



## ESTRATEGIAS DE COMUNICACIÓN PUBLICITARIA PARA EL TRATAMIENTO Y PREVENCIÓN DEL CÁNCER. CASO ESPAÑOL

### Advertising communication strategies for cancer treatment and prevention. Spanish case

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#### Resumen

Muchas son las marcas que hacen uso de la publicidad emocional para dirigirse a su público objetivo. Este método se ha convertido en una forma eficiente de conquistar la mente de los consumidores ante la saturación informativa actual, pero también porque les permite mostrar situaciones de la vida cotidiana con las cuales las personas se pueden llegar a sentir identificadas y de esta forma establecer una relación más profunda.

Este trabajo analiza el impacto y la efectividad en el público español de los anuncios de enfermedades cancerígenas cuando hacen uso de las distintas estrategias de la publicidad emocional. Para ello se ha llevado a cabo una revisión bibliográfica de la evolución de la publicidad desde sus inicios y se ha aplicado un análisis del discurso de una serie de spots de organizaciones españolas que luchan contra el cáncer. Finalmente se ha utilizado la técnica de la entrevista semiestructurada cualitativa como base, además de una encuesta masiva. Los resultados apuntan a una eficacia mayor en quienes han tenido una relación más cercana con la enfermedad además de observarse la necesidad un contenido más realista e informativo para con la población de estudio. Como conclusiones se extrae que existe posibilidad de empatizar con las receptoras cuando en los mensajes se combinan estrategias racionales y emocionales.

#### Palabras clave:

Cáncer, Comunicación, Emocional, Estrategia, Persuasión, Publicidad, Social.

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## Abstract

Many brands make use of emotional advertising to address their target audience. This method has become an efficient way to conquer the minds of consumers in the face of the current information saturation, but also because it allows them to show situations from everyday life with which people can identify and thus establish a deeper relationship.

This study analyses the impact and effectiveness of cancer disease advertisements on the Spanish public when they make use of different emotional advertising strategies. To this end, a bibliographical review of the evolution of advertising since its beginnings has been carried out and a discourse analysis of a series of spots from Spanish organisations fighting against cancer has been applied. Finally, the qualitative semi-structured interview technique was used as a basis, in addition to a mass survey. The results point to a greater effectiveness in those who have had a closer relationship with the disease, as well as the need for a more realistic and informative content for the study population. The conclusions are that there is a possibility of empathising with the recipients when rational and emotional strategies are combined in the messages.

## Keywords:

Cancer, Communication, Emotional, Strategy, Persuasion, Advertising, Social.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advances in the fields of medicine and communication offer enormous potential to influence the trajectory of certain diseases, including cancer (Okpoko, 2019; Cara *et al.*, 2018). This occurs throughout the different phases: prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, survival or control (Samuel *et al.*, 2020). Communication thus plays a fundamental role (Cambronero and Gómez, 2021), providing information targeted to selected audiences and adapted to their particular needs (Gage-Bouchard *et al.*, 2018). However, consumers of health information often express difficulties in knowing which sources to trust and which recommendations to follow (Saavedra *et al.*, 2019).

The context in which the consumer is exposed to information must be taken into account. This is not only due to the number of channels and frequency of impacts received, with the resulting saturation (Sánchez-Franco, 1999) or the difficulty of discriminating real health information from erroneous information due to lack of knowledge of the discipline (Wang *et al.*, 2019), but also due to the fact that health-related information is presented as part of a broader information environment that includes information that may or may not be related to health (Cofré, 2020; Kontos and Viswanath, 2011). It is in these noisy conditions that direct-to-consumer advertising offers a vehicle that can provide important information in a concise and purposeful manner. In turn, this can allow advertising to have a huge impact on its target audience, reaching consumers directly with a broad and open predisposition (Silverman *et al.*, 2016).

Both support for and criticism of advertising seem to be based on the assumption that advertisements get uniform exposure, attention, processing and recall among the target audience, following the AIDA learning model (Gutiérrez, 2019). Along these lines, given that there may be differential ability among social groups to process information, it is important to understand the implications of how advertising information is processed once exposure occurs and its consequences.

Several studies already suggested in the early 21st century that advertising information provided in print and through television is too difficult and complex for large parts of the population to read and understand (Kaphingst *et al.*, 2005; Kaphingst *et al.*, 2004; Chao, 2005). The same has been updated by studies conducted by González *et al.* (2021) or Peterson *et al.* (2021). In addition, the last decade has seen an increased reliance on the internet to provide the necessary educational information to patients about health products or health communication. Research shows that consumers are increasingly turning to the internet, as opposed to other types of channels, media or media (García-Mirón and Torres-Romay, 2020).

In parallel, the evolution of the persuasive market has caused advertising communication to develop and increase its presence (Mihaela *et al.*, 2022), with media saturation that is more than evident (Perlado-Lamo, 2006). This has led to a receiver tired of so much information (Sánchez-Franco, 1999) and has made it necessary to search for new ways to attract the attention of consumers (Heath, 2012), which is causing efforts and attention to be redirected and reoriented towards processes and the exploration of new strategies to manage the search for attention and attract targets through renewed forms of persuasion (Jiménez-Marín *et al.*, 2018). Thus, persuasive or convincing argumentation appeared (García, 2008 and Lozano, 2012). Advertising has had to offer not only rational arguments, but also emotional ones (Haba, 2018), seeking to impact the public through feelings in order to achieve the effectiveness of the process, understanding this as the achievement of the objectives by the advertiser. Among its goals is the fact of capturing the attention of the receiver, accessing their mind, achieving the desired effects, persuading the consumer and finally modifying their behaviour (Rodríguez *et al.*, 2010).

The search for new tools is necessary to attract an increasingly demanding public. And, with this, different strategies are appearing, in principle at odds with each other: emotional vs. rational (González-Oñate *et al.*, 2019). Thus, in contrast to authors who remain in the sphere of the rational (Haba, 2018), others, on the other hand, propose emotional persuasion as a response to the situation of advertising overabundance, through the use of ethical and truthful methods (Xifra, 2010). This therefore includes a new valid option. Along the same lines, researchers claim that if one wants to persuade, it is necessary to convince, and to achieve this it is essential to motivate, as advertising motivates the public to consume (Gómez-Nieto, 2017).

Through persuasion, reality is constructed in the mind of the receiver, because reality itself, as such, does not exist (Luxor, 2017). It is the campaigns that have to create that scenario; reality is what the mind perceives, i.e. we recompose what we are perceiving. This idea can be related to the philosophy of Kant (1977) who states that without sensibility nothing would be given. And this theory therefore supports the increased use of emotional advertising.

Along these lines, it can be affirmed that emotional advertising covers commitments, both real and symbolic; thus, the emotional strategy is placed at the service of brands to achieve an effective link with audiences (López-Vázquez, 2007). With this, the upward trend (Luxor, 2017) of brands using emotions as a strategic and tactical basis can be detected (Luxor, 2017).

Emotional advertising is based on the union of two components: cognitive and affective. The cognitive component refers to the perception already held about people suffering from cancer and also towards the disease itself; and the affective component is directed at feelings, referring to that something that can be aroused in a more sensitive and emotional public (Ceruelo and Gutiérrez, 2003).

But faced with the existing saturation, advertising persuasion is forced to look for other ways to reach the public and focuses on two: the rational way and the emotional way (Carrillo, 2017). The latter is the way in which authorities, organisations, manufacturers, brands, etc. transmit information through the communication of messages, but including some that are merely persuasive. The point is that, in order for messages to influence the recipients, a prior change in the recipient's thoughts or beliefs must take place (Moya, 1999). Only if this change takes place will it be possible to access the most irrational part of human behaviour, which is what advertisers pursue with this type of campaigns based on persuasion (Luxor, 2017), and this is the current dynamic. Therefore, all kinds of resources with a rational argumentative orientation are used to convince the receiver and incite changes in thoughts and behaviours, but then they turn to the emotional (Alcaide, 2014).

### **1.1. Cancer advertising in Spain**

There is a growing trend in the case of emotional advertising linked to social causes and objectives (Alvarado, 2010), which is also endorsed in the case of medical or health-related issues (González-Oñate *et al.*, 2019). In addition, in recent years, there has been an increase in the rate of cancer diagnosis and mortality due to such diagnosis, both nationally and internationally (SEOM, 2021). This disease has come to provoke certain emotions in today's society that have led to the creation of certain links with brands (Moorison *et al.*, 2019) that can determine the success of this type of advertising (López-Vázquez, 2007).

In this sense, the advertising of organisations that fight against cancerous diseases is, to say the least, significant, as the incidence of this disease is high. Although cancer mortality has been falling since the 1990s (Domenech-Climant *et al.*, 2021; Miñarro *et al.*, 2000), the incidence of the disease in its different typologies and specific variants, on the other hand, has been progressively increasing (Díaz, 2019).

From this arises the interest in investigating the way in which emotional advertising affects the public receiving spots made around this type of entities and specifically the campaigns of the José Carreras Foundation (hereinafter, FJC) and the Spanish Association Against Cancer (hereinafter, AECC). The selection of these two entities is due to the fact that they are two of the organisations that stand out at a national level for their work in the fight against cancer.

Advertising and social marketing campaigns, above all (Galiano-Coronil, 2021), in addition to informative and persuasive actions, have included in their planning various media and supports, the main ones being television and the Internet (Morrison *et al.*, 2019; Nosrati *et al.*, 2018). Television advertisements aim to induce the consumer to conduct an external search or seek additional information about the entity, while internet advertising aims to lead directly to the site to achieve campaign and entity objectives (Viswanath, 2005). In any case, the need for health information campaigns is evident, an issue that has been widely endorsed following the global pandemic resulting from covid-19 (Román-San-Miguel *et al.*, 2020), or even after the incursion into the field of prescription of non-health influencers (Jiménez-Marín *et al.*, 2021), in addition to the effect that social networks have been having on health communication and information (De Oliveira *et al.*, 2020; Vraga *et al.*, 2018).

However, there is hardly any scientific literature on studies that analyse cancer advertising in Spain or the influence of the media on cancer prevention or treatment in Spain.

This article therefore briefly outlines and describes the effects that cancer advertising can have on the consumer, focusing specifically on emotional advertising as a case for understanding the wider implications of cancer-related advertising. In this regard it is worth noting that the history of direct-to-consumer advertising of medicines coincides with the history of mass media advertising in the early 18th and 19th centuries (Del Castillo-Rodríguez and Enríquez-Fernández, 2021; Ojeda, 2020; Tovar, 2006), when advertisements for patent medicines accounted for almost 50% of newspaper advertising revenue in the early 20th century (Jiménez-Marín *et al.*, 2021; Almudéver and Camaño, 2021 and 2020; Gray, 2003).

In attempts to assess the overall health implications of cancer-related advertising, attention should be directed not only to the demands it places on the health system in reaching certain groups, but also to those who may be excluded by the use of this communication strategy, i.e.: family members, environment, at-risk population (Molyneux and Holton, 2015). And, in this sense, the effects of advertising and media vary according to population groups (Colomer and Aldebarán de Villasante, 2022). However, the current literature on general health advertising, as well as cancer-specific advertising, does not take into account these observed health disparities (Corredor-Lanas *et al.*, 2021). And, in general, as indicated, there is a very limited scientific theoretical framework as far as the Spanish case is concerned.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

The justification for this study is directly related to high-impact figures: in 2021, 277,234 people were diagnosed with cancer in Spain, the vast majority of them women, according to the Spanish Medical Oncology Society (hereinafter SEOM) and, in general, a notable increase in cancer detection is predicted, regardless of gender or age. In addition, despite the slight decrease mentioned above, death from cancer is one of the three main causes of death worldwide, according to the World Health Organisation itself, forming the so-called Triple C Triad: Heart, road, cancer. From these data arises the importance of the present study, which establishes the basis for the conjecture from which the main hypothesis is established:

HP: The advertising campaigns of organisations that fight cancer base their strategies on emotional advertising in order to capture the public's attention through their sensitivity and emotions such as sadness and happiness, because this allows them to establish a close and deep bond with the recipients, something that is not achieved with another type of advertising strategy such as rational advertising.

This hypothesis gives rise to a series of questions that are identified with the general objectives:

- O1: To understand the use of emotional advertising in advertisements for cancer diseases based on the concept of advertising effectiveness. In other words, in relation to the objectives established and those achieved by the entities once the advertising campaign has been broadcast.
- O2: To study in depth the impact that certain cancer disease advertisements have had on the Spanish population.
- O3: To find out the real effectiveness of emotional advertising campaigns linked to organisations supporting and fighting cancer.

Specific objectives:

SO1: Collect information on advertisements broadcast in the last five years by cancer organisations (AECC and FJC).

SO2: Evaluate the effectiveness and reach of these advertising campaigns.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out using a mixed methodology based on the concept of triangulation (Yin, 1989). Firstly, a qualitative technique of descriptive analysis of the spots and of the public's emotions when faced with this type of advertising campaign was used. Therefore, the discourse analysis of three campaigns in which the advertiser was the FJC and another three by the AECC was used. Both organisations coincide in that they dedicate their social and health work to the fight against cancer. In parallel, the need to collect information through interviews was also determined, since, as Ruiz (2007) states, the credibility of qualitative research is based on natural indicators that have been adapted to theories and approaches, consistent in terms of reflection and that are deeply represented in opinions that are clear from the context and the feelings of the people interviewed. Finally, a massive questionnaire (Martínez, 2002) was launched to collect the generalised opinion of the direct target audience (sufferers, survivors and those genetically predisposed through diagnosis) or indirect (family members, environment, context). A graphic summary can be seen in table 1:

**Table 1.** *Research methodology used*

	Technique	Corpus	Objectives
FASE 1	Discourse analysis	AECC – FJC Campaigns	O 1 SO1 & SO2
FASE 2	Interviews	Public (direct) and non-public	O 2 y 3 SO1 & SO2
FASE 3	Surveys	Direct and indirect audiences	O 2 y 3 SO1 & SO2

**Source:** *Own elaboration based on Jiménez-Marín et al. (2021)*

#### 3.1. Campaign analysis

For the discursive analysis of the sample, different items were used, including the perspective from which cancer is approached, the tone used in the messages and the main emotions conveyed. Therefore, one of the essential parameters is the presence of emotions in the discourse, as this is one of the variables we were interested in observing and analysing for the purpose of this research. Another, fundamental, is that the campaign was aimed at direct or indirect audiences (patients, survivors and those genetically predisposed through diagnosis; family members, environment and context, respectively), and not necessarily at the so-called non-audience (that which does not correspond to the direct or indirect audience).

- Ausonia – El valor de ser mujer (AECC)
- Saca pecho por ellas (AECC)

- Llámalo cáncer (AECC)
- El mejor anuncio del mundo (FJC)
- Imparables (FJC)
- Hazte socio (FJC)

The time frame of the sample is the last ten years. In the case of the FJC, every June it carries out a campaign around the week against leukaemia. Since 2015, it has been carrying out advertising campaigns every two years, and for this reason, in order to have a wider range of content, it has been decided to place the start of the sample in 2013. In the case of the AECC, this organisation constantly carries out campaigns with different objectives and without distinguishing between any specific type of cancer, and without having a specific periodicity.

### **3.2. In-depth interviews**

Six semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to create a closer relationship with the interviewees on a sample of six advertising spots, corresponding to the campaigns:

- Ausonia – El valor de ser mujer (AECC)
- Saca pecho por ellas (AECC)
- Llámalo cáncer (AECC)
- El mejor anuncio del mundo (FJC)
- Imparables (FJC)
- Hazte socio (FJC)

These six semi-structured interviews allowed us to establish a close relationship with the interviewees and to get to know their opinions and emotions about this type of advertising campaign related to cancer. The interviews were carried out by means of video calls, and during the interviews they were recorded and later transcribed. In order to maintain the qualitative nature of the interviews, the information was classified by means of a matrix of our own elaboration according to a series of categories defined and related to the objectives, as well as through the script with which they were carried out.

In order to select the sample, 50% of people were chosen who had some kind of relationship with cancer and 50% who did not suffer from it at the time (in this case not limited to women). This allowed different perspectives to be observed. It was also considered appropriate that the number of people chosen matched the number of spots in the sample.

### **3.3. Surveys**

As a last step, a multi-response questionnaire (Martínez, 2002) was carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns and the empathy of the population with them, as well as to deepen the impact and find out the real effectiveness of the campaigns.

The sample included, as in the case of the interviews, direct and indirect audiences (sufferers, survivors and those genetically predisposed through diagnosis; family members, environment and context, respectively). The survey was conducted using the Google Forms platform; the specific software SPSS was used for data extraction. The questionnaires were completed between 15 May

2022 and 15 June of the same year. A total of 527 questionnaires were filled in, of which 512 were valid. The questionnaire, composed of 14 closed multiple-choice questions, was structured on the basis of four thematic blocks (Sanz *et al.*, 2021):

Block 1: Respondent profile

Block 2: Relationship and knowledge about the disease

Block 3: Assessment of campaigns

The sample was selected according to the following criteria (Wang *et al.*, 2019):

- Direct audience: patients, survivors and those genetically predisposed through diagnosis.
- Indirect audiences: family members, environment and context

## 4. RESULTS

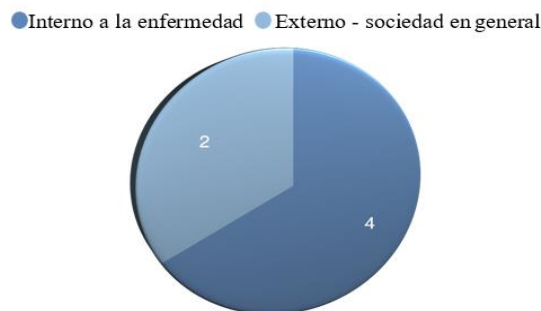
In general terms, the results of this research indicate that the use of emotions in the advertising campaigns of organisations dedicated to the fight against cancer is highly frequent, largely due not only to the fact that it is a trend in the field of communication, but also because the subject analysed is a health-related content, which justifies the increased use of emotionality, as Millones and Hernández (2020) and Vera (2010) have already pointed out. Emotions are used in a large number of campaigns with the aim of conquering and creating an impact on the audience, specifically the one studied.

### 4.1. The use of emotions from different strategies

Following the methodology employed, it can be concluded that there are not many differences in the discourse used by each of the entities studied as independent organisations, but rather the opposite. Thus, for example, there are notable similarities both in the objectives that both institutions set themselves with such communication and also in the emotions they use to capture the public's attention.

On the other hand, it can be concluded that the similarity of the campaigns is maintained, even though the advertising spots of both organisations do not always target the same audience. There is, therefore, a tendency towards the emotional, finding preference for these messages when they are aimed at patients and their families or contextual environment (internal public to society - direct), with this strategy being used to a lesser extent for society in general (external -indirect-).

**Figure 1.** *Target audience of the analysed advertising spots*





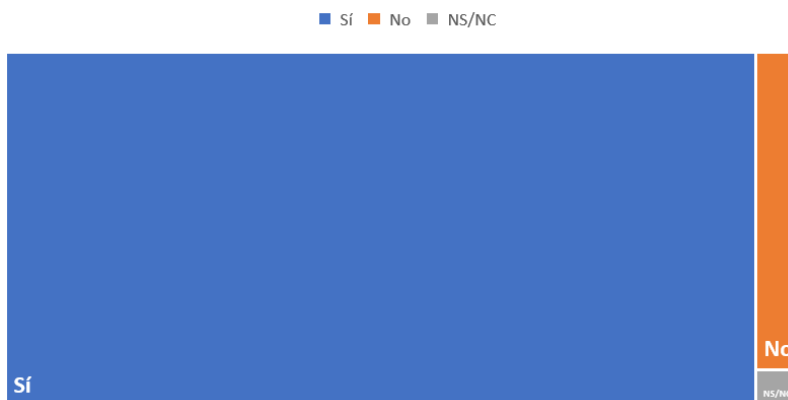
**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

These figures show that the entities analysed tend to be emotional and that for this type of advertising to have better results, it is necessary for the target audience to have a close relationship with cancer, and this determines the target audience for this type of advertising. This fact is reinforced by the contribution of the interviews carried out, as both coincide in that the most widely used is the presence of women who are directly or indirectly related to the disease, with the aim that this has an impact on the emotions of the recipients. It is even observable that the people who appear in the spots physically present features that are associated with the idea of suffering from cancer. Thus, for example, baldness, which is the effect of some treatments:

I think it is a way of showing the reality of people who receive chemotherapy and I think that it should not be hidden because you have to show sincerity. It's hard for me to say, but it makes me sad to see them either on a screen or in person, I feel a need to empathise because seeing a person without hair I associate it with the disease. (Interviewee 6)

In relation to the quantitative sample, and on the question of whether they are more affected by emotional campaigns, where patients are seen suffering, or objective and rational campaigns (presenting logical arguments), almost 95% of the respondents (94.34%, 483 people) answered yes, considering the concept of campaign effectiveness as synonymous with personal affection (Figure 2):

**Figure 2.** *Impact of emotional strategy in the campaigns of AECC and FCJ*



**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

Therefore, verbally or visually, the use of emotion is prioritised and addressed to an audience directly involved with it.

#### 4.2. Advertising as a tool to raise awareness

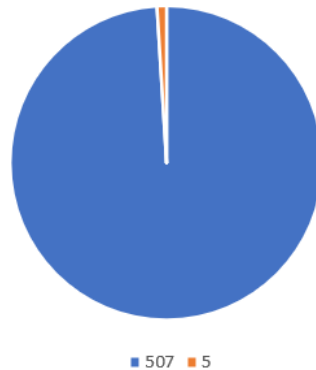
In relation to the tools, it can be concluded that the FJC seeks to raise awareness among the population, in the case of the campaigns analysed. It also urges society in general to collaborate financially in order to continue research projects and find a cure for leukaemia. To this end, it does not provide much information about the disease itself, but appeals to people's feelings. On the contrary, the AECC sends out a message that seeks, in addition to raising public awareness, to

provide information about the different services that the organisation offers to both patients and their families. One of the elements most used for this purpose is the patient and everything they experience, think and feel.

From this perspective, it can be stated that the attitude towards the advertisement is considered in a two-dimensional way, i.e. the mental construct is directed towards two components: the cognitive and the affective, towards the perception already held about people suffering from cancer and about the disease; and towards the feelings it generates.

When the respondents were asked about the training received through the campaigns, as well as the greater knowledge of the reality of the patients and their families, in addition to the disease itself, just over 99% (99.02%, 507 people) clearly stated that knowledge was greater once they had received the publicity impacts, as can be seen in figure 3.

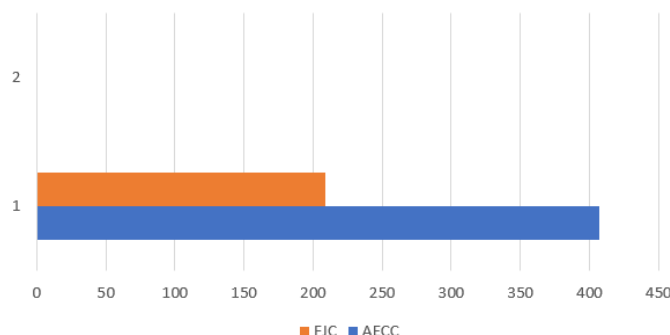
**Figure 3.** *Is awareness of cancer disease increasing after the impact of the AECC and FCJ campaigns shown?*



**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

Similarly, when asked whether the FCJ and AECC campaigns shown are intended to educate and/or provide information about the disease, as opposed to having an emotional impact, a large number of individuals (407, 79.45%) responded that the AECC campaigns were intended to educate on the issue raised; 40.82% (209) were of the same opinion in relation to the FJC campaigns shown (figure 4).

**Figure 4.** *Do you think that the campaigns shown by FCJ and AECC educate about the disease, respectively?*



**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

#### 4.3. Differences according to disease involvement

Another of the results that can be extracted from the analysis of the spots and the semi-structured interviews with the selected sample is that there is a clear contrast between the perception that is held depending on the degree of proximity to the disease or to people who suffer from it, differences both about the disease itself and in general in the way in which the advertising messages of the organisations that fight against cancer are perceived. Therefore, it can be affirmed that a person who has had a relationship with cancer shows more sensitivity towards the messages of the organisations and feels more identified and reflected. In the same way, it is verified that the main feelings that emerge in this audience are sadness and fear, emotions that are captured by the spectators and cause the objectives of these campaigns to be fulfilled.

According to the data provided by the interviews, these reactions are due to the fact that the recipients remember what they have experienced, this provokes empathy and, therefore, responds to the call of the advertising message in an efficient way, thus fulfilling its purpose: "The advertisements have informed me, but on the other hand I feel that they are trying to remind me that cancer exists and that it is something that you can still fight against and that you should continue to support if you have the means or possibilities" (Interviewee 5).

Another of the results of the research is that the people interviewed who have not had a relationship with cancer have a different perception. This difference stems from the fact that the ideas they have are based on what they have seen and not on what they have experienced. In this sense, their knowledge and feelings are based on what they see in films, series or what is presented in some media. This means that advertising has a different impact on them and that the message sent does not fully materialise. Some of the people interviewed who have had a relationship with the disease say that no matter how much an advertisement tells you what cancer is, it is not enough to explain it in its entirety: "They convey that cancer can happen to everyone, but not that it is a problem for everyone" (Interviewee 1).

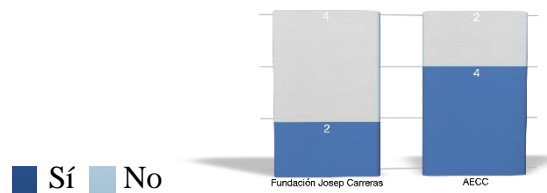
In fact, the contributions of two other interviewees are along the same lines:

I think that the fact that people appear giving their testimony in some way has made the message reach me more. It has been quite sad for me, but at the same time hopeful, knowing

that these people have already gone through it, that they have overcome cancer makes me believe that it is a treatable and not a fatal disease. (Interviewee 2)

The results would coincide with the statement made by Fonturbel (2012) where he establishes that emotions make it possible to achieve an affective bond with the public that is greater than the presentation of arguments, and that this bond is produced when the characteristics of the receiver are considered first and foremost. Likewise, it was observed during the research that not all the interviewees were aware of the existence of the organisations included in our research, which was significant given that they were the two most representative, although this observation was not one of our objectives.

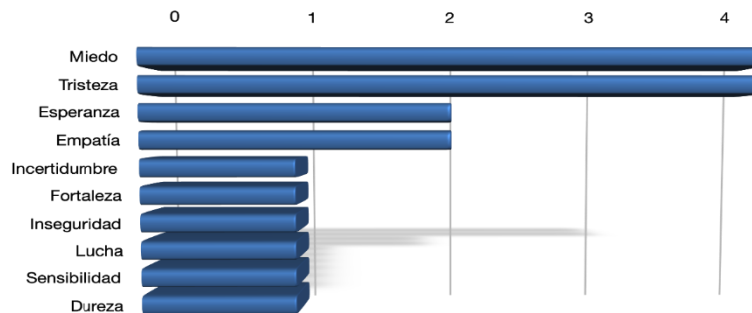
**Figure 5.** *Respondents' knowledge of the organisations broadcasting the spots*



**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

After measuring the emotional impact of the interviewees, asking them to describe the AECC and FJC advertising spots, the most predominant emotions were fear and sadness. These types of feelings help not only to empathise with the advertising message, but also, as they are events associated with emotions, they are more easily acquired and maintained for a longer period of time, proving to be more resistant to extinction (Sandi et al., 2001), as can be seen in figure 6:

**Figure 6.** *Description of the interviewees' spots.*



**Source:** *Own elaboration.*

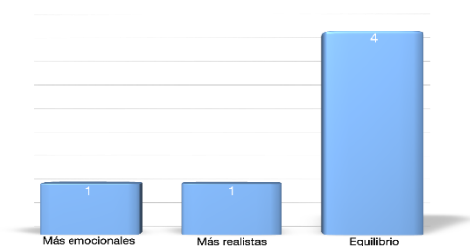
Thus, the degree of involvement with the disease determines the emotional reaction of the receiver and, therefore, the degree of fulfilment of the objectives of the advertising campaigns.

#### 4.4. The non-exclusivity of the emotional

Another of the results of the research, extracted from the testimony of the people who participated in the research, is that they unanimously agree that the best way for the message of this type of entity to reach the public is the use of emotions. However, they do point out that there must be a balance between the emotional and the rational:

I think that balance is the key because the emotional can be too surreal and may not work for all types of people. Perhaps messages that allow us to see more real data could awaken in us a real conscience, without forgetting our feelings, of course. (Interviewee 5).

**Figure 7.** Respondents' perceptions of the type of advertising needed to communicate cancer-related messages



Source: Own elaboration.

On the basis of the indicators provided by the interviews, both the context and the feelings of the people interviewed agree that the use of emotions is fundamental, which confirms the trend detected in this research, but without forgetting that it is essential to maintain the more rational and realistic side.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

From the research conducted, it can be concluded that the trend towards the increased use of emotional advertising is not only for brands seeking to market their products and obtain an economic purpose, but is also a strategy used by advertisers seeking social welfare. These advertisers seek to persuade the public in order to achieve awareness-raising effects, rather than sales. And it is within this trend that the advertising of the different non-profit organisations analysed is framed. Non-profit advertisers are aware that their discourse must be socially and culturally appropriate in order to meet their objectives. In this line, it can be concluded that the participation in the spots of people who have had cancer or their relatives has a positive impact on the fulfilment of the objectives, as these testimonies provide credibility.

The study brings with it the fact that advertising campaigns for cancer diseases aim to raise awareness more than to inform, although they try to reach an audience beyond the specific target, people close to the disease. From the point of view of both knowledge and feeling, the aim is not to sell commercially, but to raise awareness of the disease and, therefore, to educate and communicate. This question, in general terms, has already been raised by Elías (2018) through the concept of consumer educommunication

The exclusive use of emotions is not enough to make your speeches effective. At least not with those audiences that do not have a greater knowledge of the disease, since this type of audience needs information with rational elements to be persuaded, something that does not happen with messages that are aimed at an audience that is more related to the disease, where feelings and emotions are sufficient (Ruetti *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, there is evidence that, in many cases, the memory of events associated with different emotions is more easily acquired and maintained over time, proving to be more resistant to extinction (Sandi *et al.*, 2001).

It can be concluded that the advertising campaigns of organisations fighting cancer base their strategies on emotional advertising in order to capture the public's attention through their sensitivity and emotions such as sadness and happiness, and that this allows them to establish a close link with the recipients, something that is not achieved with other types of advertising strategies. Likewise, the fact of showing people with cancer or who have survived the disease in the campaigns of organisations fighting against cancer has had an impact on society, thus generating a more aware, informed and sensitive public, which is more likely to respond to the campaigns of this type of non-profit organisation. However, once this research has been completed, it can be pointed out that the use of emotional strategies is much more than a simple communication trend, but is the best way to connect in a profound way with an audience that needs more real messages.

Also, that the presence of emotions such as fear and sadness in the advertising messages of cancer organisations are a constant and this is mainly due to the fact that it is these emotions that are perceived in stories of people who have been diagnosed with cancer. Throughout history, illness and death have been associated with these feelings, and this not only does not change, but is used emotionally by advertising. However, a change in the discourse is noticeable by introducing some messages that begin to seek to convey hopeful discourses.

For future lines of research, it is considered necessary to carry out a broader analysis of advertising messages belonging to more organisations involved in the fight against cancer and with a longer timeline. It is also necessary to investigate the effects of emotional advertising on a larger sample of people. This would provide a broader understanding of the level of awareness of the Spanish population in relation to cancer. It is considered advisable to extend the study to find out what other types of strategies are used in advertising campaigns whose message is cancer, or whether the predominance of emotions also occurs in campaigns on other subjects.

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