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Impact of still advertisements in advancing the notion of body image among adolescents

A multimodal discourse analysis

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Abstract

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Advertisements are multimodal texts. They have the potential to achieve a vast and diverse viewership through diverse media channels, thereby enabling precision targeting of specific customer segments such as adolescents through tailored messages aimed at evoking a heightened response, such as the promotion of impractical beauty ideals (Belch and Belch 2009). The available literature indicates that the female demographic is highly susceptible to targeting by advertisers, particularly concerning their physical appearance because of exposure to idealized bodily imagery in advertisements. These ads often lead to heightened self-consciousness and body dissatisfaction among this population.

The goal of the present thesis is to examine the impact that distinct varieties of advertising exert on the spread of body image ideals among adolescents. Moreover, the investigation centers on how the linguistic and visual components of advertisements facilitate the identification and engagement of intended audiences. The thesis pivots around two research inquiries. The present research aims to scrutinize the persuasive influence of visual and linguistic elements in the context of advertising. In addition, the research aims to explore the portrayal of unrealistic beauty standards in advertisements and how it impacts the body image of adolescents. To accomplish this, a thorough multimodal discourse analysis is conducted, employing the widely recognized visual grammar framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). This framework is used to analyze three ads.

This investigation has revealed that women are a particularly vulnerable demographic targeted by advertisers. In summary, advertisements have the tendency to target a demographic of younger individuals, thereby potentially eliciting concerns about body image. Additionally, the advertisements exhibited a high level of persuasiveness as a result of incorporating a diverse range of visual and textual components which made it exceedingly difficult for the intended audience to resist their allure.

Keywords: Unrealistic beauty standards, Body Image, Multimodal Text, Adolescents, Body dissatisfaction, Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Advertisement strategies.

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1 Introduction

The effectiveness of advertisements is significant and worth considering in the realm of marketing given its capacity to attain extensive and heterogeneous viewership via various forms of media, including television, radio, social media platforms, billboards, and print publications (Odunsi 2020). The availability of these mediums lets advertisements target certain customer groups such as adolescents with personalized messages that are likely to evoke a stronger response in them such as the advancement of unrealistic beauty standards (Belch and Belch 2009). Adolescents are particularly susceptible to these concepts, which can be detrimental to their well-being. During this stage of their growth, they are in the process of constructing their own personal identity, thus any introduction to concepts of this nature has the potential to incite a reaction within them (Brizio et al. 2015). Furthermore, the perpetuation of unrealistic beauty standards in advertising has been linked to a range of negative outcomes, including body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. Due to the considerable influence of advertising on advancing the concept of body image among adolescents, this thesis would focus on investigating the following two research inquiries:

1. The persuasive influence of visual and linguistic elements in the context of advertising
2. The portrayal of unrealistic beauty standards in advertisements and how it impacts the body image of adolescents

The rationale for exploring these questions is multi-dimensional. Firstly, there is a growing concern about the harmful effects of advertising on young people, particularly concerning body dissatisfaction. Second, this research can elaborate on how verbal and non-verbal elements of an ad can cause these issues in adolescents. Third, due to the lack of literature about the effect of ads on adolescents, this research will provide an insight for future researchers.

The principal aim of this dissertation is to present a comprehensive multimodal discourse analysis of advertisements that propagate unrealistic ideals of physical beauty, thereby contributing to the formation of negative body image in adolescent consumers. This thesis has several objectives which include an investigation of the diverse techniques utilized in advertisements to appeal to adolescents, an exploration of the promotion of body image among adolescents through verbal and nonverbal characteristics of the text in advertisements, and ultimately the conduct of a multimodal discourse analysis utilising Kress and van Leeuwen framework. By providing a critical multimodal analysis of ads, this thesis will help to raise awareness about the pervasive and harmful effects of advertising on young people. Finally, this thesis is important for promoting critical media literacy skills among adolescents, which are essential for navigating the complex and often misleading messages promoted by advertisements.

This thesis is structured in a way that the introductory section introduces the topic, aim, objectives, and structure of the thesis. Section 2 focuses on the literature review. The primary focus of this section is on conventional advertising techniques, followed by the promotion of exaggerated beauty standards through advertisements, and ultimately on the idea of multimodality and the power of visual and linguistic elements. The third section is research question which then leads to methodology, which explains the research method, data collection and in-depth understanding of the Visual Grammar theoretical framework of multimodal analysis. The analysis section provides a detailed analysis of the advertisements selected for analysis and the discussion section interprets and critically evaluates the analysis. The seventh section proposes the scope for improvement and practical recommendations for future research. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key findings of the investigation.

2 Literature review

This section is designed to initially concentrate on the tactics utilized by advertisements to captivate the intended viewers meaning the common

advertisement strategies. Subsequently, it delves into the written works concerning the establishment of impractical ideals of beauty through advertisements. Ultimately, it delves into the concept of multimodality and the way in which literature has demonstrated that pictures can be considered texts with multiple modes. The concluding section briefly addresses the power of visual and textual features.

2.1 Advertisements

Due to advertisements' ability to communicate thoughtfully produced content to targeted consumers, they have become an integral part of consumers' lives. The fundamental objective of advertising is to exert a significant impact on the perceptions, attitudes, and conduct of the intended audience towards a specific product, service, or concept (Frolova 2014). They utilize different strategies to convince the intended audience including the use of emotional appeal, repetition, and celebrity endorsement (Pilátová 2015). Their goal is to use these to influence the intended audience to undertake a certain action (Fennis and Stroebe 2021).

Advertisements are defined as a medium that is there to inform its targeted audience, to persuade them to purchase the advertised product, and to remind them of what they are missing. Furthermore, to manipulate its consumers emotionally and to change or alter their emotions and attitudes towards advertised products. (Cook 2001 cited in El-Dali 2019) Therefore, advertisements are frequently crafted to be captivating through the utilization of a blend of visual imagery, emotions, and linguistics with the aim of shaping an impactful and convincing message (Woodward-Smith and Eynullaeva 2012). The use of visual constituents has the potential to efficiently communicate intricate ideas while leaving a lasting impression, thereby serving as a formidable means of persuasion. These multimedia visual components can also elicit favourable emotional responses such as pleasure, affection, and enthusiasm, or unfavourable emotions such as anxiety (Kim and Sullivan 2019). Therefore, the appeal to emotions ranks among the foremost strategies

commonly employed in advertising. By use of emotions, Advertisers can make their message more powerful, they can make the audience more likely to do what they want them to do (Belch and Belch 2009). Moreover, the utilization of emotional advertisements has the potential to surpass other modes of communication, such as news articles or public service announcements, because they lack visual and emotional engagement (Skurewicz 2016).

Furthermore, it is common practice for advertisements to be extensively repeated across various media channels, thereby magnifying their influence. A method that has proven to be notably efficacious involves repeating a consistent message through various media outlets, thereby generating a sensation of familiarity and legitimacy that can enhance the probability of the intended audience performing a desired behaviour.

In addition, the advertisement industry frequently utilizes celebrity endorsements to cultivate a facade of reliability and confidence among the intended consumers (Belch and Belch 2009). According to Ohanian (1990), the utilization of celebrity endorsements can foster a bond between the intended audience and the merchandise by instilling a feeling of intimacy and confidence. In other words, when people say good things about a product or service, it can make others more likely to trust and feel confident about it.

The three strategies clarified over are the foremost common ones that are utilized by advertisers to captivate their viewers. They are particularly common in ads that are aimed at adolescents. In the analysis section, it will be investigated whether the presence of any of these three makes it more appealing for the targeted audience.

2.2 Unrealistic beauty standards in advertisements

Beauty has been a subject of interest for advertisers for a long time. Advertisers manipulate our perceptions and emotions toward our physical appearance by enforcing unrealistic beauty standards. The influence of media is immense as it has the ability to shape public opinion as well as to contribute to shaping

personal identities (Batool, Iqbal, and Arshad 2022). In her study, Rana (2021) examined the depiction of female figures within the realm of Pakistani media. She conducted a thorough content analysis that stressed the pervasive influence of media in promoting exceedingly unrealistic beauty ideals for women. The notion of achieving flawlessness is intensified by the media, but it is predominantly women who endure the effects of anxiety, depression, and self-doubt in their surroundings (Rana 2021; Lerner et al. 2015). Her research brought forward the notion that women are mostly targeted by beauty standards in media.

Desiyanti and Ling (2022) conducted a study to investigate the construction of beauty through the utilization of makeup and skincare products in magazine advertisements. The researchers examined advertisements featured in *Women's Weekly Singapore* and *Femina Indonesia* magazines from the 2019 edition. To understand how images communicate messages, researchers have used two theories: Social Visual Semiotics by Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen, and Systemic Functional Linguistics by M.A.K. Halliday. The findings of their investigation revealed that aesthetic appeal can be generated through the implementation of visual components, particularly through the presentation of an image (Desiyanti and Ling 2022). When an image is presented to the viewer, it provokes a cognitive association that fosters a deeper comprehension of the advertiser's intended message.

As per Heiderscheidt (2019), the cruel truth about the beauty norms established by makeup advertisements is the normalization of the idea that fair equals beautiful and dark equals unappealing. The primary objective of their research was to examine the fairness paradigm prevalent in India and its impact on women's understanding of the concept of beauty, specifically with regard to the influence of media. Through its findings, the research highlights the pervasive acceptance of fairness creams among women in this demographic and sheds light on the prevalent attitudes toward female beauty within their community (Heiderscheidt 2019).

“Nash et al found that images of women wearing makeup were judged to be healthier and more confident than the images of the same women without makeup. When wearing cosmetics women were also assigned greater earning potential and considered to have more prestigious jobs than when they were presented without makeup” (Nash et al 2006 cited in Britton 2012: 7).

The findings of these two studies indicate that the acceptance of beauty standards in society leads to an emphasis on pursuing facial attractiveness through the application of cosmetic products.

In addition to advertisements promoting makeup products, advertisements promoting weight loss products have been linked to the prevalence of unrealistic beauty ideals and the consequent experience of body dissatisfaction among individuals. Disturbingly, this phenomenon is believed to facilitate the development of eating disorders and body image.

“Body Image can be defined as a person’s views or thoughts about their body sizes and shapes. Every mind has a different concept about ‘ideal or perfect’ body image but its society and media both influence” (Batool, Iqbal and Arshad 2022: 399).

Studies have shown that individuals who fully embrace the notion that beauty is accurately represented in advertisements experience a sense of discontentment with their physical appearance. Consequently, these individuals may resort to purchasing the products advertised as a means to attain the unrealistic standards of beauty that are being promoted (Swick 2014).

The studies enumerated herein postulate that advertising possesses immense capabilities to enforce ideas and manipulate consumers' vulnerabilities, particularly concerning the promotion of unattainable beauty standards. They also revealed that advertisements are the primary means of promoting these products to female consumers. Furthermore, it demonstrates that women are primarily singled out because they seek to appear appealing, conform to societal norms, and achieve a desirable aesthetic. When society imposes beauty as a norm, it can trigger issues like discontentment with one's body, which may result in overconsumption. The significance of delving into this

literature is to expose the fact that earlier research has delved into how unrealistic beauty norms affect women, yet there is a scarcity of studies that investigate the consequences of these norms on adolescents. Hence, they will be investigated in this study.

2.3 Multimodality in the context of advertising

Mode refers to the way discourse is perceived by others through language, image, colour, music, and other symbol systems (Peng 2022). Multimodal refers to a discourse genre that integrates various communicative modes, including but not limited to images, sounds, and textual components, in order to effectively convey information (Bo 2018). In other words, a multimodal discourse can be characterized as the outcome of the intensive utilization of various modes. Multimodality is a term coined by Michael Halliday at the Sydney School of Semiotics (Luca 2020). It refers to the different ways in which we can analyse things, such as objects and words. Multimodality has its roots in linguistics, but it has also been applied to art and theatre interpretation (Tannen, Hamilton and Schiffrin 2015).

The idea that advertisements are multimodal was investigated by Barthes (1977) in the work "Rhetoric of the Image". This book explored how meaning is communicated in numerous ways through advertisements to the viewer. Barthes (1977) laid the foundation for the current research in language and image. 'Barthes classified the messages conveyed through the advertisement into three categories: linguistic, symbolic, and literal' (McCabe, 2009). Two types of meanings can be conveyed through linguistic messages: the literal or explicit meaning (denoted) and the implied or associated meaning (connoted). Indicated messages can include various elements like tags and headings, for instance. Symbolic messages, otherwise known as implied images, convey meaning through the visual components of an advertisement. Ultimately, direct communication refers to the understanding that is conveyed when a particular concept or statement is communicated without any interpretive meaning (Barthes 1977).

In addition to, Barthes's (1977) significant work in the field of language and advertisements, another researcher named Halliday (1978) also viewed language as a social symbol. Halliday, in his literary work titled 'Language as social semiotic', put forth the notion that language is a system that uses different ways of communicating to make sense (Halliday 1978). According to Halliday's (1978) perspective, language fulfils three distinct functions, each of which serves an essential purpose in communication. These functions include the ideational function, which enhances the speaker's ability to recognize their surrounding environment; the interpersonal function, which facilitates the interpersonal dynamics of communication including the roles and participation of language users; and the textual function, which plays a key role in organizing discourse in a coherent and comprehensible manner. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual communication framework builds upon the groundwork established by Halliday. The visual grammar framework includes three main dimensions representational dimension, interactive dimension, and compositional dimension (Peng 2022). The visual grammar framework is explained in detail in subsection 4.1.

Cheong (2004 cited in Nugroho 2009) developed a more in-depth understanding of linguistics and advertisements by integrating prior literature of Halliday and introducing a general print advertisement structure made up of two main elements: Visual Images and Linguistic Components. This collection of elements includes the 'Lead, the Display, and the Emblem'. The most prominent visual element, known as the Lead, commands the greatest amount of attention from viewers and serve as the primary pivot of the advertisement. It is the aspect that draws the viewers' attention and holds their interest. The Lead's traits are depicted through the Display, which is the second component. "Typically, the Emblem is the company's logo and is considered the third element in the visual image component" (Nugroho 2009: 74).

Ly and Jung (2015: 50) suggested "that like language, images are rich in meaning potential and are governed by visual grammar structures which can be utilized to decode the meanings of images". They employed Visual Grammar

framework to analyse two images. Their findings endorsed the visual grammar approach and uncovered the potential of visual illustrations to convey intricate and multifaceted concepts (Ly and Jung 2015).

In 2016, Hu and Luo conducted a Social Semiotic Analysis on an advertisement for the airline company 'Air France'. Their analysis aimed to investigate the dynamic interrelationship between pictorial and linguistic elements in regard to the positioning of the brand. The framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) was employed in the analysis and the results indicated that the advertisement instils a feeling of superiority and comfort amongst its audience, accomplished through the utilization of both linguistic and visual elements (Hu and Luo 2016).

The findings of these studies have broadened our comprehension of how an image operates through a range of different modes. According to the literature, it is possible to extract significant interpretations from a mere image.

2.3.1 Power of visual and textual elements

Advertisements have become an effective medium of communication. In the past mostly communication used to be associated with verbal elements such as spoken or written language but as the years passed by communication expanded to include nonverbal means. Nowadays "Communication has assumed a new dimension as the over-reliance on verbal expression of the past is being jettisoned for multimodal communication" (Asaolu 2022: 9). This quote illustrates that in communication, language is not the only effective mode for sharing information, nonverbal means such as images are important too, and sometimes images can carry or portray even more than words.

The significance of nonverbal aspects has escalated due to the overwhelming amount of information that individuals are encounter to on a daily basis, resulting in the need for selective processing and filtering of information. Advertisers have devised a strategy to avoid this issue through the utilization of advertisements featuring a visibly dominant visual component accompanied by

one or two brief sentences. The effectiveness of advertisements is heightened when the visual element initially captures the audience's focus, followed by the accompanying textual components. To further the effects of visual components, textual components are incorporated because language holds significant control over individuals and their actions. The selection of a language that can effectively communicate a particular message with the intention of having an impact on individuals.

“It is a matter of common knowledge that language has a powerful influence on people and their Behaviour. This is especially true in the language of advertising. Certain words and phrases can stir an emotional response – a fact that is well known and skilfully exploited by advertisers” (Prelipceanu 2013: 248).

3 Research questions

The primary research topic of this thesis is: 'Impact of advertisements in advancing the notion of body image among adolescents: A multimodal discourse analysis.

The available literature indicates that the female demographic is highly susceptible to targeting by advertisers, particularly concerning their physical appearance, as exposure to idealized bodily imagery in advertisements frequently leads to heightened self-consciousness and body dissatisfaction among this population. It also indicated that ads incorporate a diverse range of visual and textual components which makes them eye catching and attention grabbing.

Based on the findings of the literature review, following two research statements will be investigated in this thesis.

1. The persuasive influence of visual and linguistic elements in the context of advertising.
2. The portrayal of unrealistic beauty standards in advertisements and how it impacts the body image of adolescents.

4 Methodology

This thesis focuses on conducting a Multimodal discourse analysis. This type of discourse analysis is a qualitative research approach that examines the different modes of communication that are present in texts, such as written mode, textual mode, gestural mode, and visual mode. It has become an increasingly popular method of analysis in recent years, as researchers recognize the importance of examining texts in their entirety rather than focusing solely on language (Jewitt 2014). Multimodal discourse analysis was chosen because this approach provides an analytical framework for analysing the visual aspects of multimodal communication. Kress & van Leeuwen's (2006) approach argues that visual images and other nonverbal modes of communication are just as important as language in conveying meaning, and that understanding how these different modes work together is crucial for analysing multimodal data. In other words, images are not simply illustrations of language but are an integral part of communication that can convey meaning in their own right. Kress and van Leeuwen asserted in their influential study titled "Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design" that the perceptual representations portrayed through visual images are not passive impressions of reality, but rather intentionally structured and fashioned to convey particular connotations (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006).

The multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) approach has the potential to be effectively employed in conducting both primary and secondary research. In primary research, MDA can involve the collection of original data through methods such as interviews, observations, or surveys (Jewitt 2014), while in secondary research, MDA involves the analysis of existing data, such as texts, images, or videos (Norris 2004). However, this thesis would only concentrate on analysing the data gathered via secondary research.

The secondary data that will be analysed include 3 advertisements. The analysis is limited to 3 ads because the focus is not on the quantity, rather its on the quality of the analysis. First ad is about weight loss pills that can replace

meals and help lose weight. Second ad is a poster of a movie where Snow White has a fat figure, and she can become slim by wearing the magical red shoes. Third ad is about women's lingerie that Victoria's Secret models are wearing. This thesis provides a multimodal discourse analysis of these ads. All of these ads share a common theme, namely the promotion of unrealistic beauty standards, which have been shown to elicit negative emotions and lead to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem among women. Different types (billboard ad, movie poster, online ad) of still ads were chosen to explain, how media can affect through all means and in all shapes. The focus wasn't on the types of ads rather it was on the effects that it can have on adolescents. Therefore, selection of ads was done randomly from the internet. The targeted participants are adolescents. They are the focus of this thesis because they can be the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of advertisements such as body image given that they are developing their character and identity at this stage. The age group that is of focus is 13 to 19 years. Below is the outline of how the Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) of the selected ads will be conducted:

1. First of all, the modes of communication will be identified, and the ad will be deconstructed based on those modes. This step is only about detecting the visual elements of the ad meaning what is presented and how is it presented. This step is important because it explains how these mere ads are multi-modal in nature. If the ads selected are not multimodal, the multimodal discourse analysis framework cannot be applied.
2. After it is evident that the selected discourse is multi-model, the visual grammar framework of multimodal discourse analysis will be applied to these ads. This framework focuses on three dimensions of multimodal text: representational, interactive, and compositional. This step will provide an in-depth analysis of the ads. (The framework applied to these ads is explained in detail in subsection 4.1)

This two-step brief outline is presented here to give an overview of how all the 3 ads will be analysed in section 5 'Analysis'.

4.1 Multimodal discourse analysis framework

The theoretical groundwork of Kress and van Leeuwen's conceptual framework in the realm of visual communication draws its foundation from the pervasive and seminal approach to language analysis referred to as the "systemic functional" framework, originally developed by the linguist Michael Halliday (Ly and Jung 2015). The visual grammar framework incorporated by Kress and van Leeuwen includes three main dimensions: representational dimension, interactive dimension, and compositional dimension (Peng 2022). The framework is presented in a nutshell in Figure 1 below.

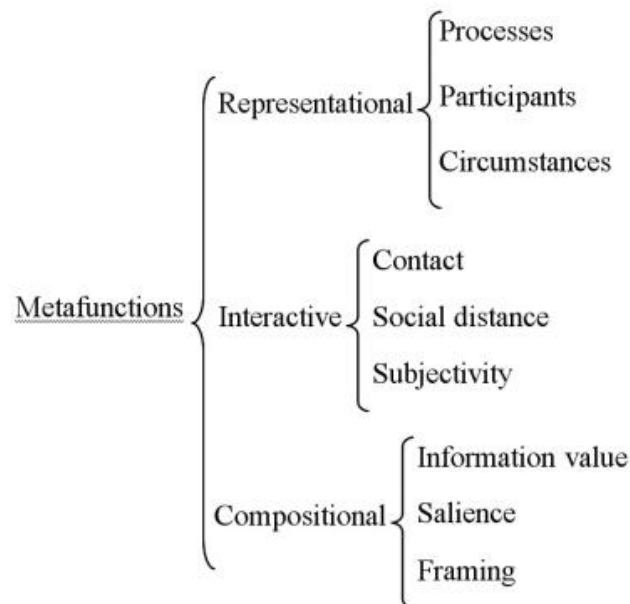


Figure 1. Visual grammar Theoretical framework (Feng and Espindola 2013)

As illustrated in Figure 1, the framework has three main dimensions which includes further subdivision to help investigate the discourse of images in depth.

4.1.1 Representational

The representational function refers to the content or message conveyed by the image. This includes what is being represented, how it is being represented, and what meaning is being conveyed. For example, an image of a person holding a protest sign communicates a message about their beliefs and values. "The representational dimension is further divided into narrative representation

and conceptual representation....In narrative representation, the participants are connected through lines called vectors” (Ollikka 2021), whereas in conceptual representation there is no vector present.

“Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) state that action processes are effectively those in which the ‘Actor’ is the participant from which the vector emanates...or forms the vector. The antithesis of the action process is the ‘reaction’ process” (cited in Ollikka 2021: 51).

In the context of reactional processes, the vector arises from the direction in which the gaze is directed. The reactional processes are composed of a reactor which is the looker and the phenomenon which is looked at by the reactor (Hu and Luo 2016).

Kress and van Leeuwen have proposed two distinct categories of participants within their theoretical framework; represented and interactive (Nashiroh 2021: 34). The initial category, denoted as represented participants, pertains to the individuals, locations, and objects that are depicted within visual and written material. The second category, interactive participants, pertains to individuals who generate these materials and those who consume and interpret it (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006).

4.1.2 Interactive

This is about how people who create images and the people who see them, interact. It refers to how the image positions the viewer or reader in relation to the represented content. This includes the use of gaze, body posture, and other visual elements to establish a specific connection between the observer and the picture. It’s like an exchange of dialogue between the two individuals. The concept was formulated by Kress and van Leeuwen, who drew inspiration from Halliday's work. They believe that people who create pictures add social messages to them through the implementation of various techniques, such as the representation of the participant's gaze, their spatial proximity to the viewer, and the angle at which they are presented.

Contact: The formation of vectors in imagery, wherein the depicted participants establish direct eye contact with the viewer, results in the establishment of an intangible connection between the two parties (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006). According to the extant literature, the images in question possess an assertive quality. Specifically, "The participant's gaze demands" a certain level of expectation from the viewer, requiring them to engage in an imaginative interaction with the subject of the image (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006). If the depicted participants in the images do not direct their gaze toward the observer, they are classified as 'offer' images (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006). This signifies that the way people look and move affects how we see our relationship with them. If they're not looking at us in a picture, we might just see them as objects to look at instead of real people. Through gestures, it is identifiable whether the relationship between represented and interactive participants is demanding or offering something. The following table shows different gestures, and they can be translated to understand the relationship. Following table was utilized by Eid Ali (2021: 19) for the purpose of examining visual representations was derived from the literary work of Kress and Van Leeuwen, titled 'Reading Images'.

Table 1. Gestures and Relationships (Eid Ali 2021: 19)

Gestures	Demanding Relations between represented participant and viewer
Smile	Asking the viewer to be in a social affinity relationship
Cold stare	Asking the viewer to consider the participant as an inferior.
Seductive pout	Asking the viewer to desire the participant.
Finger pointed at the viewer.	Asking the viewer's attention to come closer
Defensive gesture	Asking the viewer to have a distance.

The aforementioned Table 1 depicts various types of gestures and the potential associations that may be established between the depicted participants and observer based upon the inclusion of particular gestures.

Social distance: Edward T. Hall's research shows that how we see things in pictures affects how we interact with others. According to Hall, to be emotionally attracted to the other entity, the distance needs to be shortened. This means the viewer can feel connected or disconnected from the represented participants of the image based on the distance between the two (Eid Ali 2021).

“At close distance, the object is shown as if the viewer is engaged with it....At middle distance, the object is shown in full, but without much space around it. It is represented within the viewer’s reach....At long distance there is an invisible barrier between the viewer and the object. The object is there for our contemplation only, out of reach, as if on display in a shop window or museum exhibit” (Hu and Luo 2016: 36).

Table 2. Framing, Distance, and Relation (Eid Ali 2021: 20)

Framings	Social Distances	Social Relations
Close-ups	Close personal distance	Participants have intimate relations with each other and communicate physically.
Medium-close shots	Far personal distance	Participants discuss personal interests without any physical contact.
Medium-long shots	Close social distance	Participants discuss impersonal issues and business.
Long shots	Far social distance	Participants discuss business in a more formal and impersonal way than that of close social distance.
Very long shots	Public distance	Participants behave like strangers.

The aforementioned tables depict various types of social distances that can be presented through the framing of the images and the potential social relations that may be established between the depicted participants and observers based on those frames.

Angle: Another way that helps create a connection between the characters in a story and the person watching it is through the camera angle or where the camera is placed. The angle we see in a picture depends on how the camera

was placed compared to the people in the picture. The way a picture is taken can show if the person taking the picture and the person looking at it were part of the situation or not. If the picture is straight on, it means they were. If the picture is at an angle, the viewer is not involved. However, the vertical angle can be linked to strength. When the viewer looks down at someone, they seem stronger than the person they are looking at. If we look at someone from below, they might seem more powerful in a relationship. If the picture is at the same height as your eyes, you and the person looking at the picture have the same amount of power and there's no one in control. Kress and van Leeuwen say that how much someone is involved, detached, or powerful depends on the angle (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006).

4.1.3 Compositional

The third component of the framework pertains to the usage of language in writing and is founded on Halliday's textual function. This is about how all the different parts of something work together to make sense and have meaning. It's like putting together a puzzle so all the pieces fit together nicely (Eid Ali 2021). The composition of the image can be subjected to analysis based on three elements: information value, salience, and Framing (Ollikka 2021: 15).

Information value refers to how the information is presented or structured, meaning the layout of the text: left to right, top to bottom, or centre and margin (Hu and Luo 2016). Within the framework of top and bottom structure, the upper segment typically serves as a means of emotive appeal, imbued with notions of the "ideal," while the lower portion is inclined to offer practical information. The central and marginal structure employed in advertising entails the placement of the focal point or the appealing feature at the centre of the advertisement, whilst surrounding elements serve as the margin that complements the central aspect. In the context of the Left-to-Right structure, the data presented on the left-hand side is commonly referred to as the given information. Conversely, details concerning the advertised product or service are conveyed on the right-hand side, constituting the new information (Hu and Luo 2016).

“Salience refers to how a hierarchy of importance among the elements is created.....The most salient part of the image lies in the forefront. Towards the background part, the salience of the elements decreases”. (Ollikka 2021: 56)

Moreover, “framing discusses how the presence or absence of framing devices disconnects or connects elements of the image” (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006 cited in Hu and Luo 2016: 37).

5 Analysis

This section of the report is focused on presenting the analysis of the three selected ads. Each ad will be analysed one after the other. The first step of analysis is to identify the modes of communication that have been used in the advertisement because advertisements are said to be multimodal texts. After they are identified, Kress and van Leeuwen visual grammar framework of multimodal discourse analysis will be applied to these ads to understand the underlined hidden messages and the way those messages can cause body image in adolescents.

5.1 Analysis of weight loss supplement advertisement

The first ad that will be analysed is about a weight loss supplement which is promoting unrealistic beauty standards and sexualization.



Figure 2. Weight loss ad (Graham 2015)

Figure 2 depicts a slim, toned, and perfect body of a model in the middle of the ad. The model is wearing a bright yellow bikini. Around the model there is a rhetorical tagline “ARE YOU BEACH BODY READY?” that utilizes bolded and capitalized lettering in order to capture the attention of individuals. The brand name promoting this ad is “Protein World” and it is written on the top right corner of the ad. In the bottom right corner, the product of attention is also visible. Above the product is written the name of the product which is “THE WEIGHT LOSS COLLECTION”. Apart from this, there is small-sized text under the rhetorical question tagline which is prompting the notion that this type of body can be achieved if one replaces their daily meals with these weight loss supplements. Hence these pills are also named “Meal Replacement”.

5.1.1 Modes of communication

Figure 2 is considered to be a multimodal text because it is composed of 4 modes of communication including linguistic, visual, written, and gestural mode. Following is the explanation of how these modes are visible in the Figure 2.

Linguistic mode: It focuses on the language used. The language used in this ad implies that losing a significant amount of weight is essential for health and happiness and that using this supplement is the only way to achieve it. It also promotes that thinness is essential for beauty. The language used in this ad creates a sense of urgency in the viewer to consume the product advertised.

The initial statement employs a rhetorical inquiry, "Are you beach body ready?", as a method of grasping the reader's interest and implying that attaining a particular physical form is desirable. The phrase “BEACH BODY READY” indicates that having a certain body type that is slim and toned is necessary to enjoy the beach, and to feel confident at the beach because a slim figure is suitable for displaying a swimwear. This creates a discourse that promotes a particular body type as ideal and suggests that one's worth is tied to their physical appearance. Though the product is targeting women who want to achieve a certain body type, it is also indirectly promoting unrealistic beauty standards, particularly among vulnerable populations such as adolescents.

The second sentence in Figure 2, presents a claim, "Substituting two daily meals of an energy-restricted diet with a meal replacement, contributes to weight loss." The word "substituting" suggests that meal replacements are pills that are a direct replacement for regular meals. This implies that the replacements are meant to provide the same nutritional value as regular meals and that they are intended to help with weight loss. These claims are backed up by the perfect body shape of the model.

The term "energy-restricted diet" suggests that meal replacement is low in calories, which is an important factor in weight loss. The text also suggests that using the weight loss collection will contribute to weight loss, which implies that the product is effective. The use of the word "contributes" rather than "guarantees" implies that the product is not a magic solution, and weight loss requires additional effort.

Visual mode: The text also uses visual mode to reinforce its message. The greyscale image of a slim, toned model wearing a bright yellow colour bikini implies that the product will help the audience achieve a similar body type. The image is setting an ideal body type and beauty standard among viewers. Other visual elements of the ad are the bright colours, the written text in different font sizes, and the image of the weight loss supplement. The bright yellow colour of the ad resembles sunshine and the grey colour skin of the model implies the tan from the sun. The bold and capitalized letters are used to emphasize certain words and phrases, such as "Protein World" and "Weight Loss Collection." This layout has resulted in making the text more attention-grabbing and persuasive.

Written mode: The text provides information about the product name, descriptions of the weight loss supplement, and how it can help achieve a dramatic transformation or how it can enhance the beauty of those who use it.

Gestural mode: Body pose, facial expression as well as her confident look are part of the gestural mode. This mode refers to the bodily movements of the represented participants of the ad. In this text, there is no direct use of the

gestural mode because it is a printed ad and the represented participants are not making any movement. However, the still image of the perfect body of the model could be considered a form of gestural mode as it communicates a particular body type that is desirable and conveys the message that the weight loss collection can help the audience achieve that body type.

5.1.2 Representational dimension

Narrative process: The analysis of Figure 2 commences with analysing the individuals featured within the ad. Figure 2 illustrates a representation of a model who assumes the role of the actor and through her the vectors are originating. The confirmation that there are vectors present tells that this image is portraying narrative representation. The model is standing still in this ad wearing only a bikini. Her body gesture is posed, relaxed and confident all at the same time.

After detecting that Figure 2 belongs to the narrative process, it must be determined whether there is an action or a reaction process. Considering the definition mentioned before it can be derived that the only model present in the ad is the reactor because she is producing vectors through her gaze. The identification of the reactor means that the image is facilitating a reaction process, which makes the viewer the Phenomenon because the model is facing toward the viewer. Apart from the model in the middle of the ad, the other dynamic elements of the ad are the bolded capitalized tagline and the image of the weight loss collection supplements. Back to analysing the vectors, her gaze is producing a vector which is being aimed at the viewer. This implies that the structure is a transactional reaction process.

5.1.3 Interactive dimension

Contact: The model depicted in Figure 2 is gazing directly into the viewer's soul. Her gaze can be analysed through Visual Grammar framework. The purpose of the gaze is to understand whether the participant in the image is demanding something or offering something to the viewer. Based on the visual

stimulus(gaze) of engaging eye contact with the viewer, it can be posited that the advertisement is making an appeal to action, or in other words, a direct demand. The demand to purchase the product, to replace their meals with meal replacements supplements, and the demand to achieve certain unrealistic body goals.

It can also be said that the ad is multifunctional: it is making a demand and also offering a solution. It demands to make a change and become slim and beach body ready by using the offered solution which is weight loss supplements. The direct contact

Social distance: An image can be placed at different distances and different distance shot types can suggest different relationships with the viewer. In Figure 2, the camera captures the model's entire physique up until her thighs, indicating that it is a medium shot. Furthermore, by looking at Table 2, it can be said that the image contains two types of social distance, far personal distance, and far social distance. Far personal distance because the model is shown until her knees and this type of social distance means that "participants discuss personal interests without any physical contact" (Eid Ali 2021: 20). This means that the viewers are intentionally provided with the opportunity to witness a personal connection with the woman to feel closer to her and to accept the notion of unrealistic body standards that she is presenting. Moreover, it is a far social distance because she is shown with a lot of space around her, which includes a lot of text and the product advertised. To sum it up, this allows the viewer to observe the model, to feel close to her but at the same time, it maintains a level of distance that is not overly intimate. Though the model is the centre of attention, the background around her is highlighted because of her presence.

Angle: To properly assess the degree of participation, it is important to comprehend the direction of the vectors. In the case of this image, the model is directly looking forward to the viewer. Hence, meaning that vectors are shooting straight from her eyes to the viewer's eyes. The connection between the viewer

and the model through direct eye contact establishes a sense of involvement with the world presented within the image. Thus, it means that the viewer has a high level of involvement with the subject image.

Regarding the horizontal angles and power dynamics, the advertisement is not notably presented from an elevated or lowered angle, but rather from a relatively similar viewpoint to that of the viewer's eye level. Thus, it implies parity between the observer and the represented participant of the ad.

5.1.4 Compositional dimension

The present text is conspicuously designed with an aim to deliver a visually captivating and easily comprehensible reading experience. The layout adopted for the text is minimalist in nature, thereby augmenting the focus and emphasis of the brand name and underlying message of the text. The utilization of contrast and colour effectively captures the reader's attention and highlights important elements within the text. Additionally, strategic placement and proportional allocation of the text create a visual hierarchy that accentuates the notable information.

Information value: The ad is structured in a way that the model is placed in the middle of the ad and there is text on her left and right side. In addition to this on the right side, there is also an image of the diet supplement which is the product that is being offered. The design of the advertisement effectively utilizes the central section by prominently featuring a flawless physical form in the midst of the composition, complemented by supplementary components like written content and the product. "The element in the middle is referred to as the Centre and the elements around the centre are called the Margins" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006 cited in Ollikka 2021: 16). This type of structure illustrates that one is dependent on the other. The model is presented in the middle of the ad to support the claims or statements made around it.

The use of language in the text is highly emotive and persuasive, with the question "Are you beach body ready?" which elicits a psychological response in

the reader by exploiting their vulnerabilities and aspirations towards achieving an ideal body type (Lerner et al. 2015). The employment of language as a strategic manoeuvre in marketing is a prevalent approach to instil an effective reaction in potential customers, thereby encouraging them to engage in a desired action. Though this text claims that weight loss is possible if two regular meals are replaced with a meal supplement, there is no information about the negative effects of this quick-fix solution.

Saliency: As explained before saliency refers to hierarchy among elements (Ollikka 2021). In the ad, the model is presented in the very front and all the text is behind her on a bright yellow background. As the model is at the forefront, she is the most salient part of the ad. It can be assumed that the advertiser has placed the model to be most salient because they want to hide their manipulation and harsh theme of the ad. The ad is expressing the concept of skipping meals and eating pills instead as the new normal, which is in any case not a healthy diet.

The statement "ARE YOU BEACH BODY READY?" presented as a rhetorical question appears as the second most prominent element of the image due to its bold font and striking contrast against the model's skin tone. The question is complementing the body shape of the model and is also judging the viewer because the model is presenting the notion that she is beach body ready but is the viewer ready? Do they have a perfect body that they can show off like the model? The least salient part is the small-sized text around the diet supplement and the text on the right side of the model.

The text is composed of four short sentences, wherein the initial statement ("Are you beach body ready?") stands out noticeably due to its larger and bolder font size in contrast to the remaining sentences. This creates a visual hierarchy that emphasizes the question and draws the reader's attention to it. The remaining sentences are smaller and thinner in size, suggesting that they are supporting details rather than integral components of the primary discourse.

Framing: This image contains different framing techniques; some are connecting, and some are disconnected but are still part of the same frame. First element is the model that is connected with the rhetorical question around her and the diet supplements image because of the contrasted colour. Though there are different layers in the ad the bikini that the model is wearing is connected with the background of the ad via the use of the same colour.

5.2 Analysis of Red Shoes and the Seven Dwarfs movie poster

The second ad that is being analysed is a movie poster of a kid's movie named "Red Shoes and the 7 Dwarfs". This ad is body shaming and promoting ideal body type in adolescents.



Figure 3. Kids movie poster (Emmerzael 2017)

This ad shows a girl named Snow White who is a princess from kid's stories. The poster shows two images of the same girl, one is a slim figure and the other is fat. Both of these versions of Snow White are placed beside each other and they are making eye contact with each other. Apart from this the ad also contains text. On the left side of the slim version of Snow White, we can see the name of the movie and the year it's releasing in. The text "What if Snow White was no longer beautiful and the 7 dwarfs not so short?" is written on the right

side of the fat version of Snow White. This ad is a perfect example of how non-verbal means of communication can initiate body image in younger audience.

5.2.1 Modes of communication

Similar to Figure 2, Figure 3 is also a multimodal text because it is composed of 4 modes of communication including linguistic, visual, written, and gestural mode.

Linguistic mode: As mentioned before, linguistic mode refers to the use of language. Apart from the visuals this ad includes a lot of text such as the movie title, release year, publication, and the question "What if Snow White was no longer beautiful and the 7 dwarfs not so short?"

Visual mode: The visual mode of this ad includes the presentation of two distinct iterations of Snow White, one depicting a slender and conventionally attractive woman, and the other featuring an overweight and less conventionally attractive individual. This comparison may have a harmful impact on young people because it is promoting unrealistic beauty ideals. Furthermore, the utilization of this form of portrayal has the potential to significantly diminished self-worth and cause discontent with physical appearance in young individuals.

Written mode: The utilization of written language, specifically the phrasing of "What if Snow White was no longer beautiful and the 7 dwarfs not so short?", has the potential to promote unfavourable body image by implying that Snow White's value is depending upon her attractiveness and that possessing a larger body size is undesirable. The aforementioned communication has the potential to cause significant harm to adolescents, who are already susceptible to societal pressures to conform to limited beauty norms.

Gestural mode: The mutual act of gazing between the two versions of Snow White may be regarded as a mode of nonverbal communication. Eye contact constitutes a mode of nonverbal communication that is categorized as a gestural mode. The visual impact of the advertisement is enhanced by the

utilization of eye contact, highlighting the contrast between the two images featuring Snow White. The utilization of the gestural mode of communication in this context serves to strengthen the influence of the visual mode in propagating specific beauty standards, which have the potential to significantly affect the body image perceptions of adolescents.

5.2.2 Representational dimension

Narrative representation: The deconstruction of Figure 3 affirms its narrative representation by feature of the presence of vector within the depicted image. Moreover, the advertisement features dual depictions of the identical performer, exhibiting both the slender and overweight portrayals of Snow White. Both individuals exhibit vectors originating from their eye contact and hand movements directed towards one another. The presence of both the “Goal” and “Actor” in the advertisement signifies the illustration of an action process. As reciprocal gaze is established between the two versions, the dual roles of actor and goal are assumed concurrently as both entities partake in the execution of an action while also reciprocally receiving the effects of that action. Furthermore, it should be noted that the directional alignment of the vector originates from the actor towards the goal, thus indicating it to be a transactional process.

5.2.3 Interactive dimension

Contact: To comprehensively comprehend the gaze of the represented participants, it is imperative to discern whether the image in question is eliciting a demand or an offer. The participants depicted in the poster do not undertake any form of demand towards the viewer, as they fail to establish eye contact with the latter. The participants' visual focus is reciprocally oriented towards one another, which implies a possible exchange of requests or demand between them.

As posited, the participants depicted within the advertisement are engaging in demanding behaviour amongst themselves, thereby indicating that the present

poster is intended primarily as an offer to the viewer. Thus, it can be inferred that the objective of this poster is to convey informative content to its audience.

Social distance: In contrast to Figure 2, Figure 3 takes a medium-long shot, which shows full picture of the represented participants. Hence, the distance can be categorised as close social distance. The ad's positioning allows viewers to observe it and gather information without becoming overly attached, indicating an appropriate distance between the ad and the consumer. Even though the character is kept at a distance, the depiction effectively builds a connection with the audience by addressing the prevalent issue of body shaming. By presenting the full image of the two body types of a same person, the ad is giving the audience a chance to walk in the shoes of the represented participants and to experience how two different body types can affect the individual itself.

Angle: To determine the angle of the image, it can be noted that the vectors emanating through the represented participants are towards each other and the viewer is left to be an observer. As the viewer is not an involved participant the poster depicts an oblique angle.

Figure 3 depicts the involvement of the participants exclusively directed toward one another, exhibiting limited or no recognition towards the presence of viewer. Once again, this positioning places the audience in the position of an observer, enabling them to evaluate the information presented to them, including the identities of the individuals depicted and the narrative that unfolds.

Unlike in Figure 2, in Figure 3 there are high- and low-level angles between the represented participants of the ad. The left side of the poster contains slim and tall figure of Snow White who is looking over the fat Snow White. The slim figure Snow White is tilting her body a little bit on the right side, with her hands folding to make a high-level angle with the fat figure of Snow White. As the slim figure is wearing the red heels, she is taller than the fat figure and because of this the fat figure needs to look up to make the eye contact with the slim figure. Using a

high angle emphasizes the lack of strength and confusion in the overweight figure, while a low angle accentuates the power and strength of the slender figure. Thus, this implies that the slim figure is superior to the fat figure and that there is an unequal relationship between both body figures.

5.2.4 Compositional dimension

Information value: Unlike Figure 2, Figure 3 has a left to right structure. In a Left-to-Right structure, the data presented on the left-hand side is commonly referred to as the given information. Conversely, the information conveyed on the right-hand side, constitutes the new information (Hu and Luo 2016). In Figure 3 the "Given" is the movie name and the slim Cinderella figure. This information is old because it is a famous kids movie that has been reproduced a lot of times and in all those versions snow white has always been a slim figure. Hence it is the given side of the ad. The right side is referred as "New" because it includes a question which is "What if Snow White was no longer beautiful and the 7 dwarfs not so short?" and it also includes the fat version of Snow White. Snow White has never been thought of as fat because she is a princess. Hence this side of the ad is NEW. The negative aspect of this ad is that it associates being fat with being ugly and no longer beautiful.

Saliency: In this ad, the most salient part of the image is the central two characters and the direct gaze between the two. The margins of the image meaning the text around the two is characterised as the 2nd most salient part of the ad. Once again, the characters are the most salient part because the creator wants to portray meaning through images. They do not want the viewers to first read the text and then the image because an image can say a lot without the use of words. The compared individuals are a question in itself and those who worry about their weight and body figure can easily understand what these two characters feel when they look at each other.

Framing: Figure 3 employs a distinct manner of presentation. The represented participants are captured within a single frame through the connection of their gaze and facial expression. Furthermore, to create distinct framing, the

portrayal of individuals is deliberately detached from the written content. Apart from these two elements, there is also a strong contrast between the colours of the frames. The Snow White is wearing red skirt which is contracted with the colour of the text.

5.3 Analysis of an advertisement about women Lingerie

The third ad selected is viewing Victoria Secret models in a lingerie ad. Through the language “perfect body”, this ad is also promoting unrealistic beauty standards.



Figure 4. Lingerie ad (Passmore 2020)

The advertisement features a collection of models with ideal physiques. All of the subjects exhibit a luminous complexion and an expression of evident satisfaction. Moreover, the assertive physical stances convey the idea that this intimate apparel is designed for comfort and instils a sense of confidence in the wearer. The advertisement further comprises three sentences written in capitalized large font.

5.3.1 Modes of communication

Linguistic mode: The advertisement in question appears to endorse Victoria's Secret lingerie, with a particular emphasis on the notion of the "ideal body" and the desirable attributes of the apparel itself - namely, its ideal fit, comfort, and softness. The employment of Victoria's Secret models in advertising is likely aimed to communicate an impression of ambition and longing for the product. Additionally, it is intended to insinuate that wearing the lingerie will facilitate the accomplishment of the "perfect body" appearance symbolized by the models. It is imperative to acknowledge that the concept of an ideal physique is a subjective matter and the ad does not consider the detrimental effects of it on those who fail to conform to established societal norms of attractiveness. Apart from this, ad includes text about the description of the product which is, "PERFECTLY FIT. PERFECT COMFORT. PERFECTLY SOFT. EXPLORE THE COLLECTION". This text is supporting the gestures of the models and their comfortable smiles wearing the soft lingerie.

Visual mode: The visual mode of the ad is the images of the Victoria's Secret models posing in an attractive, sexualized way to recommend consumers to purchase the lingerie. The advertisement's chromatic composition is linked to notions of femininity, delicacy, and naivete. The utilization of the colour white encompasses connotations of untainted purity and cleanliness, thereby serving to fortify the notion that the product is exceedingly soft and pleasurable.

Written mode: The advertisement employs a simplistic sans-serif typography that is modern and easy to read. The utilization of uppercase letters in the written text establishes an impression of fearlessness and self-confidence. The text is bigger in size to ensure that the ad is readable from afar.

Gestural mode: Similar to Figure 2, Figure 4 also involves indirect gestural mode because the represented participants are not making any movement. However, the still image of the perfect bodies of the models could be

considered a form of gestural mode as it communicates a particular body type to be the perfect body.

5.3.2 Representational dimension

Narrative representation: The advertisement employs visual portrayals of Victoria's Secret models attired in the lingerie to symbolize the product and its attributes, including the appropriateness of the fit and the level of softness. The representational dimension of this ad is complex but it can be noted that it is a narrative representation because there are many actors present in the ad and all of these actors are emitting vectors through their gaze. Due to the presence of gaze, it can be said that this ad is featuring a reactional process which means that it features a gaze by several participants. The represented participants of this image are called the Reactor because they are emitting the vectors through their gaze and the viewer in this case is called the phenomenon. This ad is both transactional and non-transactional in nature. The contrast pinkish skin colour models in conjunction with the chosen font style serves as a visual manifestation of the brand's contemporary and feminine identity. The reason this advertisement faced criticism was for its reinforcement of unrealistic bodily standards and its contribution to the perpetuation of negative body image concerns.

5.3.3 Interactive dimension

Contact: When the participant depicted in an image directs their gaze towards the viewer such that they establish an eye contact, they are effectively soliciting an action, purchase, or other response from said viewer. Contrarily, when the illustrated subject is depicted in an image, it communicates indirectly to the viewer without direct interaction. The individual is positioned as a source of information that can be observed. This is called an "offer" to the viewer. In this there are some participants that are establishing an eye contact and some are not. Hence this image is a combination of demand and offer. This allows the viewer to consume this ad in two ways. First the offer part of the ad allows the

viewers to see the picture from a far perspective, whereas the demand part lets the viewer become actively involved in the ad.

Social distance: Similar to Figure 3, Figure 4 also offers full body visual of the Victoria secret models wearing lingerie which makes it long shot. Therefore, the space between individuals can be referred to as far social distance. This distance implies that the ad offers itself to the viewers to observe it and to get informed by it. Additionally, it presents an opportunity for the viewer to engage with the product through the act of visiting the website, thereby constituting a noteworthy form of interaction. The absence of interactivity substantially restrains the capacity of the audience to effectively interact with the product beyond a mere visual judgement.

Angle: By assessing the angle, it seems that the image has an oblique angle. This implies that the observer does not belong to the realm inhabited by the depicted participants. When the depicted world is detached from the viewer, the degree of the viewer's engagement with the visual content diminishes. A decreased level of engagement implies that the viewer functions more as a passive observer than an involved participant. Primary objective of utilizing this angle is to accentuate the lingerie being marketed and to preclude the potential for Victoria models with flawless bodies from diverting the audience's focus.

5.3.4 Compositional dimension

Information value: This Figure (Figure 4) fits the top and bottom structure theory presented by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). This theory refers to the way the ad is structured in other words the layout of the ad. This top and bottom means that an image would most likely have the product on top part of the image and the bottom part of the image would have text about the product. The Figure 4 follows the same layout. The top part of the ad is the image of the model's wearing lingerie and the bottom part of the ad has the text which supports the visuals shown above.

Saliency: The ad looks pleasant, and the models are arranged nicely to show off the lingerie that they're wearing. This ad shows that the lingerie is a good fit and very comfortable but it only uses models who have the same body type, which might make some people feel like they can't wear the lingerie and feel confident or happy just as the models in the ad.

The advertisement's composition exhibits a visually appealing and well-balanced arrangement, with the models strategically positioned to accentuate the lingerie they are wearing. The implementation of a solid white background colour serves to maintain visual emphasis on the showcased models and products. The present composition efficiently communicates the intended message of the advertisement regarding the superior fit and softness of the lingerie product. Nevertheless, the use of models possessing similar and perfect body features potentially restricts the inclusion of customers who do not conform to the limited ideal.

The most salient part of the ad is the text "THE PERFECT "BODY". PERFECTLY FIT. PERFECT COMFORT. PERFECTLY SOFT." which is placed in front and on top of the models. The second most salient part is the model's wearing lingerie.

Framing: The advertisement portrays several Victoria's Secret models posing while wearing lingerie, thereby establishing a sense of visual balance and symmetry. The positioning of the models in such a manner accentuates the significant attributes of the lingerie, such as its fitting and gentle texture. Figure 4 exhibits a certain degree of framing. The models and the written content are placed in close proximity to each other which implies that they form a unified frame.

The comprehensive analysis of these three ads is summarized in Appendix 1.

6 Discussion

The aim of this analysis was to examine the role different types of ads play in advancing the notion of body image in adolescents. Additionally, this analysis focused on how the linguistic and visual elements of the ads aid in targeting the consumers. The analysis was carried out utilizing Kress and van Leeuwen's framework for multimodal discourse analysis, known as Visual Grammar. This framework provided three dimensions for the analysing of ads including representational, interactive, and compositional dimensions. All of these ads were initially analysed in terms of different modes of communication including visual, written, linguistic and gestural mode. Upon conducting a comprehensive analysis of these modes, it is deducible that these ads were able to grab much attention and be persuasive due to the presence of all the modes of communication. The aim of this thesis was to explore the following two research statements:

1. The persuasive influence of visual and linguistic elements in the context of advertising
2. The portrayal of unrealistic beauty standards in advertisements and how it impacts the body image of adolescents

It became evident from the multimodal discourse analysis of these ads that the most apparent idea in the advertisements is the presentation of perfect appearance of women. All ads used a woman figure to normalise this desire of perfect body and to establish authority over this population who desires to fit in to societal norms. The act of establishing authority is accomplished by means of a tagline and the depiction of the idealized body, which situates the advertiser as possessing specialized knowledge and the audience as being inexperienced and in need of direction. This power relation with customers is established through manipulation of their ideologies through the message that a non-ideal body is one that is fat, flabby, and unattractive whereas the ideal body is thin, toned, and sexually attractive.

Some of the aspects that all three ads have in common are the composition, placement, and colour scheme of the ads which enhance its persuasive power, making it difficult for individuals to resist the urge to consume the product. While the composition of the ads is visually striking and effective in capturing the reader's attention, the message it conveys is problematic and potentially harmful. According to the data presented in Figure 2, it may be inferred that the weight loss supplement has the potential to facilitate the attainment of the desired physique, as portrayed by the model featured in the advertisement, through the replacement of regular daily meals with dietary pills. Although this advertisement targets both genders, it strongly implies a focus on the feminine ideal body as depicted by a slim and fit model in a bikini. The primary objective of Figure 2, pertaining to the weight loss supplement, was to persuade the target audience to incorporate the said supplement into their dietary routine. Additionally, it sought to establish the notion that possessing an ideal physique is an essential prerequisite for revealing attire, like a bikini swimsuit. The aim of this initiative is to direct attention towards the adolescent's demographic, as they are more likely to demonstrate a tendency to skip meal intake and adhere to societal expectations regarding body image.

The usage of the question "Are You Beach Body Ready?" in conjunction with an idealized physique model portrayed alongside an advertisement for meal replacement pills infers that these supplements serve as an effective means of accomplishing a desirable beach body. This question also engenders a feeling of inadequacy and a longing for physical perfection. The spread of beauty ideals and the repetition of the notion that solely a particular physique is deemed suitable or desirable are reinforced. The use of this specific question as a form of juxtaposition conveys an implicit message to the reader that their present physical state is not suitable for the beach, and consequently, the promoted product can assist in achieving their ideal physique. Despite the absence of a celebrity endorsement, the model depicted bears a striking resemblance to a typical fashion model. The analysis of ads has shown that indeed this ad has the appeal to a younger demographic that places significant importance on matters related to beauty.

Apart from Figure 2, the juxtaposition of two versions of the Snow-White character, depicted in Figure 3, one characterized by a slender and conventionally pleasing physique, and the other harbouring excess weight and possessing less conventional physical features, serves to underscore a correlation between thinness and societal perceptions of beauty and desirability, where overweight body types are frequently not afforded the same degree of affection or desire. This example illustrates that the formation of body image may commence at a young age due to the ease with which advertisements can permeate and influence our societal ideals.

Additionally, Figure 4 seems to focus on body image by endorsing the concept of an "exemplary physique" through the utilization of Victoria's Secret models, who are commonly viewed as possessing an idealized physical appearance. The ad is showcasing Victoria's Secret models who are promote lingerie specifically catered towards individuals with an exemplary physique and idealized body type akin to that of a Victoria's Secret model. The advertisement employs language centred around the notions of "perfectly fit" and "perfectly soft" intimating that the lingerie is particularly designed for individuals who conform to a certain body shape and size.

In Summary, the modality of the ads is confident and persuasive, suggesting that the author is promoting a particular product and viewpoint with the aim of convincing the reader to take action (i.e., purchase the product or conforming to the "thin is pretty" notion). The use of assertive language and positive evaluations reinforces the effectiveness and desirability of the products and contributes to the sense of urgency conveyed by the text.

The predominant advertising approach evident in the aforementioned advertisements is the utilization of explicit emotional rhetoric as a means of persuasion. To create a connection between the customers and the main characters, attractive and graceful female models possessing aesthetically pleasing physical features are employed in these advertisements. The Figure 2, illustrates the subliminal messaging employed by the advertiser which posits

that by utilizing their products, adolescents may bear a resemblance to models featured in the advertisement. This particular communication is a tactic of controlling one's thoughts and emotions. In the realm of advertising, one could argue that all forms of manipulation are psychological; however, in this particular situation, marketers target individuals' emotional tendencies, specifically those who tend to compete with each other, particularly in terms of their physical appearance. The promotion of such ideals contributes to the development and exacerbation of body dissatisfaction among female individuals.

Overall, the discussion section brings forward that females are most likely subjected to unfair beauty standards in ads. The overall focus of these ads is on promoting products rather than a holistic approach to health and well-being. This approach means that the ads are prioritizing profits over the needs and interests of consumers.

6.1 Critical evaluation of the results

This research turned out to be very informational. It brought forward one of the major negative impacts of advertisements on adolescents which is how media constructs the idea of an ideal body which is unrealistic beauty standards in the minds of the younger audience. As previously mentioned, the literature explores how ads can affect older audiences but there is not much literature that focuses on how it affects the younger audience such as adolescents.

Though this research provides useful information about the impact of advertisements on the younger audience, it has also some limitations. The initial constraint relates to the size of the sample. As the research approach employed in this thesis was qualitative in nature, the emphasis was placed not on the quantitative aspects, but instead on the quality of the research. Therefore, a limited set of three advertisements was selected for a thorough examination. The limited sample size precludes generalization of the results to a broader population. Secondly, the present thesis centres solely on the female gender, thereby posing the challenge of limited generalizability across other genders.

Thirdly, the thesis only analyse still image which means that still images cannot be said to have similar impact as those ads that are not still such as video advertisements.

Moreover, the analysis is limited by the subtle nature of multimodality and the subjectivity inherent in its interpretations. Essentially, this implies that different individuals may perceive and analyse images in varying manners due to their distinct perspectives and approaches to evaluations.

7 Scope of improvement and Further research

To enhance the generalizability of outcomes, future research should employ a more extensive pool of advertisements. Moreover, it is imperative to consider the impact of advertising on males and their gender perceptions. By incorporating both females and males, it would be exciting to examine the manner in which advertising fabricates their personal identity from an early developmental phase. With regard to time constraints, forthcoming investigations that aim to employ larger sample sizes ought to be cautious on the amount of time it would require to comprehensively analyse each sample.

Furthermore, to understand the extent to which advertising can influence body image in younger audiences, it would be wise to undertake an analysis of a diverse range of advertisement formats, beyond those that merely consist of static images.

8 Conclusion

The present research examines the multimodal discourse employing the theoretical framework of visual grammar advanced by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Through the process of conducting this research, a clear finding emerged indicating that women are a particularly vulnerable demographic targeted by advertisers. The findings of the analysis have conclusively demonstrated that advertisements possess a tendency for directing their focus towards a demographic of younger individuals and, in doing so, possess the potential to trigger concerns with body image. The analysis of advertisements indicates that images possess the capacity to communicate meanings that are multi-layered in nature. The grammatical structures of images can be subjected to analytical examination as a means of discerning meaning, which serves to validate the visual grammar theory posited by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

The analysis also revealed that the participants under consideration were portrayed as individuals of superior stature, possessing admirable attributes. Furthermore, scholarly literature and critical analysis have demonstrated that individuals who do not conform to the restrictive prototype of a slender body figure ideal may experience unfavourable concerns related to their body image as a result of exposure to such cultural standards. The adverse consequences of this phenomenon have a significant impact on the affected persons' self-confidence. Based on this, it can be inferred that advertising has significant potential to impose notions and exploit customers' susceptibilities, particularly in regard to promoting unrealistic beauty ideals.

Furthermore, the findings of the present investigation add to the body of knowledge surrounding advertising discourse and expose its intrinsic linguistic and visual characteristics. The methodology and findings section of the report furnishes a comprehensive and systematic approach for undertaking a thorough investigation of advertisements in the form of static visual images.

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Appendices

Summary of analysis

Table 3. Summary of multimodal discourse analysis

	Ad 1	Ad 2	Ad 3
Modes of communication	Visual, linguistic, gestural, written	Visual, linguistic, gestural, written	Visual, linguistic, gestural, written
Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative - Reaction process - Transactional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative - Action process - Transactional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative - Reaction process - Transactional and non-transactional.
Contact	Demands from the viewer. Direct eye contact with the viewer.	Offers to the viewer. Direct eye contact in between the represented participants.	Offers and demands from the viewer. Direct eye contact also no eye contact.
Social distance	Medium shot	Medium long shot	Long shot
Angle	Horizontal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close to the eye level. - No inequality Vertical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct eye contact with the viewer. - High involvement - Active participant 	Horizontal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High- and low-level eye contact. - Inequality Vertical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct eye contact in between the represented participants. - Low involvement - Observer 	Horizontal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close to the eye level. - No inequality Vertical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oblique angle - Low angle - Observer
Information value	Centre & margin structure	Left to right structure	Top to bottom structure
Salience	Represented participants are the most Salient.	Represented participants are the most Salient.	Text is the most salient part.
Framing	Several connected frames	Several connected frames	United one frame.