of people, there are widespread beliefs that constantly occur in adulthood. Thusly, according to Riso (2004), "the principle that mandates our psychological apparatus is shocking: when information that reaches the organism does not coincide with the beliefs that we have stored in our memory, we resolve the conflict in favor of the beliefs or schemes already installed, meaning, we cheat ourselves. We believe too much in convictions because it is more comfortable to not question ourselves" (p. 33).

According to Esperanza Guisán (1992), "Getting all men on board, waking up from their slumber, rejecting conventionality, thinking and determining for themselves, is an important task that yields generous rewards in terms of satisfaction and enjoyment, for a meager, if not *zero*, cost" (p. 14). The mental economy is based on the following principle: there is less expenditure for the system to maintain schemes we have stored than changing them.

The patterns and methods of communication are acquired in the social environment, family and school; if these are functional and satisfactory, the person will tend to present them in the same way in different areas in which it develops. Therefore, we know that many of the alterations of personal and professional development have their origin in the family nucleus. (González López, 2012, p. 85)

Among those schemes prevalent in the adult mind beyond their relevance are those related to approaches of reality that are not always valid, or not *universally* so. In the words of Tovar (2012):

Many have been educated in a culture that makes them feel guilty when they spend money to enjoy themselves. However, in addition to covering pressing basic needs and having savings as a prevision, every human being also requires leisure and goods that give them a sense of belonging and status. (NP)

The sense of belonging Tovar refers to, in our global society, is closely linked to communication networks, which form part of or constitute "one of the major industries of our time: the media", industry which, in turn, "feeds significantly on advertising income" (De Andrés, 2007, p. 61),

In this perspective, according to what Eguizábal (2009) outlines, ads, as long as they are the result of a specific social reality, could be considered as "a great portrait of the social" (p. 10). With this, the capacity of advertisers to consider in their messages the eigenvalues of a given context is underlined. In the case of today's society, the value of consumption is not only as a satisfier of needs, but also as a creator of identity.

Consuming has become gradually a social duty, inasmuch as consumption is, perhaps, the most important phenomenon that enables the individual to identify, relate and integrate itself into the social group. (Martin Requero, 2007, p. 110)

"Poor but honest". In the cultural context (...) this typical phrase of our past and still in force even now among the masses and the poor middle classes with identity, has become a sentimental cliché. The response of many young people, trapped by the new ethos is "the old were honest and nothing came from it". "Decency does not pay," others say. (Moulián, 2002, p. 137)

In everyday life, and in the majority of the occasions thanks to advertising, man has associated success with material goods, money, power, fame, and prestige, in part because he has forgotten who he is, but also because the advertising discourse establish pseudo-patterns of conduct: "Get a big house, a good job, a title, a husband, a wife, have your children, buy several cars, then several boats, travel, buy a beach house, a motorcycle, a sports car and you will be happy (...) This logic of "winning" associated with "having" produces known results. It is an experience of daily life that the epic joys of the winners, by necessity, are built on the tragedies of the losers" (Moulián, 2002, p. 140).

The image of professional success young people have is very associated with money and, even more so, to consumerism. Teens increasingly learn to measure activities by their economic performance and analyze successes based on the amount of money coming from it. (...) Another important factor by which success is associated with money is due to a social conditioning that is imposed on the world in which we live in. In movies, in advertising, on television, even on the street it can be seen that everything that is expensive is associated to success. It must be understood that one lives in a capitalist world. Companies want money to be spent, society itself needs consuming, since if it is not done, the economic system would come apart. (González López, 2012, pp. 168, 169).

On many occasions, advertising makes us believe that quality of life depends unquestionably on consumption and economic movements. Most of the companies - and all of humanity - make efforts to make people believe that money will give happiness and success, since the more money you obtain, the more that will be consumed, and the more that is consumed, the more the socio-economic system progresses. "Pleasure, aesthetic taste, dreaminess, these are the proposals of advertising. The judgments will differ on the value of them, but in the background we all have an anthropological modality, the definition of the type of man and of woman which suits" (León, 1995, p. 24).

Everyone wants a higher salary. People who have everything they need, including everything they want, anyway, wish for a higher salary anyway. A paycheck should be understood as what it really represents. It is not only acquisitive power or security in life. For us it symbolizes the value given to our efforts and skills, the confidence that others have in us. (Niven, 2004, p. 164)

In Western society, there is an extreme relationship between money and wealth, between money and material goods, although strictly speaking they are not the same. You can have money and not have theoretically affordable property available. Or you may want to buy that which cannot be subject to any transaction, as Marx pointed in many passages of his work (1844).

From all of this an inclination of serious psychological consequences is precisely derived. To confuse money with global personal security, which could also be called "happiness" – by not being able to see the base error – the subject believes that, if the amount of economic

security and physical security increases, these are transformed into personal safety. Money does not always bring happiness. In this case, the matter is more or less like this: mentioning the word "money" helps to feel motivation to work better and to endure more physical suffering. This conclusion is the result of a study conducted by scientists at the University of Minnesota, in the United States, which was also published in the magazine *New Scientist* (Buchanan, 2009).

Money plays a very important role in society's life. In addition to being a simple exchange tool that makes economic life more efficient, it has a strange psychological force. The researchers decided to analyze what is the psychological impact of money and how this changes the behavior of people. In contrast, at the same time, that thinking generates greater independence and less commitment to the problems of others. As said by Kathleen Vohs, the scientist who directed the research above mentioned, "counting with or handling money makes us invulnerable to social rejection and can even diminish physical pain" (quoted in Buchanan, 2009).

## METHODOLOGY

The design of the study is of a quantitative experimental type, using deductive reasoning to reach the verification of the hypothesis presented in the research and generating knowledge denominated as "holistic *marketing* trends for individual and professional performance", where usually ordinal measurements are used and the operationalization is essential. The objective is to approach the technical and practical knowledge about attitudes and patterns acquired in the social environment of the inhabitants of the Monterrey Metropolitan Area (AMM) in Mexico, as a determining factor for their personal and professional development. The cognitive dimension of communication is worked from a behavioral approach, in order to establish if the success or failure of people is based on the unconscious assimilation of hedonistic advertising messages that link happiness with the law of minimal effort and the subjectivity of social ties.

Of the hypothesis part of the project, it is emphasized that: (H1) the success or failure of a person is based on the unconscious assimilation of hedonistic advertising messages, because these relate happiness with the law of minimal effort and the subjectivity of social bonds. As alternate hypothesis, it is sustained that: (H2) money prompts demonstrated privileges, such as tranquility,

comfort and security, and enhances self-esteem, since the acquisitive power that a person achieves tends make it give greater credibility to advertising messages.

The research was carried out in two stages. In the first, a diagnosis is made in two qualitative phases: the initial phase begins from the assessment carried out to 250 subjects inhabitants of Monterrey, with personal interviews as a study matrix, which sought to identify their perspective regarding their personal and professional projection. In the second phase of this first stage, interviews were conducted with experts from the business sector, with the objective of detecting what the business environment expected of its collaborators or employees.

For the second stage a numerical measurement system was established, using the Likert scale regarding statements referring to values and beliefs, capacity of learning, emotional knowledge and emotional competencies. For the analysis of this material the Pearson's Chi-square test was used. Through its application trends and discrepancies of the responses concerning variables such as gender, age, socioeconomic status and educational level were explored. A probability sampling was used, where each element of the population under study has a chance of being selected in the sample and stratified on the basis of the municipalities that belong to the studied metropolis. In this regard, the observation units are grouped based on the existence of similar characteristics depending on the number of key population by municipality. Of these, Apodaca, Cadereyta Jiménez, García, General Escobedo, Guadalupe, Juárez, Salinas Victoria, San Nicolás de los Garza, San Pedro Garza García, Santa Catarina and Santiago, along with Monterrey, conform the Metropolitan Area of Monterrey.

Of a population of 4.090.000 inhabitants of the AMM, a finite sample of 384.1 surveys to apply was determined, with a level of reliability of 95.0%, determined by the formula:

$$n = \frac{Z^2_{\alpha/2} P Q N}{\epsilon^2 (N-1) + Z^2 P Q}$$

The methodological process defines hazy concepts; however, they can be measured quantitatively and empirical through an operational definition. The intention of the statements has been to appraise opinions, tastes, satisfaction and knowledge against the mentioned areas, exploring trends and discrepancies of the responses regarding analyzed variables. The emphasis is on the independent study of each feature, being somehow possible to integrate the measurements of two or more characteristics in order to determine how the phenomenon is or how it is manifested. It is not intended at any time to establish the form of relationship between such characteristics.

## RESULTS

The study of advertising may constitute an area of knowledge that can be accessed through different perspectives: philosophical, sociological, economic, technological and, of course, psychological. In this research a series of statements were applied to know what the inhabitants of the AMM thought on the ideal of having lots of money and not work. Below are the results.

Table 1. Statement: "My ideal life is to have lots of money and not work". Results according to gender.

			Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Gender	Male	Count	22	26	20	71	24	163
		% By gender	13.5%	16.0%	12.3%	43.6%	14.7%	100.0%
	Female	Count	21	38	36	103	20	218
		% By gender	9.6%	17.4%	16.5%	47.2%	9.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	43	64	56	174	44	381	
	%	11.3%	16.8%	14.7%	45.7%	11.5%	100.0%	

Source: Own Elaboration..

Regarding gender, there is no difference to the statement presented [ $X^2(4, N0381) = 5.263, p = 0.261$ ] and in Table 1 you can see how there is no great contrast between the responses of men and women. The interesting thing in this table is the similarity of the percentage among the options "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree". However, it is clear that, for the majority of the "regiomontana" population, its ideal is not to have money without having to work.

On the Internet, one of the quintessential interactive media, abounds an amount of ads on how to earn money without having to do too much; yet for Monterrey population, the "regiomontanos", the ideal of minimal effort is not as compelling as it appear online, as shown by the results of the instrument applied.

Regarding age as a sample variable, the Chi-square shows a significance to the statement "my ideal life is to have lots of money and not work" [ $X^2(16, N = 380) = 37.784, p = 0.002$ ]. Table 2 distinguishes how new generations seek, although in a smaller percentage, the ideal of minimal effort. The current youth (up to age 24) have a lot of information, thanks to new technologies, and demand more; yet they refuse to deploy a greater effort to achieve their goals. Almost half of this group (42.3%) agrees with the statement, while the age group 45-to-54 denotes the highest level of disagreement (72.7%).

With the represented results, it can be considered that the "regiomontano", or at least the representative sample, continues with the ideology that work is required for the achievement of goals.

In the same way, the socio-economic level shows a representative difference obtained by the Chi-square [ $X^2(16, N = 370) = 27.383, p = 0.037$ ]. It is observed in Table 3 that the highest socio-economic level is the one that most agrees with the statement (38.1%), making it clear that, in their perception, you can get a desirable economic level without considerable effort.

In theory, the trends presented could be considered as a product of an "ideological attack" of advertising in a society like the regiomontana, therefore, hypothetically, the responses would indicate that people look for practical solutions and in little time, as an effect of advertising presenting the ideal of minimal effort. For example, they want to improve their appearance, but without doing sports or foregoing the best typical dishes of the region, which are those that generally contain more percentage of calories.

However, if you analyze well, the origin of such trends does not arise precisely from hedonistic advertising specifically. To a large extent, such a culture is the responsibility of the education that is taught, and not just from parents and teachers, but mass media in general. These tend to show the

Table 2. Statement: "My ideal life is to have lots of money and not work". Results according to age.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
15-24	Count	25	30	22	45	8	130
	% By age	19.2%	23.1%	16.9%	34.6%	6.2%	100.0%
25-34	Count	7	18	10	37	9	81
	% By age	8.6%	22.2%	12.3%	45.7%	11.1%	100.0%
35-44	Count	5	10	15	46	10	86
	% By age	5.8%	11.6%	17.4%	53.5%	11.6%	100.0%
45-54	Count	3	3	6	25	7	44
	% By age	6.8%	6.8%	13.6%	56.8%	15.9%	100.0%
55 and over	Count	3	4	3	20	9	39
	%	7.7%	10.3%	7.7%	51.3%	23.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	43	65	56	173	43	380
	%	11.3%	17.1%	14.7%	45.5%	11.3%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration.

Table 3. Statement: "My ideal life is to have lots of money and not work". Results according to socioeconomic level.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
Socioeconomic Level	Low	Count	6	4	5	11	6	32
		% Per Level	18.8%	12.5%	15.6%	34.4%	18.8%	100.0%
	Medium	Count	11	19	12	49	7	98
		% Per Level	11.2%	19.4%	12.2%	50.0%	7.1%	100.0%
	High	Count	21	26	22	79	24	172
		% Per Level	12.2%	15.1%	12.8%	45.9%	14.0%	100.0%
	Medium	Count	3	7	10	26	1	47
		% Per Level	6.4%	14.9%	21.3%	55.3%	2.1%	100.0%
	High	Count	0	8	4	5	4	21
		% Per Level	0%	38.1%	19.0%	23.8%	19.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	41	64	53	170	42	370
		%	11.1%	17.3%	14.3%	45.9%	11.4%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 4. Statement: "Successful people are those who have money". Results according to gender.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
Gender	Male	Count	18	45	28	53	15	159
		% By gender	11.3%	28.3%	17.6%	33.3%	9.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	26	58	33	87	14	218
		% By Gender	11.9%	26.6%	15.1%	39.9%	6.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	44	103	61	140	29	377	
	%	11.7%	27.3%	16.2%	37.1%	7.7%	100.0%	

Source: Own Elaboration.

situation of famous living considerably well and that, in general, do not execute a job that requires a major effort. It is the case of films in which the protagonists live in luxurious mansions, boast an attractiveness stereotyped by society itself and do not "suffer" with a work for more than eight hours a day.

In some respects, the ideal of minimal effort is valid and - as it was distinguished for the two previous variables - new generations and high economic classes hold it and approve it. Either by the family or social environment, or media influence, the fact is that the current situation is taking a new view on effort and achievable goals. Today more than ever it is talked about the society of opportunities. It is thought that with effort you can obtain whatever you

want. It is believed that belonging to one or another socioeconomic class does not determine where you can get, that what matters is determination, will, striving for a goal.

Before the statement "successful people are those who have money", the results thrown by the Chi-square regarding gender indicate that there is no significant difference [ $X^2(4, N = 377) = 2.628, p = 0.662$ ]. Table 4 shows a slight difference in the variables: 39% associated successful people with money, while a 44.8% differs from this, giving a negative response to the corresponding claim. Both men and women think in a similar way in this matter, with only 16.2% of ambiguous result.

T. H. Eker (2006) points out that every human being possess a "business model", an internal *script*

Table 5. Statement: "Successful people are those who have money". Results according to age.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
15-24	Count	15	41	22	41	8	127
	% By age	11.8%	32.3%	17.3%	32.3%	6.3%	100.0%
25-34	Count	8	23	11	32	7	81
	% By age	9.9%	28.4%	13.6%	39.5%	8.6%	100.0%
35-44	Count	9	22	15	33	7	86
	% By age	10.5%	25.6%	17.4%	38.4%	8.1%	100.0%
45-54	Count	7	6	8	18	4	43
	% By age	16.3%	14.0%	18.6%	41.9%	9.3%	100.0%
55 and over	Count	5	11	5	16	2	39
	% By age	12.8%	28.2%	12.8%	41.0%	5.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	44	103	61	140	28	376
	%	11.7%	27.4%	16.2%	37.2%	7.4%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration.

that dictates how their relationship with money is. This model is created from the exhibition during their life to messages from friends related to money, as well as those from current events, entertainment and, especially, of the family. Unfortunately, the models thus constructed ordinarily contain errors that prevent the achievement of the objectives. The personal money model instilled in our subconscious minds, more than anything else, will determine the financial life of men and women.

Regarding the age group applied to the measuring instrument, there is no significant difference either [ $X^2(16, N = 376) = 8.484, p = 0.933$ ] and, as shown in Table 5, there is a great diversity of responses. Meaning, despite having one higher percentage disagreeing with the statement according to which successful people are those who have money, the indifference and positive aspects support high percentages. The diversity of opinions on the matter in the case of the variables analyzed is synthesized in table 5.

The Chi-square used for the socioeconomic variable shows a significant difference in the results [ $X^2(16, N = 366) = 38.723, p = 0.001$ ], which can be seen in Table 6. The "medium", "medium low" and "low" economic strata show higher percentages to the statement (35.3%, 49.4% and 38.7%, respectively), which suggests that the financial model has determined their vision and association of success with money.

The people from middle and high class differed notably, as the association they have of money with success is not positive, meaning that they do not consider the financial state as a determinant for success. The Chi-square has determined that there is a significant difference in the answers given by the sample also in terms of the level of studies [ $X^2(20, N = 373) = 32.514, p = 0.038$ ].

Table 7 reflects how the highest levels of formation correspond to a considerable disagreement with the assertion that successful people are those who have money. Instead, basic levels and the high school level express their conformity to such an association.

Wallace D. Wattels, author of *The science of getting rich* (2007), inspired Rhonda Byrne, author of the bestseller *The secret*, and other classics of self-improvement literature, in the elaboration of psychosocial guidelines to achieve wealth and prosperity that a particular group of contemporary society longs for. It is well known that for many social scientists, the bibliographic corpus that includes works such as those mentioned, lack methodological character, so they do not have their approval. However, the large number of books, audiobooks, and videos sold shows the great need to seek solutions to the emotional and financial problems that have arisen in the new era. All these trials refer to something that is decisive for this study: that the change



Table 6. Statement: "Successful people are those who have money". Results according to socioeconomic level.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
Socioeconomic Level	Low	Count	5	7	12	6	1	31
		% Per Level	16.1%	22.6%	38.7%	19.4%	3.2%	100.0%
	Medium	Count	8	40	16	30	3	971
		% Per Level	8.2%	41.2%	16.56%	30.9%	3.1%	100.0%
	High	Count	23	37	23	70	17	170
		% Per Level	13.5%	21.8%	13.5%	41.2%	10.0%	100.0%
	Medium	Count	3	10	5	24	5	47
		% Per Level	6.4%	21.3%	10.6%	51.1%	10.6%	100.0%
	High	Count	1	4	4	9	3	21
		% Per Level	4.8%	19.0%	19.0%	42.9%	14.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	40	98	60	139	29	366	
	%	10.9%	26.8%	16.4%	38.0%	7.9%	100.0%	

Source: Own Elaboration.

Table 7. Statement: "Successful people are those who have money". Results according to educational level.

		Totalmente de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Indiferente	En desacuerdo	Totalmente en desacuerdo	Total	
Educational Level	None	Count	1	2	2	0	0	5
		% Per Level	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0%	0%	100.0%
	Primary	Count	5	8	4	9	1	27
		% Per Level	18.5%	29.6%	14.8%	33.3%	3.7%	100.0%
	Secondary	Count	11	27	10	31	0	79
		% Per Level	13.9%	34.2%	12.7%	39.2%	0%	100.0%
	High School	Count	14	37	17	48	7	123
		% Per Level	11.4%	30.1%	13.8%	39.0%	5.7%	100.0%
	Graduate	Count	11	23	27	47	18	126
		% Per Level	8.7%	18.3%	21.4%	37.3%	14.3%	100.0%
	Post-grad	Count	1	5	1	5	1	13
		% Per Level	7.7%	38.5%	7.7%	38.5%	7.7%	100.0%
	Total	Count	43	102	61	140	27	373
		%	11.5%	27.3%	16.4%	37.5%	7.2%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration

of attitude, solidarity, creativity, and imagination are essential to reach and attract the desired objectives.

To the statement "money equals power", the representative sample of the AMM does not show a significant difference according to the gender variable; meaning both men and women think the same about this. A 56.1% agree with the statement, as indicated

in Table 8, which shows that more than half of the "regiomontanos" and "regiomontanas" consider that money gives power, while 27.2% responded negatively to the respective claim and to 16.8% it was indifferent.

The incorporation of women into the work market is one of the most significant social changes of the last decades. But the fact that men and women work

Table 8. Statement: "Money equals power". Results according to gender.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	
Gender	Male	Count	29	61	28	37	4	159
		% By Gender	18.2%	38.4%	17.6%	23.3%	2.5%	100.0%
	Female	Count	38	83	35	55	6	217
		% By Gender	17.5%	38.2%	16.1%	25.3%	2.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	67	144	63	92	10	376	
	% By Gender	17.8%	38.3%	16.8%	24.5%	2.7%	100.0%	

Source: Own Elaboration

outside the home and earn their own money does not automatically generate an egalitarian domestic situation. Money can guarantee the autonomy of women and put an end to the inequality in the private sphere, but, in fact, in our society that has not occurred fully, though it has advanced on this regard. So, according to Viveret in his article over time, money and power (2003), the three major expressions of the malaise of modern society have to do with the relationship we establish with such factors.

The first [of such expressions], the most deep and that structures the pathologies of power and money, concerns the relationship with time, lived as an opponent behind which we run (productive version) or that we kill (depressive version). (NP)

The second expression of the current social malaise, continues Viveret, "corresponds to money, that is considered to give value to time (time is money); the result is the transformation of money as an end, not a means. It is the same investment found in pathologies of power, when it ceases to be a way to combat impotence and becomes the object of a conquest destined to dominate the other".

It is true that, as you can read in the perceptions of the members of the sample, for society money isn't everything; however, it is a primary determinant in their emotional, physical and cognitive life. And if in itself it does not generate any power, it can be converted into power.

In terms of its relationship with power – the issue of the statement in question – Table 9 shows the tendency to say that money provides a certain degree of social power. "It is clear why the one that gives money has power over the one who receives it. Said in

a summarized way: the first gives a future; the second a present; the first has freedom (of choice); the second determination: "In general (...) the owner of money enjoys a double freedom (spatial and temporal) and to renounce it in favor of the owner of goods, he will claim a special equivalent (an "addition"), (...) being him who generally wants less... "[E]njoys the advantage, not because he has the money, but because he gives it" (Boehmler, 2009).

Regarding age, the Chi-square did not find a significant difference in this matter [ $X^2(16, N = 375) = 10.425, p = 0.843$ ], given that, regardless of age, participants of the sample coincide in their answers about the relationship between money and power.

Concerning the socio-economic level, the Chi-square does display a significant difference [ $X^2(20, N = 372) = 27.279, p = 0.128$ ], as Table 10 projects. For the lower class, despite its remarkable inclination to the disapproval of the statement, the highest percentage is determined by indifference (37.5%), while the remaining strata leans significantly to a positive response of the item, surprisingly showing who assign a greater power to money.

In terms of the level of studies and their relationship with power, the Chi-square found no significant difference [ $X^2(20, N = 372) = 27.279, p = 0.128$ ], which indicates that the determined blocks of study levels for the research have a same opinion regarding the statement presented. People without any study show a considerable percentage of indifference to the item, while the rest of the levels show a remarkable inclination to agreeing with the statement; meaning that regardless of the degree of schooling, the sample considered that money equals power.

Table 9. Statement: "Money equals power". Results according to age.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
15 - 24	Count	24	46	26	28	3	127
	% By Age	18.9%	36.2%	20.5%	22.0%	2.4%	100.0%
25 - 34	Count	13	33	12	19	4	81
	% By Age	16.0%	40.7%	14.8%	23.5%	4.9%	100.0%
35 - 44	Count	11	36	14	24	1	86
	% By Age	12.8%	41.9%	16.3%	27.9%	1.2%	100.0%
45 - 54	Count	10	14	4	13	1	42
	% By Age	23.8%	33.3%	9.5%	31.0%	2.4%	100.0%
55 and over	Count	9	14	7	8	1	39
	% By Age	23.1%	35.9%	17.9%	20.5%	2.6%	100.0%
Total	Count	67	143	63	92	10	375
	% By Age	17.9%	38.1%	16.8%	24.5%	2.7%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 10. Statement: "Money equals power". Results according to socioeconomic level.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Low	Count	6	4	12	10	0	32
	% Per Level	18.8%	12.5%	37.5%	31.3%	0%	100.0%
Medium Low	Count	9	46	14	25	2	96
	% Per Level	9.4%	47.9%	14.6%	26.0%	2.1%	100.0%
Medium	Count	41	64	24	35	5	169
	% Per Level	24.3%	37.9%	14.2%	20.7%	3.0%	100.0%
Medium High	Count	8	14	9	14	2	47
	% Per Level	17.0%	29.8%	19.1%	29.8%	4.3%	100.0%
High	Count	4	8	3	5	1	21
	% Per Level	19.0%	38.1%	14.3%	23.8%	4.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	68	136	62	89	10	365
	%	18.6%	37.3%	17.0%	24.4%	2.7%	100.0%

Source: Own Elaboration

Today more than ever you can check how human progress depends on finances, in a world that had never been so complex, given its dimensions, its rate of change, its overflowing growth. "Money is the product of a real social process, but transcendent forces are allocated to the process that generates it. From an

economic point of view, it has its origin in present or future commercial exchanges, but, from a social and cultural point of view, it generates a set of symbols and images that are reversed on the same social process and that act as real forces in the social processes" (Castaingts Teillery, 2002, p. 26).

## DISCUSSION

According to the results obtained, culturally people with more money have more credibility than those with less. It is as if ideas acquire greater relevance when a wealthy person tells them. Similarly, despite the great social struggles after equality in dignity and rights, people with more money are treated better in comparison to those who have less. In a sense, this fact is quite obvious and accepted in the environment where the research was conducted.

Mostly "visual" people compose the population of Monterrey: they understand the world as they see it; when remembering something, they do so in the form of images; when imagining the future, they visualize it. They tend to issue involuntary judgments and to control things to make sure they are in their correct place. Advertising influences in a high degree on the lifestyle of the "regiomontanos" who aspire to have their territory become one more city of the American Union.

For the "regiomontano", upper class symbolizes the hope to become someone with power; yet for the lower classes, the possibility that this illusion is met is almost zero, at least in a legal and formative way, since normally the youngsters of these classes acquire the same socio-economic and cultural level of their parents and will be lucky if they reach greater success than them. There is no advertising focused on the lower classes. Advertising sets the trend of wanting to be and to have, a possibility that the population of the lower class perceived as out of their reach.

The social perception is framed by the subjectivity of social ties. Meaning that the display of advertising messages affects the formation of the environment where a child develops. The level of education within the free schools supported by the Government is very low, the young people of lower class have to work from a very early age and until today education beyond the basic level has not been thought as an obligation; only since 2016 upper secondary education will be compulsory in all the national territory, which guarantees a higher level of education for the population.

The form of entertainment of the lower-class youth is also very different from the other socio-economic classes, or it is scarce, since they have to work. Family money does not give them more than enough to survive, and they have to become adults very fast. However, it is in the lower class where Mexican culture is distinguished as of great unity among its members in difficult times.

Advertising messages influence with greater rigor the young middle and upper middle class; most of the entertainment consists of the competition among these young people, to see who has the best clothes, who is the thinnest, or who spends more money during weekends. Instead of worrying about survival, they worry about impressing others.

The role played by advertising in the "regiomontana" society is vast; it could even be argued that it is one of the most powerful agents in our culture. This, as you might imagine, has brought plenty of social repercussions. The exaggerated vision of advertising is based on the fear that inspires as a powerful tool of communication. That is, in a society with a visual tendency, it is very common that people are valued by where they live, the car they drive, the brands they use in their daily lives, even by the place where they buy coffee in the mornings. Faced with this reality, it can be said that it is true that advertising exerts influence on the behavior of people, but that other factors are also influential, such as family values, religion and formal education, in that order, according to the research data.

Advertising expresses in good measure the dominant socio-cultural values in the historic context where it is forged. In addition, it reflects the activity and way of organization of the people in the public and private sphere through a purely popular discourse, which has gained an imperative space in the informational and communicational media. The study distinguishes it as the variable of greatest importance in the formation of the family and school environment, and as a determining factor in the emotional and intellectual teaching approach of the "regiomontano".

Advertising is first and foremost communication; it is the medium and the message, the way of relating between a company and its consumers or possible target audience. And in that sense, the trend of current advertising, in multinational brands, is the development of a discourse in support of the personal development of consumers, where the benefits and attributes of the brand are left in second place, to transmit more humane messages, with other types of values beyond uncontrolled consumerism.

The hypothesis raised in this project is rejected, by determining that the success or failure of the people is not based on the unconscious assimilation of the hedonistic advertising messages that relate happiness with the law of minimal effort, but that the formation in the social environment is decisive in it. Meaning that the

formation in the family nucleus, the relationship with friends, living with a partner and religion are the factors that have the most important role in the personal and professional development of individuals. Media, such as television and cinema, also influence the unconscious formation through its narrative, and this influence is not a unique factor of hedonistic advertising.

Considering that advertising is being the primary tool in human stability, it is necessary to provide people, especially new generations, with tools that allow them to not only survive the change that our society lives today, but to adapt to it easily and take advantage of the positive opportunities that change can offer.

## FOOTNOTES

1. For their study, IMCO considers 10 factors, 122 variables, 71 metropolitan areas and 332 municipalities. <http://www.informador.com.mx/economia/2008/22895/6/agendas-municipales-atrasan-competitividad-del-estado.htm>
2. Magazine with global focus on businesses and leading companies in Latin America, at <http://www.americaeconomia.com>

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