'Congratulations for your day': benevolent attitudes during March 8 in Mexico

4 authors:

Angélica Quiroga
Universidad de Monterrey
45 PUBLICATIONS **498** CITATIONS

Eva Moreno-Bella
National Distance Education University
19 PUBLICATIONS **151** CITATIONS

Juan Matamoros-Lima
University of Granada
8 PUBLICATIONS **26** CITATIONS

Guillermo B. Willis
University of Granada
109 PUBLICATIONS **1,333** CITATIONS

"Congratulations for your day": Benevolent attitudes during March 8 in Mexico

Angélica Quiroga-Garza[1], Eva Moreno-Bella[2], Juan A. Matamoros-Lima[2], and Guillermo B. Willis[2]

[1]Psychology, Universidad de Monterrey, Garza García, Mexico

[2]Social Psychology, Universidad de Granada, Granada, Mexico

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Angélica Quiroga, Centro de Tratamiento e Investigación de la Ansiedad (Cetia), Universidad de Monterrey, Av. Morones Prieto No. 4500 Pte., Garza García, Mexico 66238, phone: +52(81) 8215-1248, email: angelica.quiroga@udem.edu.

Author Contributions

AQG is principal investigator of the research, developed the research proposal and first draft of the manuscript. She was involved in the recruitment and data acquisition of both samples in study site in Mexico.

EMB was involved in data analysis, developed the results section and critically revised the manuscript.

HML was involved in recruitment and data acquisition and critically revised the manuscript.

GBW is a scientific staff member at Granada University. He developed the research proposal and critically revised the manuscript.

"Congratulations for your day": Benevolent attitudes during March 8 in Mexico

Sexist attitudes reinforce gender inequality, but, are they absent on Women's Day? This research examines the extent to which, in some contexts, Women's Day can activate sexist attitudes that reinforce maintenance of structural inequality between men and women. Based on the ambivalent sexism theory, we propose that people are more likely to agree with benevolent sexist attitudes on Women's Day than any other day. In Study 1 ($N = 190$) we measured sexist attitudes on Women's Day and one month later. We found that participants asked on Women's Day reported more benevolent sexism than participants asked a month later. In order to establish causality, in Study 2 ($N = 175$) we used an experimental paradigm in which we made the Women's Day more salient (vs. control). Results showed that participants assigned to the Women's Day experimental condition indicated more support for benevolent sexist attitudes than those assigned to the control condition. This research provides evidence of another side of some people's attitudes on Women's Day.

Keywords: Ambivalent sexism; benevolent sexism; hostile sexism; gender inequality; women's day.

Introduction

International Women's Day, which is celebrated on March 8 in many countries, was created for two main reasons: to acknowledge the achievements of women around the world and to highlight the problem that gender equality has not yet been attained (Johnman et al., 2016). Traditionally, this celebration is also described as recalling the fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York on 25 March 1911, in which more than 140 female workers lost their lives (International Labour Organization, 2011; Ortega, 2019). Some have claimed that the company owner burned down the building with the women inside because the workers were fighting to improve their conditions (Varela, 2008).

However, in some countries, such as Mexico, Women's Day can carry a very different meaning. Although some government institutions and feminist movements (CONAPRED, 2019; Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres, 2019) seek to highlight the structural challenges that women face daily, much of the advertising in print media and on television ('Mujeres', 2017; 'Vida', 2017), as well as the traditions and customs related to this celebration, might instead be helping to promote a stereotypical image of traditional roles and relationships—i.e. how women should behave to be appreciated and rewarded.

In this article, we consider whether Women's Day could actually be unintentionally reinforcing sexist attitudes that sustain structural inequality between men and women. To do so, we apply the theoretical framework of ambivalent sexism (Glick, 2016; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick et al., 2000), which proposes that sexism is a construct composed of two different kinds of attitudes: hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. In this investigation, we hypothesised that in a masculine culture where sexism is prominent and gender roles are well-established —such as Mexico (Hofstede, 1980, 2011; Hofstede Insights, 2020)—, Women's Day may activate benevolent sexist attitudes and that therefore, on that day, respondents would tend to agree more strongly with a series of phrases containing benevolent sexist content—a result quite distant from the original motivations behind the March 8 commemoration.

Ambivalent Sexism Theory

Glick and Fiske (1996, 2018) maintained that relationships between men and women are characterised by a unique situation: although men tend to dominate women, at the same time, both genders depend on each other for heterosexual intimacy and reproduction. As a consequence, ambivalent attitudes towards the oppressed group often develop.

On one hand, hostile sexism expresses negative attitudes towards women, especially those who challenge the privileged positions of men, such as working professionals or feminists. Sexist violence and discrimination against women also correspond to the so-called hostile sexism. This is similar to its counterpart, *Marianism*, which in Latin American cultures describes attitudes of sacrifice and subordination typical of motherhood (Shallat, 2000). However, according to ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Moya & Expósito, 2008), hostile sexism implies only part of the problem, since the positive protectionist variant of benevolent sexism has, as well, various offensive implications for women.

Benevolent sexism refers to favourable attitudes towards women, especially those who fulfil traditional roles such as wives and mothers (Chen et al., 2009; Glick, 2016; Hopkins-Doyle et al., 2019; Shnabel et al., 2016; Silván-Ferrero & Bustillos, 2007). Benevolent sexism is still considered a sexist behaviour, despite its seemingly kind rather than hostile tone, because it restricts women to certain roles that usually maintain social inequality between men and women (Chen et al., 2009; G. Fraser et al., 2015; Gul & Kupfer, 2018; Moya et al., 2007); it may represent women as superior to men, but only with regard to traits or attributes that are not relevant to changing the social status of women (Delgado, 2013; Fiske et al., 1999; Glick, 2016; Ramos et al., 2016). Furthermore, numerous investigations have shown that benevolent sexism can be positively correlated with coercive control (Navarro, 2015), attitudes that legitimise gender violence (Cardona et al., 2015; Durán et al., 2014; Glick et al., 2002; Gul & Kupfer, 2018), and sexual aggression (Abrams et al., 2003; Durán et al., 2010, 2014; Fraser, 2015; LeMaire et al., 2016; Ornelas et al., 2015).

Benevolent sexism can also negatively influence women's behaviour. For example, when they are exposed to comments of this type, women are often perceived

as less competent (Dumont et al., 2010; Good & Rudman, 2010; Hammond & Overall, 2015), exhibit lower self-efficacy (Jones et al., 2014) and perform more poorly on cognitive tasks (Dardenne et al., 2007). They are more likely to accept behavioural restrictions from both their romantic partner (Cross et al., 2016; Gul & Kupfer, 2018; Moya et al., 2007) and the society in general on such issues as their right to motherhood (Huang et al., 2016) and social activism (Becker & Wright, 2011; Calogero, 2013).

In the media, inequality between men and women is reproduced through gender stereotypes reinforcing a social model of inequity and discrimination (García-Ruiz et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2019). In Mexico, several businesses promote in the media to celebrate Women in their day with gifts (e.g., 5 unforgettable Women's Day Gift Ideas; Piscos, 2020), considering "is the special occasion to recognize the importance women have for the lives of men and for that reason, on that day gifts full of love are given to them" (Regalos personales, 2020), undoubtedly promoting manifestations of benevolent sexism.

In sum, benevolent sexism should be considered a form of sexism, because it consists of beliefs and attitudes that help maintain structural inequality between men and women. For this reason, the possibility that celebrating Women's Day could inadvertently activate such sexist attitudes merits serious investigation.

The Present Investigation

To pursue our research objective of determining whether Women's Day may increase people's tendency to exhibit benevolent sexist attitudes, we conducted two studies designed to investigate the impact of its salience. In Study 1, we explored whether participants were more supportive of benevolent sexist attitudes on Women's Day (8 March 2017) than on a different day (19 April 2017). In Study 2, in an effort to establish a causal relationship, the salience of Women's Day was manipulated experimentally in

comparison with a control group. Noting that people's behaviour during Women's Day have received little attention in the literature, recent studies have examined people's collective behaviour during Women's Day (Zumeta et al., 2020). However, we consider there could be two sides of the same coin during this day: feminist actions for gender equality (Zumeta et al., 2020), and benevolent sexist attitudes that finally maintain gender inequality. In this research, we focused on the latter side, providing evidence that on a day when gender equality is demanded —such as Women's Day— there could be sexist attitudes that, in contrast, favour the maintenance of gender inequality.

The studies were conducted at a private university in northern México where students experience frequent reminders of the arrival of Women's Day. For example, special events recognising the event occur on the university campus, and the media often mention that it is Women's Day.

On this day, conflicting views of stereotypes related to traditional gender roles are promoted. Thus, in the context in which Study 1 took place, some print media highlighted, in their editorials and opinion essays, the importance of ending gender inequality and femicide. But at the same time, amongst the commercial notices and even paid insertions by municipalities in the soft news section, women tended to be congratulated for 'their day' ('Mujeres', 2017; 'Vida', 2017). Another anecdotal illustration is that at the university where this investigation took place, it is common to see students give roses and chocolates—gifts with a high stereotypical connotation—to their female peers. Moreover, it should be noted that gender inequality (based on Gender Inequality Index) is still very present in the cultural context of Mexico (Human Development Reports, 2020). In other words, Mexico is a culture in which traditional gender roles are well-established in the society (Hofstede, 1980), and in which benevolent sexism is highly prevalent (Kyrss et al., 2018). Thus, it should not be

uncommon that Women's Day in Mexico have a particular meaning more oriented to benevolence attitudes and behaviours towards women instead of recognising the facing for gender equality.

Because of the fact that a stereotypical vision of women as mothers and housewives is promoted—at least to some extent—on Women's Day, we predicted that benevolent sexist attitudes would be more activated on that day than on a different day (Hypothesis 1). Additionally, in Study 2, it was proposed that the participants who have just been prompted to think about on Women's Day would report stronger agreement with phrases reflective of benevolent sexism compared with a control group (Hypothesis 2). On the opposite, it will not trigger hostile sexist behaviour because, on Women's Day, culturally, favourable behaviour towards women (e.g., giving roses or chocolates) is expressed with a high degree of "benevolence" (vs. hostility). Moreover, both studies explored whether there are any gender differences in the hypothesised effects.

Study 1

Method

Participants

One hundred and ninety-eight participants completed our survey, although we excluded eight participants (two did not indicate their age, and six were under 18 years old). The final sample consisted of 190 students (48.4% female, 51.6% male) of different degrees of a private university in northern Mexico, with an average age of 21.30 years ($SD = 2.18$). With regard to their social class, most of participants considered themselves upper-middle class ($M = 7.19$, $SD = 1.18$) in the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (MacArthur SSS scale; Adler et al., 2000), which has a rating

scale from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest).

Ninety-three participants were recruited on Women's day (46.2% female, 53.8% male) and ninety-seven on April 19 (50.5% female, 49.5% male). The average age of the participants surveyed on Women's Day ($M = 21.13$, $SD = 2.28$) did not differ significantly from that of those who responded on April 19, ($M = 21.46$, $SD = 2.08$), $t(188) = -1.06$, $p = .292$, $d = -1.05$. In terms of subjective ratings of social class, we did not find a significant difference between those who participated on Women's Day ($M = 7.18$, $SD = 1.21$) and those who participated on April 19 ($M = 7.21$, $SD = 1.14$), $t(188) = -0.14$, $p = .892$, $d = -.02$. More precisely, the 80.7% of participants on Women's Day and the 81.4% of participants on April 19 placed themselves mainly on the sixth (Women's Day = 19.4%, April 19 = 11.3%), seventh (Women's Day = 30.1%, April 19 = 42.3%), or eight step (Women's Day = 31.2%, April 19 = 27.8%) of the MacArthur SSS scale.

Procedure

We collected the data in the libraries of a private university in northern Mexico. Students were instructed as to how to complete the questionnaire and gave their informed consent before participating in the investigation. As noted, the first sample was collected on Women's Day (March 8); the second day, April 19, was selected because it was the same day of the week, more than a month later and after the completion of Holy Week. All participants were assured that their responses would be anonymous and gave informed consent to participate voluntarily in the study.

Instrument

The instrument used to measure sexism was the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) of Glick and Fiske (1996, 2001, 2018), adapted to Spanish by Expósito et al. (1998). It is

composed of 22 items, of which 11 evaluate benevolent sexism (α = .89) and the

remaining 11 evaluate hostile sexism (α = .89). Participants reported their degree of

agreement or disagreement with each item on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 0

(*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Examples of items from the benevolent sexism

subscale include "Even if a man achieves many things in his life, he will never feel truly

complete unless he has the love of a woman" and "Many women are characterised by a

purity that few men possess". The hostile subscale includes these items: "Under the

pretence of asking for equality, many women seek special privileges, such as working

conditions that favour them over men" and "Most women interpret innocent comments

or behaviour as sexist, that is as expressions of prejudice or discrimination against

them".

   After answering the ASI items, participants were asked to complete

sociodemographic data, including their subjectively rated social class based on the

MacArthur SSS scale (Adler et al., 2000), age, and gender.

Results

Correlations

   Results also revealed a positive relationship between gender and benevolent ($r =$

.17, $p = .018$) and hostile ($r = .24$, $p = .001$) sexism, in the sense that men scored higher

on both dimensions of sexism. When we analysed the relationships between the

different variables of interest, we found a significant and positive correlation between

benevolent and hostile sexism, $r = .67$, $p < .001$. We also found a correlation between

social class and the age, $r = .18$, $p = .015$.

Evaluation of the hypothesis

First, we performed an ANOVA considering the day on which the questionnaire was

administered (Women's Day vs. April 19) and gender (female vs. male) as independent variables and benevolent sexism as the dependent variable. This analysis showed a main effect of the day, $F(1, 186) = 17.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$ (see Figure 1). The level of benevolent sexism was higher on Women's Day ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.08$) than on April 19 ($M = 1.54$, $SD = 1.09$), confirming Hypothesis 1. We also found a main effect of the gender variable, $F(1, 186) = 5.89$, $p = .016$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$; the average score of benevolent sexism was higher for men ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.16$) than for women ($M = 1.67$, $SD = 1.08$).

Moreover, this analysis yielded a significant interaction between day and gender, $F(1, 186) = 8.30$, $p = .004$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$ (see Figure 1). Amongst the female respondents, there was no significant difference between the two days on which the study was conducted, $F(1, 90) = 0.78$, $p = .380$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. However, amongst the male respondents, benevolent sexism was stronger on Women's Day ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 1.05$) than on April 19 ($M = 1.50$, $SD = 1.01$), $F(1, 96) = 26.87$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .22$.

Additionally, we conducted an ANCOVA with social class and age as covariates. When controlling for these variables, the significant effects of the day [$F(1,184) = 17.56$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$], gender [$F(1,184) = 5.47$, $p = .020$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$] and the interaction term of day × gender [$F(1,184) = 7.84$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$] were not affected.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

For purposes of comparison, we performed another ANOVA on hostile sexism, considering the day and gender as independent variables and hostile sexism as the dependent variable. As with benevolent sexism, a main effect of the day was found, $F(1, 186) = 22.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .11$ (see Figure 2); the level of hostile sexism was higher on Women's Day ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.96$) than on April 19 ($M = 1.67$, $SD = 1.16$). We

also found a main effect of gender, $F(1, 186) = 11.39$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$, as women

exhibited a lower level of hostile sexism ($M = 1.75$, $SD = 1.12$) than men ($M = 2.29$,

$SD = 1.08$). However, we did not obtain a significant interaction between day and

gender, $F (1, 186) = 0.72$, $p = .398$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$; these results suggest that the increase in

hostile sexism found on Women's Day was similar for both men and women.

[INSERT FIGURE 2]

Discussion

On Women's Day in Mexico, women are celebrated but the nature of that celebration

has sexist roots. Specifically, we proposed in Study 1 that benevolent sexist attitudes are

stronger on Women's Day than on other days. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, people had

higher benevolent sexism scores on Women's Day than on April 19. Similarly, men

exhibited more benevolent sexist attitudes than women, supporting previous literature

(Glick & Fiske, 2001).

We also found, without having made a prediction in this regard, that men only,

not women, displayed benevolent sexist attitudes more strongly on March 8 than on

April 19. Also, both men and women exhibited higher degrees of hostile sexism on

Women's Day. This result might suggest that on this day, not only are women who

adhere to traditional gender roles (through benevolent sexism) rewarded to a greater

extent but also women who do not adhere to them are more strongly punished (thorough

hostile sexism).

However, this first study has important limitations. The design does not allow us

to establish a causal effect between the salience of Women's Day and the increase in

benevolent (and hostile) sexist attitudes. To attempt to establish a causal relationship

between the variables, we carried out a second experimental study in which we

compared Women's Day to another common day.

Study 2

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 177 students from a private university in northern Mexico.

Two participants were excluded because they did not indicate their gender. The

remaining 175 participants included 53.7% females and 46.3% males, with an average

age of 20.58 years (*SD* = 4.06). All of them were older than 18 years old. In terms of

social class, most participants viewed themselves as in the upper middle class

(*M* = 6.93, *SD* = 1.16), as 80.5% placed themselves on the sixth (17.8%), seventh

(41.4%) or eighth step (24.3%) of the MacArthur ladder. As for their political

orientation, most participants (82.5%) indicated an ideology that was either centrist

(40.7%), centre-right (30.2%) or right-wing (11.6%).

The average age of the participants assigned to the Women's Day condition (*M* = 20.40,

SD = 3.49) did not differ significantly from that of the subjects in the control condition

(*M* = 20.76, *SD* = 4.59), *t*(173) = −.59, *p* = .558, *d* = −.09.

Procedure

We used a convenience sampling procedure, in which the researchers went to different

areas of the university to contact students and administer the questionnaire. All

participants were assured that their responses would be anonymous and gave informed

consent to participate voluntarily in the experiment.

All data were collected on a single day, 19 November 2019. Participants were

randomly assigned to the experimental condition (Women's Day, *n* = 88) or the control

condition (yesterday, *n* = 87). As the experimental manipulation, those assigned to the

former condition were asked to think back to the previous Women's Day and write

down (a) what they had done to celebrate that day, (b) three words that reflected what the day meant to them and (c) how they conceptualised Women's Day. The participants assigned to the control condition were asked to think about the previous day and answer the same three questions.

Instrument

After completing the task specific to either the experimental manipulation or the control condition, all participants were asked to read and respond to the 22 ASI statements about sexist attitudes, which were again used to measure benevolent sexism ($\alpha = .88$) and hostile sexism ($\alpha = .92$).

The subjects provided the same sociodemographic data as in Study 1, such as subjective rating of social class (Adler et al., 2000), age and gender. In addition, in Study 2, they also indicated their political orientation (1 = *extreme left*, 7 = *extreme right*).

Results

Content analysis

To explore what kind of activities are carried out on Women's Day in Mexico, we analysed the open-ended responses of the experimental group members in relation to women´s day (Rodríguez, 2003). Eighty-eight descriptions of what the participants had done on the previous Women's Day were collected. On the one hand, concerning what they had done to celebrate the women's day, 25 included content relating to benevolent sexism (e.g, "I sent congratulations through social media to my family and friends"); there was one expression with ambivalent content (e.g., "Although that day commemorates a tragedy, I congratulated my mother and sister"); 8 favourable attitudes towards gender equality (e.g., "I disseminated information about the subject on social

media"); 52 participants showed indifference (e.g., "I did not do anything special"); and 2 participants did not provide any answer.

These results corroborate that benevolent sexism descriptions of the day were more prevalent than egalitarian descriptions. And that most participants written down neutral content. We will next analyse whether thinking on women's day also influences their attitudes.

Descriptive statistics and correlations

When we analysed the relationship between different variables, we found a positive correlation between benevolent sexism and hostile sexism, $r = .70$, $p < .001$, as in Study 1. The results also showed a positive relationship between gender and benevolent sexism, ($r = .29$, $p < .001$) as well as between gender and hostile sexism, ($r = .35$, $p < .001$), in the sense that men scored higher on both dimensions of sexism. Both benevolent sexism and hostile sexism were positively correlated with political orientation, $r = .23$, $p = .003$ and $r = .18$, $p = .019$, respectively, which means that those participants a higher right-wing political orientation scored higher on benevolent and hostile sexism. Age and subjective rating of social class were not correlated significantly with any of the variables of interest.

Evaluation of the hypothesis

We performed an ANOVA with the day (Women's Day vs. yesterday) and gender (females vs. males) as two independent variables and benevolent sexism as the dependent variable. This analysis found a main effect of the day, $F(1, 171) = 4.99$, $p = .027$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ (see Figure 3). Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the participants assigned to the experimental condition ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 1.11$) had higher average scores on benevolent sexism than those assigned to the control condition ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 0.99$).

A main effect of gender was also found, $F(1, 171) = 14.81$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$. Men ($M = 2.07$, $SD = 1.13$) scored higher than women ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 0.92$) on benevolent sexism. However, this time, an effect of the interaction between day and gender [$F(1, 171) = 0.81$, $p = .371$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$] was not found.

[INSERT FIGURE 3]

Also, by performing another ANOVA with hostile sexism as the dependent variable and the day and gender as independent variables, we found a main effect of gender on hostile sexism, $F(1, 171) = 23.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$ (see Figure 4). Men scored higher ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.21$) than women ($M = 1.47$, $SD = 1.00$) in hostile sexism. However, we did not find a main effect of the day [$F(1, 171) = 0.89$, $p = .347$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$] or of the interaction between day and gender [$F(1, 171) = 1.25$, $p = .26$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$].

[INSERT FIGURE 4]

Discussion

The results of Study 2 support those of Study 1, further establishing that the salience of Women's Day and its meaning in Mexico lead to the activation of benevolent sexist attitudes. Participants who were asked to think and write about Women's Day reported higher scores on the benevolent sexism scale than those assigned to the control condition. This result sheds light on the types of ideas that are promoted and transmitted in Mexico when Women's Day is celebrated.

Two other results found in Study 1 were not replicated in Study 2—namely, the effect of the interaction between gender and day on benevolent sexism, and the principal effect of the day on hostile sexism.

General Discussion

These two studies were motivated by our prediction that in a highly sexist context, Women's Day activates benevolent sexist attitudes, as a consequence of the set of benevolent (vs. hostile) sexist behaviours that are carried out on Women's Day (e.g., giving flowers or chocolates to women). Our findings indicated that the participants were more likely to express agreement with ideas that contained benevolent sexist content when Women's Day was on their minds, either because the questionnaire was administered on Women's Day (Study 1) or because of our experimental manipulation (Study 2). These findings corroborate our main hypothesis.

On the other hand, although in Study 1 an effect of the interaction of day and gender on benevolent sexism was found, along with a main effect of the day on hostile sexism, these results were not replicated in Study 2. Subsequent studies may clarify or add to our results. The data from our studies suggest, however, that Women's Day seems to activate benevolent sexism, and the effect of the day occurs in both men and women, although it is stronger in men.

In short, celebrating, congratulating and giving gifts to women on "their day" could indicate that people attach importance to this special day that is intended to recognise women's rights but that they do so in ways that emphasise gender differentiation—thereby implying that women are wonderful or even the superior gender, but only when their activity is circumscribed within traditional gender roles (Dardenne et al., 2007; Silván-Ferrero & Bustillos, 2007). This finding could be explained by the "women are wonderful" effect proposed by Eagly and Mladinic (1989), which tends to express appreciation for those attributes that maintain women's traditional social status (Delgado, 2013; Fiske et al., 1999; Glick, 2016; Ramos et al.,

2016) and that could induce more mild-mannered behaviours in women (Moya et al., 2007).

The position of women in Mexico has improved because of their increased access to education and social participation (Potthast-Jutkeit & Scarzanella, 2001); however, this achievement has been clouded by the elevation of motherhood (Arrom, 1988) and a concomitant emphasis on sacrifice and subordination (Shallat, 2000), as opposed to the stereotypical male trait of competition (Castañeda, 2007). This might suggest that the increase in benevolent sexism around Women's Day is a coercive control strategy (Navarro, 2015). It may suggest that both genders can find life satisfaction within the traditional social structure, which is perceived as fair to men and women alike (Connelly & Heesacker, 2012), instead of recognizing inequality.

Subsequent studies could seek to confirm these results using, for example, a longitudinal design that investigates participants' attitudes over time. However, since no previous studies have investigated the presence of sexist attitudes in relation to Women's Day, we consider our research a valuable first step that should encourage further efforts to understand the actual impact of the day on people's attitudes and behaviours. In this respect, further research may extend the knowledge about the role of men in maintaining but also confronting gender inequality (Estevan-Reina et al., 2020; Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020, Kuchynka et al., 2018; Subašić et al., 2018), focusing on their attitudes and behaviour on Women's Day.

One important limitation of our studies is that our sample consisted only of university students of a northern university. Therefore, future studies should include a wider cross-section of the general population, including a greater age range and different social classes. Such studies could provide interesting information about generational and socioeconomic differences. Besides that, another important limitation

could be the period in which study 2 was carried out, after Easter Week. Future studies should study whether the spiritual experience of Easter Week can affect benevolent sexist and hostile sexist.

It is important to emphasize that, in despite of these results, we still believe that it is important to promote Women's Day, especially for claiming women's rights and raise awareness of the various obstacles that women face simply because they are women. Our objective with this research is to highlight that, paradoxically, this day has been commemorated in some contexts in ways that perpetuate gender inequality. The best way to identify this unintended consequence is to apply subtle strategies to detect the promotion of benevolent sexism.

Our findings suggest that it is important to continue making visible gender inequity. As such, it may be important to promote several activities on Women's Day that rise awareness about gender inequality. From this perspective, it may important to organize feminist demonstrations in which people protest against inequality. It may also be important to organize specific seminars and lectures on feminist topics. Overall, it may be necessary to make people aware that not only hostile sexism may promote gender inequality—it is also important to detect and avoid benevolent sexism.

We believe that our study can help highlight the ways in which, despite the many positive changes in the perception of women, an egalitarian society has not yet been achieved. Recognising the subtle negative consequences of benevolent sexism that can be triggered even by an institutionalised day that was intended to recognise women's achievements reminds us that women still have a long way to go.

References

Abrams, D., Viki, G. T., Masser, B., & Bohner, G. (2003). Perceptions of stranger and acquaintance rape: the role of benevolent and hostile sexism in victim blame and

rape proclivity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *84*(1), 111–125.

Adler, N. E., Epel, E. S., Castellazzo, G., & Ickovics, J. R. (2000). Relationship of subjective and objective social status with psychological and physiological functioning: preliminary data in healthy white women. *Health Psychology*, *19*(6), 586–592. https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.19.6.586

Arrom, S. M. (1988). *Las mujeres de la ciudad de México, 1790-1857*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores. https://books.google.com.mx/books/about/Las_mujeres_de_la_ciudad_de_México _1790.html?id=T-buNEf4z0QC

Becker, J. C., & Wright, S. C. (2011). Yet another dark side of chivalry: Benevolent sexism undermines and hostile sexism motivates collective action for social change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*(1), 62–77. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022615

Calogero, R. M. (2013). Objects don't object. *Psychological Science*, *24*(3), 312–318. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612452574

Cardona, J. C., Casas, L. P., Cañon, S. C., Castaño, J. J., Godoy, A. K., Henao, D. F., & Valencia, L. K. (2015). Sexismo y concepciones de la violencia de género contra la mujer en cuatro universidades de la ciudad de Manizales (Colombia), 2015. *Archivos de Medicina*, *15*(2).

Castañeda, M. (2007). *El machismo invisible regresa*. Taurus.

Chen, Z., Fiske, S. T., & Lee, T. L. (2009). Ambivalent Sexism and Power-Related Gender-role Ideology in Marriage. *Sex Roles*, *60*(11–12), 765–778. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9585-9

CONAPRED, C. N. para P. la D. (2019). *Día Internacional de la Mujer. Discriminación de género y políticas públicas*.

Connelly, K., & Heesacker, M. (2012). Why Is benevolent sexism appealing? Associations with system justification and life satisfaction. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *36*(4), 432–443. https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684312456369

Cross, E. J., Overall, N. C., & Hammond, M. D. (2016). Perceiving partners to endorse benevolent sexism attenuates highly anxious women's negative reactions to conflict. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *42*(7), 923–940.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216647933

Dardenne, B., Dumont, M., & Bollier, T. (2007). Insidious dangers of benevolent sexism: Consequences for women's performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *93*(5), 764–779. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.5.764

Delgado, D. R. (2013). La investigación narrativa y las prácticas artísticas comunitarias: algunas posibilidades, encuentros y desencuentros. *CALLE14: Revista de Investigación En El Campo Del Arte*, *7*(10), 52–63.

Dumont, M., Sarlet, M., & Dardenne, B. (2010). Be too kind to a woman, she'll feel incompetent: Benevolent sexism shifts self-construal and autobiographical memories toward incompetence. *Sex Roles*, *62*(7–8), 545–553. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-008-9582-4

Durán, M., Campos-Romero, I., & Martínez-Pecino, R. (2014). Obstáculos en la comprensión de la violencia de género: Influencia del sexismo y la formación en género. *Acción Psicológica*, *11*(2), 97. https://doi.org/10.5944/ap.11.2.14177

Durán, M., Moya, M., Megías, J. L., & Viki, G. T. (2010). Social perception of rape victims in dating and married relationships: The role of perpetrator's benevolent sexism. *Sex Roles*, *62*(7–8), 505–519. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9676-7

Eagly, A. H., & Mladinic, A. (1989). Gender stereotypes and attitudes toward women and men. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *15*(4), 543–558. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167289154008

Fiske, S. T., Xu, J., Cuddy, A. C., & Glick, P. (1999). (Dis)respecting versus (Dis)liking: Status and Interdependence Predict Ambivalent Stereotypes of Competence and Warmth. *Journal of Social Issues*, *55*(3), 473–489. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00128

Fraser, C. (2015). From "Ladies first" to "Asking for it": Benevolent sexism in the maintenance of rape culture. *California Law Review*, *103*(1). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15779/Z38MV66

Fraser, G., Osborne, D., & Sibley, C. G. (2015). "We want you in the workplace, but only in a skirt!" Social Dominance orientation, gender-based affirmative action and the moderating role of benevolent sexism. *Sex Roles*, *73*(5–6), 231–244. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0515-8

García-Ruiz, R., Aguaded, I., & Vázquez, A. I. R. (2014). Propuesta de alfabetización mediática ante los estereotipos de género en los medios de comunicación: Resultados y valoración de "rostros de mujer." *Prisma Social: Revista de Investigación Social*, *13*, 576–609.

Glick, P. (2016, September). Benevolent sexism and the art of the deal. *Pschology Today*.

Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (1996). The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory: Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexism. *Journal of Psrsonality and Social Psychology*, *70*(3), 491–512. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.3.491

Glick, P., Fiske, S. T., Mladinic, A., Saiz, J. L., Abrams, D., Masser, B., Adetoun, B., Osagie, J. E., Akande, A., Alao, A., Brunner, A., Willemsen, T. M., Chipeta, K., Dardenne, B., Dijksterhuis, A., Wigboldus, D., Eckes, T., Six-Materna, I., Expósito, F., … López López, W. (2000). Beyond prejudice as simple antipathy: Hostile and benevolent sexism across cultures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *79*(5), 763–775. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.79.5.763

Glick, P., Sakalli-Ugurlu, N., Ferreira, M. C., & Aguiar, M. (2002). Ambivalent Sexism and Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse in Turkey and Brazil. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *26*(4), 292–297. https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-6402.t01-1-00068

Good, J. J., & Rudman, L. A. (2010). When female applicants meet sexist interviewers: The costs of being a target of benevolent sexism. *Sex Roles*, *62*(7), 481–493. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9685-6

Gul, P., & Kupfer, T. R. (2018). Benevolent sexism and mate preferences: Why do women prefer benevolent men despite recognizing that they can be undermining? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218781000

Hammond, M. D., & Overall, N. C. (2015). Benevolent sexism and support of romantic partner's goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *41*(9), 1180–1194. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215593492

Hopkins-Doyle, A., Sutton, R. M., Douglas, K. M., & Calogero, R. M. (2019). Flattering to deceive: Why people misunderstand benevolent sexism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *116*(2), 167–192.

https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000135

Huang, Y., Davies, P. G., Sibley, C. G., & Osborne, D. (2016). Benevolent sexism, attitudes toward motherhood, and reproductive rights. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *42*(7), 970–984. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216649607

Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres. (2019). *Fechas conmemorativas. Una visión de género*.

Johnman, C., Sim, F., & Mackie, P. (2016). International Women's Day. *Public Health*, *132*, 1–2. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2016.02.001

Jones, K., Stewart, K., King, E., Botsford Morgan, W., Gilrane, V., & Hylton, K. (2014). Negative consequence of benevolent sexism on efficacy and performance. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *29*(3), 171–189. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2013-0086

LeMaire, K. L., Oswald, D. L., & Russell, B. L. (2016). Labeling sexual victimization experiences: The role of sexism, rape myth acceptance, and tolerance for sexual harassment. *Violence and Victims*, *31*(2), 332–346. https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-13-00148

Moya, M., & Expósito, F. (2008). Sexismo: Los efectos perniciosos de una ideología ambivalente. In *Método, teoría e investigación en psicología social* (pp. 271–294). Pearson.

Moya, M., Glick, P., Expósito, F., de Lemus, S., & Hart, J. (2007). It's for your own good: Benevolent sexism and women's reactions to protectively justified restrictions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *33*(10), 1421–1434. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167207304790

Mujeres. (2017, March 8). *Milenio*. www.milenio.com

Navarro, J. (2015). *Violencia en las relaciones íntimas. Una perspectiva clínica*. Herder.

Piscos. (2020). *Ideas de regalos por el Día de la Mujer - 5 detalles*. https://www.piscospersonalizados.com/ideas-de-regalos-por-el-dia-de-la-mujer/

Potthast-Jutkeit, B., & Scarzanella, E. (2001). *Mujeres y naciones en América Latina. Problemas de inclusión y exclusión*. Vervuert.

Ramos, M. R., Barreto, M., Ellemers, N., Moya, M., Ferreira, L., & Calanchini, J. (2016). Exposure to sexism can decrease implicit gender stereotype bias. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *46*(4), 455–466. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2165

Regalos personales. (2020). *Los mejores regalos para el Día de la Mujer*. La Confitería. https://www.laconfiteriacolombiana.com/blog/regalos-para-el-dia-de-la-mujer

Rodríguez, C. (2003). Nociones y destrezas básicas sobre el análisis de datos cualitativos. *El Proceso de Investigación En Educación, Algunos Elementos Clave*, 1–21.

Shallat, L. (2000). Democracy in the nation, but not at home. In J. Mirsky & M. Radlett (Eds.), *No paradise yet: The world's women face the new century* (pp. 137–156). Panos/ZED.

Shnabel, N., Bar-Anan, Y., Kende, A., Bareket, O., & Lazar, Y. (2016). Help to perpetuate traditional gender roles: Benevolent sexism increases engagement in dependency-oriented cross-gender helping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *110*(1), 55–75. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000037

Silván-Ferrero, M. del P., & Bustillos, A. (2007). Benevolent sexism toward men and women: Justification of the traditional system and conventional gender roles in Spain. *Sex Roles*, *57*(7–8), 607–614. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9271-8

Varela, N. (2008). *Feminismo para principiantes*. Zeta Bolsillo.

Vida. (2017, March 8). *El Norte*, 8–11. http://www.elnorte.com/

Xu, H., Zhang, Z., Wu, L., & Wang, C.-J. (2019). The Cinderella Complex: Word embeddings reveal gender stereotypes in movies and books. *PLOS ONE*, *14*(11), e0225385. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0225385