We need to go deeper:

A visual analysis on how the personal care industry uses sex and sex appeals in advertising
between 2010 – 2019 to attract its audience

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Abstract

A question often posed by consumers and marketers is whether sex actually sells in advertising. Sex appeals have long been used in advertisements, with the personal care industry being one of the markets that use in the most when trying to attract their audiences. Personal care brands such as Nivea, Tom Ford, Chanel and Gillette often use sexual appeals to attract its audience. Whether it sells may no longer be a question, instead it is important to understand how sexual appeals and sex are used to attract audiences when advertising personal care products especially in this day and age. Moreover, it is also important to look at how the sex appeals differ in terms of appealing to women and men, as well as how consumers are then encouraged to buy products of the brands. There has been a shift in society when it comes to gender ideologies and sex. Therefore, it is important to look at what this shift in society meant for the personal care advertisements. Through qualitative research in form of a visual analysis, combined with Burke's identification, 80 personal care video advertisements between 2010 and 2019 were analyzed. Four main themes were found in regard to personal care brands using sex appeals and sex in order to attract its audience: *overt sexual behaviour,* consisting of the themes: *emphasis on the body, explicit displays of sex, sexual desirability and single lifestyle.* Second, the theme of *socially acceptable displays of sex,* amounting to the themes: *the use of humour sexually suggestive behaviour, reflecting desires and relationship.* The third theme was *traditional persona's,* consisting of: *masculine behaviour* and *submissive partner to men.* The last theme that derived from the analysis was that of *progressive persona's,* containing the themes: *boy-next-door* and *female empowerment.* The research offers the view that advertisements of their personal care industry have tried different strategies when using sexual appeals in order to attract its audience. By promoting identification, advertisements are able to find creative ways to appeal to their audience using sex appeals. The personal care industry has to mediate its sexual imagery in order to attract audiences who are attracted by explicit displays of sex, as well as those who are not. Moreover, a variety of different types of gender role displays were found within the advertisements, which match up with the way contemporary society views the gender roles of men and women nowadays.

KEYWORDS: *identification, sexual appeals, gender roles, advertising, personal care*

TABLE OF CONTENT

Peggy: Sex sells.

Don: Says who? Just so you know, the people who talk that way think that monkeys can do this. They take all this monkey crap and stick it in a briefcase, completely unaware that their success depends on something more than shoeshine. You are the product. You feeling something. That's what sells. Not them. Not sex. They can't do what we do and they hate us for it.

- Mad Men, season 2

1. Introduction

A question often posed by consumers and marketers is whether sex actually sells in advertising. Sex and advertising have become intertwined to one another ever since it was found that using sex is effective when it comes to selling a product (Reichert, 2003). For over 150 years, sexual imagery has been used in advertising (Reichert, 2003). Kacen and Nelson (2002) commented on how advertising is a creator and a mirror of society, therefore the depictions of sex in advertising is interesting as it is a reflection of society. In a world with so much information, marketers are attempting to capture the audience through more and more extreme images (Dahl, Sengupta & Vohs, 2009). A tactic that has been used often in the world of advertising is the images of sex. It draws the consumers attention even if selling products that have nothing to do with sex (Dahl, et al., 2009; Sawang, 2010). Whilst research has indicated that people react negatively towards unnecessary sexual content within advertisement, it still happens (Dahl, et al., 2009). As it is still used, and as consumers react a certain way to the appeals, it is of importance to look at how it is used.

According to Sawang (2010) sexual imagery is actually used in almost any product category from personal-care products to heavy industrial machinery. Furthermore, Reichert, LaTour and Ford (2011) found that the use of this imagery had increased from the 1980's to 2003. They found that sexual imagery was most used in health/hygiene industry, following that, the beauty, drugs/medicine and fashion industry. Moreover, the use of sex has become common for products such cosmetics and perfume (Reichert, et al., 2011). As it is most prevalent in these products, it is interesting to research how these products use sexual imagery to persuade the consumer into buying the product. As Don Draper in Mad Men says, it is not the sex that sells, it is the fact that consumers feel something when looking at that imagery, that it is able to sell a product or service.

Consumers may react differently to the sexual imagery within an ad (Black & Morton, 2017). Multiple researchers already found that men reacted more favourable towards sexual imagery than women in general (Reichert, 2003; Rossi & Rossi, 1985; Black & Morton, 2017). Therefore, one can assume that there is a difference in the way sex is utilized when advertising towards women and men as one favours it more than the other. Taking this and the prevalence of sex into account, it is interesting to understand how this affects the way the personal care industry uses sexual imagery to

attract its audience. Society has begun to shift its ideas in terms of sexuality and sex, with feminist movements calling for more inclusivity and support of all women in the media and society (William & Jovanovic, 2014; Cochrane, 2013). As this discussion continues, it is important to see how the advertising world reflects these ideas as they have begun changing. Furthermore, in terms of men, not a lot of research has been done on their roles in advertising (Grau & Zotos, 2016). By looking in depth at how both men and women are appealed to in personal care advertisements with the use of sex appeals, this could complement other studies.

1.1   Research problem

As society changes, so do the images of sex. In the past decade, research that has been done on the phenomenon was often conducted quantitatively rather than using qualitative methods (King, McClelland, & Furnham, 2015; Dianoux, & Linhart, 2010). King et al. (2015) found that sexual imagery made for better brand recall than non-sexual imagery. While Dianoux and Linhart (2015) found women reacted more negatively towards nudity than men. While these look at the effect of sexual imagery on brands, as well as how audiences perceive it, they do not look at the way sex is used or promised as a benefit of buying the product, which is interesting. Therefore, qualitative research is useful as it has not been done as often and can come to different conclusions.

The use of sex will always be controversial, but also useful as it does grab the audience's attention and make for memorable advertisements (Sawang, 2010; King et al., 2015). As mentioned earlier, one of the most prevalent sectors that use sex appeals in their advertising are that of beauty and health care. Therefore, the research question is as follows:

How does the personal care industry use sex and sexual appeals in advertising to attract their audience?

To answer this question, a visual analysis on video advertisements between 2010 and 2019 will be conducted, which is a qualitative content analysis method. This method of research is relevant as a visual discourse analysis looks at the meanings of images which are implicit, with enough attention the implicit meanings can be revealed, which often serve existing relations of power (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Visual analysis is a combination of sentiment analysis and discourse analysis which often exposes "strategies that appear normal or neutral on the purpose but may be ideological and seek to shape the representation of events and persons for particular ends" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 5). In this case that would mean how the use of sex may seek to shape something within the advertisements which can reflect on society and its ideologies.

Moreover, according to Lambiase and Reichert (2003) empirical research on sex in advertising has been lacking in looking at the meanings and rhetorical arguments constructed in tandem by the advertisements and their audiences. Furthermore, after doing their analysis on sexual

appeals, they found that more research should be done on the nature of sexual appeal. These can also be answered with the use of a visual discourse analysis. Therefore, the following sub-question was formulated:

- *How does the use of sex appeals in advertisements differ when geared towards men and women?*
- *How do sex appeals in advertisements encourage consumers to use the brand?*

1.2   Relevance

As mentioned before, research on the topic of sex in advertising has been conducted extensively. Nonetheless, it is worth researching as there is still a gap within scientific and academic literature.

Research on sexual advertisement was found to be very prominent in the early 2000s. In more recent research, a lot of research has been done on how sexual appeals in advertising affects men and women (Lascu, Marcheva & Thieringer, 2016; Black & Morton, 2017). For instance, Black and Morton (2017) conducted an experiment on how intimate and objectifying sex appeals in advertisements worked on both sexes. They concluded that both men and women preferred intimate appeals, but men were more likely to (Black & Morton, 2017). Furthermore, they also found that overall men had a more positive response on the appeals than women. Lascu et al. (2016) conducted a content analysis on appeals of need, emotion and sex. The study found that the more suggestive the ad was, the more likely it was that it was to be used for attention. It also concluded that the sex appeals were used to create a connection between sexuality and the purchase and ownership of the product (Lascu et al., 2016). Knowing how appeals are evaluated by audiences is important, however it is also important to understand what kind of appeals are used in order to attract the audience in combination with sexual imagery. Moreover, by taking a contemporary view in which sex appeals in personal care is used to attract its audience, one can complement on prior research done on sex appeals. However, it is not just important to know that they are most often used in personal care advertisements, in it also important to understand how they are being used which is why this research is necessary in terms of academic relevance.

Not only does this research have academic relevance, it also has societal relevance. Firstly, sexual appeals are very prominent and widely used in the world of advertising (Morton & Black, 2017). Advertising is everywhere, on your phone, television or when walking down the streets. Advertising reflects society and what they find important (Waugh, 2011), therefore by analysing sexual imagery in advertisements one can conclude how people look at sex and the notions of sex nowadays. Sexual imagery attracts an audience, but it also reflects how the audience looks at it in general, what they find important, and when an advertisement is not done properly, what they do not find important. Furthermore, since the 90's, there have been two feminist waves: the third and fourth.

The third wave lay it importance on sexual agency for young women, thus the recognition of desire, to freely express said desire, and society's acceptance of a variety of sexual practices without negative ramifications (Williams & Javanovic, 2014). The fourth feminist wave, which started in 2012 and is currently happening now, puts its emphasis on battling sexual harassment and supporting intersectional women, thus equality for all women, whether they be of colour or transgender, in particular (Cochrane, 2013). Thus, society has ideologically its gender ideas. It is interesting to see whether these ideological changes have been incorporated into the personal care advertisements when using sex appeals.

2. Theoretical framework

This study bases its research in several theoretical concepts to find out how the personal care industry uses sex and sexual appeals to attract their audience. Firstly, a definition will be given on sex and sexual appeals, as well as how they are used in advertising. The gender differences within sexual advertising will also be discussed. Secondly, an overview will be given on the personal care industry and its use of advertising, afterwards it will be related to sexual appeals within personal care advertising and lastly identification in regard to advertising will be discussed.

2.1. Sex and sexual appeals in advertising

The use of sex appeals is not limited to one market, it is a popular strategy due to the belief that sex sells (Ekici, Erdogan & Basil, 2020). Most people probably have certain images in mind when they consider sexual imagery in advertising. Women and heterosexual couples are found to be most shown when using sexual appeals in advertising (Wirtz, Sparks & Zimber, 2018). While the imagery can vary in what it looks like, Reichert and Carpenter (2003, p. 824) defined sexual appeals in advertising as "the mediated messages containing sexual information with the persuasive purpose of selling branded goods". Sexual appeals are featured in a lot of different ways within advertising and it is mostly used as a persuasive tool. Advertisers use sexual appeals in order to increase the consumers' awareness and emotional arousal, as well as to strengthen brand interests and attitudes (Choi, Yoo, Reichert & Northup, 2020). Though, the use of sex appeals may be deemed to be controversial, audiences are attracted to the idea and have better memory recall of the ad due to it (King et al., 2015; Wirtz, et al., 2018).

Wirtz, et al. (2018, p. 168) defined sex appeals as "a persuasion attempt that uses words, images, and/or actions by models appearing in advertisements to deliver explicit and implicit sexual messages to evoke sexual thoughts, feelings and/or arousal in a target audience". Sex in advertising comes in different forms and is often defined in terms of nudity and sexual explicitness (Petruvu, 2008). Nudity refers to the style and number of clothing worn by the models in the advertisement. It is often models (mostly female) that wear progressively less clothing, from modest, to suggestive to being partially nude (Petruvu, 2008). Sexual explicitness also comes in different forms, the most prevailing themes being explicit verbal, such as sexual innuendos and more important, visual elements of sexual nature, such as partial nudity and suggestive positioning (Petruvu, 2008; Wirtz, et al., 2018).

Soley and Reid (1988, as cited in Reichert et al., 2012) used four categories in order to stratify the amount of sexual explicitness in an ad. While Petruvu (2008) gave a clear understanding on what sexual explicitness looks like in advertising most often, the categories Soley and Reid (1988, as cited in Reichert et al., 2012) show how this can be conceptualized in terms of an analysis. These do relate to the amount of nudity within an advertisement. These categories being: (1) demure; (2) suggestive; (3); partially clad and (4) nude. Demure would be defined as "everyday dress". Suggestive dress was

clothing that partially showed the upper body, this could be an unbuttoned blouse, miniskirts, and very short shorts. Partially clad models were often shown in either underwear or swimwear. Furthermore, the suggestion of nudity was also classified as nude, such as a woman having a towel draped over her body. Garcia and Yang (2006) found that perceived nudity, as well as with a swimsuit or topless models, were more attention grabbing than only showing the product.

The final common form of sex appeals within advertisements are sexual innuendos. Sexual innuendo is an appeal that uses words, images and actions of models to deliver a subtle message that can be interpreted as both sexual and non-sexual (Wirtz et al., 2018). One thing that is important to note when it comes to sexual innuendo's, is that the receiver of the ad needs to understand that it is an innuendo, otherwise the advertisement is not effective.

In order to conduct an analysis, it is important to have defined categories which can be easily used when coding. Now that sexual imagery in advertising is defined, this study can use Petruvu's (2008) explicit explanation of what it means for an advertisement to have sexual content and what it looks like in order to select the advertisements for the analysis. However, for the coding process Soley and Reid's (1988) categories will be used as it is extensive and could therefore be applied to the sexual nature of the advertisement as it enfolds all the possibilities of how sexual explicitness is used in advertisements. As the categories are clearly defined, it can help with avoiding bias within the advertisement. This research a contemporary approach to theory that has long been used when researching sexual appeals in advertising, to derive new themes from it in order to understand the use of sexual appeals in personal care advertisements nowadays. Choi et al. (2020) stated that since the 1960s there has been a steady increase in the use of sex appeals in advertisements which are prevalent in magazine, television and online. The sexual nature of explicitness of sex could have changed in the last years. Furthermore, three types of sex appeals were identified, these being: sexual implicitness and explicitness, nudity and sexual innuendo. These can be used to describe what type is being used in the advertisements.

2.1.1   Gender differences and the view on sex in advertising

Sex is a common and often used tool in advertising, as stated before. Women and men both react differently towards the appeals. As the biological and psychological needs of men and women are different, the effectiveness of a sex appeal is gender related (Liu et al., 2009). Research has also looked at whether women and men would respond differently to sexual appeals given contemporary trends in both sexes towards sexual permissive behaviour and attitudes (Ketelaar, Anschutz, & van Hemmen, 2015, as cited in Wirtz et al., 2018). From this perspective it can be concluded that it is useful to look at gender differences. Advertisers possibly also use different methods in order to persuade them as both genders react differently towards them. In terms of sexual imagery, most of the advertisements feature women sexually, rather than man, even if both the genders were in the same advertisement (Reichert, 2002; Reichert & Lambiase, 2003; Choi et al., 2020). Women were more

likely to be sexually objectified within advertisements as well (Choi, Yoo, Reichert & LaTour, 2016). However, society's views have changed, especially due to the third and fourth feminist wave, which emphasizes intersectional feminism and the acceptance of women's sexuality (Williams & Jovanovic, 2015; Grady, 2018). Intersectional feminism is the phenomenon of different forms of oppression intersecting, in which it also includes the support of queer, sex-positive, trans-inclusive and body positive stances (Grady, 2018). This could mean that sexual imagery in advertisements could look different as it could show transsexual women or even levelling out the field and having a lot of men being featured sexually.

Reichert and Ramirez (2000) found that women put emphasis on contextual features, intimacy and behaviour in sexual advertising, while men favour physical features and attractiveness in sexual advertising. In a more recent study, it was found that women take a relational-based attitude towards sexuality in advertisements, a view that puts its emphasis on intimacy and commitment in sexual relationships (Dahl, Sengupta & Vohs, 2009). Lanseng (2016) presented a more nuanced view by saying that women's attitude was influenced by whether the sexual imagery was related to the product or not. Thereby considering the brand to be less favourable if the setting of the advertisement involved commitment. Lanseng (2016) found that women with heightened commitment thoughts would find a mismatch between the product and the sexual content. Moreover, Witz et al. (2018) concluded that female models were often interpreted as intra-sex mating competition, therefore women react less positively towards the sex appeals in advertisements. Based on the aforementioned, this could mean that women do not think that commitment and sex appeals work together, as women often take a relational-based attitude when evaluating sexual imagery and value sex as something meaningful and important.

Men on the other hand, have a more relatively recreational attitude towards sexual imagery in which the emphasis lies on physical gratification and sex as the best outcome (DeLamater, 1987; Hill, 2002, as cited in Dahl, et al., 2009). This is a logical consequence as Reichert (2012) found that men evaluated an advertisement more positively as nudity and sexual explicitness increased, while women view these to be more offensive. However, Black and Morton (2017) somewhat disagreed with this finding as they found that men also preferred intimate appeals over objectifying ones when being exposed to both. Black and Morton (2017) did find that men were more positive in their evaluations of objective appeals than women in general when looking evaluating advertisements. As the attitudes of men and women are different, it would mean that advertisers would more likely appeal to women in a relational way, but it does not mean that men only like images sexual objectifying appeals.

This study aims to look at how the personal care industry attracts both men and women when using sexual appeals in their advertising. From these perspectives it can be concluded that there seem to be several ways women and men prefer to be appealed to when using sexual appeals. Different studies come to different conclusions in regard to how to use sexual appeals best when appealing to

different sexes, such as using intimate appeals or objectifying appeals. Therefore, it is interesting to find out which strategies of appeals the advertising industry uses and how it appeals to the audience.

2.2   Personal care industry and advertising

To fully understand how the personal care industry uses sexual imagery in order to attract its audience, the industry first needs to be looked at with more depth. According to the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) (2016), people often use the term "personal care products" to refer to a variety of items that can be found in the health and beauty section of pharmacies and department stores, however, the term is not defined by law. Personal care products fall into different categories: some products that fall under the category of personal care products are cosmetics, these being products such as skin moisturizers, perfumes, toothpaste, deodorant etcetera (FDA, 2016). Other personal care products may fall under the drug category: these being products such as lip balms, mouthwashes, antiperspirants, acne, etcetera (FDA, 2016). There is also a small amount of personal care products which fall under the category of medical devices, dietary supplements or other consumer products, meaning 'personal care' is quite broad. A more simplified definition of personal care could also be: products that are intended to "be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on, introduced into or otherwise applied to any part of the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness or altering the appearance, and any item intended for use as a component of any such article" (Law Insider, n.d.). As the FDA definition is quite broad, the simplified definition works better for this study as it is more direct and concise. Seeing as the industry is undefined, this study aims to look at literature on the beauty industry and the health/drug industry as more research has been done on these topics. As stated by the FDA, health care and beauty products are part of the personal care industry, therefore it makes sense to use research on those topics for this study.

Usually beauty advertisements tend to manipulate the consumer to a certain degree into believing that whatever is advertised is considered to be true (Kaur, Arynygam & Yunus, 2013). Ads for both men and women tend to show a specific body ideal, for men this is often a mesomorphic body type, with defined muscles, low body fat and a v-shaped upper body while the ideal body type for women is often being thin (Diedrichs & Lee, 2010). This is also of importance in sexual advertisements as one of the appeals is nudity. However, the general population has slowly become larger and not many people can relate themselves to the models within the advertisements (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). Even in research conducted later, it was shown that the overflowing amount of advertisements still picture skinny women, rather than a wide variety of body shapes and looks (Pounders, 2018).

Within the health industry, it is important that advertisers understand that the imagery within the advertisement needs to match up with the desire of healthiness already (Bjerke & Polegato, 2006). This could be done through positive framing, which is less risky for brands, in which consumers are persuaded to maintain their health status or improve their health status through the use of that

particular product (Chang, 2007). However, it could also be done using negative framing, which come with higher risks, in which consumers are faced with a potential loss if not buying the product (Chang, 2007). The interplay between the two framing types and sexual appeals can give interesting conclusions as sex appeals are often shown as something positive, such as it being the most preferable outcome (Black & Morton, 2017). Moreover, consumers want to match an idea to their identity through the use and purchase of products (Bjerke & Polegato, 2006).

It is not just oneself that is a determinant factor for what kind of advertisements brands are making in terms of personal care, but also societal perceptions. Based on the theory, one could say that advertisers should be able to attract its audience in multiple ways, such as framing the message positively or negatively, and showing diverse images of models. Seeing as sex is quite controversial, it would be interesting to look at how advertisements were framed as it could be framed both positively and negatively as well as what kind of body types are often used. Therefore, the literature will be used for the data analysis, as well as which body type is featured often within the advertisements.

2.2.1 *Personal care geared towards women and advertising*

The consumption of beauty products has been mostly confined to women, it also is a construct that varies in different cultures and changes overtime (Souiden & Diagne, 2009; Frith, Shaw & Cheng, 2005). Most research has been done on how beauty advertisements pushing for an idealized body affect both female and male consumers, however not much research has been done on what kind of tactics advertisers use in order to persuade the consumers (Brown & Knight, 2015; Gurari, Hetts & Strube, 2006).

In general, the beauty industry is known to make claims that certain products can make you look better (Brown & Knight, 2015). Beauty advertisements offer the perfect medium to promote a certain beauty ideal (Frith et al., 2005). The beauty industry often selects women that are attractive and thin as this imagery should be able to positively influence the consumers in order to buy the product or brand (Antioco, Smeesters & Le Boedec, 2012). Images of youth and beauty dominate beauty advertisements and often times they also put emphasis on bodily perfections (Brown & Knight, 2015). These are shown often through sex in which models pose in provocative manner and revealing clothing (Reichert, 2002).

Moreover, often advertisements claim well-being and happiness from using the personal care product (Frith et al., 2005). However, findings indicate that these images of skinny models do influence the consumer implicit self-evaluations negatively, meaning the image they had of oneself was negatively influenced by the images of idealized bodies in beauty advertisements (Gurari et al., 2006). As such, the visual images contradict the message of well-being and happiness. Kees, Becker-Olsen, and Mitric (2008) also agreed with this finding, however, their research also indicated that female college students appeared to prefer beauty advertisements which featured a thin model, rather

than a regular-sized one and were more likely to purchase that product if the model was thin. This could explain why advertisers still use thin women in their advertisements, as it is more accepted by consumers.

Beauty advertisements are known to not be diverse, scholars all around have found that there is a need for diversity within advertisements (Jang & Lee, 2009; Pounders, 2018). Moreover, diverse images of women bodies within personal care should not be to make a statement, such as Dove's *"Campaign for Real Beauty"*, it should be embedded into the advertisements, making the images normal (Pounders, 2018). Furthermore, consumers do want to fight against these impossible standards and are happy when brands do show diverse images of beauty (Millard, 2009). However, Stone (2017) came to a troubling conclusion it which only thin women were sexualized. It is widely known that advertisements shape beauty standards, but women still feel the need to compare the compare themselves to the models within the advertisements even knowing that often times those images are edited (Millard, 2009). If women with different body types cannot compare themselves to images when using sex appeals, this is quite troubling and potentially harmful.

Visuals and language also play a vital role in advertisements to attract their audience (Kaur, et al. 2013). Moeran (2010) concluded that the language within advertisements was used as a "spell", in which the power was derived from saying the words in a special context, making it seem unique. Often, the language within the advertisements zoom in on one particular body part or mention the benefit a product has on a body part without saying which, to entice and persuade the consumer (Moeran, 2010). Thus, using sexually suggestive images to appeal to the audience. Indeed, advertisements push for transformations turning them into spells since most advertisements suggest that women can achieve results with minimal effort (Kilyeni, 2012). Moreover, Kilyeni (2012) complemented Moeran's (2010) theory, by finding that beauty advertisements both explicitly and implicitly promoted products that could transform the audience for the better or help her become better in her gender identity within their use of language. This also relates to how often sexual provocative language is used in advertisements (Petruvu, 2008), as this could also be used as a spell in order to appeal to the audience.

Especially with the sexual advertising, it becomes important to reflect what society looks like, as not only consumers with the ideal body image see and react to sexual appeals. As sexual advertising often only shows unrealistic standards of beauty and thinness for women (Kozhouharova, 2017). This could potentially affect a brand or how often sexual appeals are used nowadays. Moreover, as bodies are displayed so often in advertisements involving sexual content, should it not reflect the general population? Through this study, the advertisements will be observed to see whether it reflects society's need for more diversity within bodies.

2.2.2 *Personal care geared towards men and advertising*

While there is an abundance of research of women's care products and advertising. Less research has been done on men's care products in advertising, while there has been an increasing demand for male beauty products (Souiden & Diagne, 2009). In 2015, it was found that within the Western market, 30 percent of the market consisted of male skin care products (Souiden & Dagne, 2009; Scheibling & Lafrance, 2019). No longer is it focused on just grooming in terms of shaving, it has increased into products such as cleansers, moisturizers and more (Souiden & Dagne, 2009). Moreover, there has been an increase in male care advertisements (Souiden & Dagne, 2009). Sarwono and Fayardi (2018) also found that within male personal care advertising, they were creating a false need. A product is then bought not because it is necessary, but it did satisfy a need or status that could be obtained when using the product (Sarwono & Fayardi, 2018). Men used to not need a face cleanser, but suddenly in this day and age it was necessary. Based on that, this research provides an approach that brands are able to persuade women and men in the same way it by creating a need that is not there.

Advertisements showing these male care products, did not necessarily reflect the traditional icon of men's masculinity (Souiden & Dagne, 2009), even though Diederichs & Lee (2010) did find that most advertisements still showed men with this ideal. However, Diederichs and Lee's (2010) looked mostly at men's lifestyle magazines which show a broader range of advertisements for men. Godeo (2005) discussed the visual discourse on masculinity in male perfume advertisements, he found that television and the press bring great contributions to discourses which are reflected within the advertisements in terms of masculinity (Godeo, 2005). He developed the concept of the 'new man' in which it renounces the hegemonic constructs of masculinity and incorporates new masculine identities which are closer to femininity in which men care more about their personal appearance, as well as their commitment to women (Godeo, 2005). Men are using personal care items while maintaining their muscular identities (Souiden & Dagne, 2009).

While the imagery of the male body in advertising has been monotonous as shown by Souiden and Dagne (2009), research did show that masculinity has become more negotiable. Men have become able to negotiate their masculinity in terms of personal care, Diederichs and Lee (2010) concluded that if the advertisement featured a man who was overly concerned about his appearance, male consumers would react more negatively towards it as they deemed the advertisement to be too feminine, or homosexual. This was also confirmed by Scheibling and Lafrance (2019), in which they stated that hegemonic masculinity has gone through a change, both progressive and regressive. Progressive meaning that there should be more equality between both genders, while regressive consumers calling for going back to a time where roles between men and women are more distinct and defined. It is to be understood that there still should be a balance to negotiating their masculinity, as some featured could be unpleasant and discomforting for the male consumer. Brands need to therefore find a balance in advertising a product in order to create a need, without showing a model

which is too concerned about his appearance. Sexual appeals could be useful as these could help males in negotiating being manly and using a personal care product.

In terms of the discourse within the advertisements in personal care products for men, that it uses language that men can identify with, relating to sports for example (Harrison, 2008). Harrison (2008) researched the discourse on male mascara. The study also found that advertisements would position products that could improve the male body without creating a feminine look (Harrison, 2008). Again, this goes back to how men need to negotiate their masculinity and do not want to be too feminine (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). This is also reaffirmed by Scheibling and Lafrance (2019) in which they state that advertisements man's grooming ads construct their advertisements in a hybrid and flexible way. They combine hard language with softer body aesthetics, men are showed to be both hard working but also still caring.

The negotiation of masculinity seems to be of importance in male's personal care advertisements, not only for the consumers themselves, but also for advertisers. In order to be able to attract the male consumer, it seems that advertisements should be able to reflect a man's masculine side and showing that caring for themselves is not too feminine. Sex appeals geared towards men often emphasize more and better sex (Reichert & Lambiase, 2003). The importance of sex is key to masculinity (Scharrer & Blackburn, 2018). Therefore, this may mediate the message of the personal care advertisement as it shows the importance of sex through sex appeals. Through this study, one is able to find out whether this strategy is used most often, or if advertisers have found a different way to attract its audience.

2.3   Personal care industry and sexual imagery in advertising
Advertisers within the beauty industry have been criticized for the abundance of negative and/or gratuitously sexy images of women in advertising, especially when directed towards the male audience (Jones, Stanaland & Gelb, 1998, as cited in Taylor et al., 2013). These sex appeals are also found with personal care related advertisements that aim to persuade women to buy goods or services (Taylor et al., 2013).

Bazzini, Pepper, Swofford and Cochran (2015) found that within women and men's health magazines, men were more often objectified within the images than women. They also did find that women's bodies were more often more sexualized than men, with women being shown partially nude more often than men (Bazzani et al., 2015). However, their research did not look at product advertising, but at magazine covers op men's and women's health magazines. Reichert et al. (2012) also concluded this in his research when research with 43% of 51% beauty advertisements showing visual sexual imagery of women. One can therefore conclude that not only are women shown more sexually in health magazines, but also in beauty advertisements. That being said, Reichert et al. (2012) found that only a small percentage of health advertisers featured sexual content, as it is often more focused on the health benefits. Furthermore, in advertisements for products such as shampoo or

shower gels, men and women are often showed to be (partly) nude, these images are not overt, but more done in convenience.

Jung and Lee (2009) looked at beauty advertisements in the United States and Korea. They found that within the United States women in beauty advertisements were often found to be submissive and decorative. Seemingly, female objectification is still very apparent in Western culture. Taylor et al. (2013) findings also indicated that sex appeals were used often in beauty advertisements, especially when targeting young adults. Moreover, in beauty advertisements there was great emphasis on sexuality and women were often portrayed with high levels of nudity (Jung & Lee, 2009).

In a research by Reichert et al. (2011), it was found that advertisements of perfume with extreme nudity did not have a positive effect on consumers, unless the consumers were high sensation seekers, as well as those who were comfortable with their sexuality. While, Wirtz et al. (2017) concluded that sexual appeals did work well on products such as perfumes as people could recall them more easily and recognized them more easily. However, this is also difficult to compare as Reichert et al. (2011) looked at the effect on the consumer's own perception, whilst Wirtz et al. (2017) studied what it did to their recall. This could still mean that consumers would react negatively towards the advertisements, but still recall it easier as the imagery was more captivating for example.

As seen, there are several different outcomes in scholarly researches on sex appeals used in personal care advertisement as some scholars conclude that it useful, while others indicate that it not useful. Furthermore, women are still being objectified within advertisements. This does not fit today's image in which women increasingly protest against street harassment, sexual harassment and body shaming (Cochrane, 2013). Therefore, by researching 10 years of advertising, one can conclude whether this still apparent and whether it has to be changed.

2.4   Identification and advertising

Burke's identification can describe what advertisements do very well, as rhetoric was not about winning a discussion, but about making a connection (Davis, 2008). Woodward (2003) describes that Burke's identification as "creating spikes of decisive recognition that can bind us to specific sources, while affirming the boundaries of our own recognised world" (p.5).

It is with advertisements that one seeks to convince someone of the power of the product and thus, make a connection. Moreover, Burke agreed with Aristotle in that the basic function of rhetoric is persuasion (Davis, 2008). While Burke's identification is often used in rhetorical analysis, the framework is helpful in considering how advertisements persuade their audience using sexual appeals when doing a visual analysis. As stated, before advertising is known to be persuasive, therefore Burke's theory of identification is applicable to the study of sex in advertisements. Burke also argues that persuasion is very condition that makes it possible to perform identification (Davis, 2008). Burke's identification can be applied to study sex in advertisements, as these advertisements present information and provoke action that will bring the audience together for a common cause, rather than

targeting them on their unique character traits. Moreover, as sex appeals in advertising are used as mostly a persuasive tool, one can therefore conclude that its due to its persuasive nature that people perform identification and therefore are persuaded by it. Furthermore, being able to identify with the model or the context of the advertisement is important (Bjerke & Polegato, 2006).

An important aspect of identification is associated with how symbols are interpreted by people in order to promote identification. Burke identified three kinds of identification, these symbolic systems are used and perceived by human beings: mechanical, analogical and ideological (Woodward, 2003).

Firstly, with mechanical identification, Burke looks at the mechanical linkages between the symbol and its socially accepted meaning of it (Woodward, 2003). In society, people make associations to specific cues, these may be accidental, but have over time obtained a certain weight of conventional meaning (Woodward, 2003, p. 29). Furthermore, it does not require any critical thinking as the association is made on presumed ideas already in one's mind as these are shaped by previous experiences to interpret the world around us (Woodward, 2003; Antunes, 2010). In terms of sexual imagery in advertising this would mean that explicit sexual imagery directly attracts people that feel sex sells.

Analogical identification is described as "where terms are transformed from one order to another" (Woodward, 2003, p. 30). This means that analogical identification happens when moving a symbol from its usual context to a more creative uncommon kind of context, and thus create a new meaning (Woodward, 2003). There is a limitless amount of plasticity in language and humans have a way of finding new perspectives in the inconsistencies created by symbolic meanings that otherwise make no sense (Woodward, 2003). In terms of sexual imagery in advertising this would mean that a consumer may think about sex through some associations and if attracted to that idea, they associate the image with sex and can identify themselves with the product.

Lastly, there is ideological identification, in which "clusters of terms or symbols are derived from the same generating principle, hence embodying it" (Woodward, 2003, p. 31). This is the most abstract of the other kinds of identification. Ideological identification happens when a complete system, or clusters of symbols, are created to symbolize a big idea that is used to order other signs (Antunes, 2010). In terms of sexual imagery in advertising, that would mean that the advertisements reflect what is thought about sex in society. Thereby, identifying with it, or dissociating with it.

The power of analogical and ideological identification lies in the fact that analogical associations is able to reframe ideas, meaning individuals have never thought of a concept in such way before, while ideological associations rename ideas, as it provides a consistent vocabulary of motives for action that once seemed inconsistent (Woodward, 2003). The kinds of identification of are useful in looking at the rhetoric as identification of advertising as the brands within these use these identification strategies in order to move a crowd towards some action, and in the end persuade to buy a product.

In terms of identification, the audience that is being looked at men and women between 18 and 24 years old, as advertisements using sex appeals usually target and appeal these consumers (Liu, Cheng & Li, 2009). Moreover, Liu et al. (2009) found that women had a less favourable attitude towards highly sexual imagery of women than men, meaning they were not able to identify with the ads as women are usually attracted towards the opposite gender and would like to see this reflected in advertisements. These ads want to prompt a certain behaviour from the consumers that fall within the target audience as they are able to identify to a certain extend with it (Lambiase & Reichert, 2004). Furthermore, different identification kinds could be utilized for men or women.

If advertisers use the strategies by Burke to identify with the audience, they should have a successful advertising campaign as they are able to create common ground with its audience. As mentioned before, identification is key in order to have a successful advertising campaign as consumers need to be able to relate to the model and the use of the product (Bjerke & Polegato, 2006). Thus, this research aims to identify whether these techniques are used as through these they can move their audience.

3. Methodology

The following chapter is dedicated to the methodology used within this research. Firstly, a detailed description of the research design will be given, as well as the method of analysis, this being a visual analysis. After this, the operationalization of the research will be discussed, in which it is shown which concepts are used and in which manner. The data analysis will also be described, and lastly, the validity and reliability of the research will be stated.

3.1   Research Design

To gain a deeper understanding on the research topic, a visual discourse analysis will be performed. This is qualitative approach to look at the data. In general, is able to provide deeper meanings behind data as such it aims to interpret meaningful relations (Brennen, 2013). There are several advantages to doing a qualitative research. It interpretative in its nature, as well as suitable to examine a phenomenon it its natural surroundings and occurring over a period of time (Snape & Spencer, 2003). As this research is looking at advertisements through the years of 2010 – 2019, it is best to use qualitative research as it is looking at the phenomenon of sexual appeals that have been occurring over a specific period of time. Moreover, this research is looking at how brands use sexual imagery in advertisements, these need to be observed in their natural environment, which can be done best with a visual analysis as the advertisements are being watched. Additionally, a qualitative approach to a research is the most appropriate to answer questions that seek exploration, explanation and understanding (Snape & Spencer, 2003), therefore this method works most effectively as the research question seeks to explore and interpret sexual imagery in personal care products and how they are used.

    As this research seeks to investigate how discourse in ads involve people's construction of meanings, it is quite descriptive in its nature, making a qualitative approach more useful than a quantitative. As mentioned before a visual analysis often shows implicit meanings which serve existing relations of power (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The aim of this study is to find out what attracts audiences when the personal care industry uses sexual appeals in advertising. Through the use of the visual discourse analysis one can find out how implicit meanings are related to underlying beliefs. By looking at advertisements that feature sexual appeals, one can see how and why they use these appeals to appeal to their audience, as well as the changes it has made throughout the years.

    This chapter focuses on the conceptualization of visual analysis by looking at visual analysis in more depth, as well as explaining why it is appropriate for this research. It also will provide a detailed explanation of how data is collected and analysed.

3.1.1 Visual analysis

Visual analysis looks at how visual communication, as well as language, both shaped and is shaped by society (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The sexual imagery used in advertisements both shape society and is shaped by society, finding the underlying meanings within these advertisements therefore become interesting. Moreover, Machin and Mayr (2012) stated that within this analysis power relationships are assumed to be discursive. Therefore, it is important to study how power relations are exercised and negotiated. Especially in sex, there often is a display of power dynamics which can be researched in more depth. People tend to play a certain role in the power structure of sex. One can see a basic power dynamic between partners in a relationship as some partners tend to be more submissive, while the other is more dominant (Skurtu, 2016).

The process of 'meaning-making through language, body language, visual images, or any other way of signifying' is an unchangeable part of life (Fairclough, 2001, p. 229, as cited in Thomas 2004). Due to recent technological developments there has been a transformation in the relationship of language and other forms of semiosis, such as visual images, resulting in a more fluid relationship between words, sounds and images. Therefore, all texts are multimodal, and they make meaning through several semiotic modes (Thomas, 2004; Machin & Mayr, 2012). Machin and Mayr (2012) also stated that the production of meaning through language can be enhanced by visual language, as it is able to provide a more in-depth view of how an interplay between language and semiotics bring out the how and the why of communication. This becomes especially interesting when the scope of research is advertisements, which means to sell something to the consumer and how language and semiotics is used in advertisements in order to communicate.

Upon doing research, it was found that there is a lack of discourse analysis which is one of the elements of visual analysis on sexual imagery in advertisements. While critical discourse has been done on sex in advertisements, it often looks at consumer responses of this (Elliot, Jones, Benfield & Barlow, 1995). They found that consumers were often concerned about the power dynamics between men and women in these advertisements, while this is interesting, it does not look at why this is done and how it is done. Meaning, what are the implicit meanings of these advertisements? Moreover, this research is from 1995, meaning it is quite outdated. In a visual discourse analysis on beauty advertisements by Kaur et al. (2013) it was found that the beauty industry used several strategies to manipulate women, as well as making women believe that what is advertised is true. These findings can be appropriate for this study as well. However, as this research focuses on sexual appeals in advertisements, rather than beauty advertisements geared towards women in general, findings could be different, and more specific as this study looks at one certain category of advertisement. Therefore, it can broaden the spectrum of what is already found by Kaur et al. (2013). Kaur et al. (2013) also did not include men in their research, as care for the male body has become increasingly more popular, it would be appropriate to research this as well.

That being said, print and video advertisements may use different strategies to manipulate consumers. Both Elliot et al. (1995) and Kaur et al. (2013) used print advertisements. However, Nelson and Peak (2008) stated that that nudity in commercials, especially with primetime television, differ from print advertisements, as there are mainstream audiences such as children who could easily see the content, as well as there being regulations to what can be broadcasted on television. Moreover, little attention has been given to video advertisements that use sex appeals, therefore this study would like to acknowledge the importance of visuals in advertising and sex appeals in personal care brands and aims to include video analysis to the discursive construction of advertising.

Much of the meanings of the visuals in advertisements lie at the implicit level, meaning it cannot be observed directly. Therefore, only by paying enough attention these implicit meanings can be revealed, these meanings often serve existing relations of power (Machin & Mayr, 2012). To find these implicit meanings Machin & Mayr (2012) created a framework of tools to find them more easily. As there is not one specific framework which can be used in order to research the discourse of advertising, it is useful to use Machin & Mayr's (2012) framework. Furthermore, as it has been used often, this would also mean that it is a reliable method. These categories will be discussed in a later section.

3.2   Sampling and data collection

In order to answer the research question and sub questions this study would be collecting 80 video advertisements, for either television or the digital, in order to find out how the personal care industry uses sex and sexual appeals to attract their audience. Using the rules of qualitative content analysis of videos, 30 to 40 videos needed to be analysed which were between 3 to 5 minutes (*Methodological Guidelines Thesis Research, September 2019-2020)*. However, as advertisements are often shorter due to wanting to capture the attention of its audience, this research analyses 80 videos instead as the advertisements were mostly between 30 seconds and 2,5 minutes. By doubling the number of analysed videos, saturation could be reached in a more meaningful way. Moreover, of the unit of analysis, video advertisements, because several studies have already been conducted using print advertisements. In the case of this study, video advertisements were also easier to obtain as there was no archive to be found on print advertisements from the early 2010s.

Through the use of purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling method which conforms to certain critera (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007), the units of analysis were selected. These were done according to the researcher's knowledge of the population, the elements of the sample and the purpose of the study, from which the researcher can judge which units work best for the analysis (Babbie, 2011).

Several platforms could be found in which video advertisements were uploaded, such as Adforum and YouTube, thus these platforms were used to obtain the advertisements. Through the use of quota sampling the relevant characteristics were found to describe the dimensions of the population

(Adams et al., 2007). Therefore, of the total 80 advertisements were analysed, half of the advertisements (40) chosen for this research were ads targeting men and the other half (40) were geared towards women, as the advertisement industry may use sexual appeals in different forms to attract men and women. According to the theory mentioned before, it was found that different appeals do work differently on men and women, therefore it is interesting to look at whether different strategies are applied to appeal to the audience. Furthermore, this research decided to focus on ads geared towards consumers between the ages of 18 – 24. The reason for this is sexual appeals are most prevalent in advertisements targeting young consumers between the 18 and 24 (Reichert, 2003; Lui, Cheng, & Li, 2009). Therefore, products such as anti-aging creams will not be included as these are mostly geared to men or women who are over the age of 24.

As a lot of research has been done on sexual appeals in advertisements around the 90s and the beginning of 2000 (Reichert & Carpenter, 2004; Reichert & Ramirez, 2000; Reichert et al., 2012), this study will focus on ads between 2010 and 2019, for it is less explored and thus should be looked at in more depth. Thus, of each year there will be 10 advertisements analysed, with four of them being geared towards men and 4 of them being geared towards women. In the end, making that 80 advertisements. They will be selected on the premise of whether they are advertise personal care products, meaning they are intended to "be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on, introduced into or otherwise applied to any part of the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness or altering the appearance, and any item intended for use as a component of any such article" (Law Insider, n.d.). Thus, products such as shavers, daily creams, make up, parfums, aftershave, shower products fall into this definition. Moreover, the research intended to have a stratify these products in an even way as to minimize biases.

The brands were chosen by looking at Statista's (2019; 2016) list of leading personal care brands worldwide as well as Technavio's (2019) list of top cosmetics brands. These, in no particular order falling under the companies of L'Oreal Paris, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Beiersdorf, Estee Lauder, Shiseido, Coty, Johnson & Johnson, LVMH and Shiseido. Moreover, brands such as Chanel, Marc Jacobs, Paco Rabbane, Dolce & Gabbana, Hugo Boss and Armani are also included as they are the top selling brands in The USA and the UK (CNBC, 2016; Fragrance Direct, 2019). As these brands are popular worldwide, they cater to the Western countries as well. Due to globalization, marketing teams now create standardized campaigns in their head offices in the U.S. or Europe and distribute them all over the world, with small modifications such as translations (Frith et al., 2005). Moreover, in similar models are more likely to be standardized (Nelson & Peak, 2008). Thus, they are appealing to multiple markets by the use of one advertisement, with small modifications. Moreover, according to Nelson and Peak (2008) standardisation of advertising occurs often in terms of background context and spokespersons. Therefore, the advertisements chosen for this study all gear towards a Western audience and can be more easily standardized.

Thus,the purposive and quota sampling criterion were as followed:

(1) 80 personal care advertisements broadcasted between 2010-2019;

(2) Of which 40 personal care advertisements targeted the male audience;

(3) And 40 personal care advertisements targeted the female audiences;

(4) The advertisements were geared towards a Western audience.

3.3   Operationalisation

The concepts discussed within this section will be used in qualitative manner, and do not only count for what is happening in each ad. They are also used to illustrate certain phenomena which happen throughout all the advertisements.

For the initial coding process, it was important to look at the which types of sexual appeals are used within the advertisements. These are a combination of different theories proposed by Petruvu (2008) and Reichert (2002). The latter theory, which discusses sexual innuendo, is also used in Wirtz, Sparks and Zimbres (2018), therefore they can still be applied to this research. The types and its description are presented in table 1.

Table 3.1

Types of sex appeals

Sexual implicitness and explicitness	Overt or implied behaviour that demonstrate sexual activity, interest or availability, with implicitness being more suggestive and explicitness being directly apparent
Nudity	The amount of clothing that a model does or does not wear in an advertisement
Sexual innuendo	Using words, images and/or actions of models to deliver certain messages that can be interpreted as having a sexual meaning and non-sexual meaning

In terms of nudity, Soley and Reid (1988) proposed the stratification of sexual explicitness of models. While these levels were proposed several years ago, it is still being used in research often such as in Reichert et al. (2011) and Wirtz et al. (2018). The levels of sexual explicitness of models and its description will be explained in table 2.

Table 3.2

Levels of sexual explicitness of models in advertisements

Demure dress	Everyday dress, non-sexual

Suggestive dress	Clothing that partially exposes the upper body, such as unbuttoned blouses, miniskirts, and very short shorts
Partially clad	Underwear or bathing suits
Nude	Nudity, but also the suggestion of nudity, such as in silhouette or models covered in a towel

Two types of attitudes were also identified in what women and men prefer when it comes to the sexual appeals used in advertisements. These two attitudes will be used on a more interpretive level.

Relational-based attitude as proposed by Reichert and Ramirez (2000), which Black and Morton (2017) call the *intimate appeal*, in which an advertisement puts more emphasis on commitment and intimacy in sexual relationships.

Recreational attitude as proposed by Reichert and Ramirez (2000) but coined by Black and Morton (2017) as the *objectifying appeal,* in which an advertisement puts emphasis on physical gratification and sex as the best outcome.

In regard to the Motivation techniques for the usage personal care products, several theories will be combined for the initial coding process by Chang (2007) and Diedrichs and Lee (2010). In table 3 the types of motivations and the description will be defined.

Table 3.3

Motivation techniques for the usage of personal care products

Motivating through men's ideal body type	Muscled, low body fat and a v-shaped upper body
Motivating through female's ideal body type	Skinny body
Motivating through positive framing	Benefits of purchasing promoted product
Motivating through negative framing	Potential loss if not buying promoted product

Lastly, Burke's types identification will be used to code the data. The types and description will be shown in Table 4. However, Burke's kinds of identification will be used when doing the axial coding as the analysis has then identified the open codes and look for the relationship between the codes.

Table 3.4

Burke's identification

Mechanical	Explicit sexual imagery directly attracting people that feel like sex sells.

Analogical	A consumer may think about sex through some associations and if attracted to that idea, they associate the image with sex and can identify themselves with the product.
Ideological	The advertisements reflect what is thought about sex in society. Thereby, identifying with it, or dissociating with it. E.g. gender roles in terms of sex.

3.4   Data Analysis

After collecting the 80 video advertisements, the advertisements will be transcribed both visually and verbally in as much detail as possible with the assistance of the visual analysis techniques. After transcribing the advertisements, the coding process will be done with the assistance of Atlas.ti, this is beneficial as the program is able to code both images and text. This should be beneficial in finding the key themes of the advertisements.

In order to code the dataset, Machin & Mayr (2012) tools for visual analysis will be used. These tools can guide the research towards themes which may explain how the personal care industry uses sexual imagery to attract its audience.

The first category is, denotations and connotations. Concerning of denotation, one may ask themselves: "who and/or what is depicted here?", in terms of connotations, one may ask themselves: "what ideas and values are communicated through what is represented, and through the way in which it is represented" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 49, 50). There is no such thing as neutral denotation, and all images can connote something to someone (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Therefore, during the coding process, the study needs to look at every aspect of the visual in as much detail as possible, as one needs to not only look at what is being connoted, but also exactly how it is being connoted.

The second category is the object, when looking at the object, one is concerned with the ideas and values that are being communicated by an object, as well as what these exactly mean (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The meaning of every object should be considered in this case. The third category would be setting, in which one looks at "what settings are used in order to communicate general ideas, to connote discourses and their values, identities and actions" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 52).

The last category is salience, in which Machin and Mayr (2012, p. 54) describe it as "certain features in compositions are made to stand out, to draw our attention to foreground certain meaning. Such features will have the central symbolic value in the composition." There are several features to salience, these being: potent cultural symbols, size, colour; tone, focus, foregrounding, fore lapping and overlapping (Machin & Mayr, 2012). After the data is coded, this study aims to draw a conclusion using Burke's kinds of identification to find out how the personal care industry uses sexual imagery to attract its audience. Appendix A shows several examples of how these were coded.

Commented [DA1]: Add in the appendix a few examples of your analysis of this stage – 3 or 4 is enough (like the ones you showed me during our meeting). Mention them here (see Appendix X).

3.4.1 Open coding

The first step into coding was open coding, this was done with the use of the program Atlas.ti. Open coding is the initial step into the process in which the collected data is examined, divided into fragments and categorized into groups (Boeije, 2010). Each group would receive the appropriate code which summarized and named the content of each category which could potentially be important into answering the research question. The approach taken was both latent and semantic. This research was coded in an inductive manner, meaning it wants to identify and develop new concepts as well as use existing theoretical concepts which will not pre-define the research (Lewins & Silver, 2007; as cited in Boeije, 2010). The codes formed from the theoretical assumptions were listed in the operationalisation of this research. Due to this manner of research, the codes were less structured because a frame of analysis had yet to be developed during this stage (Boeije, 2010).

The relevant advertisements were transcribed and then uploaded to Atlas.ti. Each relevant quote was highlighted, and a code was invented for it, then the next part would be inspected, and if a code was not derived for that part yet, a new code was invented. Each fragment would also be looked at again to see whether the code needed to be more condensed or more explored in terms of relevance. Multiple codes were also assigned to some fragments as they were relevant to different themes. The questions that were asked when coding the documents were guided by the tools for visual analysis by Machin and Mayr (2012), in terms of denotation, object, settings and salience as well as taking the research question into account. This made for an already meaningful analysis as it looks at not what is physically there, but what could be meant by the image.

In total, 127 open codes were derived from the 80 advertisements. Boeije (2010) recommended additional rounds of data collection in every step of the analysis. This was done in order to reach saturation, meaning the information from a new case could be separated into fragments that could be covered under the codes. Moreover, if a new code was derived from the text, it was looked at whether this could fit other segments within the dataset.

3.4.2 Axial Coding

The second step in the coding process was axial coding. This step refers to the set of procedures in which the data is put back after the open coding process, by making connections between the categories (Boeije, 2010). The purpose of this stage is to determine which themes are dominant and which are less important, as well as to reduce and reorganize the data set (Boeije, 2010). By doing this process, twelve themes were identified which would be important for answering the research question.

1. *Boy-next-door*
2. *Emphasis on body*
3. *Female empowerment*
4. *Explicit displays of sex*
5. *The use of humour*

6. *Sexually suggestive behaviour*
7. *Masculine behaviour*
8. *Being in a relationship*
9. *Submissive partner to men*
10. *Sexual desirability*
11. *Reflecting desires*
12. *Single lifestyle*

All the codes which were featured in these themes were mutually exclusive. Moreover, of the 127 themes, only 10 coded ended up not being relevant to the analysis and were discarded for that reason. Thus, through axial coding both the definition and properties of the categories were made clear (Boeije, 2010). The axial codes were created in Atlas.ti, using the group code function in the program. All themes were also reviewed and double-checked for the quality and the connection to the research question.

3.4.3 Selective coding
The last stage in the coding process was selective coding, meaning it would look for connections between the codes in order to make sense of what is happening in the field (Boeije, 2010). This would lead to "sorting, sifting, organizing and reorganizing of materials, usually in larger components and units" (Boeije, 2010, p. 115). Therefore, the focus lay in the relationship between the developed themes. This stage of coding built on the previous stages in order to find the overarching themes of the research which were derived from the visual analysis. The themes that were found in order to formulate a theoretical model, these were: *overt sexual behaviour, socially acceptable displays of sex, traditional personas and modern personas.* As the last step of analysis, the selected themes were presented within the "results" section of the research in order to illustrate the data in relation to the core themes, as well to discuss it in more detail. The complete coding tree can be found in Appendix B.

3.5 Reliability and validity
Doing research, whether it be qualitative or quantitative, is a perfect account of reality, as reality is actually a matter of perspective (Silverman, 2011). However, researchers do need to strive to do research that is accurate, credible and plausible as possible in order to ensure rigor and trustworthiness (Silverman, 2011). In terms of qualitative studies, two factors need to be taken into account. Firstly, there is *reliability*, the possibility whether this research can be replicated and secondly, *validity*, which is the accuracy of the study in describing and interpreting social phenomena (Silverman, 2011)

In terms of reliability, this research aims to be fully transparent in the way it is performing this study. Thereby, showing a detailed description of the research strategy, as well as how the data analysis is performed, which will be shown in the appendix. Moreover, it is also important to have

theoretical transparency which can be satisfied through the inclusion of low interference descriptors (Silverman, 2011). Therefore, the literature section is dedicated to showing which theories are being used and why. Moreover, when transcribing the advertisements, the aim is to record observations as concrete as possible, meaning that whatever happens in the advertisements whether it be visual or linguistical should be noted. Silverman (2011) emphasizes the importance of transcribing visuals that may seem trivial, but that are often crucial. All the advertisements have also been saved into a drive so that at any given moment another researcher can look at it.

In order to ensure the validity of this research, Silverman (2011) states that by implementing steps of analytical induction, the constant comparative method, deviant case analysis, comprehensive data treatment and the usage of appropriate tabulations. For this study, a constant comparative method was implemented as several advertisements across the years were compared to another. After the development of the set of codes in the open coding process, the codes were also tested on the expanding dataset (Silverman, 2011). Moreover, the data for this study was treated comprehensively, therefore all parts that were collected of the data were carefully inspected and analysed.

This research does not include the cooperation of any participants, such as with qualitative interviews. Therefore, no significant ethical issues need to be addressed. That being said, sex is a sensitive topic and as this research is comparing sexual content among several different brands, this could influence their reputation negatively due to extreme sexual content for example. In order to mitigate the probability of possibly harming multiple company's reputation, this research was conducted as objective and non-judgemental as possible.

4. Results

This study aimed to explore and interpret the way personal care brands use sex appeals to attract their audiences through the use of video advertisements through the use of visual analysis. To answer the research question and the sub-questions, the themes that were found within the data analysis will be presented, as well as their interpretation and connection to the theoretical framework. The coding tree with all the themes and codes will be illustrated in Appendix A.

The following chapter will be structured by using the four main themes that were derived from the analysis. The analysed data showed that personal care brands use sex appeals and sex in four different ways: through *overt sexual behaviour, socially acceptable displays of sex, traditional personas progressive personas.* Each theme consists of multiple sub-themes which are presented in the following table:

Table 4.1

Themes and sub-themes

Overt sexual behaviour	Socially acceptable displays of sex
Emphasis on the body	The use of humour
Explicit displays of sex	Sexually suggestive behaviour
Sexual desirability	Reflecting desires
Single lifestyle	Being in a relationship

Traditional personas	Progressive personas
Masculine behaviour	Boy-next-door
Submissive partner to men	Female empowerment

Each sub-theme will be explained in more detail, by the use of examples and interpretations.

4.1 Overt sexual behaviour

Within the visual analysis, it was found that personal care brands used overt sexual behaviour in order to attract their audience. Firstly, this was achieved by putting *emphasis on the body* on both the male and female models. By showing naked bodies or the ideal body type in the advertisements and having models rub them sensually, their sexual availability was implied, even if there was no other model

reciprocating the behaviour. As Moeran (2010) mentioned, by zooming in on a particular body part, without even mentioning the benefits of the product on that particular body part, advertisers are able to persuade and entice the consumer. What is interesting is that research found that nudity did not always have a positive effect on consumers (Reichert et al., 2011), which may explain why some advertisements zoomed in on particular body parts which showed skin, but more parts of the body were still covered. Nevertheless, according to Choi et al. (2016) women may evaluate female nudity as more positive as the third feminist wave saw women's sexuality as a tool to empower femininity. This may explain why nudity is used in advertisements geared towards women without the use of male models making advances at them. An example is shown below (Figure 4.1 and 4.2). Moreover, there was a pattern in advertisements that targeted women in which they would show the female model in a sensual manner, without a male model being there showing interest in her. While advertisements geared towards men sometimes would feature males with a "regular" body size, ads geared towards women all had women who were thin, even though research did find that consumers do want to see more diverse body types (Millard, 2009).

Figure 4.1

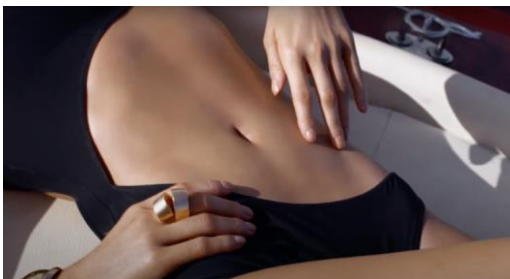*Estee Lauder, "Be a Bronzed Goddess", 2018*

Figure 4.2

Prada, "Candy Florale", 2014

Advertisements targeting the male audience which would use female models would more likely put emphasis on the female body, especially when the male model was just a regular man, and

not muscled and strong. Often, women would be shown partially clad while the male models would be fully dressed. This may be due to the fact that male audiences are influenced by a model's sex, in which they were attracted to the female models (Lee & Lee, 2016). This is not the case for women, in which the sex of the model does not matter to them (Lee & Lee, 2016). By putting emphasis on the (almost) nude female body, the male audience would think that they would be able to date such a girl. As Morton and Black (2015) discussed, men have a preference for the objectifying appeal, therefore by showing (almost) nude female models, they will evaluate the advertisements more positively and possibly feel more inclined to by the product. An example of this can be seen in Figure 4.2, in the advertisements by Axe in 2017. However, it is a pattern that is not only used in this advertisement but is also shown in other ads geared towards men in which male models are fully clothed, but female models are not. Young male consumers often mediate the gendered messages and frame their understandings in ways that speak to their own identity (Zayer & McGrath, 2019). Moreover, Reichert (2003) concluded that men look for someone is young, healthy and beautiful in terms of a partner. Therefore, by displaying using sexual imagery to show young, healthy and beautiful women, they pay attention and associate the imagery with the product (Reichert, 2003). This seems to be the case with many advertisements in which a female model is used as a tool to show off the benefits of that product. Therefore, being showing a normal male model, male consumers are able to see themselves in that setting.

Figure 4.3
Axe, "Luke Lucky Shirt", 2017

Advertisements geared towards men that showed nudity and put emphasis on the body displayed the ideal male body type as well. Advertisements aimed at men did show more "regular" body types, although when this would happen, the focus was not necessarily on their bodies as mentioned before. Still, there were many instances of advertisements which featured the idealistic mesomorphic body. In these cases, oftentimes the male model would be accompanied by a female model. This may due to the fact that extremely muscular men in advertisements are perceived to be too concerned about their looks, and therefore too feminine or homosexual, which male consumers found unappealing (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). An example can be seen in Figure 4.4 and 4.5. By

showing a hypermasculine male who cares about his appearance and can still get the female model, it shows that it is okay to be concerned about your looks and it is not too feminine or homosexual.

Figure 4.4

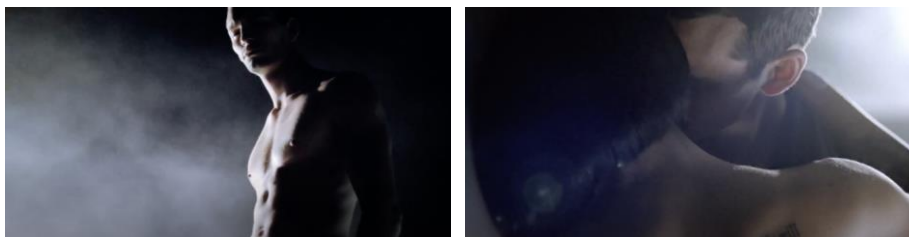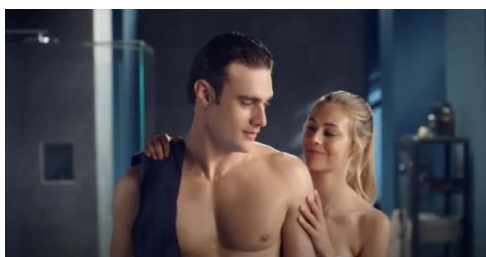*Armani, "Armani Code Sport", 2014*

Figure 4.5

Nivea Men, 2018, "Body Shaving Stick"

The second sub-theme that emerged from the analysis was that of *explicit displays of sex*. While this strategy was not used often, it was most often used in perfume advertisements, for both male and female audiences. Consumers may react negatively towards it, however by using this tactic, it does mean that advertisers think that it will help with attracting the attention of the audience and possibly remind them of the controversial ads when they are shopping for perfume or other personal care products. This confirms the conclusion made by Wirtz et al. (2011), who said that perfume advertisements that used sex appeals would be more memorable consumers. An example of the strategy used by the brand Dolce & Gabbana in 2013 can be seen in the example below (Figure 4.6). The reason that this strategy may not be used often is due to restrictions on how much nudity and sex can be shown in advertisements, as there are guidelines for this. While guidelines are vague, the Dutch guideline for television advertisements states that: advertisements need to be in agreement with the law, the truth, appropriately tastefulness, as well as decency (Nederlandse Reclame Code, 2019). While the guideline is highly interpretive, it does mean that it cannot be too obscene and explicit. Therefore, by having advertisements coming close to crossing that line, in which the decency of the ad is debated, it makes for something memorable. Reichert et al. (2011) did find it their research that

segments of consumers did like and responded favourable to highly sexual imagery and nudity in advertising.

Figure 4.6

Dolce and Gabbana, "Pour femme et pour homme", 2013

The aforementioned advertisement shows highly explicit scenes; however, it is hidden in between shots which are not as explicit, making it not as obvious. Oftentimes advertisements would sandwich these kinds of highly explicit imagery between other non-explicit imagery. Explicit displays of sex often feature women in compromising positions where the male model is dominant. While Figure 4.6 is quite extreme, other ads also feature sexual behaviour in an overt manner, with the audience knowing what is coming next. An example is shown in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7

Axe, "Axe Shower gel", 2011
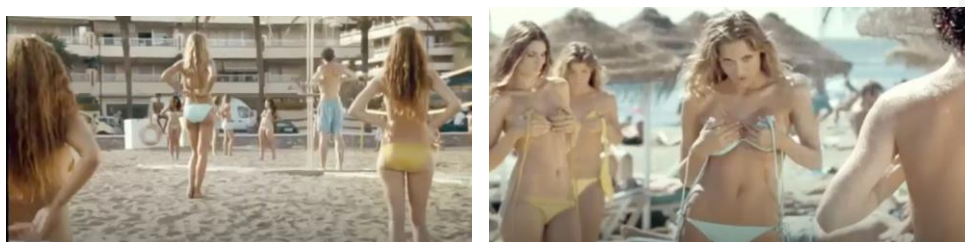
The strong emphasis on the explicit display of sex in mostly perfume ads shows that advertisers still believe in the primary notion that sex sells, especially when it is shown outright. Moreover, gender does affect how the audience evaluates an advertisement with nudity (Reichert et al., 2011). As seen before in other literature (Reichert et al., 2011; Black & Morton, 2017), male respond more positively towards sex and nudity, which may be why the advertisements targeting men are more likely to show overt sexual behaviour. Whether it be because people want sex or whether it attracts attention to the brand, it is still employed in 2019.

Thirdly, the ads would use the strategy of *sexual desirability*. In this case male and female models were shown to be sexually desired by the opposite sex. By showing sexual desirability of the model, it could reflect how the personal care product would make the audience sexually desirable if they were to use that particular product. It is with analogical identification that this appeal works well. The audience will indirectly think about sex due to the nude model, and this will be shown in the context of a relationship. By making the association with sex, they want to buy the product. This tactic is often employed by different brands in different manners, which some more explicit than others, however they all show off that the opposite sex is sexually desire to the other. An example of this is shown below from a Nivea advertisement in 2012 (Figure 4.8) in which the video alternates between showing the model in the shower and being desired by a male model.

Figure 4.8

Nivea, "Touch and Smooth Bodywash", 2012

Bjerke and Polegato (2006) found that advertisements needed to match up with the desire of healthiness in order to appeal to their audiences, it could also be said that advertisements need to match up with the desire of having a partner or being sexually active, as this is shown in the advertisements that employ this strategy. Through the use of positive framing, which almost all the advertisements employed, as sex is often portrayed as something positive, it helps the audience to realise that by using the product they will maintain their status or improve it (Chang, 2007). Therefore, the advertisements show that through the use of the product advertised, they will become sexually desirable if that is what they want to be.

According to Lanseng (2011) women prefer sexual content in advertisement when it is relational based setting. In the example seen above, the female model seems to be in loving relationship, rather than lust as the male model is touching her affectionately. The imagery is a great example of analogical identification, in which the nude body of the female body is shown, as well as the female model being admired by a male model. It moves the sexual setting, to a more normative setting which does not directly involve sex. Therefore, the audience is more comfortable with relational based settings as they want to be in one too. Therefore, sexual desirability in advertisements becomes accepted and meaningful.

Figure 4.7 also shows an instance of sexual desirability. The women on the beach flock to the male model while he is using the Axe shower gel. The ad shows directly how sexually desirable the male model becomes by using the product. Not only does he take care of himself, but he also is able to attract attractive women.

The last sub-theme which was found in the visual analysis was that of *single lifestyle*, by appealing to a person's single lifestyle and showing the benefits of the single lifestyle, such as having multiple people interested in someone, a consumer who is not in a relationship is able to identify with that lifestyle rather than being alienated by a brand. Showcasing the single lifestyle is more overt sexual behaviour as the imagery often shows the models with different partners or having less regard for the partner they are with, thereby promoting wanton behaviour and recreational sex (Dahl et al., 2009). By showcasing the easiness of the single lifestyle, and not being committed, the advertisements appeal to the audience through the use of the objectifying appeal, in which the emphasis lies on physical gratification and sex as the best outcome (DeLamater, 1987; Hill, 2002, as cited in Dahl, et al., 2009).This strategy was used in advertisements geared to both the male and female audiences. The single lifestyle appeal is strongly connected to ideological identification, as it is an idea which the audience either associate with or disassociate with.

While ads targeting men used this strategy more often than ads targeting women, it is interesting to see how ads are able to attract the female audience in this way. An example of this is shown in Figure 4.9 and 4.10. The advertisement normalizes the fact that women can have multiple (sexual) partners, rather than being 'slut-shamed' for it. This is also in line with the fourth feminist wave, in which women wanted to reclaim words such as 'slut' and 'whore' by refusing to shame women for their sexual behaviour and pushing others to do the same (Chamberlain, 2017). It shows that advertisements reflect society and what society thinks is important, as women feel the need to be sexually liberated without being shamed for it. However, it can also disassociate the audience, the audience may think it is vulgar to have different sexual partners of different sexes and that it should not be promoted within an advertisement. As said before women are less likely to like objectifying appeals (Black & Morton, 2017). Therefore, this advertisement at the same time shows sexual liberation, but it is also superficial as in the end it is just an advertisement which may just aim to be shocking as the model has multiple lovers.
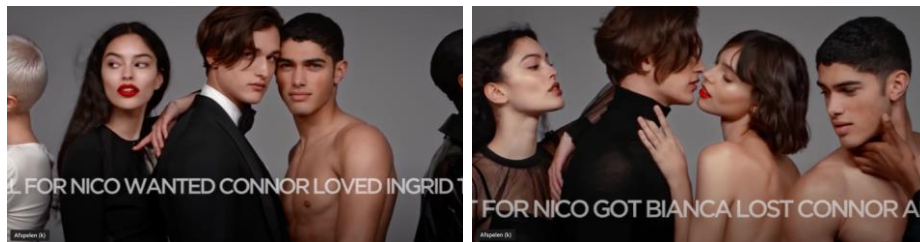
Figure 4.9

Yves Saint Laurent, "Babydoll Mascara", 2013

Figure 4.10

Tom Ford, "Boys & Lips", 2017

An example of the single lifestyle strategy for men could be seen in another Axe advertisement in which a fireball of women flew towards a male model as he used their product from 2012 (Figure 4.11). It shows that through the use of the product women will become attracted to the user, which is what single men may want. It is much easier to appeal towards men using sexual imagery as they do not have a preference for a certain sex appeal whether this is linked to relationships or not (Dahl et al., 2009). The single lifestyle strategy when geared towards men, is very much focused towards a man's need for physical gratification with sex as the preferable outcome (Black & Morton, 2017). This is also in line with Dosch, Belayachi and Van der Linden (2015) as their research stated that men feel more the need to be desired by women, than women do by men.

Figure 4.11

Axe, "Fireball*",* 2012

Showing more overt displays of sex shows that the advertising world may think that people have become more accepting of sex appeals. Women may consider sexuality as positively as men do nowadays, which could be that gender differences in sexuality have faded in Western society (Dosch et al., 2015).

4.2 Socially acceptable displays of sex

Another way personal care brands appeal to their audiences by the use of sexual appeals is through socially acceptable displays of sex. What is meant by this is that sex is shown in contexts which are more acceptable in society as there is a reason behind it or it is not as obvious as using overt sexual behaviour in advertisements, and therefore people feel more comfortable looking at it.

The first sub-theme that was found was *the use of humour*: multiple advertisements used humour in order to display sexual behaviour. Pleasure takes an important role in different appeals, both humour and sexual appeals are shown for pleasure (Das, Galekh & Vonkeman, 2015). Humour, erotic, sex and fear belong to the strongest emotional appeals in advertising (Hornak, 2016). Therefore, it makes sense to combine strong appeals in order to create an effective ad. Moreover, by showing sex in a more humoristic way, it could be perceived as more normal or simply funny. Galloway (2009) already concluded that highly arousing advertisements should use humour in order to relate to audiences who do not like nudity or explicitness. Thus, by utilizing sexual humour, the audience is more likely have positive attitudes towards it (Mayer, Kumar & Yoon, 2019). Reichert (2012) stated women were more likely to be offended when there were high levels of sexual explicitness. Thus, by using humour the sexual explicitness would be reduced, meaning women could relate better to it. An example of humour being used in advertisements, with the use of a sexual innuendo is shown below (Figure 4.12). The female audience like sexually humorous ads when they are not sexist towards women (Mayer, et al., 2019). The female model in this ad states: "if every first time could be this good", not only is she talking about her hair colour which is just dyed. It is also aimed at the male model behind her. As they are in bed together, it suggests that they did something sexual.

Figure 4.12

L'Oreal Paris, "Hair Crème Gloss", 2018

The use of humour does not only include sexual innuendos, sarcastic remarks that evoke sexually explicit scenes were also used to appeal to the audience such as in the following example (Figure 4.13). Sarcasm works well with young people, and it is based on three pillars, the audience is: watching it, laughing about it and most importantly remembering it (Hornak, 2017). As this research looks at young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 it makes sense that it used. Moreover, laughter comes from watching misfortune from others (Hornak, 2017). The male model says: "If this smells good, I'm going to run naked across the highway", he is then stripped off of his clothing and naked on the runway. By showing the male model's clothing ripped off because of what he says, the misfortune becomes laughable, especially when it is quite ridiculous. High levels of nudity do not work well on men and women, therefore by using humour the effect of nudity becomes mediated.

Figure 4.13

Axe, "Leather and Cookies", 2016

While humour minimizes how explicit sexual content is, the advertisements also used *sexually suggestive behaviour* in order to appeal to the audience. Sexually suggestive behaviour in ads meant the sex appeals used within the advertisements were not obvious however in context could be perceived as sexual. Beetles and Harris (2005) concluded that nudity could potentially cause irritation to the advertisement. This phenomenon may explain why advertisers want to use different methods to imply sexual behaviour without showing off nude models as they do not want to irritate and possibly alienate their audiences. This advertising technique may work due to the fact that consumers responded more positively and stronger toward mild sexual stimuli; mild meaning that there were no direct and explicit mentions of sex, however they could be interpreted (Wyllie et al., 2014). This kind of stimuli is favoured in print advertisements (Wyllie et al., 2014). According to this analysis, it should also be used in video advertisements as several ads showed imagery which could be perceived as being sexual without using nudity or explicit sex. Figure 4.15 and 4.16 display how this is used in personal care advertisements.

Figure 4.14

Herbal Essences, "Smooth and Shine Collection", 2013
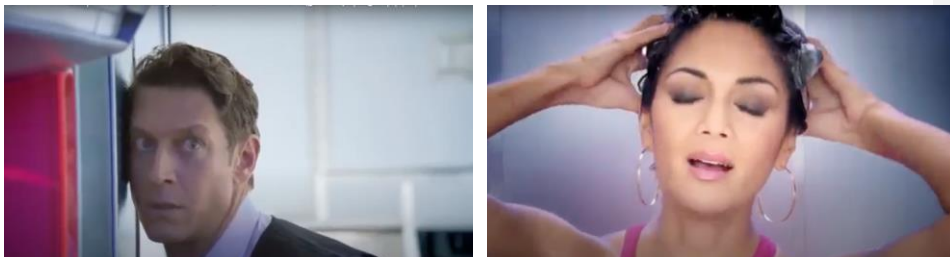

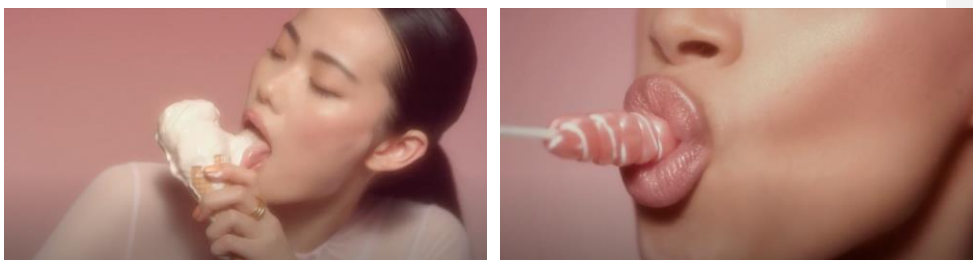**Figure 4.15**

Nars, "Orgasm", 2017

Figure 4.15 already has the innuendo in its name. However, both abovementioned figures show sexually suggestive behaviour without something sexual happening. In Figure 4.15 the female model is moaning loudly in an airplane while washing her hair while Figure 4.15 shows women sucking at objects which resemble male parts. What is also interesting to note is that the advertisements are geared towards women, while both the things the female audience is doing would not resonate with the audience. One may wonder whether this type of content would convince women to use the product. In a research conducted by Ozdemir, Bostanci and Cakmak (2019) the percentage of women using makeup to look pretty for their partners was 14.6% as most women used it in order to feel good with 80%. Therefore, the imagery contradicts with what women feel. This could lead to disassociation of the brand and product.

Moreover, Canals and Adriana (2014) researched this kind of sexual appeal and consumer's reaction to these. They concluded that if the person was sexually aroused, this kind of advertising would be more effective than to a non-aroused person. However, it is important to note that the less obvious the sexual content is, the more effective it is (Reichert, 2002).

Reflecting desires was another technique which was used in the advertisements. By showcasing potential desires of the audience in the advertisements, the audience may want to buy that product as it reflects their desires. Analogical identification reframes the experience of the audience

(Woodward, 2003), within reflecting desires, the audience first sees the imagery of sex and as the context and framework shifts the meaning of this, it may make the audience think of something else. As Bjerke and Polegato (2006) stated that it is important for audiences to be able to identify themselves with the context and/or model. The reflected desires may not always be related to sex; however, the desires are amplified by it, such as wanting to live a luxurious lifestyle.

Figure 4.16

Old Spice, "The Man Your Man Can Smell Like", 2010

Figure 4.17

Estée Lauder, "Be a Bronzed Goddess", 2018

Figure 4.16 and Figure 4.17 shows how ads can reflect desires of living a luxurious lifestyle. Both ads are directed towards women, while Figure 4.17 is advertising a men's product. According to Kendrick et al. (2001, as cited in Black & Morton, 2017) women find signs of wealth and status attractive. The ad features elements of oysters, tickets and diamonds which are signs of wealth and status. Therefore, through analogical identification the partners, which the ad is directed ad, are reminded of what their partner could be like if they used products by Old Spice especially due to the male model in the ad stating: "Anything is possible when your man smells like Old Spice and not a lady." The imagery shown in the ad could be considered things that women want. Moreover, the male model in this advertisement is muscular and handsome. Thus, reflecting their desires of having a partner looking like the man in the advertisement as well as getting all the materialistic things the male model mentioned is an effective strategy because of analogical identification. Figure 4.17 displays the same desire. By showing the female model on a boat, on the open sea, relaxing, it shows

that by purchasing the product, the audience can become like her. Through nudity and the model, the audience is attracted and by combining it with the setting it promotes analogical identification as audience's may initially think of sex, but then are attracted to it through the luxurious setting. The creation of meaning and desire is a key component to communicating luxury in which social status is important (Gurkzi, 2020).

Consumers may want to look wealthy nowadays, social media influencers are often showing off their luxurious lifestyles which their followers do not have but do wish to have (Chae, 2017). As this need has become normalized due to "normal people" on social media becoming rich and living a luxurious lifestyle, it makes sense for the advertising world to reflect this as well. As stated in Marwick (2015, p. 55), influencer's postings are "the catalogues of what young people dream of having and the lifestyle they dream of living" (as cited in Chae, 2017).

Desires are not only displayed through the promise of luxury. Over the past few years that has been an emphasis on being productive. Waste of time has become a sin it seems (Gregg, 2015). Due to this development in society, ads have also played into that desire to be productive in their ads. By blending in sexual appeals, such as intimacy between two models or nudity, within the need of being productive, ads show how everything can be possible in a span of 24 hours (Figure 4.18 & 4.19). Control brings pleasure (Gregg, 2015), but so does sex.

Moreover, in the Tom Ford ad which is geared towards men (Figure 4.16), the male voice over states: "It's quite simple, take care of your skin, look closely at your face, use a few basic corrective techniques. And you will present your most handsome and most impeccable self to the world." It reflects the desire of men to be succesful, but also wanting to take care of themselves. Through analogical identification, audiences can relate to wanting to be productive, but also satisfy their sexual needs or becoming sexy.

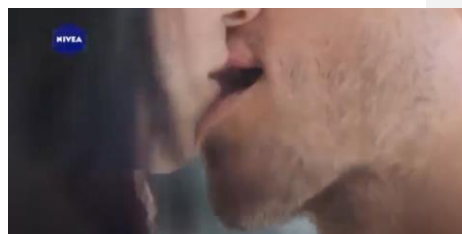**Figure 4.18**
Nivea, "Urban Skin", 2017

Figure 4.19

Tom Ford, "Tom Ford for Men, Skincare and Grooming Collection", 2013

   The last sub-theme within this core category is *being in a relationship* in which sex is shown in the context of a relationship between a man and woman. None of the ads selected featured a same-sex or intersectional couples, even though the researcher did look for them. As research had shown, intimate appeals work well as it shows commitment (Reichert & Ramirez, 2002; Dahl et al., 2009; Lanseng, 2016). Both men and women prefer advertisements when sexual content is shown in the context of intimacy and commitment (Black & Morton, 2017). Moreover, women tend to think about more romantic imagery when thinking about sex (Black & Morton, 2017). Therefore, by using the intimate appeal, advertisers can further romanticize sex. It is also a safe way to use sexual appeals, as being in a committed relationship usually means people have sex. It is less explicit, due to the consensual relationship between the models, making it more normal and not as shocking. As stated by Dahl et al., (2009) negative impressions against explicit sex in advertisements would be mitigated by commitment appeals within the ads. Moreover, people may be able to recognize themselves being in a situation such as one portrayed in the advertisements. Through analogical identification, the audience may link sex to relationships, making them persuaded by the advertisement to buy the product. Moreover, the setting is familiar to the consumer without being too explicit. Black and Morton (2017) concluded that advertisements with low levels of nudity and intimate appeals were effective, and indeed this strategy was used in multiple advertisements geared to both male and female audiences. Figure 4.20 and 4.21 show how this strategy is used in advertisements. It is interesting how the advertisements are still very heteronormative, in a world in which people call for more representation of LGBTQ+ people and couples (French, 2017). It seems that advertisers that use sexual appeals fear alienating their heterosexual consumers and therefore prefer to use heterosexual couples rather than more diverse ones.

42

Figure 4.20

Dior, "Miss Dior", 2017

Figure 4.21

Gillette, "The Gentleman's Shaver", 2012

Both advertisements showed their products in a commitment setting, making it relatable to the audience. However, the advertisement geared towards men, that of Gillette, showed the female model in a more compromising position, wearing less than in the Nivea advertisement. The reason for this may be due to the fact that the advertisement wanted to arouse the male audience by showing the female model in this way as the male audience do react positively to more objectifying appeals (Black & Morton, 2017). This appeared in multiple advertisements which showed commitment appeals geared towards men. Female models were still often objectified and did not add too much to the advertisement.

4.3 Traditional personas

As stated as one of the research sub-questions, one of the aims of this research was to study how the personal care industry appealed differently to male and female audiences when using sex appeals. One of the ways was by displaying traditional personas.

The first sub-theme found was that of *masculine behaviour,* in which advertisements showed men in masculine ways in which the male models were shown to be more dominant and assertive

either in a more hegemonic way or through the use of 'the new man' (Godeo, 2005). This is a more traditional persona as masculine behaviour falls into more traditional gender roles. In regard to displays of masculine behaviour, this would include avoiding femininity, dominance, importance of sex, not showing emotions and self-reliance (Scharrer & Blackburn, 2018). Diederichs and Lee (2012) stated that advertisements would still often show men with this ideal and indeed in the early 2010s and in the later 2010s, the advertisements geared towards men often showed them to be masculine. The reason for this may be due to the fact that men are not yet comfortable to be showing their feminine side as it can make them appear more homosexual which to them may be uncomfortable (Diederichs & Lee, 2012). Moreover, De Meulenaer, Dens, De Pelsmacker and Eisend (2019) concluded that ads which featured stereotypical masculine behaviour were received more positively, meaning they liked it more than ads that featured less masculine behaviour. Masculine behaviour often looked like Figure 4.22.
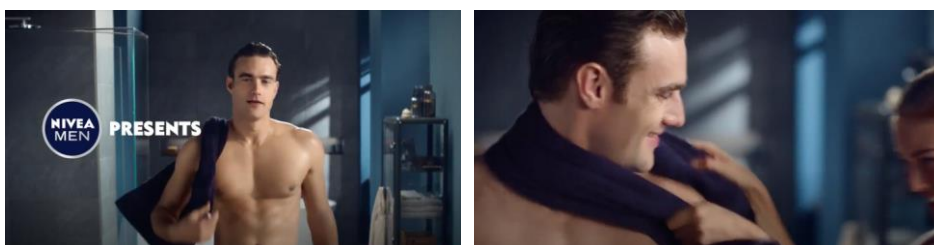
Figure 4.22

Gucci, Gucci Guilty for Men, 2012

Figure 4.22 shows the male model riding a motorcycle, an activity that is considered to be very manly and adventurous. When he enters the building and sees the female model, he is able to seduce her immediately. This advertisement shows the dominant and assertive behaviour of a man. It appeals to its audience as it shows that when using this particular product, a perfume, the audience has the opportunity to become as cool as the male model and be able to get the girl he wants. The male model will obtain a certain status by using the product, even if he does not need to obtain it (Saworno & Fayardi, 2018). While Diederichs and Lee (2012) concluded that muscular models were rated as less effective by the male audience, however as the male model is only shown topless for mere seconds, this may not be apparent as when his muscular body becomes the main focus in print ads for example.

Figure 4.23

Nivea Men, Shaving Body Stick, 2018

In figure 4.23, The female model enters the bathroom after the male model is finished; this shows that she is comfortable with him. The male model is shown in the beginning of the ad to be muscular, however he does want to take care of his looks, therefore shaving his body hair. The male audience would feel comfortable with using this personal care product because it still appeals to a man's masculinity and he shown to not be too vain. The male model is shown to be athletic as he has a lot of muscles. This also ties into the concept of 'the new man' (Godeo, 2005), in which men show commitment to women but also maintain their muscular identities. It shows that the male model can be with a woman while also maintaining his muscular identity by being athletic and muscular, but still loving and also sexually attractive to women. This phenomenon could also be found in figure 4.24.

The second theme found was the *submissive female partner* in which female models were shown in a submissive position. Most of the ads that featured the submissive female partner would be targeting the male audience, rather than the female audience. Diederichs and Lee (2012) concluded men were uncomfortable with advertisements that are too feminine and homosexual. By showing a submissive female model next to a male model, the threat to their masculinity decreases, making men more comfortable as it showed that taking care of one's self does not necessarily mean one is homosexual or not able to get the girl.

Figure 4.24

Nivea Men, Deodorant Invisible Black & White, 2014

Figure 4.24 first shows a woman's hands going over the male body which can be seen as the motive of 'feminine touch' in which female models would touch trace their hands and fingers over delicate objects, or in this case a male body (Heathy, 2020). Then the female model giving the male model a shirt to wear, she is shown to be submissive to him as he could also grab his own shirt. Jung and Lee (2010) found that in advertisements targeting men, sexual female images often promoted the message that men were able to benefit from a sexual relationship as the user of that product. The example above showcases how the male model first uses the product, and suddenly there is a submissive female who would do anything for him. While women may not like to be objectified, it still happens often in the media, as well as in society (Jung & Lee, 2010). As advertising reflects but also creates what is important in society, this shows that men value a submissive partner.

Ads also often showed male models saving female models, in which they would then fall in love with them because they were saved by them. Advertisements often portray women as 'damsels in distress' according to Heathy (2020). Indeed, this was found to be true in sexual advertisements as well. Ads would focus very much on how a man is masculine and able to save a female model. Moreover, the female models would often be objectified within the ads, in which they were shown in scarce clothing, while the male models were fully clothed. Figure 4.25 exhibits this phenomenon. As the male model saves the female models from a monster, they become submissive to him and start to worship him. It reflects that society thinks that women need to be saved by men.

**Figure 4.25**

Axe, "Tribal", 2015

Whilst this kind of display is often geared towards men, it also is used in ads geared towards women. Jung and Lee (2010) mentioned that in ads targeting women, women would use the product in order to increase their sexual appeal to men. This is indeed also affirmed in the advertisements analysed. An example is shown in Figure 4.26; however it is not just limited to this example. At the start of the ad the male model is not there. Later on, he is pulling at the female model's hair to illustrate how strong her hair is. This also reflects that men are stronger than women. Moreover, in the end the male and female model are standing intimately together, affirming that indeed her sexual appeal increased due to the product. Again, this shows that women are portrayed as submissive and dependent, whereas men are portrayed as confident and powerful (Heathy, 2020). Moreover, the voice

over in the ad states: "New Grow strong, fructis, stronger hair, stronger you. Garnier." This tagline combined with the imagery within the ad shows a girl's greatest weapon is to be beautiful, in order to seduce men. Moreover, the emphasis is on her hair, as it is a shampoo advertisement. However, long and beautiful hair is often portrayed as a sign of attractiveness and beauty (Heaty, 2020). Therefore, by showing the male model, femininity and submissiveness to a man is reaffirmed by the advertisement. Changing role structures in society has brought variation within advertisements (Grau & Zotos, 2016). However, as this analysis shows, too often women are still portrayed in a stereotypical manner. The implication of this is that due to sexism being used in advertising, it promotes gender inequality in society as valid and acceptable (Grau & Zotos, 2016).

Figure 4.26

Garnier Fructis, "Grow Strong Shampoo & Conditioner", 2016
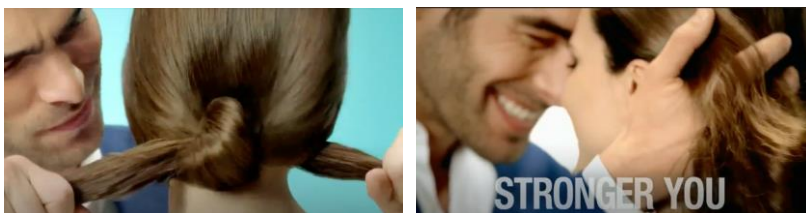
4.4 Progressive personas

In the previous core category both genders were portrayed in a traditional, often stereotypical, manner. However, several ads that were analysed also show more progressive personas in the ads in order to attract audiences.

The first sub-theme in this category would be *boy-next-door.* The boy-next-door is a male who is young, wholesome, average-looking and likeable, someone who could live next door to someone and is the opposite of the masculine mesomorphic male (transitiomx, n.d.). In recent years, men have been portrayed in softer roles (Grau & Zotos, 2016).This type of man reflects the image of men more as most men do not have super defined muscles and are not hypermasculine; the general population is unable to relate to this type of man to themselves (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). Moreover, ads that featured non stereotypical gender roles were received as more positive (Heaty, 2020). Therefore, these kinds of ads are able to appeal to the average man as it reflects who they think they are.

Figure 4.27 shows the boy-next-door category. The emphasis in the ad is very much on how the male model is just a regular guy, who may be lucky due to his shirt. Diederichs and Lee (2010) discovered in their research that men would evaluate ads with average looking models more favourably over those containing muscular models. By using sex appeals, ads show that men do not need to be hyper masculine in order to attract women.
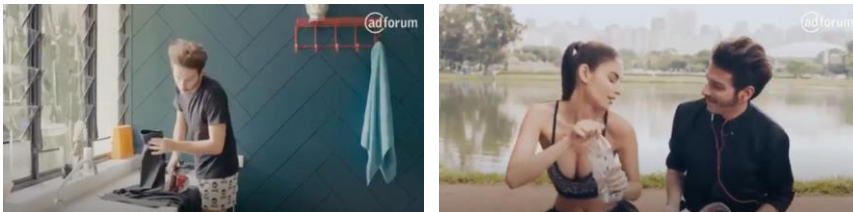
Figure 4.27

Axe, Luke Lucky Shirt, 2017

Figure 4.27 puts even more emphasis on the boy-next-door archetype, in which it shows the ideal man in contrast to an average man by showing it in a fantasy-like setting. It puts emphasis on how much of a fantasy it is to be like the male model in the fake ad. Hargraeves and Tiggeman (2009) researched how muscular ideal media images would affect men's body satisfaction and attractiveness. They concluded that these images affected the men watching them negatively. Therefore, by showing the contrasting images, consumers see how ridiculous it is. While the imagery of figure 4.27 is used more frequently than that of figure 4.28, it does show the contrast on how men are often portrayed in advertisements. Fowler and Thomas (2013) actually found an increase of the use of the mesomorphic body of men in advertisements.

Figure 4.28

Philips, "One Blade", 2016

By using the boy-next-door strategy, personal care brands are able to positively impact the male audience as they can identify with the male model in the ad. By emphasizing the difference between the two, such as in the Philips ad, it could possibly affect their body satisfaction and perceived attractiveness even more positively. As the way men are portrayed in advertisements influence men (Hargraeves & Tiggerman, 2009; Fowler & Thomas, 2013), it would make sense for advertisements to show more average men who do regular things and look like everyone else as this shows that it is okay for men to be themselves.

The last sub-theme found within the analysis was that of *female empowerment.* By showing sexual appeals in an empowering manner, the personal care brand could attract the audience since

there has been such an emphasis on female empowerment in the last few years. Drake (2017) found that ads containing female-empowering messages were evaluated positively in terms of product and brand. Moreover, ads that featured female models were received more positively if they did not feature stereotypical images of women (De Meulenaer et al., 2018). It is interesting to note that fourth wave feminists argue that sex has become increasingly normalised through contemporary media (Maclaran, 2015). These female-empowering messages in ads still show sexual appeals, therefore one may wonder whether they are actually empowering women. However, according to Williams and Jovanic (2015) these images are actually empowering women as feminists are more likely to view female sexuality and sexual expression as natural part of their femininity and sexual independence. Through ideological identification, women are able to relate to the advertisement. The ad gives meaning to the product as well as women's sexuality. Women who hold more feminist beliefs are then more likely to relate to the advertisement and would buy the item advertised.

Figure 4.29 shows empowering image of women, as well as still being sexual and sexually attractive towards men. In the ad, the female model says: "I'm not shy, my drama? I totally own it." It emphasizes on how women are often called dramatic. The word dramatic has a negative connotation for women (Is it okay to call someone dramatic, 2017). However, the ad show that it is okay to be dramatic, and that women should own up to it and not see it as something negative. Moreover, in the end the female model is seen flirting with the male model who poured his drink over her. Showing that drama is not something negative and can be used to attract men. It gives the women the empowering message that showing one's emotions is not bad, instead showing emotions should be seen as something positive for both men and women (Is it okay to call someone dramatic, 2017).

Figure 4.29

Maybelline New York "The Falsies, Push Up Drama", 2015

Moreover, women do not need to feel empowered by interacting with a male model, instead advertisements use positive messages in their ads to empower women. Moeran (2010) noted that this strategy in which language is used as a "spell" and entices and persuades the audience. Therefore, there is a duality in the empowering messages in the advertisement, not only is it used as a spell to make the female audience feel empowered, it is also able to entice and persuade them. Figure 4.29 (and Figure 4.1 and 4.17) shows the slogan "let the sun worship you", the advertisement appeals to

the female audience as to show that they are worthy of being worshipped, even by the sun. It is an empowering message for it shows that women can achieve the result just like the model in the ad with minimal effort as all they need to do is buy and use the particular product within the ad (Kilyeni, 2012). The model in the advertisement is "independent, confident, and liberated and thus empowered" (Drake, 2017, p. 594). Moreover, through ideological identification, the empowering messages may work in the advantage of the brand, as female consumers that identify themselves as feminist, first may not like the sexual imagery, but because of the empowering message they are still able to relate to it and therefore, will be persuaded.

Figure 4.29

Estée Lauder, "Be a Bronzed Goddess", 2018
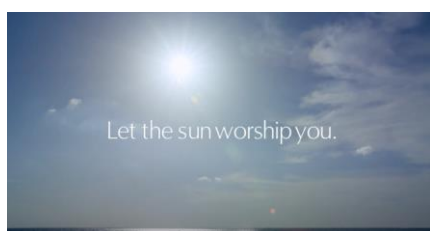
Dolce and Gabbana created two ads for their perfume "Light Blue", one was broadcasted in 2010 (Figure 4.30) while the other ad was broadcasted in 2017 (Figure 4.31). Both ads target the male and female audience and have the same setting. However, there is one difference. In the ad broadcasted in 2010, the male model makes the sexual advances towards the female model first, while in the 2017 ad, the female model takes the lead in sexual advances first. This shift is quite interesting, as it does show that advertisements are changing. In the 2010 ad, the male model is shown taking off the female's top first, while in the 2017 ad, the female model goes under the male model's swimming trunks first. The 2010 ad portrays the female model as a sexual object or decoration which women often have been portrayed as (Paek, Nelson & Vilela, 2011). While the female model is still sexualised, she is shown to be more assertive. Moreover, in the 2010 is watching the female model and she does not notice it while in the 2017 ad she watches him as well. It shows that female sexuality and sexual expression is something women should not be ashamed off (Williams & Jovanovic, 2015). The empowerment of women lies in the fact that it shows a different power dynamic between the male and female model in which the female model is more assertive.

It shows that the advertisement world has been some changes and strides in how women are portrayed. Moreover, other brands such as Axe have also changed the way they feature women in their ads in which women are featured less sexually. Thus, while personal care ads are still sexualized,

it is much less in the face that in prior years. The advertisements satisfy audience's with feminist beliefs while still showing sexual imagery.

Figure 4.30
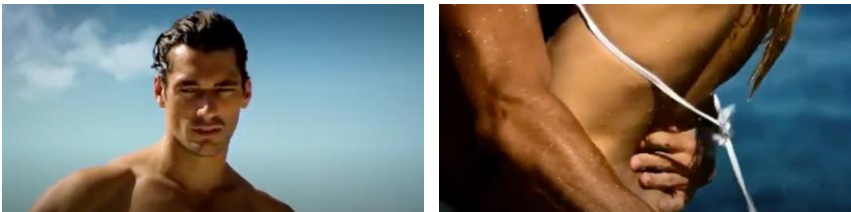
Dolce & Gabbana, "Light Blue", 2010

Figure 4.31

Dolce & Gabbana, "Light Blue", 2017

5. Conclusion

This research investigated the way personal care brands use sex appeals and sex in order to appeal to their audience through the use of video advertisements. To answer the research question, a qualitative research was conducted, in particular a visual analysis of the different advertisements all created by different brands. The following chapter will first answer the sub-questions and after the research question, provide theoretical and societal implications of the findings, limitations of the study as well as further research directions.

5.1 Using sexual appeals to attract the audience

In order to answer the research question of how personal care brands use sex appeals and sex in their advertisements to appeal to its audiences an analysis of the different advertisements between 2010 and 2019 needed to be done and interpreted. The results of the data analysis showed four different strategies, *overt sexual behaviour, socially acceptable displays of sex, traditional personas and progressive personas.* Indeed, the advertisements all featured mediated messages containing sexual information with the purpose of selling branded goods in the forms of nudity, sexual imagery, innuendo and double entendre (Reichert & Carpenter, 2003).

The use of sex has become very common in beauty and care advertisements (Reichert et al. 2011). Personal care brands such as Tom Ford and Axe have always been known to use explicit sexual information in order to persuade the audience. Therefore, they are able to push the boundaries more and more in terms of sex. Brands such as Nivea and Maybelline New York also employed strategies containing sexual imagery to do so, however these images were much less explicit. Nudity and explicit sex appeals were often employed as a strategy to emphasize what a consumer could gain from using the product. Therefore, positive framing in order to motivate consumers was used most often as sex is often seen as something positive (Chang, 2007). It validated the "outcomes", such as becoming more sexually desirable or affirming the advantages of living a certain lifestyle when buying and using that brand (Reichert & Carpenter, 2004). This encourages consumers to buy the product. Moreover, brands known to be using explicit sexual content may have always been able to push the boundaries of explicit images for they were already known for it, even though these brands could potentially risk offending consumers and provoke backlash (Reichert et al., 2011). With the continuous displays of sex in contemporary media, nudity and sex have become normalized, making these images less shocking and more acceptable (Maclaran, 2015). In addition, sexuality and nudity are often regarded as relevant to personal care products, therefore making the images more acceptable as consumers find them relevant to the product (Nelson & Paek, 2008). Furthermore, Choi et al. (2016) indicated that there was a shift in the way women evaluated nudity in advertisements now, as their research found that women actually did not mind nudity as it was seen as an empowering tool. In

the end, sex still sell, the brands will receive attention either way, whether it be good or bad. Research even suggests that sexual appeals involving women may be evaluated more positively by them.

Context is key in advertisements, as they can enhance and frame the sexual content (Reichert, 2002). Moreover, several studies have looked at what the context does to consumers when evaluating the ad (Black & Morton, 2017; Lanseng, 2016). Context can enhance the explicitness of the advertisements, by putting emphasis on a model's sexual desirability and lifestyle. However, the setting of an ad can also dilute the effects of sexual explicitness when consumers are familiar with the setting and can relate to it by making the sexual appeals more socially acceptable. It is proven that highly arousing ads should use humour in order to relate to all audiences who are more easily offended by nudity and sexual explicitness (Galloway, 2009; Mayer et al., 2019). Thus, through sexual messages are mediated and more easily accepted. In addition to this, ads which feature sexual innuendos, in which models can be interpreted as acting sexual, work well as consumers react more favourable to the ad and brand (Wyllie et al., 2014). Furthermore, another socially acceptable way of showing sex was by putting the emphasis on something other than the sexual imagery such as reflecting the audience's desires. By promoting identification, most often ideological or analogical meanings were given to otherwise symbols within the advertisement. Indeed it was found that creation of meaning and desire is important when it comes to advertising (Gurkzi, 2020). Moreover, putting advertisements in non-provoking settings is also a useful strategy when trying to appeal to the audience. Multiple studies have shown that both men and women prefer intimate appeals, in which the emphasis is put on intimacy and commitment (Black & Morton, 2017; Dahl et al., 2009; Lanseng, 2016). This is also reflected in the advertisements, in which relation-based appeals were used more often than objectifying ones. Moreover, as women tend to romanticize sex, the advertisements can reflect their desires for romance and having a partner. Through analogical identification this experience is reframed (Woodward, 2003). Meaning they audiences that believe commitment is important in a sexual relationship will be able to associate themselves with the ad.

However, it does not always reflect today's society as there was a lack of LGBTQ+ representation. This may be due to the fact that brands do not want to alienate heterosexual consumers. In the end, these kinds of strategies are used to appeal to the audience in such a way that is minimizes the explicit sex appeals, as well as making audiences relate to it more easily as they are familiar with the context the sexual appeals are placed in.

In terms of differentiating sex appeals between the male and female audiences, it was found that women were either appealed by showing how they could be a submissive partner to men, or by showing female-empowering messages. Men were appealed through the use of masculine behaviour as well as using a more balanced appeal by showing a more average-looking man, through the boy-next-door archetype. Women want to increase their sexual appeal to men (Jung & Lee, 2010), by showing how women would use a personal care product and end up getting attention from men, the ads show the positive benefits from using the product. However, this strategy was more often used in

male targeted advertisements than in female targeted ones, possibly due to the fact women do not necessarily want to be a submissive partner to their male counterparts. Gender stereotypes are still often used in advertising (Heaty, 2020). This was indeed apparent in the advertisements analysed as well in which women were still portrayed in stereotypical roles. However, ads did show to make changes in which ads targeting women often appeared to have more empowering messages rather than traditional messages. Female-empowering messages work well in advertisements and are often evaluated more positively (Drake, 2017). These messages also mediate the effect of the objectifying sexual appeals as oftentimes women are shown more sexually than men even if men are featured within the advertisements (Reichert, 2002; Reichert & Lambiase, 2003). Due to the third and fourth feminist movement, brands may use empowering messages to appeal to women. By showing empowering messages, women will feel enticed and persuaded as they are directly targeted with a positive message without having to put too much effort into accomplishing it (Moeran, 2010; Kilyeni, 2012). Nonetheless, women are still shown in compromising positions even when the ads feature an empowering message. Therefore, the message seems contradictory to what is shown, as the ads often still featured a skinny, white model, even though research has shown that women in contemporary society want to see more diversity in advertisements (Jang & Lee, 2009; Pounders, 2018). The use of sexual appeals often already puts women in a more submissive way. However, changing gender role structures in society has brought variations of how women are portrayed in advertisements in order to attract them (Grau & Zotos, 2016). Through ideological identification, female consumers either associate or disassociate from the ad. The submissive partner and empowered women are two different target groups in the end.

According to Godeo (2005) men find it difficult to mediate their masculinity when using personal care products. They fear being too feminine or homosexual which makes them feel uncomfortable (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). Therefore, ads either showed male models to be hypermasculine and athletic or they were portrayed as more regular, but still manly. When hypermasculine male models were featured, it would appeal to a man's desire to obtain a certain status. However, research did find that men prefer a more average looking model (Diederichs & Lee, 2010). By showing the hypermasculine models with female models who like them, the focus was not on the masculine model, but instead on what a man could gain from using the product. They were then encouraged to buy the product in that way. By showing a positive outcome the male audience would feel attracted to purchase the product as they want to acquire the same outcome as the male models. However, as the hypermasculine male model could still alienate the male audience, therefore the boy-next-door archetype was also often used to appeal to them. These male models are utilized as mirrors to the male audience, as they can recognize themselves within the context. Moreover, by displaying that they can still acquire the outcome of getting the girl, it shows that they do not need to be hypermasculine. By putting two different strategies together, it can be seen that there indeed has been a shift in the way men are portrayed, as their portrayal has become softer and less harsh and

stereotypical (Grau & Zotos, 2016). By showing men in more softer roles, these become more normalized in society, showing that men do not need to be masculine in order to be sexy or attractive. As advertisements reflect and influence society, diverse people need to be shown in order to be inclusive.

5.2 Theoretical and societal implications

As shown within this study an abundance of research has been done on how sex appeals are used and how consumers attitudes are influenced by these. This research aims to complement these studies, by showing in more depth in which way the sex appeals are utilized in order to attract audiences. The study showed that the context in which the sexual appeals were placed was important in attracting the audiences, as this will make audiences associate themselves or disassociate themselves when watching the advertisements. By using theories that were already established by scholars, new themes could be derived on how brands use sex appeals and sex in order to attract their audiences. By combining studies of health and beauty, as well as sex in advertisements, this study shows how sex appeals are negotiated. Some of the concepts found within the analysis, such as positive framing, are not new, however they have yet to be shown in the context of sex in advertising. Moreover, the concepts could also be applied to other markets were sex appeals are used in order to appeal to its audience. As Sawang (2010) stated, sexual imagery is used in almost any product category. Therefore, different studies could use the theoretical model to study how that particular market uses these kinds of strategies in order to appeal to its audience.

Furthermore, Burke's identification had yet to be used in the context of sexual advertising. After all, it is with advertisements that one seeks to convince consumers of the power of the product and in that way connect to them which is why it is useful when researching sex. By using his kinds of identification during the open coding process of the visual analysis, this research was able to come to new and different conclusions than other scholars have come to as it added another dimension to the analysis as identification took the analysis a step further in which the imagery within the ads could be interpreted differently as it first looked at the sexual imagery in the open coding process and then the ideas behind it tied to sex appeals in the final analysis.

In terms of societal implications, this analysis showed there is still a long way to go in the way sex appeals are utilized within advertisements. As mentioned before, advertisements reflect society but also influence it. Most of the advertisements still featured mesomorphic male bodies and skinny female bodies. Moreover, the main models in the advertisements were always white, with background models sometimes being of colour. The notion that sex sells will always be there. Therefore, it will always be used in advertising, however marketers could use more diverse models in their advertisements to show inclusivity. Furthermore, the way women were portrayed most of the time was still sexist. Women can be sexual without having to seduce men. Showing women in an objectified or submissive manner, reflects that society can see women in such a way. As mentioned by

Jung and Lee (2010) advertisements create ideals that are socially acceptable, even if they are unattainable.

5.3 Limitations and further directions

This study was able to present new and relevant insights to the study of sexual advertisements. However, there are a number of limitations attached to this. Firstly, as qualitative research was conducted, there was the limitation of interpretation bias. The analysis was prone to subjectivity as there was the possibility that personal meanings were attached to the data and from that data, conclusions were drawn. These personal meanings could have derived from personal experiences, as well as the researcher's own norms and values, risking a certain level of subjectivity. Moreover, since the data was only coded by one researcher, inter-coder reliability could not be ensured. Therefore, the level of subjectivity is difficult to measure and there could be interpretation bias.

Secondly, the researcher of this study was a woman. There could be a gender bias in selecting data, as well as coming to conclusions. Men and women react differently to sex. Therefore, ads could have been interpreted differently had it been done by a male researcher. Women are often objectified within advertisements, the degrees to which this happens are different, a male researcher may think something is not objectifying while a female researcher may think it is as she deals with it herself sometimes.

Thirdly, there is a huge amount of personal care advertisements online. Only a select number of advertisements could be chosen for each year due to feasibility which meant that only a fraction of relevant content was selected and analysed. Advertisements that were excluded from the analysis could have resulted in different meanings, patterns and themes.

Finally, this research adds knowledge to the field of sexual advertising in the personal care industry - also the health and beauty industry, by demonstrating how sex appeals are used in order to attract the audience. The findings of the study could be used in further qualitative research in which audiences are exposed to the findings to see whether the strategies that are used in advertisements actually work. Furthermore, this research looked at Western society. Further research could include other countries outside of Western society, such as countries in for example Asia as findings may differ in those countries as they hold different values and beliefs.

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Appendix A – Evidence of Coding Process

2010 Men Perfume Bleu de Chanel

Rock 'n Roll music plays. A man is running in a city street. He wears a medium length black jacket and has his hair slightly slicked back. He stops, looks at a blonde woman running up stairs and continues to run in her direction.

A digital clapperboard is closed.

The same man from earlier is stood in front of microphones like in a press conference with a projection of the street he was running on earlier projected on top of him. Camera flashes blind him, as he covers his face.

Silhouettes of enthusiastic photographers taking pictures are shown through ribbed glass. A room full of reporters and photographers is shown, looking at the man at the desk with the microphones. Next to his desk stands a man who appears to be a spokesperson. The man is shown from up close. He looks slightly confused.

An offscreen voice says "Would you like her to rephrase the question?"

A woman in the room is shown with her face in the shadow, only her long blonde hair visible.

The rock music crescendos up throughout the next few seconds.

Extreme close up of the man's eye, as he refocuses his attention on the blonde woman.

Extreme close up of the woman's glossy lips.

The man averts his attention and when he looks back, he is in another room, sitting at an opulent house with a full breakfast table next to a woman wearing her dark hair up and wearing a black dress. She is wearing dark eye makeup. The man is now wearing a sweater. He slowly and sensually reaches for the woman's neck.

A blonde woman sensually smiles and looks up in a black and white vintage looking shot. The man is photographing her on an old fashioned camera in a house.

The man photographs the same blonde woman from behind the shutters of a shop. He smiles at her.

The man photographs the blonde woman on a spacious black and white patterned floor, while he is standing on top of her. She wears black sheer stay ups and plays with her hair.

His black and white shot of this moment that he is on top of her is shown. The woman sensually throws her head back and plays with her hair.

The blonde woman stands in a blue/green bathroom with one leg on the ledge of a bath tub, while wearing nothing but a towel around her waist. Her hair is up and she covers her breasts with one hand. Then a lot of ultra short shots follow of the blonde woman with different effects and filters.

The woman with the dark hair from the breakfast table turns away in slight disgust while the man goes to kiss her neck. The man turns a page of something.

The dark haired woman walks away from the breakfast table unhappy, as she drops her shawl behind her.

The man sits in the press conference room again and the camera zooms into his face. The cameras flash. Suddenly, the blonde woman's hair who was sitting in the dark becomes visible when her face is illuminated and she tilts her head up.

The man is shocked by seeing her.

Extreme close up of her eye with dark eye makeup.

The man leans into the microphones and says:

"I'm not going to be the person I'm expected to be anymore."

He then gets up from the desk and all the reporters and photographers go into chaos, trying to catch his attention.

Code
Mysterious
Suggestive dress
Sexual implicitness
Nude
Ideal female body type
Intimate appeal – negative
II: Cheating
Negative framing

2012 Women Perfume Gucci Premiere.docx

camera.

The model is shown again, still in front of the window, staring outside, with her mouth slightly open.

In the desert, she's wearing a dark blue dress and nude high heels with a strap. She's power walking and the dress has a trail with fringes through the desert. Only her legs and the trail are being shown.

In the apartment, the model is shown sideways, still staring outside. She is holding the window frame with one hand.

In the desert she is walking with a man, he is wearing a suit. He is caucasian. She is wearing a halter dress with the trail in the back.

In the apartment the model is shown sideways again from her upper body and up. Her mouth open.

In the desert the lights are on now, and the camera is following the model as she is walking towards the man, who is the director as he is sitting in a director's chair out of the shot. The camera zooms in on the model, she is holding one part of her hair. Her lips are red and she looks seductive as she is walking. She passes a humongous fan and her hair is blowing back in the wind. The trail of her dress is also half in the air.

Another room it seems, dark blue with spots of light in the wall. The doors slide open, revealing the model.

The model is shown in the reflection of mirrors, she is spraying more perfume on. Her eyes are closed, her mouth open as she is spraying it, it looks almost as if she's moaning as her head falls backwards.

She enters the blue room.

In the reflection of the mirror, the model's eyes are closed as she slowly turns her head, her eyes slowly opening as she still stares into the camera, with her mouth slightly opened. She puts the cap on the bottle again.

She enters the room, the door sliding shut behind her. Bright light fades in into the model disappears.

Blake Lively: Gucci premiere. The new essence for women.
The gucci logo appears on screen with Première at the bottom. Gucci handwritten in golden letters write over the logo. The perfume bottle fades over it, as it is slowly turning coming to an halt as the front of the bottle is facing the audience.

Code
AI: Luxurious lifestyle
Suggestive dress
II: Female empowerment
Sex appeal of long hair
Sexual implicitness
Autosexual
Positive framing

A caucasian man with blonde hair walks in the woods. His foot slips and he rolls down. He falls through the cracks of big sandy rocks.

He falls to the floor, he seems chubby. He is wearing a plaid white and red shirt which is unbuttoned. He sits up and looks around. A pan view of a desert and a river stream is shown.

Demure dress · *Regular man*

He crawls to the edge of the rock he is standing on. He looks down, where he seems a group of people dancing, they look primitive. The camera zooms in on them, it's all women, wearing fur and their hair is loose. They look primitive as they have bones in their hair. They dress does not cover much, only their breasts, crotch and bottom. They're dancing, with primitive weapons such as spears in their hands.

Ideal female body type · *Partially clad*

The shot shows the male model he looks in awe at what is going on below him. Shots of the women's crotches are shown as well as their bottom as they dance, moving their hips.

The male model crawls back, to the Axe deodorant bottle. The camera zooms in and he grabs it and sprays it under his armpits, his shirt open, showing part of his chest.

A silhouette of a woman holding a spear. He recoils and looks scared. The female model, primitive, with poofy brain hair walks up to him with big eyes. As if she's never seen a man before. Her spear is forward, ready to attack. Her eyes are big as she comes closer to him. She smells him. She breathes in and out heavily.

Appeal through smell

The male model is down now, surrounded by the tribe of women. Fiet fieuwww (whistle sound) can be heard in the background. He looks around in awe as he enters their village. The female model who found him smiles as he walks along with her. Her hand is on his shoulder and in the back other women also want to touch him.

A growl. The women look up in horror and let out a scream. A two headed monster emerges from the rocks above. He has 4 crab like legs. The monster comes closer and closer. The tribal women swing around torches and their spears, ready to attack. They throw their spears at it, however it just bounces back.

A shot of the male model standing in front of the women, facing the monster. He looks around him. His eyes focus on the breasts of the woman that found him. A shot of the woman's breasts are shown, in a furry bra like top. They are bouncing forward as she is still ready to attack. The male model gets an idea as he sees two round rocks next to each other, much like the breasts.

Focus on female body · *Objectifying women* · *Sexual innuendo*

He smiles, his eyes widened. He grabs a fur bra from a wooden rack and puts the rocks inside it. He swings the bra in his hand, creating speed and then throws it at the monster. The rocks hit both the monster's face and he falls down, dying as his tongue falls out of its mouth.

AI: Masculinity

The tribal women cheer and dance.
Male VO: Axe effect
The bottle of the deodorant is shown in the desert. It says Axe Apollo. In the back we can see the tribal women vaguely dancing.

Positive framing

The shot then changes to the male model, sitting on top of a few rocks. Two primitive women sit beside him, one on each side. He is smiling as one of the women as her legs

Hero to women · *II: Womanizer*

A golden snake appears, over it the words *Pure XS*. A female model, with her hair tied in a low bun, wearing a silver strappy dress enters. She holds the chain of her bag behind her head.

A male model, light skin black in a tux follows appears from behind a statue. He follows her. She smirks. Another male model appears, caucasian with brown hair. He turns the head of a statue. As he does so, the floor the first male model is walking on splits. He falls into it as he is so focused following the female model. The floor closes again.

The camera zooms in on the female model who is still holding the bag behind her head. The second model runs after her and holds it for her as he follows her. The female model looks into the camera, almost mischievous.

Submissive to female

She then runs up to the stairs as the second male model is still following her. She takes of her earrings along the way.

A hand is shown touching the eyes of a painting, he pushes into it, it's a button. Just as the female model is up the stairs, the stairs become flat, the male models slides down.

The female model continues walking, her hand stretched out with the earrings in her hand. Another male model comes from behind the curtain, also caucasian with a buzzcut, wearing a tux. He takes the earrings from her and looks at it. The female model smirks, the male model who is following behind her is too focused on the earrings and is pushed away by a male model with dark curls. He falls against a bookcase which turns.

Awareness of attractiveness

The camera zooms in on the female model's face, unbothered. She rips the bottom half of her dress, the camera is focused on that area. it falls down, music intensifies. The male model with the curls following, kneels down to grab it. She continues walking. A pan view of him still being crouched down. The chandelier falls from the sky and crashes onto him. That gave her a scare up.

Female dominance

A male model with blonde curls is shown to have cut down the chandelier, he smirks. He throws the scissors behind him and runs down the hall to follow the female model. He pauses for a moment in his step.

The camera turns to him and she smirks again. She takes off her dress, underneath she isn't wearing anything. The dress falls to the ground. She closes the door, her naked silhouette can be seen. The male model looks confused.

Process of removing clothing · *Nude* · *Sexual implicitness*

In the room, the female's silhouette is shown again, she is skinny. She sprays on perfume.

Ideal female body type

66

Appendix B – Code tree

Selective codes	Axial codes	Exemplar open codes
Overt sexual behaviour	Emphasis on the body	Importance of physique
		Hyper sexualization of female
		Nude
	Explicit displays of sex	Acting in lust
		Objectifying appeal
		Process of removing clothing
	Sexual desirability	Attractive to opposite sex
		Mysterious
		Awareness of attractiveness
	Single lifestyle	Flirty
		Multiple lovers
		Voyeurism
Socially acceptable displays of sex	The use of humour	Emphasis on sex in music
		Sexual innuendo
		Playfulness
	Sexually suggestive behaviour	Demure dress
		Emphasize on sex in slogan
		Alluding to sex
	Reflecting desires	Analogical identification: Luxurious lifestyle
		Positive framing
		Realism vs. fantasy
	Being in a relationship	Couple
		Intimate appeal
		Kissing
Traditional personas	Masculine behaviour	Objectifying women
		Athletic
		Hero to woman
	Submissive partner to men	Helping man
		Male model suddenly appears
		Male ad talking to women
Progressive personas	Boy next door	Regular body type

		Regular man
		Awkward towards women
	Female empowerment	Female dominance
		Male model as accessory
		Male submissive to female