

Demographic trends and the presence of the elderly in Polish press advertising in 2012 and 2016 – a comparative study

Trendy demograficzne a obecność starszych ludzi w reklamie prasowej w Polsce w 2012 i 2016 roku – analiza porównawcza

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Wprowadzenie. Rozwinięte społeczeństwa Europy starzeją się, a zatem można by oczekiwać, że reklama, o której mówi się, że nie tylko kształtuje, ale i odzwierciedla rzeczywistość, będzie uwzględniać rosnącą populację osób starszych zarówno w roli nadawców, jak i odbiorców komunikatów reklamowych.

Cel. Celem pracy było zidentyfikowanie różnic jakościowych i ilościowych pomiędzy reklamami prasowymi adresowanymi do osób starszych, jak również prezentującymi osoby starsze, które ukazały się w wybranej polskiej prasie w roku 2012 i 2016. Badanie oparte jest na hipotezie, która mówi, że proporcja tych reklam, odzwierciedla rosnącą tendencję starzejącej się populacji Polaków.

Materiał i metoda. Materiał badawczy do analizy jakościowo-ilościowej stanowił korpus wybranych reklam z polskiej prasy skierowanej do różnorodnych grup docelowych z roku 2012 oraz 2016. Analizie poddano kategorie ilościowe, a także jakościowe, np. rodzaje produktów zaprojektowane z myślą o potrzebach osób starszych (odpowiadające na potrzeby osób starszych).

Wyniki. W 2012 r. liczba reklam w analizowanych magazynach wyniosła 797, z czego tylko 13 przedstawiało osoby starsze. Cztery lata później, łączna liczba wzrosła do 852, z czego jedynie tylko 8 ukazywało osoby starsze. W 2012 r. produkty reklamowane przez osoby starsze obejmowały głównie kosmetyki, usługi bankowe oraz suplementy diety, natomiast w 2016 r. prawie wyłącznie suplementy diety.

Wnioski. Badanie wykazało, że wbrew założeniom, zmalała liczba reklam ukazujących osoby starsze, a wachlarz produktów skierowanych do seniorów zmniejszył się. Seniorzy w reklamach prasowych są niedoreprezentowaną grupą wiekową, a zakres produktów adresowanych do osób starszych jest zmarginalizowany i obejmuje głównie sektor kosmetyczny oraz farmaceutyczny. Reklamy w polskiej prasie nie oddają tendencji demograficznych starzejącego się społeczeństwa.

Słowa kluczowe: starość, starzejące się społeczeństwo, reklama, reklama prasowa

Introduction. Developed societies in Europe are getting older, so it could be expected that advertising, which is claimed to both shape and reflect reality, will take into account the growing population of the elderly and increase their representation as senders as well as receivers of marketing messages.

Aim. To find quantitative and qualitative differences in the distribution of press advertisements directed at and presenting the elderly. The research was based on the hypothesis that the proportion of press advertisements printed in 2012 and 2016 presenting the elderly and products designed for the elderly reflects the rising tendency towards an ageing population in Poland.

Materials & Method. The press advertisements found in magazines targeted at different audiences in 2012 were collated with advertisements printed in the same titles four years later in terms of presenting the elderly and products designed for the elderly.

Results. In 2012 the number of all advertisements in the magazines was 797, out of which 13 presented the elderly. Four years later, the number increased to a total of 852, whereas the number of advertisements picturing the elderly decreased to 8. In 2012, the types of products advertised by the elderly included mainly cosmetics, banking services and dietary supplements, whereas in 2016 almost exclusively dietary supplements.

Conclusions. The research findings showed that the number of advertisements with seniors was, and the diversity of range of products for the elderly was limited. It is concluded that in the examined ads the elderly are an underrepresented age group and the range of products targeted at seniors is limited to the cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries. Overall, Polish press advertisements fail to reflect the trend of an ageing society.

Key words: old age, ageing society, advertising, press advertisements

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Introduction

In recent years, Europe has been undergoing fierce demographic changes. Demographically speak-

ing, modern societies are becoming ageing societies. According to the European Health Report 2012 – Charting the way to well-being by the WHO Regional

Office for Europe, the human population in Europe is getting increasingly older. It is predicted that 25% of the population will be over 65 years old by 2050. This demographic trend is determined by two factors. First of all, it results from people having fewer and fewer children, which in consequence leads to a dramatic decrease in the birth rate [1]. On top of that, the lifespan of modern humans is increasing [2]. Taking into account the above facts, in 2012 the Polish government introduced the Law on changing the act on pensions and disability pensions paid from the Social Insurance Fund (SIF) and some other acts (Ustawa z dnia 11 maja 2012 r. o zmianie ustawy o emeryturach i rentach z Funduszu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych oraz niektórych innych ustaw), according to which the retirement age, which used to be 60 years for women and 65 for men, was amended to 67 for both genders; in 2020 for men and 2040 for women. In 2016, however, the new government lowered the retirement ages to 60 and 65 respectively. This law will come into force on 1 October 2017.

In the light of the above, it could be expected that advertising, which is claimed to both shape and reflect reality, will take into account the growing population of the elderly and will entail the increase in their number as senders as well as receivers of marketing messages. The research is based on a hypothesis stating that the proportion of press advertisements printed in 2012 and 2016 presenting the elderly and products designed for the elderly should reflect the rising tendency of ageing population of Poles.

The study, including an investigation of qualitative and quantitative changes, gave interesting results which showed that, contrary to the assumptions, the number of advertisements with seniors was reduced, whereas the diversity of range of products for the elderly remained at the same level.

To begin with, an attempt to define 'old age' should be made in order to establish the age or state at which one can be classified as elderly. Old age as such finds itself in the field of interest of a number of scientific disciplines, and thus it may be examined from numerous perspectives.

The work of Klimczuk [3] offers 6 perspectives of approaching the problem of age such as biological, demographic, mental, social, economic, and legal. First, biological age can be established based on the criteria of one's fitness and vitality, e.g. changes in physical appearance, health problems, changes in the sphere of sexuality [4]. From a biological perspective, a human being undergoes three stages during their lifecycle: youth, maturity and old age, which are roughly determined by the ability to reproduce. The boundaries naturally vary among individuals, but theoretically they cover a stage respectively from birth to 14 years,

then 15-49 years, and finally 50 and more [2]. This classification is, to some extent, consistent with the medical perspective which says that in old age the body organs begin to deteriorate and the process of body cell regeneration starts to decline rapidly, whereas between 60 and 69 years of age there is a sudden rise in cases of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases [5]. The demographic perspective takes calendar age into consideration, focusing exclusively on the number of years which have passed since a person was born. The European Health Report 2012 (p. 6) states that the average life span has been changing dynamically over the last 30 years, and after 1980 it has increased by 5 years and reached 76 years in 2010. The mental approach concentrates on the fitness of intellectual functions, senses and the individual's adaptive abilities. In this context, according to Szatur-Jaworska [4], old age is linked with memory decline, decrease of attention span as well as unfavourable changes in logical and abstract thinking. Additionally, personal needs change as well, manifested for example in an increasing need to feel safe and useful. The social criteria of old age, in turn, concern the following aspects: how one is prepared for this stage of life; how one perceives earlier stages of one's life; or which social role one fulfills in the society, particularly within the family [6]. It is also widely accepted to consider an individual as elderly when the person becomes a grandparent, regardless of the actual calendar age. Economic and legal old age is strictly connected with the retirement age. From a psychological point of view, retirement is emotionally a difficult moment for a number of reasons. In the literature it is called 'retirement death' or 'retirement bankruptcy' as both mental and physical health may visibly decline as a result of a strong feeling of rejection and experiencing a new social reality without work [7].

Overall, it should be stressed that the literature offers a substantial number of definitions of old age, but all encompass the same essential elements such as physical and mental decline determined by the numbers of years. Presumably, this knowledge is a primary source of ideas in the process of the image creation of the elderly in advertising. Additionally, it enables enriching the marketing offer of goods directed to seniors.

Advertising can be generally defined as 'a process of persuasion aiming at informing, convincing and selling' [8]. Advertisements, as products of advertising, regardless of their types and functions, are constructed in accordance with a set of strictly established rules. Press advertisements consist of graphic verbal material combined with even more appealing iconic material, and as such can be regarded as a hybrid example of communication [9]. Due to the relatively short period of exposure, an advertising message has to be simple

and easy to decode. Stereotypes which commonly hold ideas about specific groups are helpful in this respect. According to Abbate, Boca, and Bocchiaro's definition, stereotypes contain 'the perceiver's knowledge, beliefs, and expectancies about some human social groups' [10]. Thanks to the cognitive structure, they are helpful in categorizing the world and orientation in the environment. As for their overtones, however, stereotypes can have both a positive and negative meaning. The pejorative aspect of the use of stereotypes is grounded on the premise that it 'denotes an oversimplified generalization that trivializes individual differences and complexities' [11]. Old age can be stereotypically presented in negative terms as a synonym of disability and health decline but also in positive terms, picturing the elderly as great, loving and caring grandparents who look after their grandchildren [12]. Hence, operating on stereotypes, ad makers need to show an awareness of and sensibility towards stereotypes and national values, as respect for common values and norms is fundamental in successful advertising [12].

According to the Iceberg Model of Culture, values belong to the hidden and most deeply rooted part of any culture [13]. At the end of the second millennium Jachnis and Trelak recognised the following values as traditional in Poland: family, the Polish home, statehood, Catholicism, heroism, sociability, generosity, chivalry, tolerance, openness to other cultures; values connected with the national character such as patriotism, bravery, traditionalism, love of freedom, messianism, romanticism, emotionality, optimism, individualism, and justice [14]. A few years later, Dyczewski largely confirmed the set of national values acknowledged by Poles [15]. The list comprised among others family, family life, home; sense of community; love of children; the important role of women; irrationalism; emotionality; romanticism; generosity; religiousness, and patriotism. Worth stressing is the fact that the top positions in both lists are occupied by the value of family. In this light, it could be expected that the picture of the elderly in press advertisements will present seniors as, for example, caring parents or grandparents in a family setting.

The marketing perspective, on the other hand, sees the elderly as a specific segment of consumers who can be evaluated in terms of purchasing power. Taking into account the fact that the average human life span increases, it can be assumed that the demographic shift of an ageing society will result in a shift of purchasing power from those who are 30-plus years old to those at least 50-plus years old. Especially as the extending of the average lifetime turned out to mean extending the period of old age. As for now, advertising efforts in Poland are generally focused on young and middle-aged people.

Only a few publications on the presence of the elderly in press advertisements stress that the presence of seniors in advertising is scarce. Previous studies showed that seniors are employed almost exclusively in ads for pharmaceutical and cosmetic products [12]. The reason is twofold. First, the elderly have failed to be identified as a marketing target. Seniors are perceived as those leading a non-consumerist lifestyle as a consequence of, among other things, low pensions, difficulties in keeping up with technological developments or the social role ascribed to them, which places them at the margins of social life. As a result, they fail to be identified as marketing targets and marketing strategies are aimed at younger consumers with the greatest purchasing potential. The second reason is connected with the nature of advertising messages as such. In order to generate communicative success, the image needs to be attractive [16] and advertising appeal must refer to a commonly desired attribute. Since youth is nowadays the most desired asset in highly developed societies [17] advertisements target young people by showing young people. Youth is associated above all with physical and mental fitness, good health and increased activity in different aspects of life. A stereotypical view of the elderly is the reverse, as 'in popular media, ageing is often portrayed as a process that should be stopped or controlled' [18]. Old age naturally brings associations with physical infirmity and age-related health changes, so elderly people are thought to possess less persuasive force than young ones. Since the overtone of an advertisement is intended to be optimistic, encouraging and attractive, old age and its symptoms are presented as things which should be either avoided or at least masked.

Nevertheless, age, which due to stereotypes and misrepresentation in the media can be interpreted as a discriminating factor in the majority of types of advertisements, may prove neutral or even beneficial in celebrity endorsement. The marketing strategy called celebrity endorsement is one of the most commonly employed types of promotion as it generates much publicity and attention. It consists of showing famous people such as actresses, sportsmen, singers etc. expressing a favourable opinion on a given product to the public. In the marketing literature, it is widely accepted to define a celebrity endorser as 'an individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement' [19]. This advertising strategy gained popularity because it 'offers proof from a credible source and because it is attention-getting when celebrity endorsers are used' [20]. In celebrity endorsement, the perception of elderly celebrities focuses on their attribute of being a celebrity, rather than on their being elderly. Their marketing value is

based on their recognisability and their age frequently becomes an additional asset [12].

Aim

There have been studies on the image of the elderly in Polish advertising [12, 21], but few studies have presented systematic research on the representation of seniors in press advertisements. This study investigates the qualitative and quantitative differences between advertisements available in the Polish press in 2012 and 2016. 2012 was the year when, as it was mentioned above, the new law increasing the retirement age in Poland was introduced, whereas in 2016 the new law brought the previous retirement age threshold back. It was assumed that the legal changes introduced in 2012 could have an influence on the further perceptions of old age.

The main objective underlying this research project was to examine press advertisements published in popular Polish women's magazines in terms of differences in the number of ads presenting the elderly, the number of ads presenting elderly celebrities, the number of ads for products promoted for the elderly by the elderly, and finally, the number of ads of universal products promoted by the elderly.

The specific research questions are as follows:

- RQ1 What is the percentage of press advertisements presenting the elderly in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ2 What is the percentage of press advertisements with elderly celebrities in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ2a What types of products are advertised by elderly celebrities in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ3 What is the percentage of advertisements for age-related products promoted by the elderly in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ3a What types of age-related products are advertised by the elderly in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ4 What is the percentage of advertisements for universal products promoted by the elderly in 2012 and 2016?
- RQ4a What types of universal products are advertised by the elderly in 2012 and 2016?

The following hypothesis is proposed: the demographic change of ageing in the human population is reflected in press advertisements and, as a result, in 2016 there will be more advertisements both presenting and directed at the elderly than in 2012.

Materials and method

This study was conducted following a quantitative as well as qualitative research methodology. The source of data collection consisted of advertisements from international and national magazines available

in Poland and printed in Polish. In order to collect the necessary data a set of up-to-date issues (May 2016) of magazines for men and women were examined against the same titles from May 2012. Advertisements representing social campaigns were not taken into consideration, due to the fact that their nature frequently makes them shocking or provocative.

Three categories of magazines directed at different female target audiences were represented by the five most popular titles (presented in alphabetical order):

- how-to magazines for women taking care of their houses and families (housewives): *Dobre Rady*, *Kobieta i Życie*, *Olivia*, *Poradnik Domowy*, *Świat Kobiety*;
- glossy women's magazines: *Elle*, *Pani*, *Twój Styl*, *Wysokie Obcasy*, *Zwierciadło*;
- gossip magazines: *Flesz*, *Show*, *Twoje Imperium*, *Świat i Ludzie*, *Życie na Gorąco*.

Similarly, three categories of magazines targeted at men were represented by the five most popular titles (presented in alphabetical order):

- magazines on politics: *Forum*, *Newsweek*, *Polityka*, *Przekrój*, *Wprost*;
- glossy men's magazines: *CKM*, *Logo*, *Male Men/LOGO*^{1/}, *Maxim/Men's Health*^{1/}, *Playboy*;
- automotive magazines: *Automoto*, *Auto Świat*, *Motor*, *Top Gear*, *V12/Auto Motor i Sport*^{2/}.

In order to establish the type of press purchased mostly by the elderly, the author of this research consulted a newsagent. The newsagent's observation was that seniors' purchasing behaviour is determined by the financial aspect, as they are unwilling to spend more than 2 PLN ($\approx 0,5$ €) per title. Therefore, they buy TV magazines, where gossip and recipes are also included, and the price oscillates around 2 PLN.

As a result, it was decided to add the category of TV magazines to the study. The category comprised the five most popular titles (presented in alphabetical order): TV magazines: *Kurier TV*, *Tele Tydzień*, *Tele Świat*, *To & Owo TV*, *Super TV*.

In order to identify an elderly person, the most stereotypical features of physical appearance were adopted as the leading criteria: grey hair and/or visible wrinkles. With advertisements presenting elderly celebrities, an additional criterion of being over 50 years old was adopted.

^{1/} Male Men magazine ceased to exist in 2015 in the Polish press market and for the sake of the study was replaced with LOGO magazine in 2016; Maxim magazine ceased to exist in 2013 and was replaced with Men's Health in 2016

^{2/} The automotive magazine V12 ceased to exist in 2013 and in the study was replaced with Auto Motor i Sport in 2016

Results

Both in 2012 and 2016 the study covered 35 press titles targeted at women and men with a total of 1,649 advertisements. In 2012 the number of all advertisements in the magazines was 797, out of which 13 presented the elderly. Four years later, the number increased to a total of 852, whereas the number of advertisements picturing the elderly decreased to 8 (Table I).

In the category of ads with elderly celebrities, there were 5 ads in 2012 against 1 ad in 2016 (Table I). In 2012, the advertised types of products represented two branches, namely cosmetics and banking services

Table I. Quantitative comparison of results from 2012 and 2016 based on research questions

Tabela I. Ilościowe zestawienie wyników badania z roku 2012 i 2016 w oparciu o pytania badawcze

	Number of advertisements /Liczba reklam	2012	2016
RQ1	picturing the elderly /przedstawiających osoby starsze	13 (1.6%)	8 (0.9%)
RQ2	picturing elderly celebrities /przedstawiających znane osoby starsze (celebrytów)	5	1
RQ3	where age-related products are promoted by unknown seniors /gdzie produkty związane z wiekiem są reklamowane przez osoby starsze	5	6
RQ4	where universal products are promoted by unknown seniors /gdzie uniwersalne produkty są reklamowane przez osoby starsze	3	1
	Total number of examined press advertisements /Łączna liczba analizowanych reklam	797 (100,0%)	852 (100,0%)

(Table II). Interestingly enough, female celebrities (an actress – the late Małgorzata Braunek, then aged 65, an actress – Krystyna Janda, then 60 and a singer Urszula Dudziak, then 69) promoted facial creams, whereas men (a music journalist and song writer – Wojciech Mann, then 64, a satirist and actor – Krzysztof Materna, then 64, and an actor and satirist – Janusz Rewiński, then 63) were employed to promote banks. The analysis in 2016 resulted in finding one ad for a wrinkle-reducing facial cream with an American actress Andie MacDowell (then 58 years old).

The category of age-related products advertised by the elderly comprised 5 ads in 2012 against 6 ads in 2016 (Table I). In 2012 the following products were promoted: absorbent pants for those with bladder weakness; a dietary supplement for poor eye-sight; a dietary supplement for menopause symptoms; a painkilling gel for aching joints, and a set of herbal medicine products for fighting joint pains, gastric ulcer, hypertension and a whole range of age-related problems. The ads identified in 2016 brought similar results in terms of the types of products. These were dietary supplements for: weak joints; aching joints; poor eyesight and macular degeneration; tinnitus and hearing loss; hearing problems as well as weak hair (Table II).

There were 3 ads for universal products advertised by the elderly in 2012 against 1 in 2016 (Table I). In 2012, the elderly promoted a marriage bureau; tea, and a gold deposit; whereas in 2016 it was jewellery (Table II).

Table II. Qualitative comparison of results from 2012 and 2016 based on research questions

Tabela II. Jakościowe zestawienie wyników badania z roku 2012 i 2016 w oparciu o pytania badawcze

	Types of /Typy	2012	2016
RQ2a	products advertised by elderly celebrities /produkty reklamowane przez starszych celebrytów	– lifting facial cream 60+ /krem liftingujący do twarzy 60+ – facial cream 30+ /krem do twarzy 30+ – facial cream 65+ /krem do twarzy 65+ – banking services /usługi bankowe – bank /bank	– facial wrinkle-reducing cream/ krem redukujący zmarszczki
RQ3a	age-related products advertised by the elderly /produkty związane z wiekiem reklamowane przez osoby starsze	– absorbent pants for those with bladder weakness /chłonne majtki dla nietrzymających moczu – a dietary supplement for poor eye-sight /suplement diety wspomagający poprawne widzenie – a dietary supplement for menopause symptoms /suplement diety przeciw objawom menopauzy – a set of herbal medicine products for fighting joint pains, gastric ulcer, hypertension, and a whole range of age-related problems /mieszanka ziół pomagająca przy bólu stawów, wrzodach żołądka, nadciśnieniu i innych problemach zdrowotnych wynikających z podeszłego wieku – a dietary supplement for aching joints /suplement diety na bolesne stawy	– a dietary supplement for weak joints /suplement diety wspomagający stawy – a painkilling gel for aching joints /żel przeciwbólowy na bolące stawy – a dietary supplement for poor eyesight /suplement diety na słaby wzrok – a dietary supplement for tinnitus and hearing loss /suplement diety na szumy w uszach i stopniową utratę słuchu – a dietary supplement for hearing problems /suplement diety na problemy ze słuchem – a dietary supplement for weak hair /suplement diety na słabe włosy
RQ4a	universal products advertised by the elderly /produkty uniwersalne reklamowane przez osoby starsze	– a marriage bureau /biuro matrymonialne – tea /herbata – a gold deposit /depozyt złota	– jewellery /biżuteria

Discussion

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be stated that the elderly, though becoming an increasingly larger part of society, are inadequately portrayed in terms of quantity and quality in press advertisements. The number of press advertisements with elderly people both in 2012 and 2016 manifests an uneven distribution of images presenting people at different stages of life which fails to reflect the recent demographic changes resulting in the Polish nation getting older. The percentage of the elderly in Polish society is substantially higher than could be judged by their appearance in press advertisements, and this target group may feel neglected.

In the light of the above, on the other hand, it can be said that ads presenting elderly celebrities are relatively frequent. In 2012, they constituted over 38% of all ads presenting the elderly, however, in 2016, the number dropped to only 14% (Table II). The study shows that actors and actresses are the most commonly employed celebrities (80% of all celebrity-endorsed ads in 2012 and 100% in 2016). As far the gender of celebrities is concerned, there is a visible differentiation of assets. Women appear in the advertisements for exclusively beauty products, especially anti-ageing creams, which combat the symptoms of age, as if their physical appearance was their only asset, whereas men represent wisdom, experience and trust in the financial sector.

With regard to the types of products advertised by the elderly, the present study confirms the findings from previous research, which showed that the range of products advertised for the elderly was strongly limited to the pharmaceutical industry [12]. The key features characteristic for old age presented in the examined material stress a decline in physical fitness and health, as well as undesirable changes in physical appearance. In 2012, the diversity of advertised products directed at seniors was quite low. The types of products exclusively concerned health problems and included, for example, a dietary supplement fighting menopause symptoms, pain killers to reduce joint pains or absorbent pants for those with bladder weakness (Table II). Four years later the range of age-related products was even narrower and limited to dietary supplements fighting the regression in the functioning of sense organs and joints.

Although the segment of elderly consumers constitutes a significant part of purchasing power in Poland, in the range of age-related products, goods unrelated to health goods are rarely taken into account. In 2012, slightly over 38% of the examined ads concerned neutral products such as a marriage bureau, tea, and a gold deposit, targeted at different age groups (Table II). In two out of three ads, there was a picture

of an elderly couple enjoying their time together. One of the couples was presented while riding a bike, laughing and spending time actively. In 2016, the number of ads for universal products advertised by the elderly was reduced to one. It promoted jewellery with a picture of an elderly lady in the company of her daughter. The allusion to the mother-daughter relationship could be dictated by the fact that in Poland Mother's Day is celebrated on 26th of May.

It should be added that advertisements targeted at the elderly almost never include luxury or pleasure-giving goods. Although one of the main goals of advertising is to invoke desire, aspiration, to create a need, it may be noticed that in the case of the elderly, advertisements do not create new needs but only respond to the existing ones. The magazines from 2012 did not include any ads for products such as travel, perfumes, jewellery, or designer clothes etc., which would either target or present the oldest generation.

In the light of the statement that advertising not only reflects but also shapes reality, advertisements may be said to impose an image of the elderly, the way the elderly are perceived by younger people and by themselves as well. The findings of this research potentially exhibit an alarming tendency to fail to promote attitudes supporting ageing. The message sent in press advertisements is that ageing becomes a source of suffering and physical regression, while not being referred to in terms of mental resources or life experience. As a consequence, the elderly are perceived as a marginal part of society, being an object of indirect discrimination by exclusion from social consciousness and just treatment.

Another interesting observation is that the examined press advertisements are generally more women-oriented and this tendency is increasing. In 2012, one could notice the predominance of female celebrities and female seniors, as 5 out of 13 advertisements presented an elderly man. Two of the ads showed a man in the company of a woman, whereas one in the company of another man. In 2016, none of the examined ads featured a man. This observation gives grounds for further studies focused on the gender representation of the elderly in advertising.

Conclusions

First of all, on the basis of the above analysis, it should be stated that the main hypothesis of the study was rejected. The research led to the formulation of the following conclusions concerning qualitative and quantitative changes in advertisements printed in the Polish press in 2012 and 2016:

- the population of the elderly is underrepresented in ads, as their presence is marginalized;

- there is a sharp decrease in the number of ads with elderly celebrities;
- the percentage of ads for age-related products promoted by the elderly is on the same level, whereas the percentage of ads for universal products promoted by the elderly has dropped significantly;
- the range of products directed at the elderly is limited mostly to the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries;
- the offer of luxury or pleasure-giving goods targeted at the elderly is hardly present in the press;
- the examined ads perpetuate the stereotype of the senior who suffers from poor health;
- Polish press advertisements fail to reflect the trend of an ageing society.

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