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Impact of sex in luxury fashion advertisements on brand attractiveness and identification

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1 IMPACT OF SEX IN LUXURY FASHION ADVERTISEMENTS ON BRAND 2 ATTRACTIVENESS AND IDENTIFICATION

3 4 Abstract

5 Purpose

6 This study examined perceived brand attractiveness of and identification with fashion
7 luxury brands given different levels of sexuality in advertisements. Sex in
8 advertisements has become increasingly more common to generate attention and interest
9 in fashion luxury products with limited research on its influence on the consumer.

10 However, the use of sexuality in luxury advertisements may counter the ethical
11 expectations of brands by the current consumer in the United States.

12 13 Methodology

14 A sample of 1266 males and females completed a survey on brand attractiveness and
15 identification after examining an advertisement of a luxury fashion product. Participants
16 were assigned an advertisement that featured a same-gendered model at one of four
17 levels of sexuality (fully clothed to nude). IBM SPSS Statistics was used to analyze the
18 data which included descriptive statistics and a Two-Way Multivariate Analysis of
19 Variance (MANOVA) followed by an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

20 Findings

21 The results indicated *less sexuality* in luxury advertisements was better in generating
22 attractiveness to and identification with the brand. The advertisements with models fully
23 clothed were rated highest on brand attractiveness and identification. These relationships
24 were statistically significant among groups of men and women.

25 Originality

26 These findings are important to scholars and marketers of luxury brands as sexuality in
27 luxury brands continues to increase and becomes more provocative, as well as socially
28 conscious.

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 2

29

30

Introduction

31 Many consumers pursue the desire to purchase luxury brands to fulfill and define
32 a certain social status. Luxury brands such as Chanel, Gucci, and Prada have been
33 purchased not only for functional features but for the symbolic use. “Fashion
34 consumerism is an activity predicated by the belief that a *perceived need* is an actual need
35 (Rucker and Galinsky, 2013). What causes a fashion consumer to act on this impulse to
36 buy is part of semiotics. Semiotic theory is the science that studies signs and symbols like
37 those that are used in fashion luxury brands (Kaushik and Sen, 1990). Many influences on
38 consumers are artificially created largely by advertisers using their understanding of the
39 effect of semiotics on the individual who is reading the ad. For an advertisement to be
40 successful, it must manipulate the behavior of the buyer of fashion using a complex
41 assessment of cultural codes and symbols that are used in and **meaningful within an**
42 **society**. Cultural codes include those of sexually implicit advertisements of both women
43 and men. Rather than focus on the product to sell due to its own features to convince of it
44 purchase worthiness, advertisements exploit sexuality.

45 New definitions of marketing are inclusive of not only managerial processes to
46 sell advertised goods and services but more inclusive of a social relationship with the
47 consumer (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). It has changed previous forms of marketing to
48 a marketplace that is very fast paced, and ever-changing. Consumers are more
49 demanding and diversified in a complex selling environment (Barnes, Fox and Morris,
50 2004). In this new era of relationship marketing post-2000, marketing shifted to
51 servicing consumers (Feinberg et al., 2020). The new marketing approach focuses
52 directly on brand identity and brand image which can influence customer satisfaction
53 and increase customers’ purchase intentions (Dash, Keifer, and Paul, 2021). How has the
54 relationship between luxury marketing and its consumers changed? Are sexualized
55 images part of this shift to servicing consumers?

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 3

Advertising consists of non-personal visual and aural messages disseminated through paid media for the purpose of achieving one or more objective (Shimp, 2013; Walker and Zaid, 2011). The goals of an advertisement are to increase a company's profits, strengthen the attitudes of customers toward the company, and aim for a good position on dealer's shelves or in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 1987). Advertising can more broadly be defined as an institutionalized process that goes along with a set of partly codified practices and a host of cultural forms designed to inform or persuade larger groups of people (Florin, Vonderau, and Zimmermann, 2021).

With the intent of having a strong positive position in the consumers' minds and influencing their buying decisions, companies advertise to evoke emotions of desire in consumers that only their products can satisfy. Mentally, this places the product high on the pedestal in the mind of consumers as their needs are "fulfilled." However, since the need to buy "fashion" is filtered through culture, family, income, cinema, and self-perception, the "reality" is constantly shifting. Semiotics in the advertisement reveals the cultural context when a moment is captured. It alters new words, new needs, new moods, and thus new meanings to buyers searching for a newer "reality." Advertisers create social awareness and class differentiation through distinct advertisements. Ads are meant to target social statuses to which one would belong because of materialistic possessions. Materialistic possessions represent the social status that one tries to obtain in life.

Advertisers of high status, luxury products only associate their luxury brands with elegance, exclusivity, and a leisure lifestyle. This type of lifestyle that is recreated through the medium of ads is a lifestyle which many would like to live. Fashion advertising is an illusion of a fantasy lifestyle and exists only because of the premise that "*clothing makes a person.*" Life is not always easy, fun, or filled with enjoyment; the way it is pictured on the glossy pages of fashion magazines." The major achievement of advertising is to have created a self-fulfilling image of a public welfare as drab, brown-painted and seedy, constantly diminished by the high glamour and vivid sexual satisfactions of consumer

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 4

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4 83 living” (Sinclair, 1987, p. 29). A consumer begins to desire the fantasy life of the
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6 84 advertisement and subconsciously desires the product being sold in order to live in this
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8 85 imagined world.
9

10
11 86 Luxury fashion advertisements incorporate sexuality in advertising to garner
12
13 87 attention from the viewer and to enhance luxury status. It is important for luxury brands
14
15 88 to reach a culturally diverse audience appealing to both men and women. To understand
16
17 89 the effectiveness of luxury advertisements, *the purpose of this paper was to examine*
18
19 90 *perceptions of men and women of attractiveness and identification with a luxury fashion*
20
21 91 *brand given degree of sexuality presented in advertisements thus to further understand*
22
23 92 *relationship marketing.*
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94 Purpose

31
32 95 Luxury brands often advertise with the image of a desired fantasy world of
33
34 96 leisure. Sexuality in advertisements of luxury fashion products is often integrated to
35
36 97 achieve this desired image (Rucker and Galinsky, 2013; Reichert, 2007; Dichter, 1960).
37
38 98 Research has examined consumer relationships with luxury products, noting that
39
40 99 purchasing these products enhances self-esteem (Hudders and Pandelaere, 2012). In
41
42 100 addition, research has noted sex in advertising draws attention, generates interest, and
43
44 101 might influence behavior intentions (e.g., Reichert and Alvaro, 2001). Sex as part of
45
46 102 fashion advertising for both men and women has increased since the late 20th century
47
48 103 (e.g., Thompson, 2000). When compared to men, these advertisements featured women
49
50 104 more often in submissive and sexual positions (e.g., Monk-Turner, 2008). *The purpose of*
51
52 105 *this paper was to examine perceptions among men and women of degree of*
53
54 106 *attractiveness of and identification with a luxury brand given the amount of sexuality*
55
56 107 *presented in an advertisement. What is the marketing relationship of consumer with the*
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58 108 *luxury brands? Within the context of the previous literature, the following null*
59
60 109 *hypotheses for the study were developed:*

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4 110 **Null H1:** *There will be no differences in perceived attractiveness among male*
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6 111 *and female customers of a luxury brand given the degree of sexuality in*
7
8 112 *advertisements.*

9
10 113 **Null H2:** *There will be no differences in identifying with a luxury brand*
11
12 114 *among male and female customers given the degree of sexuality in*
13
14 115 *advertisements.*

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Literature Review

118 Social Identity through Purchase of Luxury Brands

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24 119 In today's consumer culture, many purchase luxury brands to establish social
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26 120 identity (de Bottom, 2004). Social status is important for a number of consumers to buy
27
28 121 branded, designer products because of its symbolic nature. For example, when a woman
29
30 122 carries a *Chanel* or *Gucci* purse, others who know its value will perceive this woman to
31
32 123 be "well to do financially," as these designer bags are retailed at prices in the thousands.
33
34 124 Status is very important, as status compared to other individuals means obtaining a
35
36 125 higher position whether it is in appearance, wealth, and/ or intelligence (degrees)
37
38 126 (Festinger, 1954; Hyman, 1942). In more recent literature, *compensatory consumption*
39
40 127 *theory*, documents that individuals purchase symbolic, luxury brands to fulfill any
41
42 128 deficits in their abilities, such as in status or in skill level, whether psychological or
43
44 129 physical (Rucker and Galinsky, 2013; Dichter, 1960). Consumers may purchase luxury
45
46 130 products that they can maintain or use to "create" identities through their symbolic value
47
48 131 that are desired in society. Others may acquire luxury, branded items to establish whether
49
50 132 one actually belong to or to demonstrate a desire to be a member of a group. Affiliation
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52 133 to a certain membership through a purchase can create status such as the polo club,
53
54 134 yachting club, and other affluent organizations.

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Luxury brands are different from other brands in the superior, high-quality products they sell (Kessous and Valette-Florence, 2019; Thomas, 2007). Researchers

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 6

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4 137 have acknowledged consuming luxury products temporarily increases self-esteem,
5
6 138 providing symbolic, hedonic, and functional value (Hudders and Pandelaere, 2012).
7
8 139 Garcia, Weaver, and Chen (2018) found relationships between selecting friends given
9
10 140 luxury product display is complex. When participants were asked to select friends based
11
12 141 on a brand, the luxury brand was not selected as often as the mid-level brand. Garcia et
13
14 142 al. explained, display of luxury products may signal an uncomfortable difference in
15
16 143 social status among friends.
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145 Sexuality in Advertising

22
23
24 146 The use of sexuality in advertising is prevalent. Courtney and Whipple (1983)
25
26 147 define sexuality in advertising as the use of “nudity, sexual imagery, innuendo, and
27
28 148 double entendre...employed as an advertising tool for a wide variety of products” (p.
29
30 149 103). Since 1964, there has been an increase in featuring sex in a wide range of
31
32 150 publications (e.g. general interest, men’s and women’s magazines) (Nelson and Paek,
33
34 151 2005; Reichert, and Carpenter, 2004; Rohlinger, 2002; Soley and Reid, 1988). Today
35
36 152 sexual images are common, labeled as a “fixture” in advertising (Reichert, 2007). Women
37
38 153 are the primary target that are used in most sexual images and they are also primarily
39
40 154 featured in advertisements in sexual poses with limited clothing (Monk-Turner 35 al,
41
42 155 2008). While researchers have examined sex in advertising as an effective method to
43
44 156 attract consumers (Putrevu, 2008; Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson, 2001). Researchers
45
46 157 have not thoroughly examined how sexuality in advertising influences perceived
47
48 158 attractiveness and identity with the brand (Reichert, 2002; 2007).
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54 159 Adomaitis and Saiki (2019) investigated the impact sex has on luxury fashion
55
56 160 advertisements along with the perceived attractiveness of the brand and consumer’s
57
58 161 identification with the brand. Sexual content has been used for both male and female
59
60 162 luxury fashion advertisements. Sexual content creates more of an interest and attention to
163 163 its viewers even though the product has nothing to do with a sexualized image.

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4 164 Advertisements with women were portrayed in more sexually aggressive positions with
5
6 165 more revealing clothing. In women's magazines, they were more seductively dressed to
7
8 166 sell clothes. This display of sexuality makes a mark on viewer's memory; however, the
9
10 167 name brand and its image can be diluted as in the findings of this study demonstrated
11
12
13 168 both male and females noted that nude luxury advertisement are less attractive.

14
15 169 Sarpal, Ru, Teck, Sundram and Mum (2015) investigated the impact of sex
16
17 170 appeal in advertising on emotions and attitudes. A comparison of female to male
18
19
20 171 respondents revealed negative perception of ads featuring same-sex nudes, however,
21
22 172 positive perceptions of ads featuring opposite sex nudes. Compared to the females, males
23
24 173 tend to evaluate male nudity (same-sex nudes) negatively. In terms of emotion, female
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26 174 respondents found sex appeal used in advertisements ambivalent and non-conclusive.
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29 175 However, sexually appealing advertisements were generally perceived as having a
30
31 176 negative impact on women. It may be due to the lack of practical portraying of their
32
33
34 177 respective bodies. The perception of sex appeal in advertising by different genders is
35
36 178 examined in several studies not just in Sarpal et al. (2015). Advertisements featuring
37
38 179 overt sex appeal produced more negative feelings in women than men. The authors
39
40 180 reasoned culture and women's self-perceptions may play a role in this finding.

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42
43 181 Wirtz, Sparks, and Zimbres (2017) investigated the historical use of sexual
44
45 182 appeal in advertisements. In addition, their respective research investigated whether
46
47 183 exposure to ads with sexual content influenced ad recognition and recall, attitude
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49 184 towards the ad or brand, and purchase intention. Research indicated ads with nude
50
51 185 models or ads that showed sexual behavior were rated more negatively than ads with less
52
53 186 nudity or that show less sexual behavior.

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56 187 Gerding Speno and Aubrey (2018) investigated the adultification of girls and the
57
58 188 youthification of women in magazines. The study looked at how girls are 'dressed up' to
59
60 189 look at if they are women and women 'dressed down' to look like girls. Three genres of
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190 190 magazines were investigated for both adultification and youthification which were teen

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4 191 girl's magazine, women's lifestyle magazines, and men's lifestyle magazines. Magazines
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6 192 catering to teens examined were *Seventeen*, *Teen Vogue*, and *Girls Life*. Two of their
7
8 193 main research questions were (1) how frequently does adultification of girls occur in teen
9
10 194 girls' magazines? And (2) How frequently does youthification of women occur in
11
12 195 women's lifestyle in men's lifestyle magazines? Adultification had four indicators; the
13
14 196 index ranged from 0 to 4 with a 4 being the highest level of adultification. The average
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16 197 level of adultification was 2.06 in advertisements. Men's magazines indicated less
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18 198 adultification compared to adultification in women's magazines.

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Researchers have used content analysis to document the use of sexual images in fashion advertising directed at both women and men and its increase over time. Thompson (2000) analyzed 2,000 fashion advertisements from *Gentlemen's Quarterly* and *Vogue* between 1964 and 1994 and found the use of sexual attire and nudity of women and men increased. Krassas, Blauwkamp, and Wesselink (2001) analyzed advertisements from *Cosmopolitan* and *Playboy* magazines published in 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995. In *Cosmopolitan*, both men and women were increasingly depicted as sex objects over time. Reichert and Carpenter (2004) studied advertisements from *Playboy* and *Esquire*. They also reported increases in use of sexual dress and in depictions of intimate contact between models. Stankiewicz and Rosselli (2008) analyzed advertisements from popular US magazines. The use of sex was greater in fashion magazines (men's, women's and young women's) than in news, business, or women's non-fashion magazines.

Sexual objectification in fashion advertisements caters to the "Sex Sells" perception which has increased since its 1964 inception. There was never a question on the effectiveness but rather ongoing debates on whether such images were filling a need or ethically demoralizing. Female models often fill a seemingly subservient role, of a male leering upon her with unrequited attention. The visual creates a biased narrative by focusing on the male's point of view. One should note the utilization of sexuality in

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4 218 media is mainly incorporated in beauty, health, fashion, and entertainment industries. In
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6 219 comparison, they are less common in financial and medicinal industries. As trends have
7
8 220 shifted over the decades, brand leaders search for the thin line between sex appeal and
9
10 221 sexism to incorporate in one's advertisements. Representatives of a modern woman are
11
12 222 scarce which is why backlash has become the norm. Controversial images increase
13
14 223 consumer recall (Thompson, 2000), but is also a pendulum that could make or break a
15
16 224 brand's image.

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18
19
20 225 *What is the marketers' relationship to the consumer when using provocative*
21
22 226 *images?* There have also been arguments which validate the use of illicit imagery in
23
24 227 advertisements. In an article, entitled *Sexual Appeal in Print Media: Brand Recall and*
25
26 228 *Fixation*, Fidelis et al. (2017) expressed how shock value utilized media increases the
27
28 229 likelihood of recall, and therefore purchase. The researchers conducted a three-step,
29
30 230 consumer evaluation of stimulating materials, in which there would be a comparative
31
32 231 analysis based on the moderation levels. Researchers observed the participants' *physical*
33
34 232 responses to advertisements. Participants filled out a questionnaire to note the brands'
35
36 233 recall from the first step. The resulting advertisements exposed a preference for adults
37
38 234 with sexually alluring qualities.

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42 235 As the use of sexual adult images has been increasing over time, concern has
43
44 236 been expressed that it has expanded to include adolescents. Graff, Murnen, and Krause
45
46 237 (2013) used content analysis to investigate whether the sexualization of girls increased
47
48 238 between 1971 and 2011 in *Seventeen* magazines. *Seventeen* showed increases in the
49
50 239 total number of sexualizing characteristics of featured girls including use of low-cut
51
52 240 shirts, high-heeled shoes, and tight-fitting clothing during this 40-year period.

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242 **Why is Sex Used in Advertising?**

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244 Researchers interested in the use of sex in advertising have documented
that sexual content is used to attract attention, generate interest, and influence

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4 245 behavioral intentions. Specifically, it has been found sex grabs consumer
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6 246 attention (Sawang, 2010; Bello, Pitts, and Etzel, 1983) and that sexual imagery is
7
8 247 remembered (Reichert and Alvaro, 2001). However, sexual imagery may actually
9
10 248 serve as a distractor from brand information. For example, researchers have found
11
12 249 that viewers of advertisements with sexual content have not been successful at
13
14 250 recalling the names of the brands featured (Reichert and Alvaro, 2001).

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16
17 251 Several researchers have reported that advertisements with sexual content are
18
19 252 more interesting than advertisements without it (Sawang, 2010; Reichert and Alvaro,
20
21 253 2001; Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson, 2001). However, nonsexual advertisements are
22
23 254 elaborated on to a greater extent than are sexual ones (Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson,
24
25 255 2001) suggesting that viewers are not carefully analyzing the content of sexual
26
27 256 advertisements; thus, the content of the brand promise may be missed by the viewer.

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31 257 Few researchers have directly related the use of sex in advertising to
32
33 258 behavior. Rather, what has been measured is behavioral intention. Researchers have
34
35 259 documented that purchase intentions are tied to moderately explicit sex in
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37 260 advertisements as opposed to explicit advertisements, low sexual content, or ads
38
39 261 with no sexual content (Grazer and Keesling, 1995).

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43 262

44 263 **Consumerism**

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47 264 Balzano and Vianelli (2022) investigated the impact of fragmented supplies chains
48
49 265 and indicated that consumers have difficulty following the supply chain of products and
50
51 266 the transparency of where products are being created, processed, manufactured, and
52
53 267 shipped within the retail pipeline. Balzano and Vianelli (2022) contribute the
54
55 268 understanding of consumer ideologies, which are grounded in consumer beliefs that
56
57 269 guide and motivate consumer behaviors and attitudes that do not exist in a vacuum but
58
59 270 are rather formed through an intricate interplay of individual, social, and exogenous
60
271 influences. Specifically, they reveal the ideas of purchasing local or the phenomenon of

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4 272 locavorism, arguing that it is not solely an outcome of personal values, beliefs, and past
5
6 273 experiences. This occurs concurrently influenced by the broader social context, including
7
8 274 group interactions and local community involvements that favor locavorism. Exogenous
9
10 275 factors, particularly systemic events, also have substantial impacts on shaping this
11
12 276 consumer ideology. This highlights the intricate reinforcement of the locavorism
13
14 277 dimensions—lionisation, opposition, and communalisation—which further entrenches
15
16 278 this consumer ideology. Overall, Balzano and Vianelli's (2022) examination elucidates
17
18 279 the complexity and dynamism inherent in consumer ideologies. These ideologies are
19
20 280 continually influenced and redefined by a diverse array of factors. The comprehension of
21
22 281 this dynamic is instrumental for academia and industry alike, enabling more effective
23
24 282 engagement with consumer attitudes and behaviors.

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28
29 283 Supplies chains that have fewer intermediaries, ethical and sustainable problems,
30
31 284 and support activism for consumer information are more favored. This also includes
32
33 285 fashion luxury apparel. This phenomenon can impact purchasing luxury brands that do
34
35 286 not include direct, supply-chain methods such as more having local brands. This also
36
37 287 influences marketing strategies to be inclusive of target niche marketing to the consumers'
38
39 288 purchase of luxury brands, avoiding global, mass brands, and favoring luxury designers,
40
41 289 especially in the United States and in local markets.

42
43
44
45 290 Schmitt et al. (2021) investigated different types of consumer ideology that
46
47 291 impacts consumer decision-making such as biodegradability, sustainability, and vegan
48
49 292 premises. Some ideologies are inclusive of moral parameters, societal wrong vs. rights,
50
51 293 and political injustices. A theoretical framework was presented on Consumer Ideology
52
53 294 that incorporates different consumer theories (both classical and new social theories)
54
55 295 which detail consumer decision-making. The theoretical framework was applied to new
56
57 296 consumerism with regards to upcycling, Zoom backgrounds, and the commercialization
58
59 297 of TikTok. New consumer orientations including consumer's lived experience can lead
60
298 to acceptance or rejection of materialism. Consumption is inclusive of the cultural,

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299 technological, and societal forces that impact consumer-decisions-making. This trend
300 can be an ideology of the masses, practiced rituals, and embedded cultural symbolism of
301 purchases that can shape consumer identities and are reflective of social media. It can
302 impact consumption of luxury fashion brands that are reflective of societal values,
303 technological information, and cultural symbolism of fashion that reveals consumer
304 identity through dress and non-verbal communication.

Theoretical Framework

306 Semiotic theory is the science that studies signs and symbols. According to
307 Kaushik and Sen (1990) “the terms semiology and semiotics are used in relation to
308 structural linguistics and structural anthropology” (p. 227). “It is the science of signs and
309 how they work” (Stuart and Fuller, 1991, p. 270). Semiotics investigates how we
310 communicate through language, representations, and gestures, how these have evolved,
311 how they are learned, and how they are shared socially (Silvera-Roig and Lopez-Varela
312 Azcárate, 2020). Signs convey particular meaning to people within their cultural
313 environment. Semiotic analysis reveals the values of a culture by interpreting tangible and
314 intangible objects. Some cultures value materialistic objects, such as jewelry and clothes,
315 whereas other cultures value non-materialistic objects, such as religion, or tribal dance. *It*
316 *is the people of a culture that give meaning and importance* to signs and symbols
317 (Kaushik and Sen, 1990; Mick, 1986). People impose their own values, emotions, and
318 attitudes onto the interpretation of signs.

319 Charles Sanders Pierce (1857-1913) “is considered the founder of American
320 semiotics” (Stuart and Fuller, 1991, p. 270). He is a dominant figure in philosophical
321 semiotics. Pierce developed semiotics into a mathematical equation. Pierce created the
322 basic model of semiotics to explain the triadic relationship of the sign, its meaning, and
323 the person who perceives the message, which he named *the sign*, *the object*, and *the*
324 *interpretant*, respectively (Stuart and Fuller, 1991). According to Fuller and Stuart (1991)
325 *the sign* represents an object which stands for something to someone. *The object* is the

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4 326 message conveyed through the sign and *the interpretant* is “the mental concept of what is
5
6 327 communicated by the user” (1990, p. 270). The user is the semiotic analysis is either or
7
8 328 both the sender or the receiver of the message (1990). Peirce’s model uses a triangle with
9
10 329 three (3) labeled points to explain this three-way relationship. To visualize Peirce’s
11
12 330 mathematical equation, *the sign* is at the apex of the triangle and *the object* and *the*
13
14 331 *interpretants* are on either side of its legs.

15
16
17 332 Bhattacharya and Sen (2017) discussed the underlying conditions that prompt
18
19 333 consumers to have an enduring and meaningful relationship with a company. While
20
21 334 they examined business to business relationships, their premises can also be applied
22
23 335 to the interaction between the ultimate consumers to business. According to
24
25 336 Bhattacharya and Sen, meaningful business relationships are formed after the
26
27 337 consumer has identified with the company. Identification with a company is “*active,*
28
29 338 *selective, and volitional on consumers’ part and causes them to engage in favorable*
30
31 339 *....company-related behaviors*” (p. 77). Within the context of social identity theory
32
33 340 (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel and Turner, 1985), when consumers identify with a company,
34
35 341 they categorize themselves as a member of the company (Bhattacharya and Sen;
36
37 342 Kramer, 1991). Bhattacharya and Sen argue that companies offer social identities to
38
39 343 consumers. Identifying with a company is a result of various company
40
41 344 communication channels, including advertising.

42
43
44 345 Prior to consumers’ identification with a company, Bhattacharya and Sen
45
46 346 (2017) noted that company attractiveness is important. The authors explained that in
47
48 347 order for the consumer to perceive the company as attractive, the message from the
49
50 348 company must be perceived as having a similar identity to the consumer, distinctive
51
52 349 values, and prestige. A company with a similar identity allows the consumer to
53
54 350 process the information better (Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail, 1994) and to express
55
56 351 themselves (Pratt, 1998). Identity distinctiveness allows the consumer to distinguish
57
58 352 themselves from others (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). While consumers need to relate

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4 353 with a company, they also have a desire for self-enhancement, which has been
5
6 354 associated with prestigious brands (e.g. Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994). In the
7
8 355 analysis by Bhattacharya and Sen (2017), prestige referred to the perceptions of high
9
10 356 regard. When customers associate prestige with a company they then perceive
11
12 357 themselves in high regard, even with sexual imagery. This explains the significance
13
14 358 of the use of sexually posed models.

15
16
17
18 359 Bhattacharya and Sen (2017) further identified external influences on
19
20 360 perceived company attractiveness including consumer knowledge, clarity of their
21
22 361 message/brand, and perceived trustworthiness. With regard to consumer knowledge, it
23
24 362 is assumed that positive knowledge of the company (Raju, Lonial and Mangold,
25
26 363 1995) will result in establishing company attractiveness. A company must also be
27
28 364 perceived as having a “signature personality” that is communicated clearly in order
29
30 365 for the brand to be perceived as attractive (e.g. Shoda and Mischel, 2000). Finally,
31
32 366 perceived trustworthiness in this context relates to positive product evaluations and
33
34 367 organizational behavior (e.g. Kramer, 1999). Trustworthiness is influenced by
35
36 368 historical experiences, as well as, the reputation of the category of company
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40 369 (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2017).

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371 **Methods**

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46 372 An instrument was made with a stimuli and a set of items representing
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48 373 attractiveness and brand identification. Reichert and Carpenter (2004) identified four
49
50 374 levels of sexuality in advertisements, including: i) demure – every day dress; ii)
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52 375 suggestive – partially exposed upper body; iii) partially clad – undergarments only, and;
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54 376 iv) nude – naked or the suggestion of being naked. The stimuli were luxury brand
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56 377 advertisements categorized at each of these four levels of sexuality. Researchers initially
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58 378 assessed the levels of nudity in the advertisements. For the pilot, 56 participants
59
60 379 categorized two sets of luxury advertisements at each sexuality level and the highest

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4 380 number in each category was selected for the final study. The advertisements had no
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6 381 more than two models. The final survey had the option to view one of eight
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8 382 photographs, four (one at each level of sexuality) for each gender.
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11 383 The survey had sixteen items to assess on a 5- point Likert scale (1=strong
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13 384 disagree to 5=strongly agree) on company attractiveness and company identification as
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15 385 suggested by Bhattacharya and Sen (2003). Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) developed the
16
17 386 items after conducting an extensive review of literature resulting in a model that details
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19 387 the variables in consumer relationships with a company. The resulting scales items were
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21 388 also used as a means to measure consumer relationships, but between the impact on the
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23 389 relationship given the company's advertisement. Ten items represented attractiveness to
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25 390 the brand which comprised of brand attractiveness, similarity, distinctiveness,
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27 391 knowledge, coherence, and trustworthiness. These items had a good internal
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29 392 consistency ($\alpha=.8.59$). Eight items focused on identification with the brand including
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31 393 loyalty to product, trying new products, purchasing expectations, favorable discussion
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33 394 among friends, wearing the brand logo, anticipating generating positive word of mouth
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35 395 messages, encouraging friends to buy the product, and recruiting others to use the
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37 396 company/brand's product. The identification items had excellent internal consistency
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39 397 ($\alpha=.959$).
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45 398 After the survey was developed, the study was reviewed and approved by the
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47 399 university's Institutional Review Board (#1092231-2). The sample consisted of
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49 400 participants in survey service Amazon Turk. The survey was available on Amazon Turk
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51 401 for two weeks. The participants completed the survey items in response to one of the
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53 402 selected advertisements with a model of like gender. IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28,
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55 403 2021, SPSS Inc., Chicago) was used to analyze the data which included descriptive
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57 404 statistics and a Two-Way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) followed with
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59 405 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as post hocs. Significance was $p \leq .05$. To further
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406 understand the relationship of gender within the broader context of other demographics a

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 16

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4 407 regression analysis was completed for both Company Attractiveness and Identification
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6 408 considering demographics and levels of sexuality in the advertisement.
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409 Methods

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46 426 also used as a means to measure consumer relationships, but between the impact on the
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48 427 relationship given the company's advertisement. Ten items represented attractiveness to
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50 428 the brand which comprised of brand attractiveness, similarity, distinctiveness,
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52 429 knowledge, coherence, and trustworthiness. These items had a good internal
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439 for two weeks. The participants completed the survey items in response to one of the
440 selected advertisements with a model of like gender. IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28,
441 2021, SPSS Inc., Chicago) was used to analyze the data which included descriptive
442 statistics and a Two-Way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) followed with
443 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as post hocs. Significance was $p \leq .05$. To further
444 understand the relationship of gender within the broader context of other demographics a
445 regression analysis was completed for both Company Attractiveness and Identification
446 considering demographics and levels of sexuality in the advertisement.

448 Results

450 Sample

451
452 A total of 1,266 participants completed the survey. There were 701(55.4%)
453 female and 565 (44.6%) male participants. Participants were educated with the highest
454 number of participants having a Bachelor's degree ($n = 520$; 41.1%) or some college (n
455 = 236; 18.6%). The majority were employed ($n = 707$; 55.8%) or self-employed ($n =$
456 232; 18.3%). Income ranged with 21.4% ($n = 271$) earning less than \$25,000 per year,
457 and 35.1% ($n = 444$) earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Participants lived in all
458 regions of the United States (see Table 1).

459 Insert Table 1 Here

460
461 Most of the participants were either married ($n = 592$; 46.9%) or single ($n = 552$;
462 43.8%). The group was mostly Caucasian ($n = 791$; 62.8%), with the second highest

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 18

463 ethnicity identified as Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 209$; 16.6%). Most identified
 464 themselves as heterosexual ($n = 996$; 80.9%).

465

466 Insert Table 2 Here

467

468 Overall, the Demure advertisement was perceived as having the highest
 469 Company Attractiveness ($m = 3.21$) and the Nude advertisement had the least ($m = 2.81$).
 470 Males perceived the Demure luxury advertisement with the highest Company
 471 Attractiveness ($m = 3.37$) and the Nude photograph had the lowest Company
 472 Attractiveness mean ($m = 2.84$). Females perceived the Demure ($m = 3.09$) and
 473 Suggestive ($m = 3.10$) as attractive. Similar to the males, females perceived the Nude
 474 luxury advertisement as least attractive ($m = 2.79$) (see Table 3).

475

476 Insert Table 3 Here

477

478 A MANOVA was used to compare the current and preferred means of male and female
 479 participants for Company Attractiveness and Identification to level of sexuality (Demure,
 480 Suggestive, Partial Clad, Nude). The Box's test of equality of covariance matrices was
 481 used to test the homogeneity of the covariance, and was not significant ($p = .076$). The
 482 multivariate result was significant for Company Attractiveness, with an interaction
 483 ($Pillai's Trace = .014$, $F_{(6,2516)} = 2.88$, $p = .008$) and main effects for the variables as a
 484 set for gender ($Pillai's Trace = .006$, $F_{(2,1257)} = 3.85$, $p = .021$) and levels of sexuality in
 485 the advertisements ($Pillai's Trace = .042$, $F_{(6,2516)} = 9.04$, $p < .001$). Therefore, an
 486 ANOVA was carried out for post hoc analysis. The Levene's test of equality of error
 487 variance was significant for Company Attractiveness ($p = .035$), however, warranting
 488 caution in interpretation. An interaction for gender and level of sexuality was found
 489 ($F_{(3,1258)} = 3.64$, $p = .012$) for Company Attractiveness but not identification with

company ($F_{(3,1258)} = 2.13, p = .095$). Main effects for gender and level of sexuality were found for both dependent.

Null H1: There will be no differences in perceived attractiveness among males and females of a luxury brand given the degree of sexuality in advertisements.

The post hoc demonstrated statistically significant differences in gender in Company Attractiveness ratings ($mean\ dif. = -0.10, SE = 0.04, p = .019$), with females ($m = 2.97$) having a lower mean than males ($m = 3.07$). Among females, Company Attractiveness ratings were: Demure ($Mean/SD\ 3.09 \pm 0.72, n = 177$), Suggestive ($Mean/SD\ 3.10 \pm 0.75, n = 176$), Partially Clad ($Mean/SD\ 2.91 \pm 0.71, n = 177$), and Nude ($Mean/SD\ 2.79 \pm 0.85, n = 171$). For females, Demure had a statistically significant higher mean when compared to Partially Clad ($mean\ dif. = 0.18, SE = 0.08, p = .026$) and Nude ($mean\ dif. = 0.30, SE = 0.08, p < .001$). In addition, Suggestive was perceived as more attractive producing a statistically significant to Partially Clad ($mean\ dif. = 0.19, SE = 0.08, p = .016$) and Nude ($mean\ dif. = 0.31, SE = 0.08, p < .001$) (see Table 2).

Among males the Company Attractiveness ratings were as follows: Demure ($Mean/SD\ 3.37 \pm 0.69, n = 143$), Suggestive ($Mean/SD\ 3.01 \pm 0.69, n = 141$), Partially Clad ($Mean/SD\ 3.06 \pm 0.82, n=142$), and Nude ($Mean/SD\ 2.84 \pm 0.76, n = 139$). For men, all remaining levels of sexuality had a statistically significant difference to Demure, with the Demure image seen as more attractive (Demure to Suggestive, $mean\ dif. = .37, SE = 0.09, p < .001$; Demure to Partially Clad, $mean\ dif. = .31, SE = 0.09, p = .001$; Demure to Nude, $mean\ dif. = .53, SE = 0.09, p < .001$). In addition, with regards to Company Attractiveness responses among males, the Partially Clad image had a statistically significant difference to Nude, $mean\ dif. = .23, SE = 0.09, p = .012$) (see Table 2).

The sample was composed of a wide variety of demographic groups. Therefore, a hierarchical regression analysis was completed for estimating Company Attractiveness

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4 517 by level of sexuality and gender after statistically controlling for the influence of the
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6 518 available demographic information. The analysis was completed in hierarchical four
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8 519 blocks: 1) demographics without gender; 2) level of sexuality in the advertisement; 3)
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10 520 gender; and 4) interaction of level of sexuality and gender. All predictors in the final
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12 521 model controlled for the effects of the others in the model. After dummy coding nominal
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14 522 predictors and creating the interaction term from centered variables, the VIF and
15
16 523 residuals showed that regression assumptions had been met. The results revealed
17
18 524 demographics without gender included accounted for about 8% of the variance ($R^2 =$
19
20 525 $.079$, $F_{(23,1165)} = 4.37$, $p < .001$). Introducing the level of sexuality added another 3.4% of
21
22 526 the predicted variance ($\Delta R^2 = .034$, $F_{(3,1162)} = 14.98$, $p < .001$) for a total of 11% in total.
23
24 527 Although the demographic block and the level of sexuality blocks were significant,
25
26 528 gender was not a significant addition ($\Delta R^2 = .002$, $F_{(1,1161)} = 2.06$, $p = .15$). However, the
27
28 529 interaction of gender and Company Attractiveness added about 1% ($\Delta R^2 = .009$, $F_{(3,1158)} =$
29
30 530 4.14 , $p = .006$) to the accounted variance, with the final variance accounted for by the
31
32 531 model of 12.5% ($R^2 = .125$, $F_{(30,1158)} = 5.49$, $p < .001$).

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39 532 In the complete model, Blacks were predicted to have a Company Attractiveness
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41 533 score that was 0.156 higher than Whites ($p = .05$), and the Asian group was 0.293 higher
42
43 534 than Whites ($p < .001$). For age, the 25-34 age group had a score that was 0.151 higher
44
45 535 than the 18-24 year age group ($p = .022$). The working group was 0.135 higher than non-
46
47 536 working group ($p = .013$). The Company Attractiveness score of the group of individuals
48
49 537 living outside the US was 0.238 lower than the Mid-Western group ($p = .03$), while
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51 538 heterosexuals scored 0.240 lower than those who were not heterosexual ($p < .001$).
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55 539 Compared to the Demure advertisement the Suggestive one dropped the Company
56
57 540 Attractiveness score by 0.153 ($p = .013$), the Partially Clad score dropped by 0.239 ($p <$
58
59 541 $.001$), and Nude fell by 0.401 ($p < .001$). Interactions were found for Demure versus
60
542 Suggestive by Gender and Demure versus Nude by Gender in line with what was
543 previously found in the MANOVA analysis. Based on the standardized coefficient, the

544 Nude versus Demure contrast had the largest impact in lowering the score ($B = -0.22$)

545 (see Table 4).

546 Insert Table 4 Here

547

548 Brand Identification

549 As far as identification with the brand/company was concerned, the Demure
 550 advertisement had the highest mean for both females ($m = 2.62$) and males ($m = 2.93$).
 551 Females and males mildly disagreed with these statements related to company
 552 identification (see Table 3).

553 *Null H2: There will be no differences in identifying with a luxury brand among male
 554 and female customers given the degree of sexuality in advertisements.*

555 As noted above, the interaction of levels of sexuality and gender was not
 556 significant for identifying with the company ($F_{(3,1258)} = 3.64, p = .095$). However, post
 557 hoc comparisons on the main effects in identifying with the company resulted in
 558 statistically significant differences between males and females ($F_{(1, 1258)} = 7.55, p =$
 559 $.006$) and levels of sexuality ($F_{(3,1258)} = 5.73, p = .001$).

560 The mean scores for Company Identification were: Demure ($Mean/SD 2.76 \pm$
 561 $1.02, n = 320$), Suggestive ($Mean/SD 2.56 \pm 1.08, n = 317$), Partially Clad ($Mean/SD$
 562 $2.53 \pm 1.08, n = 319$), and Nude ($Mean/SD 2.42 \pm 1.06, n = 310$). Demure had statistically
 563 significant differences with the other levels of sexuality including: Suggestive ($Mean dif.$
 564 $= 0.22, SE = .08, p = .010$), Partially Clad ($Mean dif. = 0.24, SE = .08, p = .004$), and
 565 Nude ($Mean dif. = 0.34, SE = .08, p < .001$).

566 The pairwise comparisons of gender demonstrated statistically significant
 567 differences in Company Identification ratings overall ($Mean dif. = -0.16, SE = 0.06, p =$
 568 $.006$) by gender, with females having lower ratings. Female mean scores of Company
 569 Identification for each advertisement were as follows: Demure ($Mean/SD 2.62 \pm 1.02, n$
 570 $= 177$), Suggestive ($Mean/SD 2.60 \pm 1.11, n = 176$), Partially Clad ($Mean/SD 2.46 \pm$

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571 0.99, $n = 177$), and Nude (*Mean/SD* 2.30 \pm 1.10, $n = 171$),

572 Similar to the analysis of perceived attraction, a second hierarchical regression
573 analysis was completed for Company Identification with the same predictors and blocks
574 as before. Demographics excluding gender accounted for about 18.7% of the variance
575 ($R^2 = .187$, $F_{(23,1165)} = 11.66$, $p < .001$). Introducing the condition added another 1.3%
576 of the predicted variance ($\Delta R^2 = .013$ $F_{(3,1162)} = 6.08$, $p < .001$) for a total of 20%.
577 Although the demographic block and levels of sexuality in the advertisement blocks
578 were significant ($p < .001$), gender was not a significant addition ($\Delta R^2 = .001$ $F_{(1,1161)} =$
579 1.98 , $p = .16$). However, the interaction of gender and the Company Identification
580 variable was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .005$ $F_{(3,1158)} = 2.66$, $p = .047$) and added 0.5% additional
581 variance. Final variance accounted for was 20.6% ($R^2 = .206$, $F_{(30,1158)} = 10.04$, $p <$
582 $.001$).

583 Specific relationships in the complete model included Blacks were predicted to
584 have a Company Identification score that was 0.28 higher than Whites ($p = .006$), the
585 Asian/Pacific Islander group score was 0.68 higher than Whites ($p < .001$), and the other
586 group's score was 0.42 higher than Whites ($p = .001$). Those who were married had a
587 predicted score that was 0.19 higher than the never married group ($p = .005$). For age,
588 the 45-54 year olds had a Company Identification score that was 0.28 lower than 18-24
589 year olds ($p = .028$). The Working group Company Identification score was 0.26 higher
590 than Non-Working individuals ($p < .001$). Those with household incomes below \$35k
591 had Company Identification scores that were 0.16 higher than the middle-income group
592 (\$35k-75k; $p = .021$). Heterosexuals scored 0.51 lower on Company Identification than
593 those who were Not Heterosexual ($p < .001$). Compared to the Demure advertisements,
594 the advertisements that were Suggestive scores fell in predicted Company Identification
595 by 0.20 ($p = .012$), Partially Clad fell by 0.22 ($p = .006$), and Nude lowered by 0.33 ($p <$
596 $.001$). An Interaction was found for Demure versus Suggestive by Gender in line with

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4 597 what was previously found in the MANOVA analysis. Based on the standardized
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6 598 coefficient, the Asian/Pacific Islander versus White group contrast had the largest impact
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8 599 in increasing the score ($B = -0.23$). (see Table 5).
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10 Discussion

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13 601 Luxury fashion brands promote a high-status lifestyle through their
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15 602 advertisements often featuring sexuality to gain attention and interest. According to
16
17 603 symbolic interaction theory, there is a triadic relationship in making meanings of objects
18
19 604 including the sign or object, its meaning, and the person who perceives the sign. This
20
21 605 study supports this semiotic theory because the meanings of the advertisements varied
22
23 606 given different levels of sexuality. In addition, men and women varied in their
24
25 607 perceptions of sexuality used within the advertisements. Furthermore, Bhattacharya and
26
27 608 Sen (2017) specify that in order to influence consumer behavior, the brand/company
28
29 609 must be perceived as attractive and it has to be a company the consumer identifies with.
30
31 610 This means luxury consumers mentally connect with the sexual innuendos that luxury
32
33 611 fashion brands convey in their respective fashion advertisements (Walker and Zaid,
34
35 612 2011). This maybe be a way of consumer recall especially if the buyer of the brand feels
36
37 613 sexy wearing the brand advertised. The advertised brand can reiterate these feelings
38
39 614 through both the advertised message and in how the clothes are scantily draped on the
40
41 615 body. However, moral parameters are often used to persuade customers as well (e.g.
42
43 616 Schmitt et al., 2021), particularly more recently with the rise in sustainability, upcycling,
44
45 617 and perceived social injustices.
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52 618 Within this more current framework, it may be assumed that advertisements with
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54 619 the least sexuality will prompt a better connection with consumers than advertisements
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56 620 with greater sexuality. Both men and women perceived the images as attractive,
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58 621 particularly with less nudity and they identified with the company with the least
59
60 622 sexuality (Demure). These results were particularly true for females, who's identification
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62 623 with the company decreased in sequence as level of sexuality increased. This may be

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 24

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4 624 caused by an increase of women in the workforce and more female leadership roles that
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6 625 are accepted into a changing society. = Not all women want to be sexualized and the
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8 626 incorporation of ethical issues in decision making may explain the attraction towards less
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11 627 sexually provocative advertising.

12
13 628 The results also suggest a complex relationship between consumer perceptions
14
15 629 and nudity in advertisements for luxury brands. Sex may garner attention (Bello, Pitts,
16
17 630 and Etzel, 1983) and interest (e.g., Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson, 2001), but as other
18
19 631 researchers have found nudity might be a detractor (Reichert and Alvaro, 2001) or the
20
21 632 message might be missed due to consumers' lack of careful analyses of the content of
22
23 633 sexual advertisements (Reichert, Heckler, and Jackson, 2001). If perceptions of
24
25 634 attractiveness and identifying with the brand are associated with behavior (Bhattacharya
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27 635 and Sen, 2017), then these findings contradict research that found higher degree of
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29 636 sexuality in advertisements equates greater intent to purchase (Grazer and Keesling,
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31 637 1995).

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36 638 Finally, the findings can be interpreted within the context of the *increase* in the
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38 639 use of sexuality in the last fifty (50) years (e.g. Nelson and Paek, 2005; Reichert and
39
40 640 Carpenter, 2004). Perhaps consumers are becoming more accustomed to sexually
41
42 641 explicit advertising, thus diminishing interest in the perceived attractiveness of and
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44 642 identity with the brand. There is more immodesty within certain age groups in society as
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46 643 some apparel trends become more revealing of the body (i.e. bathing suits and shorter
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48 644 crop tops), television programming especially on cable networks (i.e. HBO) are
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50 645 increasing sexually alluring content, and there is more exposure to sexy content within
51
52 646 social media and the use of dating apps like *Bumble*.

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56 647 These results can be helpful to advertisers as they shift to relationship -
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58 648 marketing. Consumers are more demanding and diversified in a complex selling
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60 649 environment (Barnes, Fox and Morris, 2004; Feinberg et al., 2020). Given the results, it
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62 650 is recommended that luxury brands limit the use of nudity and sexuality in

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4 651 advertisements. Consumers may connect with the tangible attributes of the advertised
5
6 652 product. Not all luxury brands persuade consumers with sexually alluring content
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8 653 (Reichert and Alvaro, 2001). For example, *Bottega Venetta*, *Harry Winston*, and *Ralph*
9
10 654 *Lauren Collection* advertise by using product allurements.

655 **Conclusion, Limitations, and Suggestions for Further Research**

656 This study is unique in that: i) it examines consumer perceptions of different
657 levels of sexuality featured in luxury brand advertisements; ii) it examines perceived
658 attractiveness of a luxury brand given different levels of sexuality; iii) it examines brand
659 identification given varying levels of sexuality featured in luxury advertisements, and iv)
660 the survey is original in its use of Bhattacharya and Sen's (2017) concepts for consumer
661 and business rather than business to business relationships. The findings are useful for
662 marketing luxury brands. Given these findings and the rise of relational marketing, it is
663 suggested that luxury advertisers limit the use of sexuality to better relate with the
664 consumer, particularly women.

665 The limitations of the study include: i) the sample was pooled from Amazon
666 Turk, ii) same gender models were examined by the participants, iii) the sample mostly
667 resided in the United States, and iv) the analysis was limited to demographic variable of
668 gender. Amazon Turk is a paid platform for surveys. It was a short survey, but
669 participants may not always pay attention to completing the survey honestly. The survey
670 platform naturally limits the population to populations inclined to participate in these
671 platforms. Further study could specifically target audiences that purchase luxury
672 merchandise and broaden the sample to other countries. Additional cultures may provide
673 insights for these global brands on differentiating levels of sexuality in advertisements
674 according to geographic region. In addition, the model in the advertisement could vary
675 from the participant's gender or ethnicity. For example, men might have different
676 reactions to the advertisement if a female was modeling the product rather than a man.
677 Finally, other demographics (e.g. ethnicity) and psychographics (religious values) in

Impact of Sex in Luxury Fashion Advertisements 26

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4 678 addition to gender could be influential factors in perceptions of advertisements and
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6 679 levels of sexuality. These groups could be analyzed with gender to determine how much
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8 680 gender influences perceptions of sex in advertisement when considering other
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10 681 demographics. Additionally, psychographic characteristics can be examined. Examining
11
12 682 such values and lifestyle will further help advertisers in appealing to a targeted audience.
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684 **Practical Implications of the Study**

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19
20 685 There are gaps in the current research that suggests sexuality is needed to sell
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22 686 luxury fashion. There seems to be a movement in the movement of more sexuality in a
23
24 687 fashion luxury advertisement should improve sales as sex sells. However, according to
25
26 688 this research study, too much sex may not be appealing to all target markets that view
27
28 689 these ads. It may be suggested that product only, a more conservative approach, and
29
30 690 less sexuality may be a better approach to selling fashion luxury and remembering the
31
32 691 brand name. In today's social construct, there may be too much sexuality or sexual
33
34 692 overload. Luxury fashion brands may want to rethink their respective marketing
35
36 693 strategies to certain target niches to reaffirm the quality, authenticity, and exclusiveness
37
38 694 of luxury fashion to grow with changing opinions of specific consumers. The global
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40 695 approach may not always work; but researching the local ideologies and applying these
41
42 696 ideas may result in stronger sales for the actual brand.
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1 Results of Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances. Company Attractiveness based on Mean was $F(7,1258) = 2.167, p = .035$, based on Median $F(7,1258) = 2.140, p = .037$, based on Median and adjusted df, $F(7,1230.17) = .037$, based on trimmed mean $F(7, 1258) = 2.180, p = .034$. Identification with the company based on Mean was $F(7,1258) = 1.951, p = .059$, based on Median $F(7,1258) = 1.784, p = .087$, based on Median and adjusted df, $F(7,1211.34) = 1.78 = .087$, based on trimmed mean $F(7, 1258) = 1.883, p = .069$.

Table 1:

Participant Demographics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
No high school degree	24	1.8	1.8
High school or GED	117	9.2	9.3
Some college credit	236	18.6	18.7
Trade school	24	1.9	1.9
Associate degree	109	8.6	8.6
Bachelor's degree	520	41.1	41.1
Master's degree	198	15.6	15.7
Professional degree	20	1.6	1.6
Doctorate degree	16	1.3	1.3
I prefer not to answer	2	.2	
Employed for wages	707	55.8	56.3
Self-employed	232	18.3	18.5
Out of work, but looking	47	3.7	3.7
Out of work/not looking	18	1.4	1.4
A homemaker	84	6.6	6.7
A student	85	6.7	6.8
Military	14	1.1	1.1
Retired	48	3.8	3.8
Unable to work	20	1.6	1.6
I prefer not to answer	11	.9	
Less than \$25,000	271	21.4	22.0
\$25,000 to \$34,999	204	16.1	16.5
\$35,000 to \$49,999	240	19.0	19.4
\$50,000 to \$74,999	234	18.5	19.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999	153	12.1	12.4
\$100,000 to \$149,999	91	7.2	7.4
\$150,000 or more	41	3.2	3.3
I prefer not to answer	32	2.5	
Midwest	265	20.9	20.9
Northeast	232	18.3	18.3
Southeast	338	26.7	26.7
Southwest	153	12.1	12.1
West	200	15.8	15.8
International	78	6.2	6.2
Single, never married	552	43.6	43.8
Married or partner	592	46.8	46.9
Widowed	21	1.7	1.7
Divorced	67	5.3	5.3
Separated	29	2.3	2.3
I Prefer not to answer	5	.4	
White	791	62.5	62.8
Hispanic or Latino	71	5.6	5.6

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3	Black or African American	113	8.9	9.0
4	Native American	45	3.6	3.6
5	Asian / Pacific Islander	209	16.5	16.6
6	Other	30	2.4	2.4
7	I prefer not to answer	7	7	.6
8				
9	Heterosexual	996	78.7	80.9
10	Homosexual	79	6.2	6.4
11	Bisexual	139	11.0	11.3
12	Other	17	1.3	1.4
13	I prefer not to answer	35	2.8	
14				
15	Female	701	55.4	55.4
16	Male	565	44.6	44.6
17	Total	1266	100.0	100.0
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Table 2:

Mean scores of company attractiveness: Females, males, and total sample

Gender	Condition	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Female	Demure	3.09	.72	177
	Suggestive	3.10	.75	176
	Partial Clad	2.91	.71	177
	Nude	2.79	.85	171
	Total	2.97	.77	701
Male	Demure	3.37	.69	143
	Suggestive	3.01	.69	141
	Partial Clad	3.06	.82	142
	Nude	2.84	.76	139
	Total	3.07	.76	565
Total	Demure	3.21	.72	320
	Suggestive	3.06	.72	317
	Partial Clad	2.98	.76	319
	Nude	2.81	.81	310
	Total	3.02	.77	1266

Table 3:

Mean scores of company identification: Females, males, and total sample

Gender	Condition	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Female	Demure	2.62	1.02	177
	Suggestive	2.60	1.11	176
	Partial Clad	2.46	.99	177
	Nude	2.30	1.10	171
	Total	2.50	1.06	701
Male	Demure	2.93	1.00	143
	Suggestive	2.52	1.03	141
	Partial Clad	2.60	1.18	142
	Nude	2.58	.99	139
	Total	2.66	1.06	565
Total	Demure	2.76	1.02	320
	Suggestive	2.56	1.08	317
	Partial Clad	2.53	1.08	319
	Nude	2.42	1.06	310
	Total	2.57	1.06	1266

Table 4

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Company Attractiveness	3.09	1	3.09	5.47	.019
	Identification with Company	8.41	1	8.41	7.55	.006
Condition	Company Attractiveness	27.61	3	9.20	16.31	<.001
	Identification with Company	19.15	3	6.38	5.73	.001
Gender * Condition	Company Attractiveness	6.16	3	2.05	3.64	.012
	Identification with Company	7.11	3	2.37	2.13	.095
Error	Company Attractiveness	709.95	1258	.56		
	Identification with Company	1400.36	1258	1.11		