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An Examination of Attitudes Toward Sexualized Advertising in Las Vegas

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An Examination of Attitudes Toward Sexualized Advertising in Las Vegas

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the attitudes of college-level criminal justice students as to their perception of sexualized advertising in Las Vegas, and if these attitudes have any correlation with the participant's length of residency. The study also correlates college-level student's attitudes toward sexualized advertising and how religious they rate themselves. Female participants who lived in Las Vegas for 5 years or more on average agreed advertisements in Las Vegas are too sexualized. In contrast, female participants who were either born in Las Vegas or lived there less than 5 years neither agreed nor disagreed that advertising was too sexualized. As for the males, only those who lived in Las Vegas for 5 to 9 years on average agreed that advertisements in Las Vegas are too sexualized. Those participants who considered themselves very religious on average agreed that advertising in Las Vegas were too sexualized.

INTRODUCTION

Las Vegas is very unique city compared to any other city in America; Las Vegas is one of the most popular travel destinations and attracts millions of travelers and visitors per year. Las Vegas has managed to become an adult's playground where no rules apply and whatever one does is tolerated by the city. Advertising and activities imply tourists who visit Las Vegas can behave however (usually sexually related) and go back home to their "normal" lives and not be affected by those behaviors. What about the residents who stay here? It is plausible to assume these types of behaviors have some lasting effect on the locals of the city.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sexual advertising is defined as drawing a response to an item of consumption while using persuasion of sexual interest (Hultin & Lundh, 2004). The adult sex industry is defined as the purchase or selling of sexual services, anything from pornography to individual prostitution. Las Vegas is a one-stop shop for anyone interested in sexual advertising or the adult sex industry (McGraw-Hill, 2002). Zimmerman and Dahlberg found that sexual content advertising makes up 75 percent of primetime television commercial content (2008). Given that sexualized advertising is so prominent in today's society previous research found that younger women don't perceive it as insulting or damaging (Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008). On the opposing side, Monro and Huon found that exposure to these "ideal" physical attributes has led to increased body disengagement and anxiety in young adults (2005). Several different studies supported the results of these two studies.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The sample included responses from 861 college students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Just over 56% of respondents were female, 43% were male. The amount of time each participants' lived in Las Vegas are presented in Table 1. The largest group lived in Las Vegas ten years or more, 31.9%. The remaining portion of the participants varied, as presented in the table 1 below.

Table 1

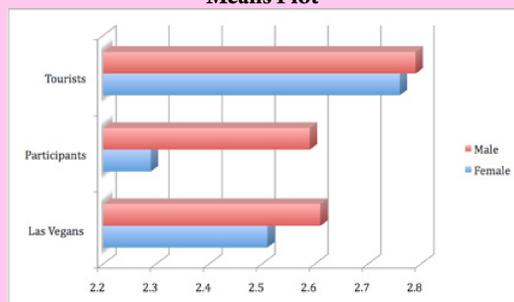
Number of years living in Las Vegas	% of Sample	N
Born in Las Vegas	29.8%	256
Over 10 years	31.9%	274
5-10 years	16.3%	140
4 years or less	18.9%	162

Note: The percentages may not add up to 100% as it was optional for participants to respond to the question.

Participants rated themselves on a scale one to five of how religious they considered themselves. The scale ranged from 1 representing not at all, while 5 represented very much so. The majority of participants, 28.6% considered themselves somewhat religious. The other portion of the group varied, 20.6% stated they were quite a bit religious, 19.3% considered themselves a little religious, 15.6% rated themselves not at all religious, and lastly 13.8% measured at very much so religious.

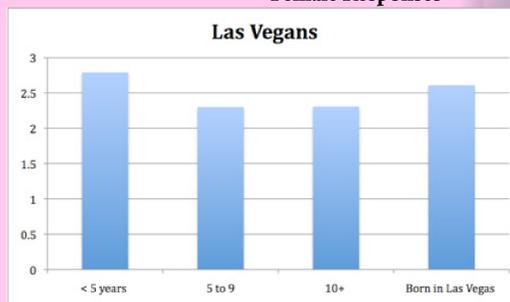
RESULTS

Means Plot



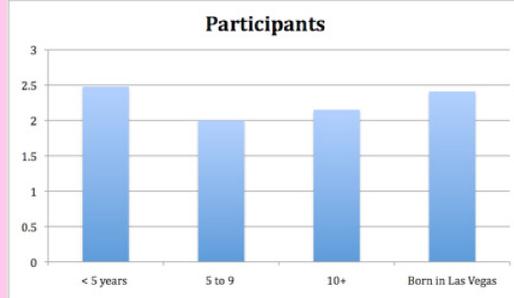
Note: Las Vegas- Most Las Vegas think advertising in Las Vegas is too sexualized, Participants- I think advertising in Las Vegas is too sexualized, Tourists- Most tourist in Las Vegas think advertising in Las Vegas is too sexualized, 1 represents strong agreement, 5 strong disagreement.

Female Responses



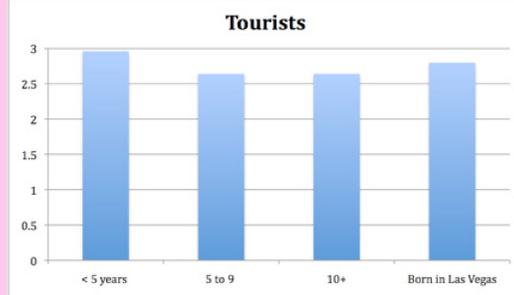
(F= 5.950 (3, 459), p<.001)

Participants



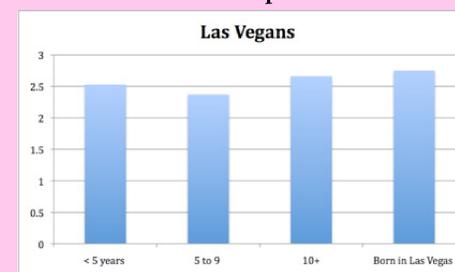
(F= 4.737 (3, 461), p<.003)

Tourists



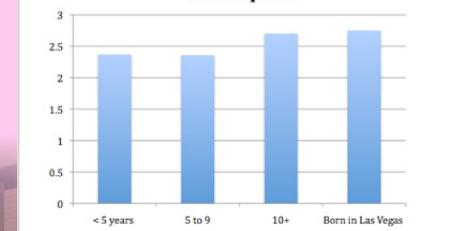
No statistically significant difference in the mean scores.

Male Responses



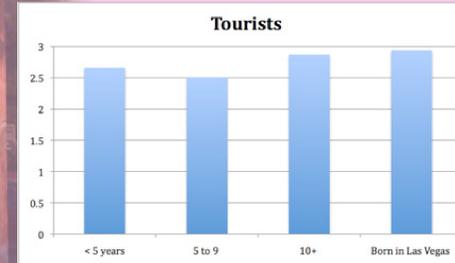
No statistically significant difference in the mean scores.

Participants



(F= 3.104 (3, 357), p<.027)

Tourists



(F=8.842 (4,832), p<.000)

CONCLUSIONS

This study found that gender had an effect on whether the participants personally thought advertising in Las Vegas was too sexualized; men on average felt ambiguous about the advertisements while women tended to agree that the advertising was too sexualized. After splitting the analysis by gender and looking for differences between how long each participant lived in Las Vegas the results varied. For the female participants who lived in Las Vegas for 5 to 10 years or more on average agreed advertisements in Las Vegas are too sexualized. In contrast, female participants who were either born in Las Vegas or lived there less than 5 years neither agreed nor disagreed that advertising was too sexualized. The curvilinear relationship makes interpretation of the trends hard to analyze. As for the males, only those who lived in Las Vegas for 5 to 9 years on average agreed that advertisements in Las Vegas are too sexualized. Those participants who considered themselves very religious on average agreed that advertising in Las Vegas were too sexualized. The current research suggests they're maybe some effect of length of residency and how religious the participants consider themselves on attitudes toward sexualized advertising in Las Vegas.

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