



**FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS
ESCOLA BRASILEIRA DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO PÚBLICA E DE EMPRESAS
MESTRADO EXECUTIVO EM GESTÃO EMPRESARIAL**

**CAN DEVIATION FROM STANDARD BEAUTY BECOME APPEALING?
AN AGE PERSPECTIVE**

DISSERTAÇÃO APRESENTADA À ESCOLA BRASILEIRA DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO
PÚBLICA E DE EMPRESAS PARA OBTENÇÃO DO GRAU DE MESTRE

MARIANA BRAGA DE LIMA
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AN AGE PERSPECTIVE

Dissertação de Mestrado apresentada à Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas da Fundação Getúlio Vargas como requisito parcial para a obtenção do título de Mestre em Gestão Empresarial.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Eduardo Bittencourt Andrade
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ASSINATURA DOS MEMBROS DA BANCA EXAMINADORA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eduardo Bittencourt Andrade', is written over a horizontal line.

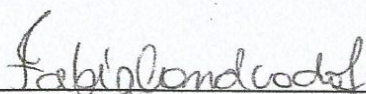
Eduardo Bittencourt Andrade
Orientador (a)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marisol Rodriguez Goia', is written over a horizontal line.

Marisol Rodriguez Goia

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink is written over a horizontal line.

Rafael Guilherme Burstein Goldszmidt

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fabíola Orlando Calazans Machado', is written over a horizontal line.

Fabíola Orlando Calazans Machado

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The ride has been tough but incredibly rewarding.

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ABSTRACT

When exploring new perspectives on the impact of non-idealized vs. idealized body image in advertising, studies have focused mainly on body size, i.e., thin vs. heavy (Antioco et al., 2012; Smeesters & Mandel, 2006). Age remains largely unexplored, and the vast majority of ads in the market depict young models. The purpose of this research is therefore to investigate which images in advertisements – young or mature models – are more persuasive for older women (40+ years old). In this investigation, two studies were conducted. The first part was an exploratory analysis with a qualitative approach, which in turn helped to formulate the hypothesis tested in the subsequent experiment. The results of the in-depth interviews suggested a conflict over notions of imprisonment (need to follow beauty standards) and freedom (wish to deviate). The results of the experiment showed essentially that among older consumers, ads portraying older models were as persuasive as ads portraying younger models. Limitations and future research are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Media agents (magazine editors, retail buyers, creative professionals in advertising, etc.) work as cultural gatekeepers, creating messages that shape the numerous stimuli used to build product and brand images (Solomon, Ashmore, & Longo, 1992). Their output influences how beauty standards are formed and viewed by the general public. Several studies (Antioco et al., 2012; Miner-Rubino et al., 2002; Tiggemann, 2004) point out the impact of today's unrealistic beauty standards on people's self-esteem and the widely perceived phenomenon of body dissatisfaction.

Even though some marketers have started using less idealized models in their advertisements (e.g. Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty), little is yet known about their impact on consumers. The concept of "real" versus "ideal" can vary across several dimensions, but it is safe to assume that in western culture the body image generally sold in advertising revolves around three factors: whiteness, slimness, and youth (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

When exploring new perspectives of the impact of non-idealized vs. idealized body image on advertising, researchers have focused mainly on body size (i.e., thin versus heavy; (Antioco et al., 2012; Smeesters & Mandel, 2006). Age remains a relatively unexplored dimension of the "deviation game," and the vast majority of ads still depict young models.

Nevertheless, in recent years, several premium brands in the international fashion and cosmetics industries have chosen older women for their advertising campaigns. This change in the fashion advertising image map has gained widespread media coverage, with reviews going from compliments to analyses about whether it is just another marketing ploy or whether the beauty construct as a whole is being enlarged.

The multifaceted nature of what is considered attractive or not attractive varies according to several dimensions and individual traits, including age. As such, the focus of this study is to investigate whether older consumers are more persuaded by current fashion ads or ads depicting older models. There is little research into the influence of age on fashion advertising, and it is therefore not clear whether mature women will be more persuaded by advertisements depicting young models (aspirational beauty standard) or by mature models (identification). Specifically, this study investigates how women over 40 years of age are impacted by ads portraying older models.

This research is different from existing studies in at least two ways. First, women aged 40 or more form the sample subject. Because researchers often recruit students from universities as their subjects, most studies rely on young participants (Pham, 2013), but that means they are unable to pick up differences in perceptions among different age groups. Secondly, as mentioned before, former studies of this theme have focused on body size or body dissatisfaction (Tiggemann, 2004). Thus, the role of age is still largely unexplored.

To attain the goal set by this research, two studies were conducted. The first part was an exploratory analysis involving a qualitative approach, whose findings were used to formulate the hypothesis tested later in an experiment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This investigation was underpinned by two main theories: the body as capital (Goldenberg, 2007) and objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Inspired by Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital, Goldenberg (2005) regards the body as a prominent form of capital in Brazilian culture. After years of research with urban middle-

class Brazilian men and women, she reports that the body is a central category in their discourse, where it is definitely viewed as an asset – noticed, admired, envied, and worth working for. The body mentioned here is not a natural one; it is a cultivated body: worked out, healthy, and sculpted. Even though this notion cannot be generalized to Brazilian culture as a whole, it is definitely the most admired and imitated body image in the country, and is reproduced normatively by the media.

In today's consumer society specialized in selling not only things, but also notions of beauty, professional success, marriage, and happiness (to list a few), people are encouraged to invest in their body with the promise that they will obtain gains in all these different fields (Goldenberg, 2007). In fact, having the “right” body can grant its owner status in many fields, not only in the domains where the body is overtly exposed, such as the gym or the beach (Goldenberg, 2007).

It would seem odd that so many women, after years of feminist struggles calling for freedom from gender oppression, have now accepted a new form of prison: the “perfect” physical appearance (Goldenberg, 2008). Brazilian women have become one of the champions of the search for the “perfect” body. This goal has put them in a constant state of body vigilance or, as Goldenberg describes it, a state of symbolic dependence: “they exist first by - and for - others’ gaze, like receptive, attractive, available objects” (Goldenberg, 2007, p. 54).

In her research, Goldenberg (2008) has also reported that women who have managed to create other forms of capital besides the body seem to be less oppressed by such notions. In an interesting comparison between cultures, she interviewed mature German women who explained that they believed interesting women – ones that are considered interesting by others and also regard themselves as interesting – had a connection with the intellectual world. They had

interesting ideas, were intelligent, confident, assertive, and economically independent, but above all, did not adjust their behaviors/appearance to suit other people. To them, the physical body, beauty, youth, slimness, and curves had no part to play in defining what an interesting woman was (Goldenberg, 2008, p. 94).

Investigations supporting the idea that in Brazil the body and looking young are both important values explain that mature Brazilian women embrace aging in either a positive or a negative way. Some of them experience this phase as a time of greater knowledge and freedom, when they are finally rid of many of the demands of others, like their husbands or children. Also, for the first time, they are less concerned about their physical appearance and therefore feel freer to enjoy themselves and their friends. Contrasting these notions, other mature Brazilian women resent aging, because it is synonymous with “invisibility”, “scarcity,” and prejudice. Instead of accepting changes in their appearance, they try to look younger, for example by dressing like young people (Goldenberg, 2007, Jorge, 2005, Salgado, 2002).

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) corroborate these findings, proposing that bodies exist within social and cultural contexts and are constructed through social cultural practices and discourses. In their article on objectification theory, they assert that women’s bodies are looked at, evaluated, and often objectified. “When objectified, women are treated *as bodies* – and in particular, as bodies that exist for the use and pleasure of others” (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 175). In western societies it is considered acceptable and normal to gaze at women. The objectifying gaze happens in interpersonal and social encounters and is widespread in the visual media. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) along with numerous feminist theorists acknowledge that women tend to internalize observers’ perspectives on their physical self. In their research they call this effect self-objectification.

“Thus, objectification theory maintains that sexual objectification in the larger sociocultural arena can coax women and girls to treat themselves as objects to be looked at, evaluated, and dehumanized, leading them to adopt an observer’s perspective on their physical selves. Self-objectification, then, is a particular view of the self that can lead to a form of self-consciousness characterized by the habitual monitoring of the body’s outward appearance (Miner-Rubino et al., 2002, p. 150).”

Since the degree of self-objectification will vary according to women’s individual circumstances, trait self-objectification has been perceived as a culture-based individual difference variable (Miner-Rubino et al., 2002). Aiming to assess trait self-objectification (TSO), Fredrickson et al. (1998) came up with a simple measure that asks respondents to rank ten body attributes in relation to their impact on their physical self-concept. Half of these attributes are related to performance (strength, physical coordination, energy level, health, and physical fitness) and the other half are related to appearance (weight, sex appeal, physical attractiveness, firm/sculpted muscles, and measurements – Appendix A). The final scores can range from -25 to +25. A low TSO score implies that the respondent internalizes observers’ perspectives less in their self-concept, while a high TSO score implies that they internalize them more. Theoretically, women low in TSO will be better protected from others’ gaze, which in turn may allow them to experience greater self-esteem.

Previous research has shown that advertising and the media (Aubrey, 2006; Choma, Foster, & Radford, 2007; Smeesters & Mandel, 2006), clothes (Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998; Tiggemann & Andrew, 2012), other’s gaze (Aubrey, 2006; Tiggemann & Andrew, 2012; Tiggemann, 2004), and media literacy (Choma et al., 2007) are all environmental cues that may trigger self-objectification. This then leads to habitual body monitoring, causing a number of destructive psychological consequences such as appearance anxiety, increased body shame, decreased “flow states,” and insensitivity to bodily cues

(Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). It has also been reported that women high in TSO will experience decreased feelings of capability and purpose (Gapinski, Brownell, & LaFrance, 2003) and weakened cognitive functioning (Fredrickson et al., 1998; Gapinski et al., 2003).

In this research we interpret trait self-objectification as a good proxy for symbolic body capital. In other words, women high in TSO will value their body as an important form of capital, while women low in TSO will have managed to amplify their symbolic value through other achievements that go beyond physical appearance (i.e. intellectual, professional, or economic achievements).

Contributing to this analysis, Tiggemann (2001) reported that although body dissatisfaction remains stable across the adult life span (“women consistently wish to be thinner”), the importance of body shape, weight, and appearance decreases as women age.

It is still not clear which dimensions have the strongest impact on mature women’s perceptions of the ideals of beauty portrayed in the media, although the literature indicates that individual differences such as self-esteem, age, and culture all play a part in how women see themselves and the world around them (Antioco et al., 2012; Englis, Solomon, & Ashmore, 2010; Tiggemann, 2004). Since the target subject of this study – mature women – may not be overly preoccupied with their physical appearance because they have experienced other forms of symbolic capital such as motherhood, occupational identity, or financial independence, young models with their “ideal body” may actually not be as aspirational as they once were to this specific audience.

In short, this research aims to investigate whether young or mature models are more persuasive for older (40+) women. In order better to understand this proposition, an empirical study was conducted.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

I decided that having closer contact with the target audience at the beginning of this investigation could serve as a source of inspiration. The interview method not only yielded samples of their discourse for analysis, but also offered an opportunity to engage with them in a market context.

METHOD

First, nine interviews were held with middle- and upper-middle-class women recruited in two marketplaces: an upscale lingerie store in Ipanema and an exclusive beauty salon in Leblon, both high-end neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro. The women were all educated at least to degree level, and were all economically independent with a high income by Brazilian standards. In this study they characterize the *consumer perspective* of an elite group who are affluent and intellectually empowered. Even though they represent a small subgroup of the Brazilian population, they often embody the behavioral vanguard in Brazil, which, as anthropologist Velho (1981) has noted, means that their practices often are valued and imitated by other segments of the population.

When approached in one of the two market venues, the participants were invited to take part in a study being conducted as part of the data collection stage of a master's thesis. After agreeing to participate, three introductory questions were asked in order to qualify the subjects: their name, age, and profession. The goal was to interview women over 40 years of age, who are hereafter referred to as mature women. The age of the respondents in the sample ranged from 45 to 73 (see Table 1). After the introduction, a script (Appendix B) was followed where the

respondents were asked to comment on topics such as aging, body figure, definition of beauty, beauty standards, and their goals and role models regarding this theme.

TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONSUMERS

Identification	Age	Professional Occupation
C1	57	Psychologist and Visual Artist
C2	69	Psychoanalyst
C3	45	Sales Representative
C4	73	History and Philosophy Professor
C5	51	Interior Designer
C6	55	Film Maker
C7	47	Coach
C8	67	Engineer
C9	65	Sales Consultant

Towards the end of the interviews, the respondents were also asked to evaluate two different groups of images. The first images were extracted from a current beauty magazine and showed five fashion or beauty ads depicting young models (see Figure 1). The second group of images illustrated five fashion or beauty ads portraying mature models, with ages ranging from 54 to 81 (see Figure 2). The images were presented without any further instructions or comments. The objective was to record the participants' spontaneous remarks, perceptions, and evaluations. The answers were either typed during the interview or recorded and subsequently transcribed.

FIGURE 1. FIRST GROUP OF IMAGES: YOUNG MODELS

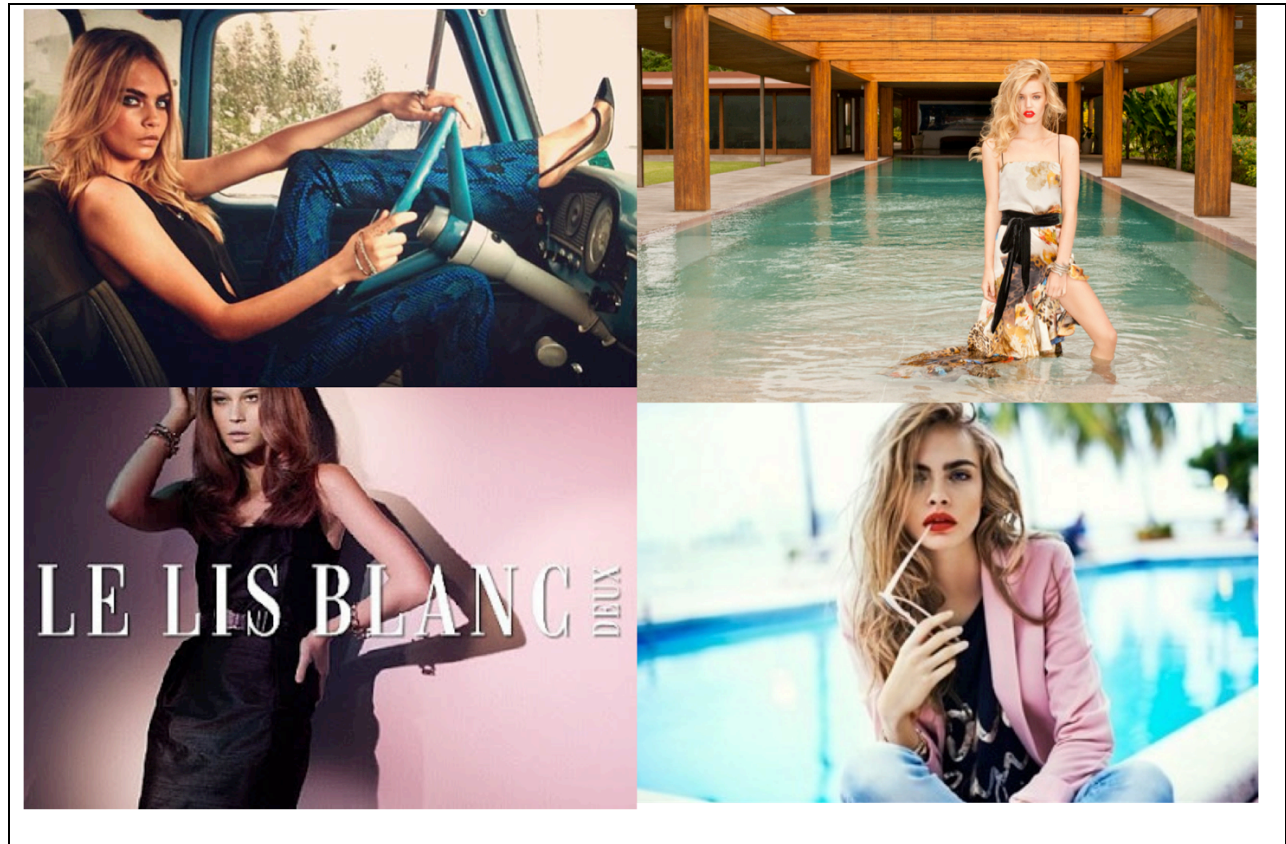


FIGURE 2. SECOND GROUP OF IMAGES: MATURE MODELS



After these interviews, four in-depth interviews lasting 45 to 90 minutes were conducted with important players from the media, fashion, and beauty industry to further explore this theme (see Table 2). Their observations represented the *industry perspective*, with the goal of learning how close their views were to those presented by the other group of women. Also it was hoped that these interviews would reveal whether the respondents anticipated a shift in the current standards of beauty, and if so, whether this change embraced deviations like age. The interviews took place either at the respondents' offices or in a restaurant. When they were first contacted, they were told that the research was part of a master's thesis. Three of the interviews were recorded, but because of technological problems only one was fully transcribed.

TABLE 2. PROFILE OF THE INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

Interviewee	Current Title	Company	Date of Interview
I1	Owner and Creative Director	Lenny	January 21, 2015
I2	Head of Branding & Creative	Nestlé Brazil	February 26, 2015
I3	Editor-in-Chief	Vogue Brazil	July 1, 2015
I4	CMO & Luxe General Manager	L'Oreal Brazil	September 15, 2015

RESULTS

Most of the respondents representing consumers did not define beauty with physical attributes. Instead, they stated that it goes beyond physical appearance. All but one were categorical in stating that there is no ideal beauty, yet most recognized that in general women are trapped by beauty standards.

The participants were the kind of interesting women defined by the Germans in Goldenberg's research: independent Brazilian women over 40 years of age who surprisingly favored ads depicting mature models rather than the normative young models.

Overall, the views expressed by the industry representatives contrasted with those of the consumers. They classified the use of older models in advertising as part of a marketing ploy that would not last, and did not anticipate a shift in current beauty standards, at least as far as age is concerned. In line with the literature, they agreed that aesthetic notions are constructed by culture, and that in Brazil there is an obsession with youth.

The consumers and industry leaders interviewed presented different ideas about what is attractive and appealing in the current advertising image map. The overall discourse was contradictory and did not reveal clearly with whom mature women identify and which

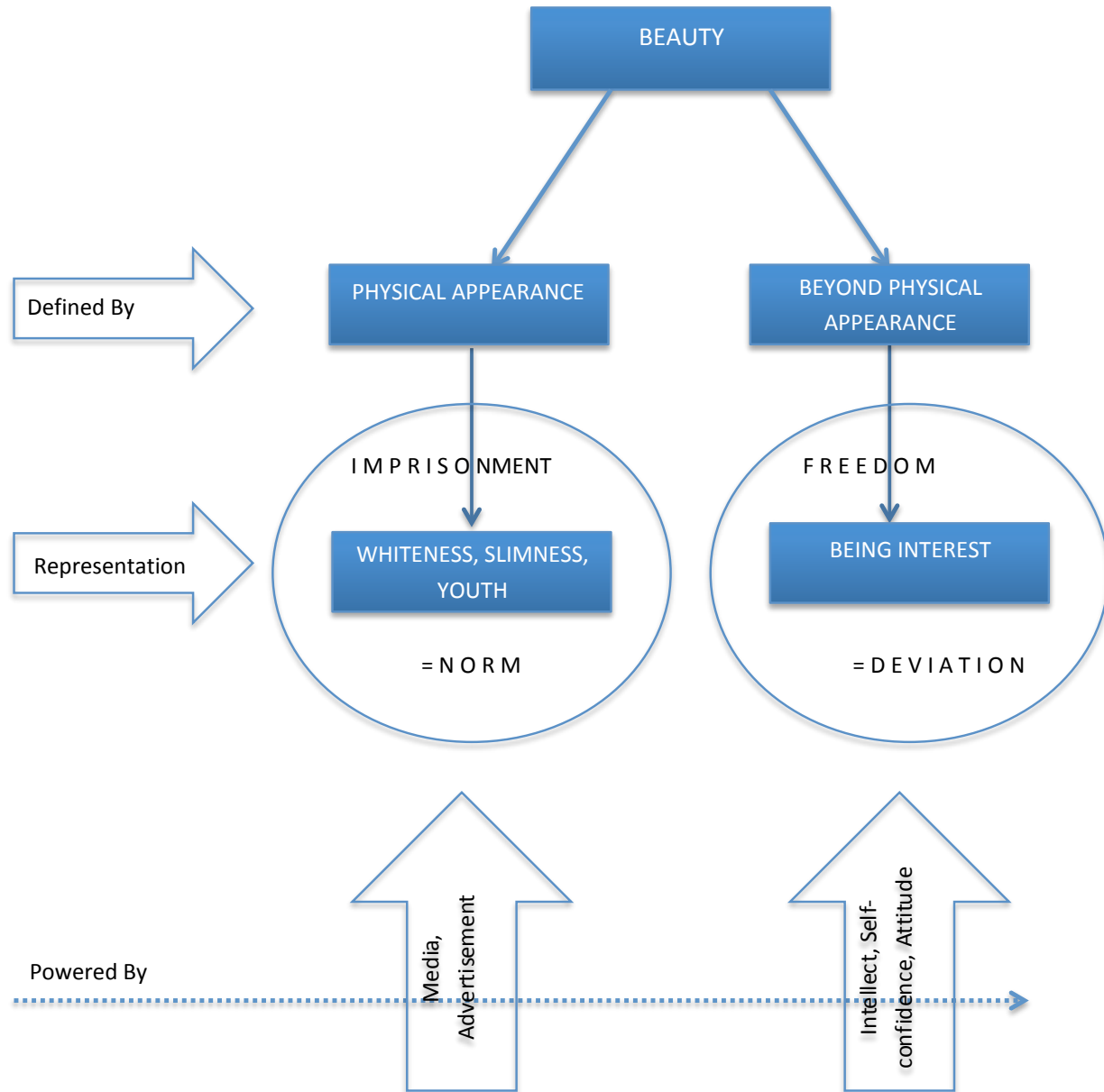
dimensions moderate their perceptions. Table 3 illustrates the main topics addressed by the interviewees.

TABLE 3. FRAGMENTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS – CATEGORIES AND CITATIONS

1. Definition of Beauty	
Subjective Perspective	<p>“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It comes from the soul.” (C1)</p> <p>“It’s how you carry yourself. Everyone’s beautiful. You have to find your beauty.” (C1)</p> <p>“It’s impossible not to consider physical beauty, but what lasts is your inner, psychic beauty.” (C2)</p> <p>“It’s about energy, and that creates empathy.” (C3)</p> <p>“Plenitude, harmony, well-being, authenticity, spirituality, and intelligence.” (C5)</p> <p>“Proportional, at ease. Authentic.”(C5)</p>
Concrete Perspective	<p>“A woman with well-cared-for skin and hair and whose body is in good shape, or at least complies with standards of health.” (C4)</p> <p>“In Brazil there’s still a “foreign” image of beauty: blond, white, and straight hair.” (I4)</p> <p>“In the 90s it was all about being really young and really thin.” (I3)</p> <p>“Brazilians like curves. Tanned, shapely bodies much like the <i>Angels</i> [ref. to Victoria’s Secret models].” (I3)</p>
2. Acknowledgement of the Existence of Beauty Standards	
Notions of Imprisonment	<p>“They want the perfect shape. Fashion reinforces that, and so do the media.” (C3)</p> <p>“People are on autopilot. Society feeds us a recipe for happiness; it’s overpowering.” (C1).</p> <p>“Some women pursue a standard of beauty that makes them look ugly. They overdo the wrong kind of look. There’s a disregard for the essence of what a woman is.” (C5)</p> <p>“There’s a strong physical culture. They’re seeking a physical ideal. Women with a narrower perspective on life value physical beauty more: ‘I’ll be successful if I’m beautiful, thin, and tall.’ (C3)</p>

Notions of Freedom	<p>“Brazilians are obsessed with straight hair.” (I3)</p> <p>“Being beautiful means being able to be who you are.” (C1)</p> <p>“The images of the first group [young models] are starting to wear thin, but it’s a gradual change. Black women are starting to appear; women that are not so thin...” (C2)</p> <p>“In the 80s the goal was to look like somebody. Today, attitude is more important for brand composition than physical appearance.” (I4)</p> <p>“The rejection of excessive thinness is huge among our online customers.” (I3)</p> <p>“Four years ago there was a boom of gray hair on all the major catwalks” (I3)</p>
3. Aspirational Women	
Performance	<p>“They look confident. They demonstrate strength, achievement, and standing.” (C8)</p> <p>“Women with experience. They don’t hide. They’re fighters.” (C2)</p> <p>“They’re people with mileage. Strong women.” (C1)</p> <p>“They send a message more than an image.” (C7)</p> <p>Women who work, who write. Female artists. (C1)</p> <p>Fernanda Montenegro (C5, C3, C2), Simone de Beauvoir (C5, C3), Susan Sontag (C3, C6), Angela Merkel (C2), Clarisse Lispector (C3)</p>
Physical	<p>“The girl next-door – They look normal. They’re a bit chubbier. ... Of course, they’re still perfect – the perfect “girl next-door”. They’re a more familiar reference for the general public (I3)</p> <p>Grazi Massafera (I 4)</p> <p>The Angels (Victoria’s Secret models), Carol Trentini (I3)</p>
4. Authenticity Valued	
NOT REAL: Fakeness, Pretend, Product	<p>“They’re caricatures, stereotypes. They can’t be what they are.” (C1)</p> <p>“Artificial” (C7)</p> <p>“The first group [young models] is playful. They look a bit childish.” (C7)</p>

FIGURE 3. SCHEMATIC SUMMARY OF THE QUALITATIVE RESULTS



However, their discourses still presented conflict about notions of imprisonment and freedom: a need to follow beauty standards and a wish to deviate from them. It is therefore still

unclear which message would be most persuasive for this target group. In other words, is the idealistic youth image aspirational and persuasive for mature women or is the chance to deviate the real aspiration?

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

Grounded in the aforementioned theory and inspired by the qualitative results presented above, I formulated an experiment to investigate which image – young or mature models – is more persuasive in advertisements for this target audience.

The content analysis based on the qualitative study indicated that mature women would be likely to deviate from the normative notion of beauty and would therefore prefer ads portraying mature models.

H1: Mature women will rate ads depicting mature women more highly than ones depicting young models.

The views expressed by the consumers in the interviews are in line with the literature reviewed, indicating that women with broader life prospects are less likely to be concerned about their physical appearance. Therefore, I expected that women that preferred the non-idealized ads would be the ones low in trait self-objectification.

H2: The TSO measure will interact with the ad evaluation, in such a way that women with low (vs. high) TSO will prefer ads portraying mature (vs. young) models.

METHOD

Sample and Design. Two hundred and twenty participants (220 females; $M_{\text{age}} = 54.72$ $SD_{\text{age}} = 8.93$) were contacted online and asked to participate in a web-based study. The experiment employed a 2 (model age: young vs. old) x TSO (continuous) between-subjects design.

Procedure. In order to avoid possible bias, before conducting the experiment, 12 models (Appendix C) were pretested on 70 participants from the same demographic. In this phase I asked the participants to evaluate each model according to her attractiveness, sensuality, and self-confidence on a scale from 1 to 6. I also asked how old each model looked. Four of the pretested models (Appendix D) were perceived as equivalent in all the key dimensions tested (all $ps > .05$), except age ($M_y = 28.2$, $M_m = 41.8$, $t = 12.9$, $p < .001$).

Next, a fictitious footwear brand called Maya was created, and four print ads were produced featuring the selected pretested models (Appendix E). The subjects evaluated these ads in order to assess brand and product preferences. Since the brand, ad design, and products were exactly the same in all four ads, our goal with this ad evaluation was only to determine how each model affected the way the brand and ad were evaluated by this particular audience.

New recruits were selected through a snowball method. After agreeing to participate the participants were told the following:

“Maya Shoes, a new brand, is about to be launched in the market. We would like to invite you to give your opinion on a few choices of the brand’s ad campaign. Please note that these ads are still prototypes. Your feedback is critical to us. Thank you for your collaboration.”

Participants were randomly assigned one of the four ads. They were asked to mark their evaluation of the ad and the brand on a six-point scale with end-points such as: “I feel negative about the ad” (1) to “I feel positive about the ad” (6), “The ad is bad” (1) to “the ad is good” (6), “The brand is not attractive” (1) to “the brand is attractive” (6)” and “I dislike the brand” (1) to “I like the brand” (6).

In order to classify the subjects according to their trait of self-objectification score (TSO), participants were then asked to rank ten body attributes according to their impact on their body self-concept (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. TSO QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions below identify 10 body attributes. Rank these attributes as follows: the most important to your physical self-concept (rank this a “9”) to the least important to your physical self-concept (rank this a “0”).	
When considering your physical self-concept...	
	9= greatest impact 8= next greatest impact . . . 1= next least impact 0= least impact
	...what rank do you assign to physical coordination?
	...what rank do you assign to health?
	...what rank do you assign to weight?
	...what rank do you assign to strength?
	...what rank do you assign to sex appeal?
	...what rank do you assign to physical attractiveness?
	...what rank do you assign to energy level (e.g., stamina)?
	...what rank do you assign to firm/sculpted muscles?
	...what rank do you assign to physical fitness level?
	...what rank do you assign to measurements (e.g., chest, waist, hips)?

To ensure accuracy, the scale from Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) was translated to Portuguese and back-translated to English. After completing the TSO scale, participants completed some socio-demographic questions and finished the survey.

RESULTS

The first analyses of the participants in this experiment revealed that their demographic characteristics were very similar to those from the qualitative study. Ninety-five percent of the sample had at least a university degree (29% had a graduate degree),

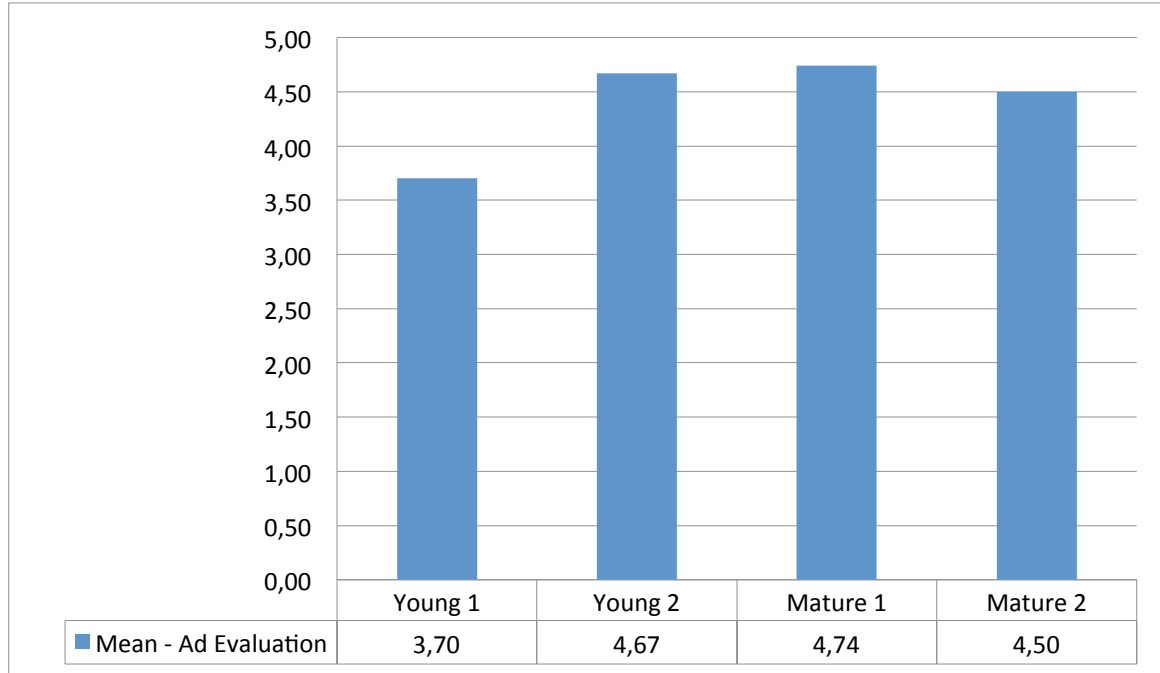
96% were professionally engaged, 50% had an above-average income and 71% said that professional achievement was very important to them.

Our first hypothesis was that mature women would evaluate ads depicting mature women higher than ads depicting young models. However, the results from the one-way ANOVA showed a null effect when comparing the ad evaluation ($F = 1.1$ $p = .34$) and brand evaluation ($F = .80$ $p = .49$). In other words, the ads portraying mature models were as persuasive as those portraying young models, but not more persuasive, for this particular audience.

Contradicting our second hypothesis, the TSO measure did not interact with the models' age on ad evaluation ($\beta = .02$, $SE = .03$, $p = .58$) or brand evaluation ($\beta = -.01$, $SE = .03$, $p = .86$). It is worth noting, however, that only 96 of the respondents answered the TSO questionnaire correctly. Some failed to rank the options correctly because they gave more than one attribute the same score. In these cases, the responses were deemed invalid and were not used in the evaluation.

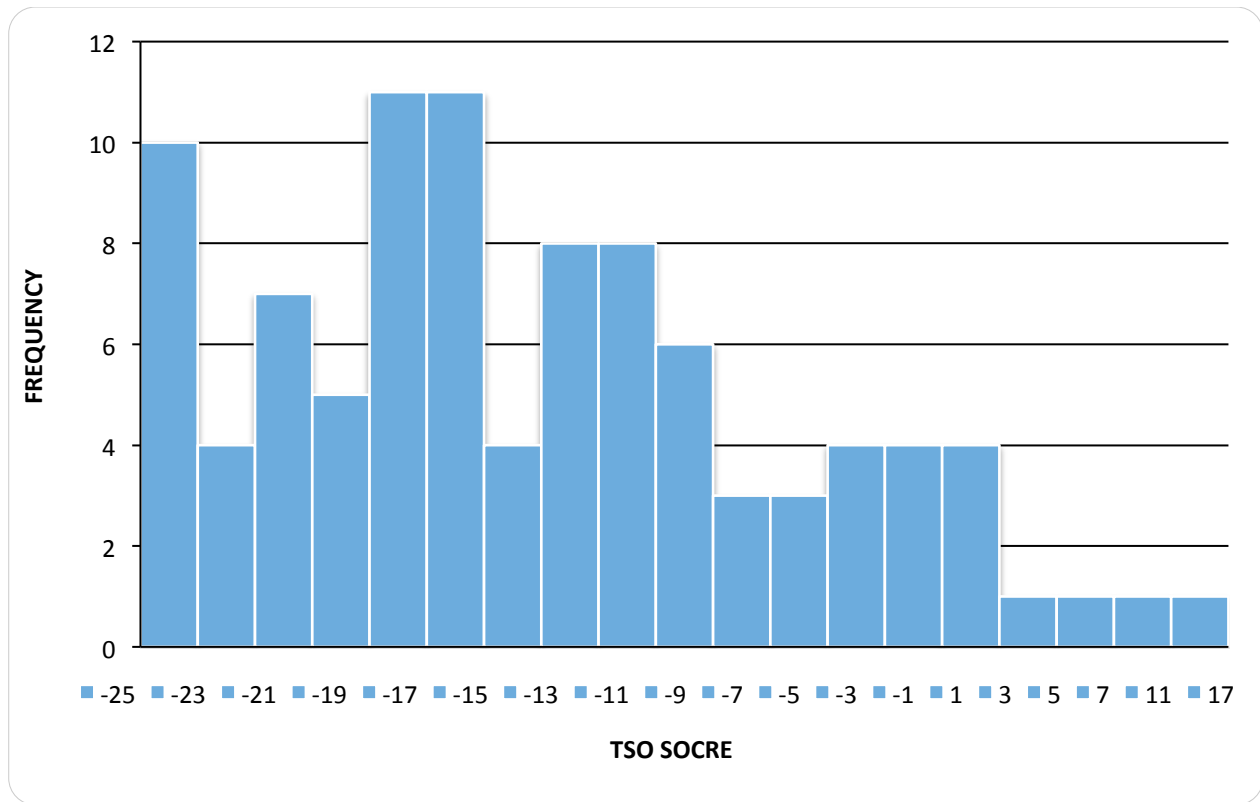
When only these data were analyzed, the ad depicting the model perceived as being the youngest received the poorest evaluation ($F = 3.16$, $p = .03$). Figure 4 shows the four mean evaluations. This may suggest that when the stimulus is really perceived as being younger, it is less persuasive in an advertisement for this audience. However, when the dependent variable was the brand evaluation, the null effect remained ($F = .60$, $p = .61$).

FIGURE 4. RATING OF ADVERTISEMENT



The fact that all the valid responses for the TSO evaluation recorded a low TSO score may be one of the reasons why no interaction was found between this measure and the dependent variables (see Figure 5). The experiment would have benefited from a more diverse sample and also from more obviously diverse stimuli.

FIGURE 5. HISTOGRAM OF TSO



DISCUSSION

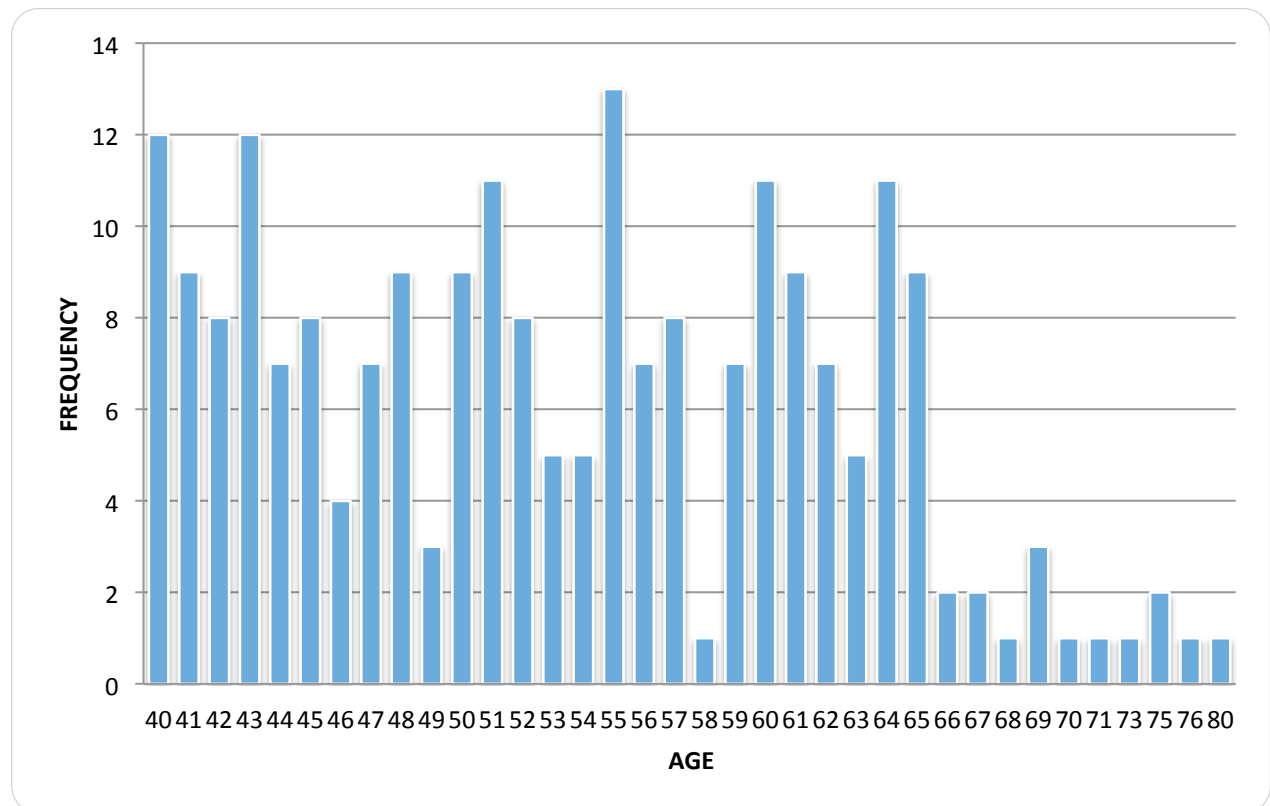
Even though the results of this study did not confirm our hypothesis, it is interesting to observe that young models (idealistic image) were not favored over mature models (non-idealistic image).

However, two alternative reasons may explain the null effect reported in this experiment. First, in the attempt to control for probable biases in the pretest phase, the four selected models ended up having a number of traits that were extremely similar. Secondly, the age gap represented in the ads was probably too narrow. The difference

between what was considered young and mature in this experiment may not have being sufficiently clear.

Another factor worth pointing out is that the average age (mean = 53.48) of the sample was much older than the age of the evaluated models, again suggesting that the sample audience may not have differentiated sufficiently between 28- and 41-year-old models. All the replicates probably end up being perceived as much younger than the respondents (see Figure 6). To sum up, this suggests that the experiment failed to present this group of respondents with models who they would really perceive as mature.

FIGURE 6. HISTOGRAM OF AGE



GENERAL DISCUSSION

The body image literature has mostly focused on physical appearance. The theoretical framework about this topic mostly deals with body dissatisfaction and the importance of physical appearance, especially body size. Successful indices have been created to assess women's self-objectification, self-esteem, and overall self-confidence. It has become increasingly clear that these measures interact with women's self-concept and therefore their overall perceptions of the world around them. Consequently, innumerable individual traits such as social class, gender, culture, ethnicity, and age all play a role.

The current study focused on age and found that mature women appear to value physical appearance less. They are comfortable embracing an enlarged view of the beauty construct. This was certainly the case of the sample of women studied: educated, upper-class, urban Brazilian women over 40 years of age.

The overall results indicate that not all women respond equally to the prevailing precepts of beauty in western culture: slimness, whiteness, and youth. The findings of this empirical study suggested that for women with intellectual and professional achievements, beauty is a notion that goes beyond physical appearance. Even though youth is undeniably an appreciated attribute, other forms of beauty representation emerged; mileage, accomplishment, and authenticity – notions related to mature women – were concepts valued by the studied audience, who showed that ads portraying older models were as persuasive as ads depicting younger models.

The findings also indicate that beauty encompasses attitudes. Taking this on board, marketers could risk deviating from idealized images when targeting this particular audience. While it is best to avoid highly stereotyped representations of youth or aging, promoting a broader, less clichéd set of values seems to be the new game to play. Pirelli is a case in point. Its

iconic calendar – usually a synonym for sexiness – will come out next year (2016) with photos of strong women who boast personal achievements as their major capital. Aspirational and identification brand strategies could benefit from looking outside the physical appearance box.

In addition, the importance of mature women as a demographic group is significant not only because there are more of them, but also because they are an important consumer group. According to the latest census produced by IBGE (the government statistics agency), the Brazilian birth rate is declining and the overall population is ageing. The latest projections suggest that there will be forty million women in Brazil over the age of 40 by 2017. Consequently studies aimed to better understand this group's desires and behavioral choices are particularly important for marketers.

One limitation of this study was its highly homogenous subject sample. To mitigate this factor, in upcoming investigations probability sampling should be favored over snowball recruiting. Furthermore, future research could broaden this discussion by including consumers from different social classes, genders, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds.

Finally, the current debate implies that the deviation game has just begun.

APPENDIX A

The Self-Objectification Questionnaire (Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998)

The Self-Objectification Questionnaire

We are interested in how people think about their bodies. The questions below identify 10 different body attributes. We would like you to *rank order* these body attributes from that which has the *greatest impact* on your physical self-concept (rank this a "9"), to that which has the *least impact* on your physical self-concept (rank this a "0").

Note: It does not matter *how* you describe yourself in terms of each attribute. For example, fitness level can have a great impact on your physical self-concept regardless of whether you consider yourself to be physically fit, not physically fit, or any level in between.

Please first consider all attributes simultaneously, and record your rank ordering by writing the ranks in the rightmost column.

IMPORTANT: Do Not Assign The Same Rank To More Than One Attribute!

9 = greatest impact
8 = next greatest impact
:
1 = next to least impact
0 = least impact

When considering your *physical self-concept* . . .

1. . . .what rank do you assign to *physical coordination*? _____
2. . . .what rank do you assign to *health*? _____
3. . . .what rank do you assign to *weight*? _____
4. . . .what rank do you assign to *strength*? _____
5. . . .what rank do you assign to *sex appeal*? _____
6. . . .what rank do you assign to *physical attractiveness*? _____
7. . . .what rank do you assign to *energy level (e.g., stamina)*? _____
8. . . .what rank do you assign to *firm/sculpted muscles*? _____
9. . . .what rank do you assign to *physical fitness level*? _____
10. . . .what rank do you assign to *measurements (e.g., chest, waist, hips)*? _____

In administering the measure, the title is not included. Scores are obtained by separately summing the ranks for appearance-based items (3, 5, 6, 8 and 10) and competence-based items (1, 2, 4, 7 and 9), and then subtracting the sum of competence ranks from the sum of appearance ranks. Scores may range from -25 to 25, with higher scores indicating a greater emphasis on appearance, interpreted as higher trait self-objectification. Copyright 1998 by Barbara L. Fredrickson. Individuals who wish to reprint all or part of the Self-Objectification Questionnaire should contact Barbara L. Fredrickson.

APPENDIX B
Interview Script

Name:

Age:

Profession:

Date:

Let's talk about beauty.

1. How would you define beauty today?
2. Nowadays what is a beautiful woman?
3. Does ideal beauty exist? Is it a goal for you?
4. Do you think women in general are seeking an ideal standard of beauty?
5. If the above answer was positive, ask: Do you believe society plays a role in this "imposition"?
6. Do you really not feel the need to comply with this standard [of beauty]?
7. What does it mean to be a woman in Brazil?
8. Which women inspire you and why?
9. Is growing old different in Brazil than in other countries?

Now I will show you two different sets of images. I would like you to comment on them after seeing each set. Say anything that comes to your mind.

Show first group of images (ads portraying young models)

Register comments before showing the second set.

Show second group of images (ads portraying mature models)

Thank the participant and say goodbye.

APPENDIX C

Pretest Young Models



Pretest Mature Models



APPENDIX D

Selected Replicates



APPENDIX E
Maya Ads









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