Bachelor thesis

Communication Science



What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions and associations in their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?

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Abstract

It is the 21st-century, and the internet allows people to form opinions about brands without ever visiting a store or speaking to an employee. Research shows that color and typeface can have the effect of improving perception as well as heightening emotions. This study aims to investigate whether or not companies can use certain colors and typefaces to enhance perceived positive emotions in the viewer. Additionally, this research will analyze if color and typeface had an influence on the overall positive brand perception and company appeal. Building on the prior research that has been conducted on color and typeface, the research question of this study is: "What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions and associations in their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?" An experiment was executed by showing 175 participants one of the 3x2 webpage designs of a fictional company in an unknown industry. Warm colors did have a significant effect on perceived trust, contradicting the hypothesis expecting cool colors to have a greater effect on perceived trust (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Sedon, 2009; Lee, Denizci Guillet, & Law, 2018). Additionally, color had a marginally significant effect on perceived emotion. The unexpected or lack of results could potentially be influenced by the global pandemic, Covid-19, and the mood people were in when they participated in the experiment. Therefore it is advised that future research takes place post Covid-19 or the effect of Covid-19 on people emotionally is taken into account.

Keywords: color, typography, typefaces, positive emotions, warm colors, cool colors

Table of content

				<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction				6
2. Theoretical background				7
	2.1. Logo			8
	2.2. Brand perception			8
	2.3. Perceived trust			9
	2.4. Color			10
	2.5. Typeface			12
	2.6. Company appeal			14
3. Method				15
	3.1. Webpage design			16
	3.2. Measures			17
	3.3 Procedures			19
	3.4. Participants			19
	3.5. Analyses			20
4. Results				20
	4.1. Summary hypotheses			23
5. Discussion and conclusion				23
	5.1. Main findings			23
	5.2. Discussion			24
		5.2.1. Control variables		26
			5.2.1.1. Color	
			5.2.1.2. Typography	26
			5.2.1.3. Company appeal	27

		5.2.2. Theoretical implications	27
		5.2.3. Practical implications	28
		5.2.4. Limitations	28
	5.3. Conclusion		28
References			29
Appendix A	Experiment		33
Appendix B	Example search log		47

1. Introduction

Branding is all around us. Everywhere one looks, one sees companies trying to capture attention and sell their products. With many companies selling the same or similar products, it is important for them to stand out. With all of the existing information about color psychology and typography psychology, it is relatively easy for companies to select the right colors and typefaces to help them to convey the optimal brand perceptions to their target audience. Especially now that research has been conducted on what certain colors and typefaces convey.

Pepsi changed its color from red to blue in order to more effectively distinguish itself from Coca Cola (Labrecque & Milne, 2012). In addition to Pepsi and Coca Cola, other companies have underliably created great brand perceptions, such as Nike, which seems to have mastered the art of creating a powerful image, story, and feeling behind the brand. Nearly all of Nike's branding consists heavily of the color black, an elegant and sophisticated color. They use the typeface Trade Gothic, which is a thick sans serif font (Fernandez, 2016), giving the brand a dominant, authentic, and strong performance feel. Together with the logo and slogan, Nike has achieved the innovative and winning image that they want for the brand ("How Nike re-defined the power of brand image," 2018; "A guide to picking the right brand colors," 2019). Another brand with a similar level of fame is McDonald's, most known for its red and yellow color scheme. The yellow was chosen to help consumers perceive a welcome and friendly atmosphere. While the red conveys a sense of urgency, encouraging consumers to not linger for too long, in contrast to more traditional restaurants. In Europe as of 2009, McDonald's began to replace the red with green. This in order to give a more organic and sustainable ambiance. They talk about saving the environment and now their brand designs align with what they are saying ("A guide to picking the right brand colors," 2019)("McDonald's rolling out green logo in Europe," 2019).

This research will contribute to a better understanding of how color and typeface can influence the emotions people feel about a brand, besides what the brand conveys inside of the industry or the extent to which the public knows what the company does. Over the last few decades, a lot has changed when it comes to how brands market themselves. Nowadays, opinions about brands are formed in large part online. The end result of this research will not be a step-by-step template on how to perfectly visualize a brand. The goal is solely to investigate if color and typeface could potentially help a brand evoke positive feelings and create positive associations within their consumers and potential employees.

Although this bachelor's thesis will not answer the specific questions on how to evoke a specific emotion within people or create a specific association, this thesis will be a stepping stone when trying to answer that question. The specific question that this thesis will answer is "What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions and associations in their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?" To answer this research question, an experiment will be performed and hypotheses about the results will be proposed beforehand. The experiment consists of the participants being shown one of the 3x2 designs (warm colors/ cool colors/ black and white + a round serif typeface / a round sans serif typeface) and voicing their agreement or disagreement on a 7-point likert scale.

What differentiates positive emotions from negative emotions, is the fact that positive emotions expand the range in terms of the following actions (Fredrickson, 2001): People who are feeling positive emotions show higher levels of creativity, flexibility, engagement, efficiency, and are more willing to receive new information (Lewis, Haviland-Jones, & Barrett, 2010).

In order to arrive at the proposed colors and typefaces, the literature on brand perceptions and identity, color psychology, and typefaces will be used in this research. This knowledge will be used to determine which colors and typefaces will be used in the fictional webpage design of the experiment. After the webpages for the brand have been designed, participants will be asked to take part in the experiment by answering questions about the impressions the webpage gives them and what it makes them feel emotionally. A significant amount of research has already been conducted on what color and typefaces do for taste perception. Krishna and Elder (2010) call this type of research sensory marketing, defining it as "marketing that engages consumers' senses and affects their behavior" (p. 2). It discusses how marketers, for example, use sound, touch, or the look of products to influence a consumer's emotions, perceptions, and preferences, to name but a few factors (Krishna & Elder, 2010). This bachelor's thesis aims to research the topic of how visuals can further influence a person's attitude toward a brand. In the communication science field, this could be interesting because it is important to know how communication professionals can help companies convey their positive messages both visually and verbally.

In the next chapter important components within this research will be introduced and expanded on. After all the necessary information that has been collected, the method will be explained. The method section includes the design of the webpage and how the experiment was conducted. Based on the outcome of the experiment results will be presented. At last, this bachelor's thesis will be closed off by a discussion and conclusion.

2. Theoretical background

A brand can identify itself by logo, brand perception, perceived trust, color, typeface, and/or company appeal. These six topics are elaborated on in this theoretical background. Since this topic is so specific, there was only limited and ambiguous research literature available. Nonetheless, there was sufficient literature on color and typeface to answer the research question In order to answer the research question "What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions and associations in their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?". First, there will be an exploration of the influence of a logo on brand perception and what type of logo would be best to use in this research. Second, the importance of brand perception will be elaborated on in terms of the benefits a positive brand perception gives a company. Third, perceived trust and its benefits will be explained. Fourth, the perceived meaning of different colors will be explained, as well as how they developed that meaning. Fifth, the perceptions conveyed by the different categories of typeface will be discussed. Finally, there will be an explanation of its webpage has an influence on a company's appeal.

2.1 Logo. A brand logo is viewed by many as an important factor that helps a company communicate. The building blocks (a.o., name, color, typeface, and shape) help consumers identify a company and differentiate it from others. Because the logo communicates a message with the outside world, consumers who agree with or are intrigued by that message will be more likely to buy from that brand and may even become loyal consumers (Kaur & Kaur, 2018).

Circles often represent the "softer" concepts such as positivity, community, or friendship, while rings imply marriage, endurance, or stability. Curves tend to be associated with femininity or nature. Squares project stability, endurance, and balance. Researchers found that most of the time, straight lines imply professionalism, efficiency, and strength.

Finally, triangles frequently make an appearance at companies that have to do with science, law, or religion. Because triangles are also often associated with power, companies that sell stereotypically masculine products often use the shape(Christie, 2017). Mitsubishi, CAT, and Doritos are examples of this.

Besides a preference with regard to the shape of a logo of the brand, people prefer logos that are in motion as this promotes greater engagement with the brand, because people often link an emotion with a shape based on the perceived motion (Rimé, Boulanger, Laubin, Richir, & Stroobants, 1985). This, in turn, increases positive brand perception. Additionally, since the brand design used in this research will be for a new company, the movement direction of the logo is important. Forward movements are usually used for new companies, while backward movements for traditional companies tend to increase positive brand attitudes in consumers. However, it should be mentioned that these findings were made with black and white logos (Cian, Krishna, & Elder, 2014). Additionally, if a logo portrays an upward motion it increases the positive emotions people feel towards that logo (Shen, Xu, Wan, Mu, & Spence, 2015)

Some companies use wordmark logos instead of symbols. A wordmark logo is one in which the logo solely consists of the name of the brand in letters. In general, people feel a stronger connection with lowercase wordmarks; such brands convey a more friendly impression than uppercase wordmarks. With uppercase wordmarks, people perceive the brand as very authoritative. Just like with larger and heavier typefaces, uppercase is often interpreted as conveying more strength in comparison to a lowercase wordmark (Xu, Chen, & Liu, 2017).

When Badajoz and Freixa researched whether the absence of a logo had negative consequences for brand perception, they were unable to conclude that the absence of a logo had an impact on brand perception. However, it is clear that when a brand uses a non-symbolic logo, it has more of a negative effect than when no logo is used at all. Furthermore, brands with a symbolic logo have a higher brand preference than brands with a non-symbolic logo or brands that do not have a logo at all (Badajoz & Freixa, 2018).

Adhering to previous research, the webpage design in the experiment will include a logo. Due to the need to incorporate color in this logo, the logo will include color. The shape of the logo will remain constant.

2.2 Brand perception. The general public and consumers base their reactions on the design elements and what they believe to know about a brand, even if what they know is not actually based on any facts (Guzmán, Abimbola, Koll, & von Wallpach, 2009). The main design

elements of a branding style are color, typeface, and shape. These are the building blocks that convey the message that people connect with (Dang, 2018) and are what distinguish one brand from another (Tokutake, Kajiyama, & Ouchi, 2019). Besides the circumstances under which a product is purchased, consumers tend to base their decisions about which product brands to purchase on emotional effects (Foroudi, Jin, Gupta, Foroudi, & Kitchen, 2018). Research has shown that a positive brand perception increases the purchase intention of consumers (Seifert, 2018).

Of course, brand perception does not only come from the kind of brand style a company uses. A company might spend a portion of its profits on charity or it might have a loyalty program in which customers are rewarded for returning to the store, all of which potentially can help a consumer develop a positive attitude towards the brand (Gorlier & Michel, 2020). Another way in which companies positively increase their brand perception is by actively involving their community, including their consumers as well as their employees. For example, Starbucks has an online community where everyone can post new ideas and give feedback, thereby giving its community a place where voices can be heard about the brand (Seifert, 2018). This works because a more engaged community is a community with a positive brand perception, which will result in a community that is more likely to regularly make purchases (Gorlier & Michel, 2020).

However, consumers not only connect with a brand based on the emotions that the benefits evoke within them, there is a relational element and an emotional element that are ways in which the company can guide the brand perception that the consumers have. This means that not only the quality of the company's service or product matters, but also what their perceived intentions are and the warmth that they are able to communicate (Kaspar, Wehlitz, von Knobelsdorff, Wulf, & von Saldern, 2015). Research conducted by Kervyn, Chan, Malone, Korpusik & Ybarra (2014) showed that when a group of people has a negative perception when it comes to the warmth of a company, it is far more damaging than when a group of people has a negative perception about the capabilities of a company. Meaning that it is far more likely for a company to be negatively impacted when there is bad word of mouth associated with the perceived warmth of the company than when there is negative word of mouth spread about its capabilities (Kervyn et al., 2014).

In this research a company will be invented for the webpage design in the online experiment. Therefore no established brand perception will play a role in this research.

2.3 Perceived trust. Trust can be defined as one party's willingness to voluntarily be vulnerable to the actions of the other party while under the expectation that they are without the ability to monitor or consistently check up on the other party. The three factors that play a big role in the development of trust are perceived capability, empathy, and sincerity (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Having a website that is able to earn trust from its first-time visitors is important since trust is an important criterion in the way people respond to a website, such as for a job application. A pleasant visual webpage design, together with easy to use navigation, are important when it comes to receiving trust from website visitors (Pengnate & Sarathy, 2017). Additionally, trust can also save a company money. This can be done by reducing the amount of money spent on marketing, having consumers promote the company by speaking positively

about it to their network, and being able to compete with the competition (Kabadayi & Alan, 2012). Since a website is unable to speak to someone face-to-face, it has to meet other criteria in order to be perceived as trustworthy. In order to promote trust, websites need to have very little ambiguity if any. Another way in which a company website can instill trust is by painting an image of the company that shows its personality. This can be done with colors and typeface among other design elements (Cyr, 2013).

2.4 Color. When designing a brand style, it is important to remember the target group. Since this group is who needs to react a certain way to the design, the design needs to be congruent with how they would express what the company is trying to express (Dang, 2018). Color can evoke an emotional reaction and is able to give the impression of the personality that a company might want to use to attract certain potential employees or to appear a certain way (Dang, 2018). Studies have been conducted on how color influences decision making. A study conducted by Singh (2006) demonstrated that roughly 62% to 90% of our snap judgments are made because of color. Therefore, not only can color differentiate you from your competition, it can also play a role in how your target audience will react to your brand and what they will think of your brand (Dang, 2018; Spence & Velasco, 2018).

Simply put, colors can be divided into two groups: warm colors and cool colors. Warm, which have a short wavelength (Hulshof, 2013), are used in design to reflect emotions such as passion, energy, happiness, and enthusiasm (Lee, Denizci Guillet, & Law, 2018), whereas cool colors, which have a long wavelength (Hulshof, 2013), are more used for emotions like calm, relaxing,



Image 1: Wavelengths of colors (Axon Optics, 2015).

professionalism, and trust (Dang, 2018). However, they are also used when expressing regression (Lee et al., 2018). The color that one sees depends on three factors: hue, brightness, and saturation (Hulshof, 2013). The saturation is responsible for exaggeration of the color. High saturation means that the color is in its most exaggerated form: basically the color that all of us most associate with the name of that color. Low saturation makes a color rather dull and gives it a grayish tone. The brightness is what creates the perceived lightness or darkness of the color. The higher the level of brightness, the more light the color reflects. Therefore, the higher the brightness, the lighter the color is and the lower the brightness, the darker the color is. Colors are perceived as more delightful and are more associated with positive emotions if both brightness and saturation are on the higher side of the spectrum (Hulshof, 2013). In order to clearly and exclusively research which color is the best to use for conveying positive emotions, only the hue of the colors will change. The saturation and value of the colors will be held constant.

Previous studies have been conducted to determine the perceived meaning of different colors, and the emotional effects of colors. In the following section, the effects of different colors are summarized.

The meaning of red really depends on the context. Red may stand for death, anger, cardiac health, extremes, restraint, anxiety, and in nature it mostly means **do not eat**. On the positive side, light red can be used to illustrate strength, warmth or heat, energy, passion,

desire, love, and excitement (Sedon, 2009; Elliot & Maier, 2014). For these reasons, red is often chosen as a primary color for sports teams (Rider, 2010).

Orange is associated with dreadfulness and upsetting emotions. However, it does promote socialization (Lee et al., 2018). Few companies use orange as a primary color in their branding, as to do so often creates the perception that the quality and the price of the product is cheap. However, in the Netherlands orange is used by Dutch companies to instantly convey that they are a Dutch company (Spence & Velasco, 2018).

Yellow, for most people, has the meaning of caution (e.g., as seen with road signs and traffic lights). Further negative effects that yellow can convey are irrationality, fear, depression, and anxiety. On the more positive side, yellow conveys optimism, confidence, creativity, and happiness. Since yellow has a very strong emotional effect, it is the strongest color in terms of psychological impact (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Sedon, 2009; Lee at al, 2018).

The color green also has many positive connections with nature (e.g, green leaves and plants). Additionally, green has connections to success, calmness, harmony, refreshment, balance, awareness, and growth. On the more negative side, green conveys fatigue, boredom, jealousy, and stagnation (Elliot & Maier, 2014; Sedon, 2009; Lee et al., 2018).

The color blue has not been researched as extensively as red has, but the research that has been done on the color has demonstrated that blue has many positive links to nature (e.g., blue sky, blue water or blue eyes). In addition to positive connotations such as openness and peace. It also conveys intelligence, communication, trust, efficiency, and reliability. However, on the negative side blue also suggests coldness, detachment, lack of emotion, and unfriendliness. The color blue has more of a mental impact on humans, whereas red has more of a physical impact (Sedon, 2009; Elliot & Maier, 2014; Lee et al., 2018).

Purple is an interesting color because of its history. It used to solely be a royal color and is therefore heavily associated with luxury, authenticity, truth, quality, and sophistication, as well as spirituality, vision, time, and space. On the negative side, purple resembles introversion and suppression. Purple has an easing effect on the mind which helps it to convey elegance and artistic creativity (Sedon, 2009; Lee et al., 2018).

Pink stands for nurture, warmth, love, sexuality, sweetness, romantic gentleness, and intimacy. On the negative side, pink stands for inhibition, emasculation, emotional claustrophobia, and physical weakness. Because it is a shade of red, pink also has a physical effect. But it is much more sweet, gentle, and connected to loving intimacy (Sedon, 2009).

Gray is mostly known for neutrality. It can also convey a lack of confidence and energy (Sedon, 2009). Additionally, Bottemley and Doyle (2006) state that American students perceive the color gray as dependable and passive, yet high quality.

Black and white both really depend on the situation. They both have connections with negative and positive perceptions (Elliot & Maier, 2014). In some situations, black stands for brand sophistication (Wang, Yu, & Li, 2019), trustworthiness (Amsteus, Al-Shaaban, Wallin, & Sjöqvist, 2015), power and high quality (Bottomley & Doyle, 2006). However, these colors must be used appropriately especially considering that black is associated with death, rebellion, evil (Wegman & Said, 2011), sadness, fear, and anger (Chang & Lin, 2010) by the general public.

White is associated with brand sincerity, purity, cleanliness, and lightness (Wegman & Said, 2011; Wang et al., 2019). White is also associated with emptiness (Wegman & Said, 2011), normality, and coldness (Ng & Chan, 2018).

The reason it is so important to look at the influence of color on people's perceptions is because most decisions are made within eight milliseconds based on how things look and what that look conveys. People can make the decision to buy a "health" product based on color. On average, people believe that products with more saturated and vibrant colors are less healthy (van Rompay, Deterink, & Fenko, 2016).

A distinction that needs to be made between the positive emotions found in warm colors and the positive emotions found in cool colors. The positive emotions in warm colors are linked to the person feeling that emotion is in a state of arousal. In this case, it means that the heart rate increases and that the brain gives off signals to make more hormones. When it comes to excitement, for example, it affects the decision-making process. Assuming that a company wants people to buy their product or to come apply to a job application, this could potentially work in their benefit (Patel, 2017; Eduardo, Terrance Odean, & Shengle Lin, 2016).

The information in this section leads to the following hypotheses:

H1: Warm colors result in more positive emotions than cool colors or black and white do.

H2: Cool colors result in a higher score of perceived trust than warm colors or black and white do.

2.5 Typeface. There is more to typography than just typeface. Because of its history typography is a complex term to define. For this thesis, typography will be thought of as the practice of designing typography in order to convey a message. In addition, typeface is defined as a set of related fonts. To further explain with examples; Arial, Garamond, and Times New Roman are typefaces, whereas fonts are, for example, italic, bold, and italic-bold (Baines & Haslam, 2005). An increasing number of companies are beginning to understand how much of an important factor typeface can be in terms of how valuable consumers see the brand (Wang et al., 2019). When companies use a typeface that is more old-fashioned, it often leads consumers to assume that the company or its products have been around for a long time (Childers & Jass, 2020). When they use a thin serif typeface or a script typeface, the company is seen as more luxurious (Childers & Jass, 2020). Because typeface has such an important role in conveying the desired message and because it can in some cases be such a distinctive typeface that people are able to recognize the brand simply by seeing the typeface, some companies use a typeface specifically designed for their brand (Wang et al., 2019). For instance, Disney had a typeface specifically designed called Waltograph. As humans, we try to find meaning in the things that we see around us, even if such meaning is not there or is extremely hidden. An example of this is how it is possible to imagine seeing certain images in clouds. Serif typefaces are often perceived as more traditional and almost demand respect. They are very recognizable for the fact that the ends of the letters are decorated with a small

line or a "foot serif (Kaspar et al., 2015)". Sans serif typefaces seem to be interpreted as more modern and friendly. Just as the word "sans" already implies, a sans serif is designed without that small line or "foot serif" at the end of the letter (Kaspar et al., 2015). The script typefaces look very human, like beautiful handwriting. Script is often associated with wedding-type scenes, something feminine or handmade, whereas modern typefaces look more futuristic (Peate, 2018). Slab serifs typefaces in comparison to serif and sans serif typefaces often lack several widths of stroke within the letter (Možina, Zidar, & Horvat, 2012). They convey a confident attitude, sometimes even as though those who use them are a bit full of themselves. Consequently, slab serifs are usually sparingly used, such as just in a heading (Možina et al., 2012). Since this research specifically looks for a typeface that a company could use as part of its entire brand rather than just for a logo or one-time advertisement, serif, and sans serif typefaces will be compared in this research. The comparison between a serif and a sans serif typeface is possible since studies have shown that there is no significant difference between the readability of the two (Amare & Manning, 2012).

Haenschen and Tamul (2019) found that sans serifs are more often used by liberal political parties since the general public perceives sans serifs typefaces as more liberal than serif typefaces. In general serif typefaces feel focused, organized, and more soothing than sans serif typefaces do (Amare & Manning, 2012). This makes sense, as serif typefaces are seen as more traditional and are therefore more familiar.

In addition to categorizing typefaces by their serif, typefaces can also be categorized by their curvature. Low curvature typefaces are sharp and angular, high curvature typefaces are round and smooth. High curvature typefaces are associated by many with tolerance, sweetness, and delight. Those sensations are associated with satisfaction and hedonic experiences. Therefore, if a company or product wants to convey hedonic associations or emotions it may be useful to use a round typeface as those connections are already in the mind of the general public (Wang et al., 2019). Low curvature typefaces are often perceived as more masculine. Additionally, they do not have the same hedonic associations as high curvature typefaces do, so they do not create the same type of automatic positive associations merely by being visible to the general public (Wang et al., 2019). Research has already proven that typeface has a big impact on taste perception. Rounded typefaces make products taste sweeter, whereas more angular typefaces make them taste more sour and bitter than they otherwise would (Velasco, Salgado-Montejo, Marmolejo-Ramos, & Spence, 2014; Wang et al., 2019). In this research, the assumption is that this could translate into rounded typefaces being more inviting and creating feelings of acceptance in comparison to angular typefaces, which might be perceived as more distant. Rounded typefaces are more likely to be connected with emotions such as happiness, whereas angular typefaces are more connected with emotions like anger (Amare & Manning, 2012). Therefore, there is a connection in typography between sweetness and happiness and between bitterness and anger.

However, caution is important when choosing a typeface purely on the perceived association of (sans) serif, and curvature of the typeface. Rather bold typefaces are often linked with car brands, heavy building materials, or other stereotypically masculine products. Italic typefaces, on the other hand, tend to be linked to stereotypically feminine products, such as

jewelry and perfume (Wang et al, 2019). Therefore, in this research, there will not be any use of italic, bold, or underlined fonts in typography.

This research will use one round sans serif typeface and one round serif typeface because several sources in the literary research have suggested that angular typefaces might invoke negative associations or negative sensations (e.g., a bitter taste when it comes to taste perception). The typefaces chosen for this research are Corporate E Pro as a serif typeface and Neue Haas Unica W1G as a sans serif typeface. These typefaces were chosen because they are not popular or well-known typefaces that people may have already formed an opinion about. Additionally, these two typefaces had enough possible fonts for the webpage designs to have similar-looking text in terms of typeface weight.

The information in this section leads to the following hypotheses:

H3: The round sans serif typeface results in more positive emotions than the round serif typeface does.

H4: The round sans serif typeface results in a higher score of brand perception than the round serif typeface does.

H5: The round serif typeface results in a higher score of perceived trust than the round sans serif typeface does.

H6: Colors and typeface interact with each other: The webpage with warm colors using a rounded sans serif typeface is the one most associated with positive emotions.

2.6 Company appeal. Prior to the internet, people searching for jobs would, for example, send out their resumes to several companies, answer job advertisements, or inquire within their social networks about job openings (Kuhn & Skuterud, 2000). Although the methods are still used today, with the rise and development of the internet people now prefer using it to look for a job (Mansouri, Zahedi, Campos, & Farhoodi, 2018). According to Shahiri and Osman (2015), people who have internet access are 47% more likely to look online for a job. Since most people in modern society have internet access, it is important to have a website that looks appealing to people and perhaps makes them want to apply for a position at the company the website belongs to. As an organization it is important to find the ideal employees, because employing excellent workers could give an advantage over competitors (Roper et al., 2013). In online job searches people use a large number of search queries to find all relevant job applications (Mansouri et al., 2018) with 29% of job hunters looking at the actual webpage of an organization. The main method (used 51% of the time) in job hunting is to go through employment websites, such as Indeed.com. However, the majority of the pages that the online job hunters clicked on, in this case, belonged to companies posting vacancies on a regular basis and who have pages dedicated to their open vacancies. Therefore, when online job

hunters click on the webpage of the company they are at least familiar with the company and would like to know more details about it, about employment conditions, perhaps about other employees, and so forth (Mansouri et al., 2018).

Pelet and Papadopoulou (2012) found that color combination does not have a significant effect on consumer consumption. Their research focused on the hue of a color rather than dividing them into categories of warm and cool, although both warm and cool colors were used in the study. Coursaris, Swierenga, and Watrall (2008) found that in daily life people prefer websites with cool colors(blue-light blue) in comparison to warm (red-orange) colors. However, that preference is a result of the fact that those color combinations come across as clean, not because of negative emotions. It would be interesting to see if the same results hold true when it comes to people wanting to work for a company.

Typefaces are like voice tones, in that each one can create a different ambiance. To give people the desired image of the company a typeface congruent with what the company wants to portray must be used; this also helps attract people congruent with the company. In this context, typeface can be compared to the clothes someone wears to an interview. People will form an opinion, even if it is subconscious, based on the decisions made. Typeface and clothing are not supposed to be artistic choices, they should be something that the client, potential employee, or boss will identify and feel comfortable with (Hyndman, 2016).

The information in this section leads to the following hypothesis:

H7: Colors and typeface interact with each other: the webpage designed with warm colors and a round sans serif typeface is the webpage that scores the highest on the "company appeal" variable.

3. Method

The emotional perception of the participant is what this research wants to determine. Toward this end, an experiment, observation, or qualitative interview were each considered. It was decided that in order to answer the research question, an experiment which consisted of an online experiment with a 3x2 design would be most effective. To arrive at a meaningful conclusion this research required a quantity of participants that would not be able to be assembled with another medium, at least not while collecting the relevant data as well (hence the reason observing would not work). This experiment consisted of a 3x2 design, because of the independent variables color (warm colors, cool colors, and black and white) and typeface (a round serif typeface and a round sans serif typeface). Everytime a participants in the experiment they were shown one of the designs (see image 4). All participants in the experiment were asked the same questions before and after seeing one of the webpage designs. The participants were found through the snowball effect (meaning that the experiment was sent out to my contacts and then to each of their contacts, and so forth). The study was approved by the BMS Ethics committee (#200727).

3.1 Webpage design. For the dynamic logo, use was made of the website freepik.com, which provided the option of changing the colors of the logo and changing or removing the text later in Adobe Illustrator. This logo was chosen because it is pointing upwards and could be perceived as in motion and is therefore congruent with the positive emotions that designs were expected to evoke. After the appropriate logo was found, it was adjusted through the use of warm colors, cool colors, or black and white (see image 2).



Image 2: logos for the webpage designs (kreativkolors, 2017).

The rest of the webpage design was based on this (*image 3*) design from arj-web-design.com. This webpage design base was selected because it had the required elements without unnecessary layout elements that could influence the data without being a tested variable. This design also allowed for the possibility of colors and typeface being repeated at least twice.

An "About Us" page was the chosen webpage experiment image because with a home or services page the industry in which the company operates in could influence the perception of the participant in terms of what they perceive as the appropriate colors and/or typeface used. The



Image 3: Inspiration webpage design (ARJ webdesign, n.d.)

contact page was also not a good option, as people might develop an opinion as to which area and/or country the company was located in. When writing the "About us" page inspiration was taken from three advertising agencies in Australia. The test was adjusted so that there were no references made to either the advertising industry or to Australia. The reason Australian companies were chosen for inspiration is that it made it unlikely that participants would recognize certain values and be influenced by their associations with another company. The reason Lorem Ipsum was not used was that when images are presented without text they have a much stronger influence on the opinion of people than in a normal image with text situation (Powell, Boomgaarden, De Swert, & de Vreese, 2015). In consideration of the fact that this research wants to create testing conditions to those of a regular webpage, Lorum Ipsum was not a suitable choice.



Image 4: Webpage designs. Picture: Deluvio, n.d.

In neither the text nor the logo was there any indication of an industry. Considering that Bottomley and Doyle (2006), among other researchers, mentioned that as long as a color is congruent with the product or industry, the color is perceived as appropriate.

3.2 Measures. For the composition of the experiment, the emotions that were listed in the section on color psychology and typography psychology were used. After the selection of a few terms that could help test the hypotheses, sections of validated surveys that had been used in other research were incorporated.

For each dependent variable (emotions, brand perception, perceived trust, and company appeal) parts of a survey in three different master theses were found (Boerrigter, 2017; Roos, 2020; Uebbing, 2015). Naturally, since their research did not line up perfectly with this research the sections did not completely match the survey questions of those master theses. Sometimes the order of the words in which a statement was written were altered slightly to make it more applicable (see table 1 and the appendix). Because we ask people about their emotions and are specifically looking at what promotes positive emotions in them, not providing a neutral option would result in making the data results more negative or more positive than that they actually are. The reason for a 7-point Likert scale instead of a 5-point Likert scale is that with a 7-point Likert scale the data will be able to detect more nuances if the data is examined in greater detail. According to Dawes (2008), a 5-point Likert scale and a 7-point Likert scale give approximately the same means, so the actual data will not differ when it comes to the emotions

that people feel or the brand perceptions that people have when they answer questions about the design.

There were three sections that measured the four dependent variables. These sections were, due to grammar, not separated independent variables. Except the fourth section, which only consisted of questions that measured the dependent variable company appeal. The first section examined how the webpage made them feel on a 7-point Likert scale (for example "This company's design makes me feel" 1 = unexcited to 7 = excited). The second section examined how they perceived the webpage on a 7-point Likert scale (for example "In my opinion, this webpage design comes across as" 1 = closed off to 7 = open). The third section explored what their perception was of the company on a 7-point Likert scale (for example "I think this company is" 1 = inconsistent to 7 = consistent). The fourth section examined how they thought it would be to be an employee at that company on a 7-point Likert scale (for example "If this company would invite me to a job interview, I would go" 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

Perceived emotion consists of eight questions and has a Cronbach's alpha of .84. Brand perception consists of five questions and has a Cronbach's alpha of .73. Perceived trust originally consisted of six questions, but one question was eliminated due to the possibility of a higher Cronbach's alpha. After the elimination, Cronbach's alpha went from a .79 to a .82. Company appeal consisted of eight questions and has a Cronbach's alpha of .82.

Table 1

Perceived emotion	Brand perception	Perceived trust	Company appeal
Sad - Happy*	Dull - Interesting**	Closed off - Open **	If this company would invite me to a job interview, I would go
Unexcited - Excited*	Traditional - Modern**	Unprofessional - Professional**	I would not recommend this company to a friend who is looking for a job
Unenthusiastic - Enthusiastic*	No growth - Growth**	Irresponsible - Responsible***	This looks like a reputable company to work for
Indifferent - Passionate*	Static - Innovative***	Inconsistent - Consistent***	This looks like a company that probably has a reputation as being an terrible employer
Irritated - Content*	No diversity - Diversity***	Insincere - Sincere***	I would find this company a prestigious place to work
Cold - Warm**		Untrustworthy - Trustworthy***	There would probably be many who would like to work at this company
Discordant - Harmonious***			If I was qualified I would accept a job offer from this company
			Employees would probably not be proud to say they work at this company

How the dependent variables were measured

Note. * = This company makes me feel. ** = In my opinion this webpage design comes across as. *** = I think this company is. With company appeal the participant would strongly agree or disagree with the statement. The one that is crossed out, was deleted in order to obtain a higher Cronbach's Alpha.

3.3 Procedures. The experiment in this research consisted of five main sections. First, there was a section in which demographic information was requested. The participants needed to provide information regarding gender, age and the highest educational level they were participating in or had completed, which consisted of ordinal and nominal answers (for example "What level of education are you currently doing or what is the highest level of education that you have completed?"). After the demographic section of the experiment, the participants were randomly shown one of the webpage designs. This was followed by several sections that included questions that had to be answered based on the webpage they saw. After the four sections that measured the dependent variables, participants were not allowed to go look at the webpage again. Two sections remained in the experiment. The first was a manipulation check on color and typeface to ensure that the participant had not mindlessly filled in the questions but had kept the webpage in mind (for example "Which of the two typefaces was a part of the webpage design that you saw"). The second section asked the participants if they had any knowledge about color or typography psychology on a 5-point Likert scale (for example "Are you familiar with color psychology" 1 = not familiar at all to 5 = extremely familiar), since that could have influenced their perception of the webpage

3.4 Participants. This research includes 175 participants between the ages of 18 and 77 years old who voluntarily took part in the research. The average age of the participants was 28.8 years (SD = 12.0 years, min = 18 years, max = 77 years). Of the 175 participants, 95 were female (54.3%) and 79 were male (45.1%), while 1 participant did not want to disclose that information and noted "no answer" when asked about gender.

Table 2

	Webp	age 1	Webp	bage 2	Webp	age 3	Webp	age 4	Webp	age 5	Webp	age 6
	Cool -	+ serif	Warm	+ serif	Black & + s	& white erif	Cool -	⊦ sans erif	Warm se	+ sans erif	Black & + san	& white s serif
Average age	29	.8	2	7.1	27	.9	27	.9	29	9.6	30).5
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender												
Female	13	48	19	66	20	69	13	42	14	48	16	53
Male	14	52	9	31	9	31	18	58	15	52	14	47
No answer			1	3								
Education												
University	19	70	15	52	21	72	22	71	20	69	21	70
Other than university	8	30	14	48	8	28	9	29	9	31	9	30
Familiar with color psychology												
Not familiar & a little familiar	19	70	19	66	20	69	19	61	19	66	20	67
Familiar & extremely familiar	8	30	10	35	9	31	12	39	10	35	9	30
Missing value											1	3
Familiar with typography psychology												
Not familiar & a little familiar	26	96	24	83	21	72	27	87	25	86	24	80
Familiar & extremely familiar	1	4	5	17	8	28	4	13	4	14	5	17
Missing value											1	3

Demographic data of the participants

Note. N = 175. Due to rounding up of the percentages some cumulate to above 100%.

3.5. Analyses. After removing all of the incomplete and unusable data, descriptive analyses have been executed as well as the analyses involved with testing the hypotheses. For the descriptive analyses the mean, standard deviations, minimum, and maximum were calculated. The validation of the online experiment has been tested. To test the hypotheses that were made based on the literature univariate analyses, including the post hoc test Tukey, were performed. An analysis was conducted to determine if any of the dependent variables had a correlation with the control variables. Subsequently, the association between the respective independent and the respective dependent variables were tested with the control variables that appeared to be separately significantly correlated with the independent variables. These analyses have been performed with SPSS using version 26 and were considered significant if they had p < .05 or lower.

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the questionnaire are presented. In order to arrive at these results, SPSS version 26 was used to conduct the analyses.

Table 3

Means and standard deviations

			Perceived emotion		Brand perception		Perceived trust		Company appeal	
			Μ	SD	Μ	SD	М	SD	Μ	SD
Color	Warm	Serif	3,46	0,846	3,12	1,022	4,69	1,021	4,12	0,898
		Sans serif	3,49	0,883	3,53	1,095	4,53	0,973	4,20	0,868
	Cool	Serif	3,09	0,919	3,46	0,901	4,08	1,035	3,67	0,982
		Sans serif	3,14	0,920	3,59	1,285	4,24	1,248	4,08	1,141
	Black and white	Serif	3,19	0,839	3,62	1,079	4,59	0,948	4,25	0,618
		Sans serif	3,16	1,043	3,57	1,221	4,58	0,969	3,97	0,914
Typeface	Serif		3,24	0,873	3,41	1,012	4,44	1,027	4,01	0,875
	Sans serif		3,27	0,954	3,56	1,187	4,46	1,064	4,08	0,971
Color	Warm		3,47	0,837	3,33	1,069	4,61	0,991	4,16	0,876
	Cool		3,12	0,912	3,52	1,088	4,16	1,132	3,86	1,069
	Black and white		3,17	0,937	3,59	1,142	4,58	0,950	4,11	0,784

A univariate analysis was completed for the variable perceived emotion. The main effect of color was that the means in the groups do differ marginally significant; F(5,169) = 1.06, p = .08, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. These values represent both the first and the third hypothesis (warm colors being most associated with the high positive side of the spectrum, while black and white are most associated with the low negative side of the spectrum). Although these results were only marginally significant, warm colors did have the highest mean for perceived emotion, 3.47. Cool colors had a mean of 3.12 and black and white had a mean of 3.17. The main effect of typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.06, p = .90. The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.06, p = 0.97.

Another univariate analysis completed for the variable brand perception. The main effect of color was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 0,80, p = .41. The main effect of typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 0,80, p = .35. The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 0,80, p = .35. The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 0,80, p = 0.35.

Another univariate analysis completed for the variable perceived trust. The main effect of color was that the means in the groups do differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.56, p = .03, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. This significance was between warm and cool colors, p = .05. Warm colors had a mean of 4.61 and cool colors had a mean of 4.16. There was a marginal significance between cool colors and black and white, p = 0.07. Black and white had a mean of 4.58. The main effect of typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.56, p = 1.00 The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.56, p = 0.70.

Another univariate analysis completed for the variable company appeal. The main effect of color was that the means in the groups do differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.59, p = .21. The main effect of typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.59, p = 0.62. The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.59, p = 0.62. The interaction effect between color and typeface was that the means in the groups do not differ significantly; F(5,169) = 1.59, p = 0.62.

4.1. Summary hypotheses

Research hypotheses	Significance level	Result
Warm colors result in more positive emotions than cool colors or black and white do.	.08	Rejected
Cool colors result in a higher score of perceived trust than warm colors or black and white do.	.03	Rejected*
The round sans serif typeface results in more positive emotions than the round serif typeface does.	.90	Rejected
The round sans serif typeface results in a higher score of brand perception than the round serif typeface does.	.35	Rejected
The round serif typeface results in a higher score of perceived trust than the round sans serif typeface does.	1.0	Rejected
Colors and typeface interact with each other: The webpage with warm colors using a rounded sans serif typeface is the one most associated with positive emotions.	.97	Rejected
Colors and typeface interact with each other: the webpage designed with warm colors and a round sans serif typeface is the webpage that scores the highest on the "company appeal" variable.	.13	Rejected

Note. * = Although the effect that color has on perceived trust is significant, the significance is caused by the warm colors, not the cool colors. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected and not accepted.

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1. Main findings. The goal of this research was to answer the question "What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions and associations

in their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?", however most of the hypotheses could not be accepted based on the significance of the results.

According to this research, typeface does not have an effect on emotions, trust in a brand, brand perception nor in making a company seem more appealing. Which means that these factors do not have to be kept in mind when deciding on which typeface to use for a brand. At least not when it comes to the decision of a round serif or a round sans serif typeface. The interaction of color with typeface does not have an effect either on emotions or the appeal of a company.

Color, however, did seem to have a significant effect, when it came to the trust a viewer has in the brand. Contrary to the hypothesis that cool color would cause this effect, warm colors made people express trust in the brand. After warm colors, black and white was the color scheme that made people trust the brand with a marginal significance. This means that as an unknown brand, using warm colors, or black and white if warm colors do not go with the type of company, need to be seriously considered if the company wants to immediately create trust. Instead of instinctively looking for a shade of blue.

Color also did have a marginal significant effect on perceived emotion. This means that if an unknown company want to evoke positive feelings in their potential consumers, it is important to invest in marketing in order to show the general public what the brand is about.

5.2. Discussion

In this research, colors were revealed as not significant regarding the emotions that were included in the experiment. Bellizzi, Crowley, and Hasty (1983) established in their study that although people do indeed gravitate more towards warm colors, they generally find it more pleasant and positive to be in an environment with cool colors (Bellizzi and Hite, 1992). This could mean that although people do think of warm colors as happy colors, they do not want to find themselves in an environment in which many warm colors are present (e.g., a website). Another reason the expectations of this research did not line up with the results of the data might be the fact that the world is currently experiencing the consequences of Covid-19, which may involve warm colors becoming associated with warnings about the virus. Warm colors can enhance the current mood, whether that is happiness or anxiety. The current global pandemic may have led to the warm colors emphasizing the negative feelings that the participant was experiencing at the moment. Cool colors do not have the same effect of emphasizing or increasing the current mood, although that would not be relevant if the participant was already in a bad mood (Bellizzi et al., 1983; Belizzi & Hite, 1992). Another possibility is that people are too concerned with the virus for the positive effect that color and typeface can have to take place. The data did not significantly show that a black and white scheme results in more perceived negative emotions. Although many sources point towards black, gray, and white as being bland and neutral colors with a reasonable amount of negative associations, minimalism could play a part in the results of this research. With increasing complexity and pressure from work and

school life, some prefer to live more simplistic lives at home. The movement toward such simplicity tends to encourage color schemes of black, white, and earth tones and is particularly popular with millennials (Brager, 2020). White tends to have a relaxing effect and is the color with the least amount of tension (Bakhshi & Gilbert, 2015). In this context, black details used in a white environment give the room a sense of luxury (Brager, 2020). As minimalism has gained increasing popularity because of social media, the associations with the color black, gray, and white may have shifted. Millennials are considered to be those between the ages of 20 and 37 (Vance, 2018) or between the ages of 24 and 39 (Dimock, 2019), depending on the source. 81% of the participants in this research fall between the ages of 20-39. Although there are not enough participants in the other age groups to either confirm or deny this, the preference towards minimalism could have played a role. It could be possible that the combination of the color of warning signs, the fact that minimalism is becoming popular, and the global pandemic, that the perceived emotions became extremely blurry.

The cool colors did not have a significant effect on perceived trust, warm colors did. In the literature, multiple sources mentioned that cool colors stood for trust and professionalism. This outcome could be based on the fact that that purple is also associated with children (Bakhshi & Gilbert, 2015) and therefore not perceived as an indication of reliability, whereas the use of warm colors provoked perceived trust because of the lack of such an association. Children from the age of 6 begin to develop certain associations with colors, especially when it comes to color associations with temperature. Blue is associated with the cold, because of the sky and water. While Orange is associated with warmth, because of fire and the sun. The phenomenon of these associations is called a viewer's warmth-stereotype. Because the colors literally remind the viewers of warmth, which is a pleasant and positive feeling, it increases the trust levels in the viewer who has these associations (Choi, Chang, Lee, & Chang, 2016).

Typeface does not have a significant effect when it comes to generating positive emotions. No literature was found after an excessive literature search on round sans serif having the opposite effect, nor was literature found on sans serif and serif typefaces with the same amount of impact or lack thereof. Perhaps typeface does not have the ability to make the reader feel more positive emotions, but can only be congruent or incongruent with those emotions.

Round serif does not significantly affect brand perception, nor does the sans serif typeface. I could not find sources discussing typefaces that had the same results in their research. Therefore I do not know why the data did not reflect the literature. The layout of the webpage design, the text of the webpage design, or the questions may be the reason that brand perception did not obtain a significant result.

Round serif does not have a significant impact on perceived trust. This result is also not explainable with the available literature. Perhaps the roundness of the serif typeface counteracted the perceived trust effect that the literature says serif typefaces have, but I could not find literature to support that assertion. It is possible that this result is the consequence of the influence of other factors such as in the web design layout, the text of the webpage, or the questions.

Warm colors combined with a rounded sans serif did not significantly evoke more positive emotions. Positive emotions are associated with less preferred colors, which are warm

colors, (Palmer, Schloss, & Sammartino, 2013), this makes it difficult to determine which colors to study in research like this. In this research, the differences between the colors involved changes in hue. However, Agell, Ghaderi, and Ruiz (2015) researched the impact of brand color on brand image and found that color value and color saturation played the dominant roles. In that regard does this research conform with the research of Agell, Ghaderi, and Ruiz, in this study it became clear that the actual hue did not have an influence.

Warm colors combined with a rounded sans serif did not demonstrate the most significant company appeal. Every color and typeface has at least a few companies that are doing very well and are able to convey the right message and ambiance. A possible explanation for there being no significance in either color, typeface, or interaction is the current global pandemic. It might be different to imagine working for a new and unknown company when the population is in a less financially stable situation than it was prior to the global pandemic.

5.2.1. Control variables. The control variables in this research were represented by the demographic variables (age, gender, and educational level). Some influences of these demographic variables on the independent variables have been researched.

5.2.1.1. Color. There are a few differences when it comes to the popularity of the color between females of differing ages, yet when it comes to colors that spark joy the same colors are mentioned by all age groups. Fakin, Smoljanović & Ojstršek (2020) divided women into three age groups, one between 16-29, a second between 30-49, and a third between 50-80. All groups perceived the color yellow as the color of joy. The second, third, and fourth-ranking colors were orange, red, and pink, with these colors being in different orders for the different age groups. All of these colors, with the exception of pink, are warm colors. This is contrary to the colors the males perceived as most joyful. For the male age group between 16-29, the colors blue and green followed yellow as the color of joy. Orange came fourth. In the 50-80 age group, red was named the color of joy, followed by green, orange, and yellow. The 30-49 age group had the same colors in the top four as the youngest age group, but with the order being yellow, orange, blue, and green. Mammarella, Di Domenico, Palumbo & Fairfield (2016) mention that the level performance of the person being graded can influence color perception. For example, people who were focused on performing above average more frequently prefer the color green than people who are not particularly focused on performing very well in school.

5.2.1.2. Typeface. A study conducted by Bernard, Chaparro, Mills & Halcomb (2002) showed that a group of children in an elementary school found it easier to read sans serif typefaces. In general, however, the level of readability between serif and sans serif typefaces is negligible. However, serif fonts (size 14 pt) are easier to read for older adults (aged 60 and above). Nevertheless, they prefer the sans serif typefaces over the serif typefaces (Bernard, Liao, & Mills, 2001).

When it comes to the preferences or the perceptions of typeface according to gender, not a lot of research has been conducted, so the extent to which perceptions of varying typefaces differ between men and women is not known. At least not when they are unconnected to a stereotypically feminine or masculine sounding brand name. Since most of the research on typefaces has been done with participants who are receiving a high level of education, it was not possible to find good literature that discussed the different preferences or the different perceptions of typeface on education levels.

5.2.1.3. Company appeal. Johnson and Monserud (2012) conducted a study on job preferences with participants between the ages of 18 to 30 years. The results showed that the older the participants were, the fewer job requirements they had. Younger participants valued, among other priorities, the ability to spend time on non-career related activities.

When it comes to choosing a job, women prioritize security in a job more than men do. Men, on the other hand, prefer to have work-related rewards over stability (Sortheix, Dietrich, Chow, & Salmela-Aro, 2013). Miller and Hayward (2006) researched the job preferences of young boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 18. Both genders preferred to work at a job that was stereotypically gender-appropriate for them.

People with a higher education level often have a higher appreciation for jobs that include great decision-making power, in comparison to their relatively less-educated peers. Those peers prioritize the stability of their job more (Johnson & Elder, 2002).

5.2.2. Theoretical implications

What this research has added to the already existing theory on color and typography perception is that color nor typeface does not have an effect on the emotions of the population when they look at a webpage of an unfamiliar company of which the industry is unknown as well. Neither does color nor typeface have an effect on the brand perception. Although typeface does not have an effect on perceived trust, color does have an effect. Since the result in this research contradicts a lot of the existing research, this would need to be further researched.

Before repeating this research, I would first recommend conducting more research on color combinations and the tone of the text. For example, researching if certain warm color combinations have different effects than others or if a text with a more neutral tone does show differences between the color and typeface combinations. Subsequently, it would be interesting to research whether or not the results of the previous studies would be the same for each company and industry or if there are differences between them, and how to obtain the same results while examining different situations. Additional to the suggested further research, an improvement to the experiment could be to ask how the participant is feeling when they start answering the questions of the experiment. These questions might be able to balance out the extreme positive or the extreme negative moods (for example "I'm feeling anxious today" 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree; or "I'm feeling happy today" 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Color and typeface do, according to this research, not have an effect on company appeal. Nonetheless, the current state the world is in at the moment, should not be ignored in this case. When the world has relatively gone back to normal, it would be interesting to research if color and typeface really have no effect or if it only has an effect when the colors and typefaces are congruent with the company.

5.2.3. Practical implications

During this research there was no particular focus on a certain industry. What is most important is that the colors and typefaces are congruent with the company. For example, a script typeface would in most cases not work for a construction company. It is important that when people look at a brand they see some clues about which field they are in and/or what their values are. This could be by using a script typeface for a wedding planning company or using a light green when the products are made from sustainable materials.

The results showed that color does have an influence when it comes to the perceived trust. A lot of literature talks about how cool color, especially blue, will give off the perception of trust. However, as shown in the results, if warm colors are congruent with the company brand it is possible to still convey trust without having to compromise the color scheme.

5.2.4. Limitations. Many of the participants were in their twenties. Other ages were not represented to the same extent and therefore it is not possible to conclude that the results obtained in this research would be the same results found in research conducted with an equal spread of ages amongst participants. This could be an important factor since Sztrókay (2010) found that there is different brain activity when it comes to observing different visual media (they studied magazine covers).

With regard to communication specifically, the words used in the text might have had an influence on the perception of the company. Since the text was held constant amongst all designs, this should not have made a difference in the results pertaining to the role that color and typeface play in influencing emotions and brand perception. However, there is a possibility that the text was too positive for the data to have differentiated between them. Holbrook (1978) found that the tone in which the text can in fact manipulate the response of the reader towards the text. It may be that the tone of the text overpowered the tone of the colors and typeface on the webpage.

5.3. Conclusion. Based on this research it can be concluded that the difference between serif and sans serif typefaces has no influence on the emotions, the level of trust in a brand, brand perception or on the level of appeal a company has. Color has no effect on brand perception or the level of appeal a company has. Color does have a significant effect when it comes to influencing the level of trust people have in a brand when they see the webpage. The data shows that warm colors caused the highest level of trust. With black and white coming in second place with a marginal significant effect on the level of trust. Colors seemed to have a marginal significant effect as well on perceived emotions. Although color only had a marginal significant effect, it may be interesting to note that warm colors did have the highest mean of the three color schemes. It will be interesting to see if these results would be the same in a post global pandemic time. What this research could additionally benefit from is more research into color combinations and the effects of certain layouts. An important note to end on is that this research was done using an unknown company of which even the industry was not known. Therefore, these results are particularly interesting for people who want to start a company, who need to design a logo or design the website of the company or companies who are looking to rebrand.

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Appendix A

Hi everyone,

Thank you for taking your time for filling in this survey for my bachelor thesis. You are going to see a webpage of a company. Based on that webpage you will be answering some questions. This survey will approximately take between 5-10 minutes to fill in.

Please note that at all times if you feel uncomfortable or you do not want to answer the questions anymore you can stop participating at any time and close the survey.

For this survey you have to be above the age of 18. Therefore people below the age of 18 are requested to not fill in this survey.

If you have any questions about the survey or about the thesis you can send me an email (y.z.m.stolvoort@gmail.com).

Kind regards, Yasmilla

I am 18 years old or above

O No

O Yes

I hereby give my consent for my data to be anonymously used for this bachelor thesis

O No

O Yes

Gender

What is your gender?

- O Male
- O Female
- O Other
- O No answer

Age

What is your age?

Education

What level of education are you currently doing or what is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- O Elementary school
- O High school
- O Secondary vocational education / VMBO
- O Higher professional education / HBO
- O University education / WO

You will now get to see a webpage of the company. Please take your time to take a good look at the webpage and to read the text.

If while answering the questions you want to see the image again you can go back to look at the image to refresh your memory.

webpage 1







Home Services About us Contact



clients. And this is how we are at the top in the 21st century.





Webpage 6



This brand design makes you feel

You can click on the "previous page" button to see the image again. You will not have to answer the questions that you have already filled in again.

This company's design makes me feel:

 Sad
 Happy

 O
 O
 O
 O

This company's design makes me feel:

Unexcited	0	0	0	0	0	Excited
This company's	design ma	kes me feel:				
Enthusiastic O	0	0	0	0	0	Unethusiastic
This company's	design mal	kes me feel:				
Indifferent O	0	0	0	0	0	Passionate O
This company's	design ma	kes me feel:				
Motivated	0	0	0	0	0	unmotivated
This company's	design ma	kes me feel:				
Content	0	0	0	0	0	Irritated

This design of the webpage comes across as

You can click on the "previous page" button to see the image again. You will not have to answer the questions that you have already filled in again.

In my opinion th	is webpage o	lesign comes a	across as:			
Interesting O	0	0	0	0	0	O
In my opinion th	is webpage o	lesign comes a	across as:			
Closed off	0	0	0	0	0	Open

In my opinion thi	is webpage d	esign comes a	across as:			
Unprofessional	0	0	0	0	0	Professional
In my opinion thi	is webpage d	lesign comes a	across as:			
Modern	0	0	0	0	0	Traditional
In my opinion thi	is webpage d	esign comes a	across as:			
Warm	0	0	0	0	0	Cold
This webpage	conveys the	e will of the c	company to g	row		
Strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0	Strongly agree

You can click on the "previous page" button to see the image again. You will not have to answer the questions that you have already filled in again.

I think that this company is: Responsible Irresponsible 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 I think that this company is: Consistent Inconsistent 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

I think that this company is:

Block 14

Insincere	0	0	0	0	0	Sincere
I think that this	company is:					
Harmonious	0	0	0	0	0	Discordant O
I think that this	company is:					
Static	0	0	0	0	0	Innovative
I think that this	company is:					
Untrustworthy O	0	0	0	0	0	Trustworthy O
It looks like th	is company	actively working	g towards divers	ity		
Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	0	Strongly disagree

For the next statements imagine that you and/or a friend would be looking for a job and saw that this company had open vacancies.

You can click on the "previous page" button to see the image again. You will not have to answer the questions that you have already filled in.

If this company w	vould invite me	e to a job intervie	ew, I would go			
Strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0	Strongly agree

Want to work there statements

I would not recommend this company to a friend who is looking for a job Strongly Strongly disagree agree 0 0 0 0 0 \bigcirc \bigcirc This looks like a reputable company to work for Strongly Strongly disagree agree 0 0 0 0 0 O 0 This looks like a company that probably has a reputation as being an terrible employer Strongly Strongly disagree agree 0 0 0 \bigcirc 0 0 0 I would find this company a prestigious place to work Strongly Strongly disagree agree 0 0 0 0 \bigcirc O Ο There would probably be many who would like to work at this company Strongly Strongly agree disagree O 0 0 0 0 0 \cap If I was qualified I would accept a job offer from this company Strongly Strongly disagree agree 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 Employees would probably not be proud to say they work at this company Strongly Strongly agree disagree 0 0 0 0 0 Ο 0

Once you click on the "next button" please do not go back to look at the image again.

Please do not make use of the "previous page" button anymore

Which colors were present in the webpage deisgn?

- O Red, orange, yellow
- O Red, orange, pink
- O Blue, green, purple
- O Blue, green, pink
- O Black, white, grey
- O Black, white, light blue

1. FORWARD INC.

2. FORWARD INC.

Which of the two typefaces was a part of the webpage design that you saw?

- O Typeface 1
- O Typeface 2

These are the last questions of this survey

Are you familiar with	color psycholo	gy?		
Not familiar at all	0	0	0	Extremely familiar
Are you familiar with	typography ps	ychology?		
Not familiar at all	0	0	0	Extremely familiar

Powered by Qualtrics

Appendix B

What colors and which category of typefaces help companies generate positive emotions under their consumers when they are exposed to the brand style?

> Yasmilla Stolvoort S1791699

Potentially useful search terms

Constructs	Related terms	Broader terms	Narrower terms
U= Color	Hue, saturation, brightness	Color perception, color psychology	Red perception
V= Perceived trust	Confidence, faith	Company trust	Loyalty, engagement
W= Typeface	Font, typography, type	Round typeface, Angular font	Sans serif, serif,
X= Logo	Icon, wordmark	Brand identity, brand recognition	Dynamic logo
Y= Company appeal	Job criteria	Company preference	
Z= Brand perception	Brand perceive	Opinion of a brand	Positive attitude

Search log

Date	Source	Search terms and strategies	How many hits (how many relevant)
25/03/'2 0	Scopus	"Color psychology" branding	3 (only 1 with available link)
25/03/'2 0	Scopus	"Brand logo" "brand perception"	3 (only 1 with available link)
14/04/'2 0	Module 7	Literature list	4
17/04/'2 0	Google scholar	"likert scale" 7-point 5-point "data characteristics" affect result (papers after 2005)	843 (3 on the first page)

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