Persistence of gender stereotypes in the media consumption habits of adolescents: drama for girls and humor for boys

Pervivencia de los estereotipos de género en los hábitos de consumo mediático de los adolescentes: drama para las chicas y humor para los chicos

A persistência dos estereótipos de género nos hábitos de consumo de mídia dos adolescentes: drama para meninas e humor para meninos

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ABSTRACT

There are few studies on the habits of media consumption of adolescents and young people focused on gender differences in Spain. This study intends to focus on this research line through a quantitative study. The administration of 787 questionnaires to adolescents from Barcelona (Spain) reveals interesting results: adolescents make a media consumption stereotyped by gender. Girls consume more dramatic products –with focus on interpersonal relationships– and boys consume more humor and videogames. In addition, girls are subjected to more family controls than boys in their media consumption.

RESUMEN

Son pocos los estudios en la línea de investigación de los hábitos de consumo mediático de los adolescentes y jóvenes centrados en las diferencias de género en España. Este estudio se propone trabajar en esta línea mediante un estudio cuantitativo. De la administración de 787 cuestionarios a adolescentes de Barcelona (España) se desprenden resultados reveladores: los adolescentes hacen consumos estereotipados por género. Las chicas consumen más productos dramáticos centrados en las relaciones interpersonales y los chicos, más humor y videojuegos. Además, las chicas se ven sometidas a más controles familiares que los chicos en sus consumos mediáticos.

RESUMO

Poucos são os estudos existentes na linha de investigação dos hábitos de consumo de mídia por adolescentes e jovens que se enfoquem nas diferenças de género na Espanha. Este estudo tem como objetivo trabalhar nesta linha através de um estudo quantitativo. A partir da aplicação de 787 questionários a adolescentes em Barcelona (Espanha) emergem resultados reveladores: os adolescentes fazem um consumo estereotipado tendo por base o gênero. As meninas consomem produtos mais dramáticos voltados para relações interpessoais e os meninos mais humor e videogames. Além disso, o consumo midiático das meninas é submetido a mais controle familiar que o dos meninos.

INTRODUCTION

This article emerges from an earlier research focused on the relationship between adolescents and the media (Masanet, 2015) . In the first phase of this research, we explored the habits of media consumption, and especially of serial fiction, of the adolescents of Barcelona (Spain) through a survey. The aim was to make a first map of consumer habits that would help us identify the serial programs and fictions that most attracted adolescents to later analyze them and explore the adolescents' speeches about them. The data collected evidenced gender differences in relation to these consumptions among the adolescent spectators, showing the persistence of gender stereotypes that the most optimistic ones consider to be eradicated among the new generations, but which remain very latent. This article aims to explore these differences and give them the space they deserve within the line of studies focused on the uses of media and its consumption.

In fact, research on the media consumption of adolescents and young people, and the sphere of everyday life shared by adolescents with the media, are abundant (for example, Cárcamo & Nesbet, 2008; Castellana, Sánchez-Carbonell, Chamarro, Graner & Beranuy, 2007, Colás, González & Pablos, 2013) and show, on the one hand, the important place that the media occupy in the life of adolescents and, on the other hand, the changes of consumption that have taken place in the last years, especially with the arrival of the new screens.

The proliferation of research focused on the adolescents' use of social networks (Almansa-Martínez, Fonseca & Castillo, 2013; Stornaiuolo, DiZio & Hellmich, 2013), videogames (Alonqueo & Rehbein, 2008, Muros, Aragón & Bustos , 2013) or the mobile phone (Méziz, Aguilera & Borges, 2011; Ruiz-del-Olmo & Belmonte-Jiménez, 2014) highlights the profound changes experienced in relation to the habits of media consumption, where new screens have gained weight over the traditional ones. Nevertheless, it is necessary to emphasize that the history of innovation shows that the new media do not replace the old ones, but complement the range of options available and present a new situation of convergence and complementarity (Buckingham, 2009, Gabino, 2004). Adolescents consume both old and new media, which leads us to the need to explore all the plurality of consumptions they make, because the media occupy a prime place in their daily life, becoming a source of reference of information for their interpretation of the world and for the construction of their own identity (Fernández-Planells, Masanet & Figueras-Maz, 2016). As Arnett, Larson and Offer (1995) stated more than two decades ago, it is necessary to know the uses and meanings of the media in order to understand the future development of young people.

In recent years, research has devoted an important space to know the uses that adolescents and young people make of the media, but the problem is that most of the research has focused on new consumption models, from the appearance of new screens –a necessary but not the only aspect– and the exploration of consumption in relation to gender has been left in the background, as we shall see below.

This research investigates these aspects and aims to explore the survival of gender differences in the use of the media among the youngest. As Buckingham and Martínez-Rodríguez (2013) affirm, in a climate saturated by digital media, young people develop new frameworks for interpreting life, drawing opinions and stereotypes and facing dilemmas related to their daily actions. The fact that the consumption of media presents gender differences as early as adolescence helps us understanding the maintenance of sexist stereotypes among our younger generations, as we will also see later.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
THE MEDIA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN ADOLESCENCE.

Nowadays the media occupy a very important place in the life of the adolescents, being authentic agents of socialization in their process of maturation. Almost two decades ago, Elzo (2000) alerted us about the importance of the media in the process of socializing of adolescents, who considered family, friends and the media as the three key agents to inform themselves and create their own identity. Family and friends are still ahead of the media (Pindado, 2005), but the close relationship between adolescents and the media

has been increasing in recent years (Buckingham & Martínez-Rodríguez, 2013). In addition, the media can occupy spaces and functions that other agents (like parents) do not develop. While the more traditional socializing agents seek for adolescents to follow their beliefs and values, the media seek the audience and use the content and themes they believe adolescents want, as Arnett points out:

> There is an important difference between media and other socialization agents in the adolescent's environment (...). Typically, these other socializers have an interest in encouraging the adolescent to accept the attitudes, beliefs, and values that they have (...). In contrast, media are typically presented by people who have the economic success of the media enterprise as their primary concern. As a result, the content of media consumed by adolescents is driven not by a desire to promote social order and pass on the culture but by the uses adolescents themselves can make of media. Because the media are market driven to a large extent, media providers are likely to provide to adolescents whatever it is they believe adolescents want –within the limits imposed on media providers by the others adults socializers. (Arnett, 1995, p. 526)

In fact, this relationship between agents can give the media an advantage in its socializing and identity-building function among adolescents, since they are capable of enhancing or nullifying the influence of other agents of socialization (Medrano & Cortés, 2008). An example of this possible situation, which is more common than many would expect or want, can be seen in previous works, such as the one of Masanet and Buckingham (2015) with the teen series Skins. The paper explored the potential of the entertainment media as a source of information and/or informal education about sexuality among adolescents. The results revealed that some questions about sexuality and love relationships raised in the series promoted the debate in the fan forum. Subjects that they could hardly discuss with their parents, such as the loss of virginity or homosexual relationships, were discussed in the forum and this debate, sometimes, crossed the barriers of pre-established discourses. This combination of breakthrough sexual representations and anonymous space for discussion –fan forum– promoted a situation of non-formal education among equals and highlighted

the potential of the media in building the identity of adolescents. In fact, what could be observed is how the media can be more effective than other agents in the treatment of certain themes, such as those related to sexuality among adolescents.

THE NEED TO EXPLORE THE USES OF THE MEDIA IN RELATION TO GENDER

It is known that adolescents also acquire values and social roles in relation to gender through their relationship with the media (Masanet, Medina-Bravo & Aran-Ramspott, 2016). If the uses they make are unequal in relation to sex, this will be transferred to their daily lives and the relationships they will maintain in the future with their peers as well as with their parents and partners. In fact, several studies alert us about the increase of gender inequalities among our adolescents. In 2013, for example, the work entitled *La evolución de la adolescencia española sobre la igualdad y la prevención de la violencia de género* [The evolution of Spanish adolescence on equality and prevention of gender violence], promoted by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality (Díaz-Aguado, Martínez & Martín, 2013) already pointed to the increase in behaviors and practices associated with gender stereotypes. And there are more and more frequent news of Spanish generalist newspapers that alert of this increase of the inequalities between the youngest.[2]

Considering the important role of media in the adolescent stage, it is necessary to explore what may be the gender inequalities that are occurring in the adolescent's media consumption and that may have social implications. Several studies have already pointed out gender differences in the media consumption of adolescents and young people. Most have taken place in the Anglo-Saxon context (Livingstone, Bober & Helsper, 2005; Weiser, 2004), but few focus their research exclusively on gender inequalities or accompany them of other gaps, such as access, age or educational level. Rodríguez (2006) investigates the phenomenon of the digital divide at the global level and points out that there are three decisive blocks: economic, demographic and cultural.

It is in the demographic where we would find the gender aspects. It is interesting how, in the Spanish and European cases, institutions still focus on access

to technology to study the digital divide (Fernández-Planells et al., 2016) and obviate, in many cases, other essential aspects, such as gender. This does not mean that there are no examples of studies analyzing the gender gap in the Spanish context, such as those carried out by the e-Equality Observatory (www.e-equality.net), but they are minority and, in many cases, in aspects such as the intensity of use or the use of applications, to affirm that the gender gap between men and women is closing. They are interesting studies, but they need to deepen in key aspects like the consumed products –genres, themes, etc. Also noteworthy is the latest report on the digital divide in Barcelona (Mobile World Capital, 2016), which concluded that the variables that determine the gap are age, educational level or income level. According to the report, gender or nationality do not influence the digital divide. In this paper we analyze the gender differences in the use and consumption of media, making it possible to observe the differences and the need to work to eradicate these gender gaps that, in fact, can lead to relationships of inequity and inequality.

Considering the studies that have dealt with gender differences in media consumption, it is worth noting that, in many cases, despite not being the main objective of their research, gender differences or gender gaps have come to occupy a place in them. Thus, for example, Greenberg, Rampoldi and Ver (1998), Morley (1996), and Romero (2005) work on television consumption but devote a space to differences by gender. Greenberg, Rampoldi and Ver (1998) show that parents are stricter with girls than with boys regarding their viewing control. On the other hand, Morley (1996) emphasizes that boys identify with the more "realistic" programs, while girls do so with fiction programs. Finally, Romero (2005) points out that boys see more programs related to news and sports and girls with soap operas and reports. A similar situation occurs with the study by Arango, Bringué and Sádaba (2010), who find gender differences when they explore Internet, mobile phone and video games consumption in teens. The authors note stereotyped differences, such as that women consume more social networks and men play more video games. Weiser (2004) also points out that boys use the internet for entertainment and pleasure, while girls use it more for interpersonal communication and as educational support.

Casero-Ripollés (2012) focuses on the news and detects a gender gap: boys consume more information than girls. Although it is not common, there is some work exclusively focused on gender differences linked to the media consumption of adolescents, such as Medrano, Aierbe and Orejudo (2009), which explores television consumption and detects differences in parental mediation and in television preferences. Teenagers girls face more family restrictions when it comes to television than boys, and consume more reality shows, gossip programs and talk shows.

The data from the cited studies alert us about the need to explore gender differences in media consumption to look for the causes of these differences and the possible solutions and actions to eradicate them.

METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the research is to analyze if there are gender differences in the media consumption of adolescents in Barcelona. Regarding specific objectives (SO), we investigated four specific media areas:

- OE1: Gender differences in relation to Internet consumption.

- OE2: Gender differences in relation to television consumption.

- OE3: Gender differences in relation to the consumption of serial fiction.

- OE4: Gender differences in relation to family consumption habits.

SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

The universe of the sample is constituted by adolescents of the city of Barcelona (Spain) between 14 and 19 years. The sample selected for this research –composed of third-year students of compulsory secondary education (ESO) (14/15 years old) and of first year of baccalaureate (16/17 years)[3]– was obtained through a "strategic or convenience sample" (Cea D'Ancona, 1996, Iguartua-Perosanz, 2006), since it sought the representation of all the neighborhoods and types of educational centers of Barcelona. It was

composed by a total of 787 secondary students. Based on a reliability test carried out by the statistical service of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, it has an accuracy of 3.5%.

To select the sample, we created a database with all schools and institutes of compulsory secondary education (ESO) and baccalaureate of Barcelona. The information for the elaboration of this database was extracted from the website of the Barcelona City Council[4]. These educational institutions were cataloged by city districts, the studies that were given (only ESO or also baccalaureate) and their type (private, concerted[5] or public). A total of 237 centers were counted, of which 16 were private, 152 concerted and 69 public. We agreed to administer the questionnaire in at least one institute or school in each district of Barcelona and also to try to represent the proportion of centers of each type that existed at that time in the city. To select institutes and schools, from the initial cataloging table, we made a new selection of centers with ESO and baccalaureate studies, leaving out those that only had one of the two studies. We intended that each procedure with an educational institution facilitated the administration of questionnaires to a class of third of ESO and one of first of baccalaureate. Once the list was structured, we reached out to the selected centers to administrate the questionnaires. The contacts with the centers were conducted in alphabetical order and by district. If it was not possible to formalize the procedure with the first institute of the list, we went to the next, and so on. Finally, the process was formalized with fifteen centers of Barcelona: one private, eight concerted and six publics[6]. The contacts and administration of the questionnaires were carried out during the academic year 2012 and 2013. Of the total number of students (787) who answered the questionnaire, 446 (56.7%) belonged to concerted centers, 255 (32, 4%) were public and 86 (10,9%) were private.

THE METHODOLOGICAL TOOL: THE SURVEY

We used a quantitative methodology, based on the descriptive survey. Once the objectives of the research and the study sample were defined, we designed the questionnaire. We used as an example models of questionnaire administered in previous researches such as that of Fedele (2011) and França (2001). The questionnaire was administered on paper to all students, because some centers did not have computer classrooms available. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: questions about habits of media consumption and questions about the habits of consumption of serial fiction. Following the objectives of the investigation, we intended to extract information on the following points:

- Internet consumption habits

- TV consumption habits

- TV content consumption preferences

- Serial fiction consumption preferences

- Preferences of consumption of serial fiction plots

- Family attitudes towards adolescents' TV consumption

The questionnaire combined closed-ended and open-ended questions. We considered necessary to include open-ended questions because they provide crucial information for the research. Most of the open questions were cataloged after the adolescents' own responses. Regarding closed questions, apart from identifying questions (date and place of birth, gender, etc.), most of the questionnaire was created from multiple-choice dichotomous questions and some from self-applied five-point Likert scales, based on the degree of agreement and frequency. In this case, these are four-point scales, since we eliminated the medium option (Corbetta, 2003) to prevent adolescents from selecting it.

The pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted at the Joan Mercader Secondary Education Institute in Igualada in January 2012. The test was done exactly the same as the administration of the definitive questionnaires in order to be able to observe the adolescents' attitude towards the questionnaire, the doubts that emerge, etc. We administrated 46 pilot questionnaires. The data were processed in a SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) statistical software database. From the pilot test some points of the questionnaire were restructured and we proceeded to the final application.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Once the final questionnaires were administered, we created a database in SPSS for its statistical treatment. Data were entered manually by the end of 2013 and early 2014.

We conducted a descriptive univariate and bivariate analysis, adopting the significance level of 0.05. We used frequency tables for the descriptive univariate analysis and contingency tables for the bivariate analysis. Since in the bivariate analysis we only deal with qualitative variables, we have made contingency tables and the Khi-square test. The statistical analysis of the data has been reviewed by the statistics service of the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

RESULTS[7]

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

As noted above, the sample consists of a total of 787 students from 15 secondary education centers in the city of Barcelona. The centers selected for the analysis are located in the 10 districts of Barcelona, therefore, all areas of the city are represented: Ciutat Vella (6.1%, N=48), Eixample (22.9%, N=180), Gràcia (8.0%; N=63), Horta-Guinardó (11.6%; N=91), Les Corts (7.2%; N=57), Nou Barris (5.0%; N=39), Sant Andreu (7.1%; N=56), Sant Martí (6.9%; N=54), Sants-Montjuïc (6.9%; N=54) and Sarrià-Sant Gervasi (18.4%; N=145). The highest percentage of respondents was born in Barcelona (75.8%, N=592) and a low percentage in the rest of Catalonia (3.5%, N=27) or Spain (2.0%, N=16). Those born in South America (9.7%, N=76) and Asia (5.2%, N=41) are also an important percentage. The rest was born in other continents (3.7%, N=29).

There is a slight difference in the gender distribution of respondents. 51.5% (N=401) were men and 48.5% (N=377) were women. These data are very similar to those of the National Institute of Statistics referring to the population by gender and age group (15 to 19 years) of the province of Barcelona at the moment of the questionnaire: 51.34% are men and 48.66% women.

As for the academic course, it is necessary to emphasize that the questionnaire was only administered to classes of third of ESO and of first of baccalaureate; therefore, the sample is distributed between these two courses: 45.4% (N=357) of third year of ESO and 54.6% (N=430) of first year of baccalaureate. The average age is 15.59 and the median, 16.

Finally, regarding the studies of the parents of the respondents, the largest percentage had university studies: 56.3% (N=422) in the case of the mothers and 51.5% (N=381) in that of the fathers. A high percentage have secondary education: 35% (N= 262) in the case of the mothers and 37% (N=274) in the case of the fathers. The percentage with primary studies or no studies is low in both cases: 8.7% (N=65) of the mothers and 11.5% (N=85) of the fathers.

INTERNET CONSUMPTION HABITS

We asked the adolescents of Barcelona if they used the Internet normally and what for they used to use it. 99.2% of the respondents answered that they do use it, compared to 0.8% who do not. Adolescents usually use the Internet "to use social networks" (90.9%), "to listen to music" (76.6%), "for class work" (75%), "to watch videos (series, Youtube, etc.)" (70.9%), "for information (news, current affairs, etc.)" (38.4%) and "to play" (31.4%). A very low percentage claims to give other uses (7.5%). And they cite some examples: "shopping", "porno", among others.

The interesting aspect of these data is that, when performing the bivariate analysis, we observed significant gender differences among adolescents regarding their use of the Internet, as can be seen in table 1. Girls use it more than boys for "social networks" (χ^2=12,252, p=.000), "listening to music" (χ^2=14,874, p=.000) and "doing class work" (χ^2=16,774, p=.000). Boys use it more than girls to "play" (χ^2=63,679, p=.000), "inform themselves" (χ^2=6,039, p=.014) and "watch videos" (χ^2 =13,126, p=.000).

There is no single use of the Internet where there are no significant differences regarding the gender of the respondent. We observe that the uses that girls give to it is more social, since they use it mainly to be in contact with friends and/or classmates through social networks and, to a certain extent, for academic purposed, since, for them, it is more important the use they can make of the network for the class work and, therefore, of the studies. On the contrary, boys give it a more ludic use, since they access it more to "play" and watch "videos". And also more informative, as the data in the table indicates. These results make evident the importance that girls give to social relations and studies, in line with the stereotyped characteristics that place them in adolescence in the area of responsibility and personal relationships. On the contrary, the boys use them for ludic aspects and have an informative concern for the world around them.

| | | Gender | | |
		Male	Female	Total
Social networks*	Yes	347	354	701
		87.4%	94.7%	90.9%
	No	50	20	70
		12.6%	5.3%	9.1%
Music*	Yes	280	308	588
		70.5%	82.4%	76.3%
	No	117	66	183
		29.5%	17.6%	23.7%
Playing*	Yes	176	66	242
		44.3%	17.6%	31.4%
	No	221	308	529
		55.7%	82.4%	68.6%
Inform themselves**	Yes	169	127	296
		42.6%	34.0%	38.4%
	No	228	247	475
		57.4%	66.0%	61.6%
Watch videos*	Yes	304	242	546
		76.6%	64.7%	70.8%
	No	93	132	225
		23.4%	35.3%	29.2%
Class work*	Yes	273	305	578
		68.8%	81.6%	75.0%
	No	124	69	193
		31.2%	18.4%	25.0%

Table 1: contingency table of Internet use *
gender. With counts and percentages
GI=1; * *Significant difference p*=or<0.001;
** *Significant difference p*=0.014

Source: Own elaboration.

TV CONSUMPTION HABITS

Secondly, teenagers were asked if they used to consume television and how many hours a day they did it. In both cases we found a high consumption. Mostly, they do it between one and two hours a day (42.4%, N=328)[8]. There is also a percentage that watches television between two and three hours a day (23.9%, N=185) or more than 3 hours (10.3%, N=80). Only 23.3% (N=180) watches it less than an hour a day.

There are no gender differences in the hours of television consumption, but —as we will see below— there are differences in the television programs that they consume. The television programs that Barcelona adolescents are most familiar with are fiction series (83.3%) and films (66.7%), which are consumed by a percentage that exceeds 50%. Also noteworthy is a high percentage of respondents who often watch the news (40.9%), sports (33.8%) and reality shows (29.7%). The least consumed are gossip shows (3.1%), cultural programs (12.1%) and cartoons (19.0%), as can be seen in table 2.

At this point, it is necessary to point out again the observed gender differences. Girls use to consume reality shows (χ^2=45,715, *p*=.000), fiction series (χ^2=5,320, *p*=.021) and gossip shows (χ^2 º=9,350, *p*=.002) more than the boys. By contrast, sports (χ^2=152,547, *p*=.000) and cultural programs (χ^2=6,463, *p*=.011) are more consumed by boys. It should be noted that respondents who claimed to consume cultural programs were asked which they watched, and most of the answers referred to specific documentaries and programs, such as *Callejeros*, *Salvados* and *El Intermedio*. Most of the cultural programs they claim to consume are, in fact, news and entertaining programs that combine current news with humor.

Again, it is necessary to emphasize that the differences found evidence a gender stereotype that links girls to the world of gossip and the realm of personal life, and boys with the world of sports and culture. The programs most consumed by girls are reality shows and of gossip, which are characterized by focusing on the lives of a number of characters, famous or not. Therefore, the central plot revolves around aspects of the private life of these characters, of personal sphere. On the contrary, cultural programs seek to explore the cultural riches

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Series**	Yes	322	326	648
		80.3%	86.5%	83.3%
	No	79	51	130
		19.7%	13.5%	16.7%
News	Yes	172	146	318
		42.9%	38.7%	40.9%
	No	229	231	460
		57.1%	61.3%	59.1%
Films	Yes	269	250	519
		67.1%	66.3%	66.7%
	No	132	127	259
		32.9%	33.7%	33.3%
Contests	Yes	97	107	204
		24.2%	28.4%	26.2%
	No	304	270	574
		75.8%	71.6%	73.8%
Cartoons	Yes	77	71	148
		19.2%	18.8%	19.0%
	No	324	306	630
		80.8%	81.2%	81.0%
Gossip shows**	Yes	5	19	24
		1.2%	5.0%	3.1%
	No	396	358	754
		98.8%	95.0%	96.9%
Reality Shows*	Yes	76	155	231
		19.0%	41.1%	29.7%
	No	325	222	547
		81.0%	58.9%	70.3%
Sports*	Yes	217	46	263
		54.1%	12.2%	33.8%
	No	184	331	515
		45.9%	87.8%	66.2%
Cultural programs**	Yes	60	34	94
		15.0%	9.0%	12.1%
	No	341	343	684
		85.0%	91.0%	87.9%

Table 2: Contingency table television program *
gender. With counts and percentages
Gl =1; * *Significant difference p*=or <0.001;
** *Significant difference p*<0.03

Source: Own elaboration.

and traditions of the world around us. This, girls stay in the intimate and personal environment and boys, in the social life. In fact, it is significant that the boys claim to watch cultural programs and that these programs are more oriented to the present, something not done by girls. They feel closer to these types of programs but, in fact, the vast majority does not consume them and does not even know how to identify them.

HABITS OF CONSUMPTION OF SERIAL FICTION

In the space dedicated exclusively to fiction series, the adolescents were asked to indicate which series they followed, taking for granted that they would indicate those that they were watching at the time. We offered a list of series that had been made from television ratings rankings and the series named by the teenagers of the pilot test. Likewise, they were given the option of adding other series in an open response. The most frequently cited series are *The Simpsons* (49.7%, N=385), *La que se avecina* (49.4%, N=383) and *The Big Bang Theory* (38.8%, N=301), followed by *How I Met Your Mother* (34.6%, N=268), *Física o Química* (29.2%, N=224), *Aída* (27.5%, N=213), *Two and a half men* (27.4%, N=212), *Los Protegidos* (27.0%, N=208) and *Modern family* (26.3% and N=204). Finally appear *Aquí no hay quien viva* (25.3%, N=196) and *El barco* (22.7%, N=175). Table 3 shows the percentages of follow-up of the series that presented significant differences according to the gender of the adolescent.

In this case, again, we observe differences according to gender. The boys follow more than the girls *How I met your mother* (χ^2=10,426, *p*=.001), *The Big Bang Theory* (χ^2 =37,308, *p*=.000), *Two and a Half Men* (χ^2 =16,411, *p*=.000) and *The Simpsons* (χ^2 =8,501, *p*=.004). While girls follow more than boys *Física o Química* (χ^2 =39,339, *p*=.000), *Los Protegidos* (χ^2=39,796, *p*=.000) and *El barco* (χ^2=21,385, *p*=.000).

If we pay attention to the typologies of the different series that the boys and the girls of the sample have affirmed to follow, we observe that the four series more followed by boys are sitcoms. This typology of series is characterized by being structured in short chapters (about 25 minutes) that present funny, difficult and absurd situations. The characters that appear are few but well defined, and the plot focuses on how these characters solve situations (Castelló, 2005; Masanet, 2015). So, these are comic series that focus on humor. By contrast, the three series that girls follow more than

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
The Simpsons**	Yes	218	167	385
		54.8%	44.3%	49.7%
	No	180	210	390
		45.2%	55.7%	50.3%
How I meet your mother*	Yes	159	109	268
		39.9%	28.9%	34.6%
	No	239	268	507
		60.1%	71.1%	65.4%
Big Bang Theory*	Yes	196	105	301
		49.2%	27.9%	38.8%
	No	202	272	474
		50.8%	72.1%	61.2%
Two and a half men*	Yes	134	78	212
		33.7%	20.7%	27.4%
	No	264	299	563
		66.3%	79.3%	72.6%
Física o Química*	Yes	75	149	224
		19.1%	39.7%	29.2%
	No	317	226	543
		80.9%	60.3%	70.8%
Los protegidos*	Yes	68	140	208
		17.2%	37.4%	27.0%
	No	327	234	561
		82.8%	62.6%	73.0%
El barco*	Yes	63	112	175
		15.9%	29.9%	22.7%
	No	333	263	596
		84.1%	70.1%	77.3%
Otras*	Yes	159	227	386
		39.9%	60.2%	49.8%
	No	239	150	389
		60.1%	39.8%	50.2%

Table 3: contingency table fiction series * gender.
With counts and percentages
Gl = 1; * Significant difference p=or <0.001;
** Significant difference p<0.02

Source: Own elaboration.

boys are teen drama series. These are dramatic series that focus much of the plot in the life of a group of adolescents and/or young people. Most of the stories revolve around key aspects of adolescence, such as early love and sexual experiences, relationships with friends and parents, early experiences, identity-seeking, and so on (Masanet, Medina-Bravo & Ferrés, 2012). Thus, again we find a gender stereotype that links girls with dramatic and emotional products, those that focus on interpersonal relationships and, above all, love, and the boys with humor and comedy.

Respondents were also asked which themes of the ones treated in serial fictions interested them or attracted them more when choosing which series to watch. The objective was to determine the themes of the series' plots that adolescents are most looking for. "The relationship of young people with friends" (62.9%) and "love and/or sexual relationships" (54.4%) obtained the highest percentage, followed by "the party (dilemmas with alcohol, drugs, etc.)" (36.7%),"studies"(11.2%) and "work (labor issues)" (10.2%), as can be seen in table 4.

In this case, we again observe significant differences associated with the gender of the respondents. Girls are attracted more than boys to plots on "love and/or sexual relationships" (χ^2=38,727, p=.000), "relationships with friends" (χ^2=28,295, p=.000), and "relationships with parents" (χ^2=13,191, p=.000). On the contrary, boys are attracted more to "other" plots (χ^2=17,268, p=.000). When we asked which are the other plots they like best, most of the answers are "humor", "comedy", "police themes" and "action". Again, we observe that the data follow the gender stereotypes that place the girls on the more emotional, sentimental and relational levels, and the boys on the more rational level or, at least, far from the emotional sphere. As we have already observed throughout the text, the girls come back to identify themselves with the topics centered in interpersonal relations, be it relations with friends, parents or couple. Relationships are what interests them of the series. On the contrary, boys affirm to prefer other topics and they indicate mainly the humor, the comedy and the action. Boys are not linked to emotional spheres, they are more attracted to humor and action, in line with gender stereotypes that keep boys distant from the more sentimental spheres.

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Party (alcohol. drugs. etc.)	Sí	149	129	278
		38.5%	34.9%	36.7%
	No	238	241	479
		61.5%	65.1%	63.3%
Relationships with parents*	Sí	67	105	172
		17.3%	28.4%	22.7%
	No	320	265	585
		82.7%	71.6%	77.3%
Studies	Sí	42	43	85
		10.9%	11.6%	11.2%
	No	345	327	672
		89.1%	88.4%	88.8%
Relationships with friends*	Sí	208	268	476
		53.7%	72.4%	62.9%
	No	179	102	281
		46.3%	27.6%	37.1%
Work (labor issues)	Sí	47	30	77
		12.1%	8.1%	10.2%
	No	340	340	680
		87.9%	91.9%	89.8%
Love and/ or sexual relationships*	Sí	168	244	412
		43.4%	65.9%	54.4%
	No	219	126	345
		56.6%	34.1%	45.6%
Others*	Sí	104	54	158
		26.9%	14.6%	20.9%
	No	283	316	599
		73.1%	85.4%	79.1%

Table 4: contingency table plots' themes *
gender. With recounts and percentages.
*Gl =1; * Significant difference p<0.001*

Source: Own Creation.

Finally, also in relation to the fiction series, respondents were asked if they believed that some series such as *Física o Química* reflect reality. Most respondents responded "quite often" (39.8%, N=302), 33.5% (N=254) responded "rarely" and 19.4% (N=147), "practically never". Only 7.5% (N=55) responded "practically always".

As in the previous cases, we find differences according to the gender of the respondents. The girls point out more than the boys that the series reflect reality "quite often", while the boys point out more "practically never" (χ^2=8,247, *p*=.041). 44.5% (N=165) of the girls chose the option "quite often", while the boys chose it 35.4% (N=137). In contrast, 22.5% (N=87) of the boys scored the "practically never" option and only 16.2% (N=60) of the girls marked this option. Considering the previous answers, in which we observed that girls consume more adolescents' drama series and the guys more sitcoms, we should not be surprised about this gender-related difference. The series that the girls consume more are characterized by presenting plots focused on the dilemmas and problems of the adolescent and young stage, such as the search for identity, first love or first experiences with drugs, among others. These are very close to the stage of life that they are living and that can help them in the construction of their own identity; therefore, it can be seen as a stronger reflection of reality. On the contrary, boys affirmed to follow more sitcoms centered in comic situations that hardly will make reference to moments lived by adolescents and, therefore, are more distant of the reality that they live at the moment.

FAMILY HABITS OF TELEVISION CONSUMPTION

Finally, we dedicated a space of the questionnaire to the families' habits of consumption of television. It was intended to explore the limits or not that the families put to the adolescents in relation to the hours of consumption of television and of the programs broadcasted. In general, we observed that families leave adolescents free to watch as much television as they want (50.4%, N=386) and the programs they want (71.0%, N=547).

Curiously, the boys interviewed get to watch more than girls "as much television as they want" (χ^2=4,991, *p*=.025) and "the programs they want" (χ^2=14,528,

p=.000). 54.3% (N=215) of the boys can watch as much television as they want, compared to 46.2% (N=171) of the girls. The situation is repeated when we talk about the programs. 77.1% (N=306) of the boys can watch the programs they want, compared to 64.6% (N=241) of the girls. These data indicate that boys have fewer barriers than girls when it comes to television, because girls are less allowed to watch television and they can watch fewer programs. It is evident, therefore, that fathers and mothers have a tendency to protect girls more than boys against television representations and, therefore, it can be said that they see them as more vulnerable. Again, the data refer to gender stereotypes related to the need for protection and control of the girl, given her condition of "vulnerability", a condition that is granted for the simple fact of being a girl. It is understood that she is more vulnerable and should be controlled more than the boy. This leads us to an inequality in the media access that adolescents of Barcelona may have, as they find themselves with more difficulties and barriers when making their media consumption.

It is also important to devote space to the programs that normally they are not allow to watch. Respondents who said they were not allowed to watch all television programs were asked to say which ones were banned at home. Most respondents indicated reality shows and gossip shows, and provided some concrete examples such as *Gandia Shore* and *Sálvame*. There were also many respondents who stated that they "do not let them see programs that contain sex and/or violence and/or drugs" or that are "for over 18 years". A minority were some responses such as "those broadcasted late" or "those who conflict with other programs that the family wants to see", among others.

CONCLUSIONS

Research data indicate that, in fact, gender differences persist in adolescents. Regarding the Internet, girls use it more focused on relational aspects (social networks) and boys in ludic and informative aspects. These data coincide with those of previous research, such as that of Arango, Bringué and Sádaba (2010), Casero-Ripollés (2012) and Weiser (2005), where girls were already linked with social networks and boys with video games and the news.

In the consumptions of television there are also differences: girls watch more reality shows, gossip shows and series of fiction; and boys, sports and cultural programs. These data coincide with those of previous research (Medrano, Aierbe & Orejudo, 2009; Morley, 1996; Romero, 2005). In fact, in 1996, Morley already warned us that girls are more attracted to fiction programs and boys to the "realists", as could be the news. About a decade later, Medrano, Aierbe and Orejudo (2009) and Romero (2005) continued to emphasize these same differences; and in the present work, again, we observe that the differences persist.

Regarding serial fiction, the girls consume more dramatic fictions and the boys, more sitcoms. Likewise, girls feel closer to the plots about affective relationships, with friends, couples and parents, and the boys with those of action and humor. Finally, following the line of previous research (Greenberg, Rampoldi & Ver, 1998; Medrano, Aierbe & Orejudo, 2009), the study reveals that girls are more controlled by their parents in their media consumption than boys.

We observe that nearly two decades after the studies of Morley (1996) and Greenberg, Rampoldi and Ver (1998), the same gender differences among adolescents continue to occur. In fact, the data of the present paper questions other studies that affirm that the gender gap in relation to the Internet and other media is diminishing or not perceived among young people (Shaw & Gant, 2002) or, as indicated by the Mobile World Capital (2016), does not influence the digital divide and, therefore, would not require special treatment. The article focuses on the gender differences that persist in our youth in their media consumption and alerts us to the need to take measures. The results are very worrying, because they indicate that there is a stereotyped sphere of female media consumption and another stereotyped sphere of male media consumption. The consumption of girls is related to the gender stereotypes that link women with the most intimate, sentimental and emotional aspects, and the boys with action, violence and humor. At this point, we wonder why these gender stereotypes persist in the consumption of our younger generations. We could find an answer in the reflections of Elzo (2000). The author states that in the "complicated" stage of adolescence, some referents are needed for the construction of

oneself and that, often, these referents end up being stereotypes. Maybe our teenagers, in building their own identity, end up adhering to certain gender stereotypes that are, in fact, very present in our society and are very easy to identify and share.

This alerts us to the need to take preventive measures to try to eradicate gender differences among adolescents. One possible way to work these aspects in relation to media consumption would be media education. For some years now, research in this line has been conducted in the Spanish context. Masanet, Contreras and Ferrés (2013) alert us in their work on the media abilities of Spanish young people about the need for

a media education so that our adolescents and young people can relate to the media in an optimal way and consume it free of gender differences. This is essential in the current technological context where, as we have highlighted above, the media has acquired a socializing function of first order among adolescents. Therefore, we must start working to make media education a reality in both formal and informal educational contexts. We need a media education that emphasizes the emotional, values and attitudes aspects. We must grant adolescents with the necessary skills and tools so that their interaction with the media is mature, equal and autonomous.

FOOTNOTES

1. Doctoral thesis entitled Mediatic representation and adolescent interpretation of sexuality and the love relationship in serial fiction. Online in http://www.tdx.cat/handle/10803/292732 (09/12/2016)

2. Examples of news published during 2015 in *El País*, *El Mundo* or *El Periódico* on the growth of gender violence among adolescents and young people, the dangers of the myths of romantic love among young people, etc.: http://politica. elpais.com/politica/2015/02/12/actualidad/1423769092_780948.html (09/12/2016); http://www.elmundo.es/ opinion/2015/03/30/5519a585ca4741d64a8b456b.html (09/12/2016); http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/ sociedad/los-jovenes-son-mas-machistas-que-sus-padres-control-pareja-3887918 (09/12/2016)

3. In the Spanish context, the pre-university education system is structured in compulsory secondary education (ESO) and baccalaureate, which is non-compulsory secondary education, after ESO.

4. http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/Educacio (2012)

5. In the Catalan context there is a type of school that is "concerted" which is characterized by mixed funding: public and private.

6. List of educational institutions where the questionnaire was administered: in Sant Martí in the Institut Joan Manuel Zafra (public - 54 questionnaires - 6.9%); in Nou Barris at IES Pablo Ruiz Picasso (public - 39 c. - 5.0%); in Eixample in School Sagrat Cor-Diputació (concerted - 60 c. - 7.6%); in Escola Estonnac Barcelona (concerted - 67 c. - 8.5%); and IES Jaume Balmes (public - 53 c. - 6.7%); in Horta-Guinardó in Escola Castro de Peña (concerted - 31 c. - 3.9%) and in Institut Francisco de Goya (public - 60 c. - 7.6%); in Sants-Montjuïc in the Institut Consell de Cent (Public - 54 c. - 6.9%); in Ciutat Vella at Institut Milà i Fontanals (public - 48 c. - 6.1%); in Sarrià-Sant Gervasi in Escola Betània-Patmos (concerted - 59 c. - 7.5%), in Escola Augusta (concerted - 47 c. - 6.0%) and in Seph Tres Torres (private - 39 c. 5.0%); in Les Corts at the Maristes Sants-Les Corts School (concerted - 57 c. - 7.2%); in Gràcia in Escola Sant Josep Teresines (concerted - 63 c. - 8%); in Sant Andreu in Escola Jesús-Maria (concerted - 56 c. - 7.1%).

7. Calculations have been made on the total responses. In the questions in which the respondents did not mark any option, they were considered lost answers and were not included in the percentage. Only in cases where they marked DK/NR have been included as such in the results.

8. Of the mediaadicts, TV adicts are the most abundant, 33% of the population, according to data from fundacc: http:// www.fundacc.org/docroot/fundacc/pdf/dieta_intensitat.pdf (07/05/2013)

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