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Casino Royale

Brand Avoidance and Advertising Among Generation Y in Sweden

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Abstract

Background: Online casinos are rising in popularity, and the number of people in Sweden who gambled online in 2018 is an all-time high. At the same time, the amount of money that online casinos spend on advertisements is also at an all-time high. Brand avoidance is receiving more attention from scholars as it is as important to know what makes consumers not want to consume, as it is to understand what makes them want to consume. Advertisements have been identified to contribute to the behavior of brand avoidance.

Purpose: The purpose of this master thesis is to explore and gain insight into what aspects of advertising contribute to brand avoidance among generation Y, and to narrow down the scope, the online casino industry in Sweden is explored. A research question was implemented to reach valuable findings.

Method: To fulfill the purpose of this study, a qualitative research methodology was applied. The collection of qualitative data was retrieved from focus groups and semi-structured interviews among generation Y consumers. By exploring the aspects contributing to brand avoidance, an abductive research approach was useful, advocating discussion and development of new theory. To justify an appropriate target population, a non-probability judgement sampling technique was utilized.

Conclusion: The empirical findings from our study suggest that six aspects contribute to advertising brand avoidance in online casino advertising, namely; content, auditory cues, emotional response, advertising ethics, preconceived notion of industry and frequency. Consequently, we identified the subcategories of attractiveness, focus on wins, message about rapid payment and/or cash-out, focus on female gamblers and brand name and slogan for the aspect of content. For auditory cues, found subcategories included; music, sound effects, narrative voice and jingle. There was no evidence of a specific sequence, but a dynamic interrelationship between the aspects.

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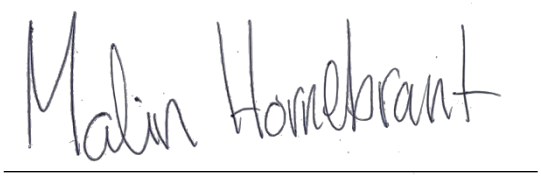

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1. Introduction

The first chapter of this study provides a general introduction to the research topic. The background and problem are discussed, enabling an elaboration upon the relevancy of the study. It is followed by the purpose and the given research question that aims to be explored throughout the research. Lastly, key terms are given to clarify common terms.

1.1. Background

The number of people in Sweden who gambled online in 2018 is an all-time high. The most contemporary trend is the rising popularity of online casinos, in total, 40% of money related gambling in 2018 took place through online casinos ("Nätkasino ökar, nätpoker minskar", 2018). The gambling market in Sweden has been divided into three main sectors due to a new national regulation that was implemented in the beginning of 2019 (Hoffstedt, 2019). The first sector includes country-based casinos and slot-machines that are present in a physical environment, the second consists of lotteries and the third and last consist of online gambling. Woolley (2003) categorized online gambling into four different activities, namely placing sports betting online, wagering on racing online, gambling in an online lottery and online casino gambling. It is relevant to study online casinos in Sweden because of their rise in popularity ("Nätkasino ökar, nätpoker minskar", 2018). Online casinos are service brands, as they provide the service of platforms for the purpose of gambling.

A brand is a form of an intangible asset, illustrated by a product, company name, sign, symbol, design or even a reputation (Law, 2016). Through brands, consumers can experience, evaluate, have feelings towards, and build associations, thus making the brand valuable (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy & Pervan, 2015). Based on brand-related stimuli, e.g. design, identity, packaging, communication and environment of a brand, brand experience can be evoked and becomes visible through feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009).

In the midst of all the brand options available to consumers, an anti-consumption movement has arisen on a societal level. Anti-consumption, i.e. the act of deliberately avoiding any form of consumption (Lee, Fernandez & Hyman, 2009a), has been suggested to be triggered by excessive unsustainable consumption and the shift in power from brands to consumers by referring to their ability to ignore and resist efforts from marketers (Denegri-Knott, Zwick & Schroeder, 2006; Pentina & Amos, 2011). Anti-consumption can be seen as a rather unexplored and contemporary area and needs more attention (Lee et al., 2009a). Anti-consumption can be generalized for overall consumption, but also for specific products or brands to achieve personal or societal goals (Garcia-Bardidia, Nau & Rémy, 2011).

From the field of anti-consumption, brand avoidance has become of interest for managers, consumers and scholars, specifically on the brand/individual level (Lee, Conroy & Motion, 2009b; Hogg, 1998). Brand avoidance can be explained by the intentional rejection of a brand, and can take on various forms (Rindell, Strandvik & Wilén, 2014). Lee, Motion and Conroy (2009c) identified four major categories of brand avoidance, namely experiential, identity, moral and deficit-value. Knittel, Beurer and Berndt (2016) identified advertising avoidance as a fifth category, which was later elaborated on by Berndt, Petzer and Mostert (2019) and redefined as communication avoidance.

Online casinos in Sweden spent 7.4 Billion SEK on advertising in 2018, which presents an increase of 95% in expenditure from 2016 (Spel Inspektionen, 2019a). Since 2019, gambling advertisement is being broadcasted more frequently and on new media channels (Adelai, 2019), indicating the relevancy of exploring the industry in relation to service brand avoidance and advertising. To specify this research, the focus will lie on generation Y, which for this purpose is defined as consumers born between the years of 1980 and 2000 (Gurău, 2012; Lingelbach, Patino & Pitta, 2012; Moore, 2012). The largest age group of gamblers in Sweden in 2017 was a part of generation Y, as 13% of all gamblers were aged between 18 and 19 (Spel Inspektionen, 2017). In March 2019, 40% of those who had used the Swedish national gambling self-exclusion website (Spelpaus.se) were born between 1984 and 1994.This presents the largest age group for people that deliberately blocked themselves from online gambling (Spel Inspektionen, 2019b). Generation Y is of interest in connection to service brands, as a majority of this generation is reaching their peak earning years (Giovannini, Xu & Thomas, 2015), whilst they are less anchored in their preferences for brands compared to prior generations (Kassaye & Hutto, 2016).

1.2. Problem

There has been a focus towards the positive and favorable aspects of branding (Lee et al., 2009b). Topics such as brand awareness (Hoyer & Brown, 1990), brand equity (Keller, 1993), brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), and positive consumer-brand relationships (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2012) has been researched.

A shift has been noted among scholars and managers, where an interest of the negative spectrum of brands has become equally important (Lee et al., 2009b). Realizing what makes consumers not wanting to consume, is as important as understanding what makes consumers consume (Hogg & Banister, 2001; Lee et al., 2009c; Knittel et al., 2016). Literature and research regarding brand avoidance are scarce, highlighting a need for further exploration (Berndt et al., 2019). Brand avoidance might result in negative brand equity, which emphasizes the managerial and theoretical importance, as a brand might be the cause of a reduced return on investment and become a market-base liability rather than an asset (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996; Lee et al., 2009c). Knittel et al. (2016) suggest that future research needs to pay attention to brand avoidance within specific industries. McArthur and Resko (1975) argued that television advertising has a persuasive power over people and our society. But the way in which Swedish consumers watch television has changed over the years, and web-based on-demand television is more commonly consumed than regular television today (Frick, 2018).

No research explores advertising on-demand aspects that contribute to brand avoidance in the online casino industry, presenting a research gap. Online casino brands are experienced through the core service provided and the encounter, leading to a formation of an attitude and behavior (Berndt et al., 2019). It is beneficial for marketing professionals within the field to understand what advertising aspects contribute to brand avoidance among Swedish consumers. It is important to note that this study does not consider the ethical aspects or consequences of online casino gambling. The focus lies on what aspects of online casino advertising that makes Swedish consumers avoid specific brands.

1.3. Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this master thesis is to explore and gain insights into what aspects of advertising contribute to brand avoidance among generation Y, to narrow down the scope, the online casino industry in Sweden is explored. This purpose will be fulfilled by the implementation of the following research question:

RQ: *"What aspects in online casino advertisement contribute to brand avoidance among generation Y in Sweden?"*

1.4. Key Terms

Advertising: A paid non-personal brand-initiated communication with an intent on impacting people (Richards & Curran 2002, p. 64; Dahlen & Rosengren, 2016, p. 369).

Anti-consumption: *"Anti-consumption literally means against consumption, yet the word is not synonymous with alternative, conscientious, or green consumption; neither does anti-consumption merely comprise the study of ethics, sustainability, or public policy*" (Lee et al., 2009a, p. 145).

Advertising Avoidance: *"Advertising as a type of brand avoidance can be connected to four different reasons, namely, content, the celebrity endorser, music and the response to the advertisement"* (Knittel et al., 2016, p. 37).

Brand: "*A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them which is intended to identify the ... services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*" (Heding, Knudtzen & Bjerre, 2008, p. 9).

Gambling: Refers to risk-taking activities in terms of financial transactions, the staking of money or an item of economic value on the uncertain outcome of a future event (McMillen, 2014).

Online Casino: Online casinos offer online gambling services, which involves wagering a stake with monetary value in games of chance that are provided at a distance, by electronic means and at the individual request of a recipient of services (European Commission, 2012).

On-demand advertising: Advertising that is broadcasted on an online video-on-demand service, which is an alternative to scheduled, synchronized and 'traditional' television (Jenner, 2015).

Service Brand Avoidance: "*Phenomenon whereby consumers deliberately choose to keep away from or reject a brand"* (Lee et al., 2009b, p. 422).

2. Frame of Reference

In this chapter, the academic literature that serves as a foundation to this research is presented. The literature covers relevant topics in relation to the purpose of this study. The chapter is concluded with the proposed research framework of advertising brand avoidance.

2.1. Service and Service Brands

Edvardsson, Gustavsson and Roos (2005) suggested that *"we may conclude that there are two approaches within service research: service as a category of market offerings and service as a perspective on value creation."* (p. 118). Accordingly, with literature, it is proposed that a service can be viewed from the two perspectives of a Service Logic Approach (SL) and Service Dominant Logic (SDL) (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014).

From the SL perspective, value creation is driven by the customer and a *"service is the use of resources in a way that supports customers' everyday practices – physical, mental, virtual, possessive – and thereby facilitate their value creation"* (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014, p. 208). The value can be explained by the extent of how a customer feels in relation to the brand, i.e. better (positive value) or worse (negative value), thus accumulating over time through experiences (Grönroos & Voima, 2013). Contrary to traditional concept of brands being product-centric, the nature of service brands, i.e. the intangibility, uniqueness and co-production, portrays a challenge for brands in the current service-dominant economy (Klaus & Maklan, 2007).

Since the 1980's and forward, Service Dominant Logic (SDL) has emerged, where intangible resources are vital, and the process can be viewed as both social and economic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The SDL is demonstrated by co-creation and value co-creation, as the service provider drives value creation (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014). It customizes offerings by using customers as co-producers, in order to meet the customer's needs and removes the focus on the movement of goods taken to the market, while instead including the customer in the process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). From the SDL perspective, the service brand itself is an important intangible asset, as it has the ability to establish relationships (Brodie, Glynn & Little, 2006). Vargo and Lusch (2008) argued that *"enterprises can offer their applied resources for value creation and collaboratively (interactively) create value following acceptance of value*

propositions but cannot create and/or deliver value independently" (p. 7), which emphasizes the importance of a relationship with customers.

The distinct difference between product and service brands in these perspectives is visible in the implementation of the branding strategy (Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003; Dall'olmo Riley & De Chernatony, 2000). Fundamentally, both perspectives share the acknowledgement of the importance of services and the interaction between service provides and customers (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014). Alongside with the SDL and SL perspective, an altered definition of a service brand has been applied for the purpose of this study. Here, a service brand is defined as the functional and emotional values derived from a service and delivered by the service provider, thus creating value from co-creation (Brodie et al., 2006; Dall'olmo Riley & De Chernatony, 2000).

2.2. Advertising

Advertising involves the promotion of products, organizations and/or services, and aims to raise the interest in what is being advertised (Hallahan, 2013). Richards and Curran (2002) defined it as *"a paid nonpersonal communication from an identified sponsor, using mass media to persuade or influence an audience."* (p.64). More recently, Dahlen and Rosengren (2016) defined advertising as *"brand-initiated communication intent on impacting people"* (p. 359). For this study, these two definitions have been merged into "*a paid nonpersonal brand-initiated communication with an intent on impacting people".* Advertisements often contain non-advertising discourses (Cook, 2001), e.g. narrative styles, aesthetics and drawing on imagery (Hackley, 2012). There are different formats to consider, including web-, mobile-, print- and broadcast advertising (Hallahan, 2013).

Consumers usage of media and purchasing behavior has changed, due to rapid development of Information Technology (IT) (Cho, 2016). These developments have led to a shift, as digital video advertising is under continuous growth (Li & Lo, 2015). Hussain and Lasage (2013) argued that there are two types of online video advertisements (OVA); linear and interactive video advertisements. Linear video advertisements are commonly inserted in the start, middle or end of a video, typically, they cannot be fast forwarded (Hussain & Lasage, 2013). Even though traditional linear television advertising and OVA contain similar aspects and sensory

systems, they differ in effectiveness because they are present in different media environments (Li & Lo, 2015).

As in-stream advertising interrupts consumers, characteristics such as frequency, duration and complexity can affect an individual's response (Kirmeyer, 1988). Chih-Chung, Chang, Lin and Yau-Nang (2012) argued that there is a fine line between frequency which improves consumer knowledge and too many broadcasts which might instead disgust the consumer. De Pelsmacker and Bergh (1999) argue that irritation in advertising can arise from the factors of the media, content, repetition, and consumer characteristics, and they argue that the frequency and what the advertising says matters. The behavior followed by seeing advertising plays a central role, as *"negative affective reactions evoked by advertising stimuli easily transfer to the attitude towards the advertisement and the brand*" (Dens, De Pelsmacker, Janssens, 2008, p. 251). If advertisements are seen to be too informative it can lead to irritation (Greyser, 1973). There are product categories that lead to more irritation than others, e.g. toothpaste and female hygiene products (Aaker & Bruzzone 1985; Greyser 1973; Biel & Bridgwater, 1990). If consumers find advertisements to be misleading or false, there is a perceived deception, which arguably has more negative effects if consumers expect the consequence of the deception to be serious and negatively affects how consumers evaluate the brand behind the advertisement (Xie, Madrigal & Boush, 2014).

2.2.1. Casino Advertising

Through internet advertising, online casinos have multiple ways to strategically target, retain and attract customers (Hing, Cherney, Blaszczynski, Gainsbury & Lubman, 2014). McMullan and Kervin (2012) asserted that the most common messages in gambling advertisements concentrated either on gambling as a path to a winning way of life or virtual socialization. Advertising of online casinos might increase the consumptions levels through the retention of problem gamblers (Binde, 2009; Derevensky, Sklar, Gupta & Messerlian, 2010). There has been little research on the effects that gambling advertising has on behavior and attitudes (Clemens, Hanewinkel & Morgenstern, 2016). It is suggested that gambling advertisements rarely attract new users, instead increases the amount of gambling that existing gamblers conduct, further, problem gamblers are more negatively influenced by gambling-related advertising than others (Hing et al., 2014; Binde & Romild, 2018).

Gambling advertising impacts the behavior of adolescents, as the content and features can be misleading with little reference to actual odds winning, and show appeal to children with animals, animated characters, humor, glamour and youth-oriented music (Monaghan, Derevensky & Sklar, 2008; Deverensky et al., 2010). Adolescents perceive the message of gambling advertisements to promote gambling as being entertaining and exciting, portraying that it is easy to achieve success, happiness and wealth through gambling. Deverensky et al. (2010) found that individuals express dislike for gambling advertising because of its frequent prevalence.

2.2.1.1. Casino Advertising in Sweden

By Swedish law, it is illegal to promote gambling that is offered by companies who do not have a Swedish licence, however, this law has been ineffective, as it has no influence over broadcasts from abroad (Binde & Romild, 2018). Håkansson and Widinghoff (2019) recorded Swedish gambling advertisements on television, to analyze the frequency, extent and content of them. They identified 16 components present in advertisements that promote online casinos in Sweden (See Table 1). They found that out of all types of gambling-related advertising, online casino advertising was most frequent (Håkansson & Widinghoff, 2019)

Table 1 Components Present in Casino Advertising in Sweden

Components of gambling advertising
Focus on wins
Focus on jackpot wins
Luxury setting
Prominent person included
Message about bonuses
Message about free-spins
Message about rapid cash-out
Message involving the word “free”
Peer bonding
Appeal to big gamblers
Social status of gamblers
Focus on female gamblers
Focus on male gamblers
Folklore associations
Sports supporter rituals / team loyalty
Sports and/or horse focus

Source: Håkansson & Widinghoff (2019).

From January 1st, 2019, the Swedish government passed a law regarding gambling. Online casinos must have a Swedish license to operate on the Swedish market and to advertise on Swedish media ("Sveriges nya spellag Expressen Spel & Casino", n.d.). Additionally, all marketing has to be done in moderation, cannot target minors and has to include clear information about the age limit of gambling. No marketing can be directed to individuals that has excluded themselves from gambling or determined their account (SFS 2018:1138). As of 2019, the Swedish government is looking into issues related to online casino advertising. An investigation, anticipated to resolve in October 2020, will consider if there should be a prohibition towards online casino advertising in Sweden, as it is regarded as being a 'particularly dangerous' form of gambling (Lindberg, 2019).

2.3. Generation Y and Online Casinos

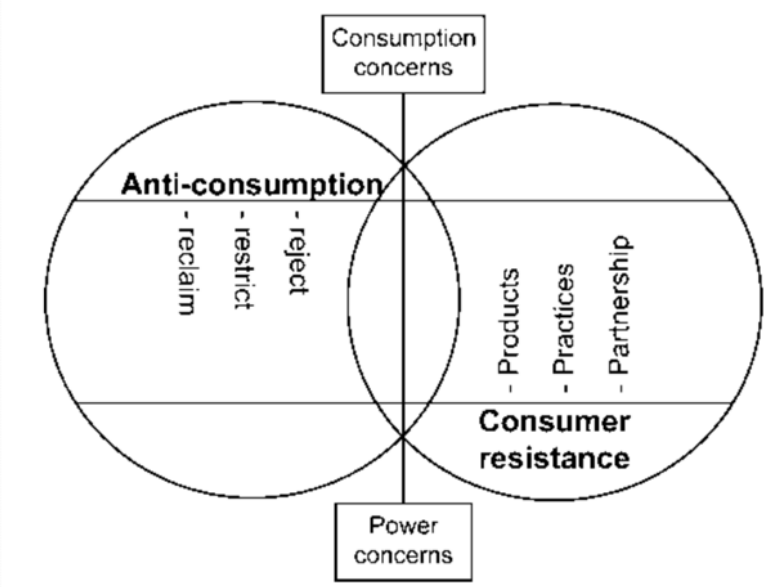
Recently, the gambling industry has emphasized more focus towards generation Y. The generation is characterized by being more involved in online gambling compared to their predecessors, who gamble more in physical casinos (Suh, Alhaery, Abarbanel & McKenna, 2017). With the introduction of online casino gambling, the activities are brought into the home environment, which has made it more accessible (Griffiths & Barnes, 2007). The generation is suggested to gamble on different platforms and games, and it is argued that they prefer skill-based and interactive games over chance-based games (Suh et al., 2017) Spel Inspektionen (The Gambling Inspection) (2018), presented that people in the ages between 18 and 29 in Sweden present the highest number who gambled in the last 12 months, mostly 'for fun and entertainment'.

2.4. Anti-Consumption

There is a consensus of what anti-consumption entails, where it is explained as a resistance, distaste or even a resentment of consumption (Zavestoski, 2002). Anti-consumption can involve an individual's overall consumption, specific products or services (Iyer & Muncy, 2009). The reasons against the acquisition, use, and dispossession of certain goods or services is central within anti-consumption research (Lee, Roux, Cherrier & Cova, 2011). Penaloza and Price (1993) conceptualized consumer resistance and examined negative choices for consumption. Drawn upon their study, Lee et al. (2011) discussed the differentiation and overlap between anti-consumption and consumer resistance (See Figure 1). Anti-consumption has its main focus

against consumption based on rejection, restriction and reclaiming, whereas consumer resistance instead focuses on consumers opposing the products, practices and partnerships (Lee et al., 2011). Lee, Motion and Conroy (2009c) argue that *"consumer resistance concerns counter cultural attitudes and behaviors that question the current capitalistic system, reduce consumption and resist oppressive forces"* (p. 170). This also includes individuals who want to attain their consumption goals (e.g. collective action) and not just against consumption (Lee et al., 2009c), which leads power concerns (Lee et al., 2011).

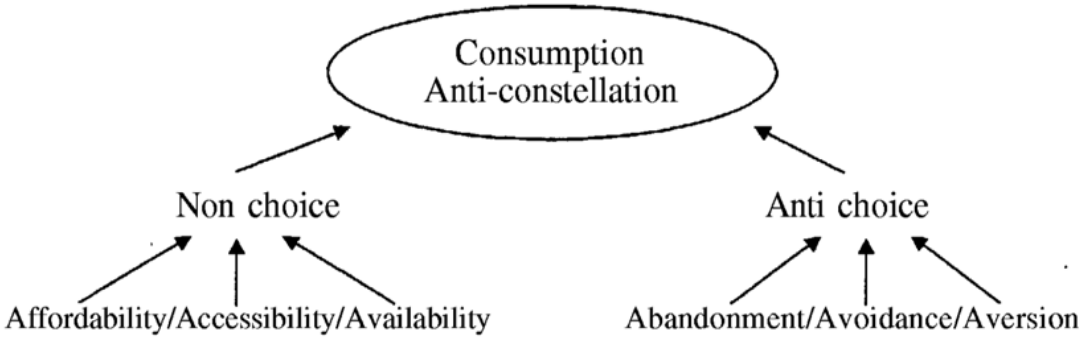
Figure 1 Delineating anti-consumption and Consumer Resistance



Source: Lee et al. (2011).

Hogg's (1998) anti-constellation represents the complementarity of negative choices toward consumption and identified factors which influence individuals' negative choices (See Figure 2). The anti-constellation is based on the aspect of anti-choice, where a consumer deliberately abandons, avoids or aversion goods or services, and the aspect of non-choice, where a consumer simply cannot acquire, use or dispose a good or service based on affordability, availability and accessibility (Hogg, 1998), i.e. brand avoidance.

Figure 2 Consumption Anti-Constellation



Source: Hogg (1998).

In the case of online casino gambling, the societal concerns are of high importance for individuals engaging in anti-consumption, as it has shown issues on a societal level. The number of online gamblers in Sweden has never been as high before ("Nätkasino ökar, nätpoker minskar", 2018), and in March 2019, nearly 28000 individuals had signed themselves up on the self-exclusion register to eliminate their ability to gamble online (Spel Inspektionen, 2019b).

2.5. Service Brand Avoidance

Brand avoidance can also be seen as a resistance to consumption and is defined as *"phenomenon whereby consumers deliberately choose to keep away from or reject a brand"* (Lee et al., 2009b, p. 422). It has a resemblance to an anti-choice (Hogg, 1998), as the brand itself is not of interest to the consumer, even when a service brand is available, accessible and affordable (Lee et al., 2009b). Brand avoidance is an intentional abstinence from a purchase and usage of a certain brand, and an individual simply 'stays away' from a brand and does not express strong negative feelings and distaste towards it (Odoom, Kosiba, Djamgbah & Narh, 2019). This is an attitude or behavior and as there are many potential reasons to why an individual would decide to avoid a brand, brand avoidance is seen as a multi-dimensional construct (Cherrier, 2009; Knittel et al., 2016). A positive relation between brand avoidance and dislike emotion has been found, as it influences consumers intent to avoid a brand (Kavaliauskė & Simanavičiūtė, 2015).

2.5.1. Types of Service Brand Avoidance

Drawing upon the framework by Lee et al. (2009b), Knittel et al. (2016) propose an extended framework of five types of brand avoidance, found to have an impact on service brands (See Figure 3). Experiential-, identity-, moral-, deficit-value- and advertising avoidance are identified as reasons to why individuals reject certain service brands (Knittel et al., 2016). In order to clearly understand the different types, it is of importance to note that experiential avoidance implies previous interaction with a service, whereas it is not necessary for the other types of avoidances (Berndt et al., 2019).

Figure 3 Framework of the Brand Avoidance Types

Source: Knittel et al. (2016).

2.5.1.1. Experiential Avoidance

Branding provides a consumer with emotional and functional promises, leading to expectations (Berry, 2000; Balmer & Grey, 2003; Odoom et al., 2019; Grönroos, 2006). When promises and expectations align, repurchase is encouraged, but portrays drawbacks if not achieved (Dall'olmo Riley & De Chernatony, 2000). Dissatisfaction occurs when a consumer's experience does not match with a brand's promises, consequently leading to the decision of avoiding a brand (Lee et al., 2009b). The consequence of a disparity between expectations based on brand promises and the actual experience could lead to an experiential avoidance (Knittel et al., 2016).

In the case of service brands, it is also important to consider the service environment (including servicescape), as this experience will influence a consumer's perception of the brand (Berndt et al., 2019). The core service provided, and the encounter are the two main sources of experience consumers can gather (Berndt et al., 2019). These are accumulated from the servicescape, i.e. the service setting, including the ambiance, place, lighting, color, use of space on the quality, delivery, and perception of the service etc. (Doyle, 2016). *"In an online environment, atmospheric cues are limited to any visual and auditory cues that an operator can provide on the user's screen"* (Abarbanel, 2013, p. 28), demonstrating the difference in the servicescape for online casinos in comparison to traditional casinos. Abarbanel (2013) argued that high and low task-relevant cues, financial trust, and gambling value influences individual's decision to avoid or engage with an online platform. Gainsbury, Russell, Hing and Blaszynski (2018) found that gamblers would avoid online casinos based on *"unreliable technology or Internet access, illegality, difficulty verifying fairness of games, concerns about account safety, including money and personal information provided, and less enjoyable game environment or social experience"* (p. 3001).

2.5.1.2. Identity Avoidance

Identity avoidance occurs when a brand fails to fulfill an individual's symbolic identity requirements and has the two underlying concepts of the undesired self and disidentification (Lee et al., 2009c). Commonly, consumers support brands aligned with their self-concept (Odoom et al., 2019). However, consumers may avoid brands based on inconsistency between the brand and the individual's actual or desired self-concept, suggested by the disidentification theory (Hogg & Banister, 2001; Lee et al., 2009c). Some consumers avoid a brand based on the perceived lack of authenticity or believed association with a negative reference group (Lee et al., 2009b). The undesired self and disidentification share the similarity of both contributing to

identity avoidance, however what differentiates is the idea that the undesired self is precise and rather specific, while the negative reference group (disidentification) is seen as less accurate and can be more generalized based on stereotypes (Knittel et al., 2016).

When consumers perceive brands to be genuine it contributes to a perception of authenticity (Kirmani, 2009; Ferraro, Kirmani & Matherly, 2010). Brands provide authenticity when consumers purchase a product or service for utilitarian purposes, contrary, inauthenticity occurs when it is purchased for the purpose of approval from other in the external environment (Berndt et al., 2019). Identity avoidance could occur when a service is seen as too popular or being used by a particular group of consumers the individual does not want to be associated with (Berndt et al., 2019).

The gambling industry has shifted from a social to an asocial form with online casinos, as the global, accessible and 24-hour availability features have taken it across geographical borders (Griffiths, 2009). Individuals may decide to align with a certain casino brand based on that their peers consider it having a favorable platform. In a study based on university students in the United Kingdom, Griffiths (2009) found that 67% of the participants had an interest in online gambling since their friends did. It could thus also be argued the other way around, that an individual may avoid a platform based on their friend's opinion.

2.5.1.3. Moral Avoidance

Moral avoidance is driven by an ideological incompatibility between the consumer and a product/service (Lee et al., 2009c). This avoidance occurs when consumers believe that a brand harms the environment or demonstrates a conflict with the individual's moral values (Berndt et al., 2019). Lee et al. (2009b) argued that country effects and anti-hegemony are the two main underlying reasons to a moral avoidance. Consumers construct an attitude and form a behavior towards a brand via various aspects. Country of origin alone could provide a consumer with the basis for their quality perception of a service, as he or she may already have a preconceived notion about a specific country that the brand is associated with (Berndt et al., 2019). It is suggested that a brand can be avoided based on the perceived negative and unacceptable moral behavior that the brand portrays to the consumer, e.g. discrimination, forced labor and non-transparency (Odoom et al., 2019). In terms of anti-hegemony, consumers may also avoid a brand due to the belief that it contributes to a dominance in the market, a development of

monopoly, or corporate irresponsibility if consumed (Lee et al., 2009b). This represents a perceived imbalance of power between the consumer and the organization (Berndt et al., 2019).

A moral avoidance could arise from the moral standpoint of gambling from the individual. It is important to note that 'Disordered Internet Gambling' exists, i.e. a psychological disorder, presenting a growing public health issue since the introduction of online gambling (Gainsbury, Suhonen & Saastamoinen, 2014). Many have shown increased levels of problematic gambling behavior and some may avoid online casinos based on the risks (Griffiths, 2009). This issue can be described as *"... the situation when person's gambling activity gives rise to harm to the individual player, and/ or to his or her family, and may extend into the community"* (Dickerson, McMillen, Hallenbone, Volberg & Wooley, 1997, p. 106). It can be argued that the mass of gambling-related advertising influences gambling behavior and gambling-related issues (Håkansson & Widinghoff, 2019), which may lead to a moral avoidance of online casino advertising.

2.5.1.4. Deficit-Value Avoidance

Deficit-value avoidance occurs when a consumer perceives that the cost is higher and irrelevant in relation to the benefit/trade-off received, i.e. a functional promise (Lee et al., 2009b). A deficiency in value can be visible when consumers find a product or service as low-quality, thus not living up to functional promises (Knittel et al., 2016). Consumers may avoid brands because of its unfamiliarity, as it brings high purchase risks due to the lack of knowledge and experience regarding its function and quality (Odoom et al., 2019). Consumers often prefer brands they have encountered before, because of its perceived value in comparison to the unknown (Knittel et al., 2016).

The aesthetics of brand could lead to an avoidance if a consumer finds it insufficient or irrelevant (Odoom et al., 2019). In terms of service brands, the deficit-value avoidance has its focus on the service value and less on the price-quality relationship that is of the essence for product brands (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Hoffman, Turley & Kelley, 2002). Not only monetary sacrifices should be considered, but also the non-monetary, including the search and time costs (Berndt et al., 2019).

In the context of online casinos, it is necessary to consider the aesthetics and functionalities that the servicescape provides to the user (Abarbanel, 2013). Abarbanel (2013) argued that the

online environment can have great impact on consumption outcomes and stated that *"atmospheric and functional qualities of on online gambling site are herein theorized to impact a gambler's revisit intentions, desire to stay at the online casino, and recommendation to others"* (p. 29).

2.5.1.5. Advertising Avoidance

Advertisements and the different components of a brand's marketing communication mix has an effect on consumers decisions, possibly leading to an avoidance of a brand (Odoom et al., 2019). Knittel et al. (2016) identified advertising as a form of brand avoidance, in which they argue that it can arise from the distinct reasons of the content, celebrity endorser, music and response to advertisement. Berndt et al. (2019) found that the frequency of advertisements might also be a contributing reason for brand avoidance. The content can play a large role in the event of service brand avoidance, as some consumers may find certain content distasteful (Berndt et al., 2019). Typically, the message or storyline brands aim to portray in their advertisements are affected by various executional frameworks including fantasies, animations, demonstrations, slice-of-life etc., which can evoke negative feelings from the audience, thus resulting in brand avoidance (Odoom et al., 2019). Brands that take "risks" have used taboo themes in advertising to portray a more provocative message, which can affect both consumers attitudes, as well as their purchase intentions (Sabri & Obermiller, 2012).

By using a celebrity endorser in advertisements, an organization elicits an association between the brand and the individual endorsing the service, which can lead to a positive or negative outcome based on the audience's perception of that specific celebrity endorser (Berndt et al., 2019). In Sweden, the online casino brand Leo Vegas has utilized both Frank Andersson and Dolph Lundgren as celebrity endorsers in their advertisements as a marketing strategy (Friberg Wennerberg, 2018). By having a famous person in an advertisement, a shift in focus from the brand itself to the celebrity endorser associated with that brand can be made (Knittel et al., 2016).

Advertising avoidance can arise from the music used. The music could be recognized as too loud, distasteful or irrelevant, leading to an avoidance based on the inappropriateness (Berndt et al., 2019). The response to the advertisement contributes to advertising avoidance. By using advertisements, brands create an opportunity to influence the thoughts and behavior of their audience, and the consequence can vary by the reaction among viewers (Berndt et al., 2019).

The response can be negative when a consumer dislike and/or perceive an advertisement as annoying and irritating (Knittel et al., 2016). These presented reasons emphasize that even when brands aim to evoke positive emotions and result from their audience, consumers may still engage in brand avoidance based on unintended effects from advertising, this could be because of sensitivity and interpretation by the audience (Odoom et al., 2019).

2.6. The Proposed Research Framework

In order to understand brand avoidance and advertising among generation Y in Sweden, a modified research framework was established (See Figure 4). As the authors have specified their study on advertising, it was deemed that experiential, identity and moral avoidance was insignificant, and it was of greater importance to solely focus on advertising avoidance. The proposed research framework for brand avoidance and casino advertising has kept the areas of content, celebrity endorser, music and response from the previous framework by Knittel et al. (2016). The framework has drawn upon Håkansson and Widinghoff (2019), and added certain components of gambling advertising, as well as the frequency of advertisements from Berndt et al. (2019).

Figure 4 The Proposed Research Framework

Source: Developed by the authors.

3. Method

In this chapter, the methodology of this study is presented. All steps and decisions have been carefully considered, therefore, insights and argumentation regarding each step and choice is included. Additionally, the different steps and procedures the authors considered and tried to conduct are described, so that trustworthiness can be achieved.

3.1. Research Philosophy

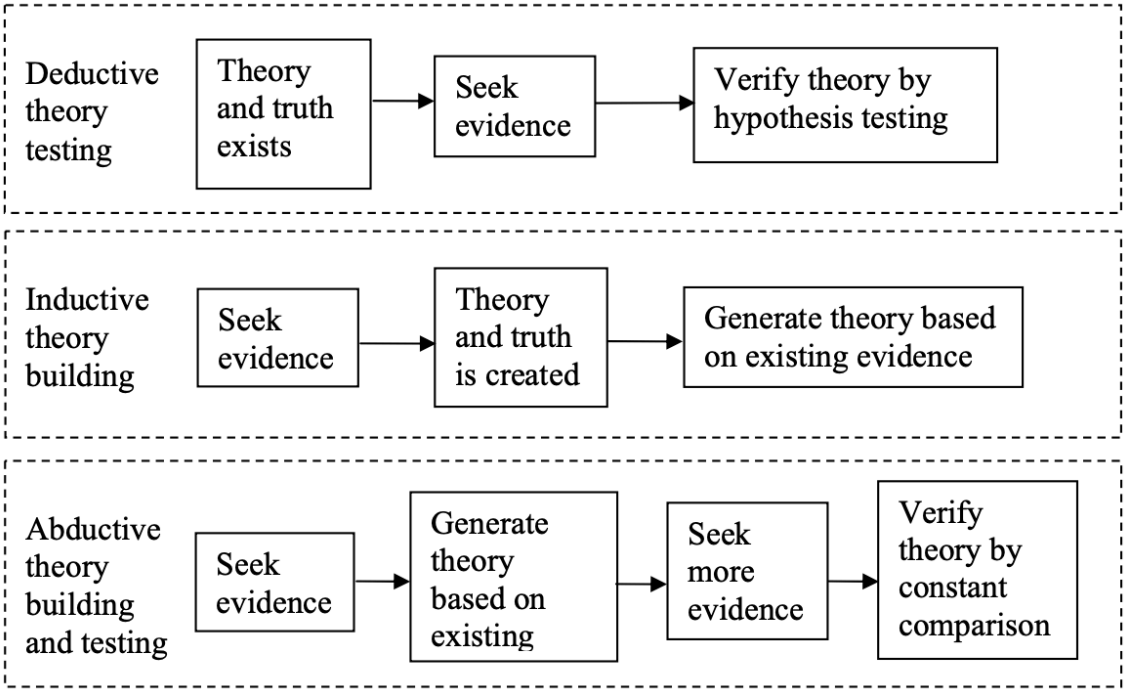
The research philosophy is important, as it presents the assumptions in which the researcher sees the world. These assumptions provide a foundation for the strategic and methodological choices (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). The philosophy influences how the authors understand the topic explored (Johnson & Clark, 2006). Different philosophies correspond to different purposes, rather than some philosophies being 'better' than others (Saunders et al., 2016). A research philosophy is necessary as researchers require a philosophical response to *"Why research?"* (Holden & Lynch, 2004).

To fulfill the purpose, the authors adapted the view of social constructivism. Creswell (2013) argued that social constructivism can be described as an interpretive framework, where people aim to understand the world, whilst developing meanings aligned with their experiences. Social life is constructed, and interpretations of the social world is shared between cultures, groups and societies through interactions (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Saunders et al., 2016). Knowledge is regarded as being constructed, in the postmodern era, social constructivism is associated with qualitative research (Andrews, 2012). Individuals interpret and experience situations differently, because they view the world differently. Reasonably, their different interpretations affect how they act and interact with others (Saunders et al., 2016). From a social construct view, there are groups of people who see the world differently, which opens up for the possibility of multiple realities (Denscombe, 2017).

3.2. Research Approach

Saunders et al. (2016) implied that the extent to which researchers consider theory plays a significant role in research designs as it affects the process. There are three approaches to consider; deductive, inductive or abductive (See Figure 5.). For deductive reasoning, the logic is that *"when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true"* (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 144). Contrary, the logic for induction is that one uses known premises to develop untested conclusions. Lastly, abduction uses known premises to generate testable conclusions (Saunders et al., 2016). What applies to all approaches, is that they are used to make logical inferences about the world and build theory, what sets them apart is their contrasting reasoning principles (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Figure 5 The Role of Theory and Evidence in Deductive, Inductive, and Abductive Research Approaches



Source: Lee (2007, p. 27)

This study applied an abductive approach as the authors aimed to explore and validate what previous researchers have established about brand avoidance. The authors used the already established premises presented by Knittel et al. (2016) at the start of the research. Then, by utilizing the literature the authors designed their research to collect empirical data to seek evidence that generated new theory. The abductive process allowed the authors to revise and extend the framework of Knittel et al. (2016) specifically to the online casino industry. Saunders

et al. (2016) stated that in an abductive approach *"data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection"* (p. 144). Throughout this study, the authors collected empirical data, identified themes, and then collected more data, until they found saturation and confirmation (Given, 2016).

3.3. Research Design

As this research does not wish to describe the specific characteristics of a given situation, i.e. 'paint a picture' of it, nor determine causal inferences, exploratory research was deemed to be appropriate (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Exploratory research is preferred when one conducts initial research to clarify an ambiguous phenomenon, as this study does (Malhotra, Hall, Shawn & Oppenheim, 2006). In studies of exploratory nature, secondary data is often identified through a systematic literature search, and primary data is collected through interviews and focus groups, with questions that ask 'how' or 'what' (Saunders et al., 2016). One of the main advantages that this research gains from its exploratory research design is that it is possible to adapt in response to changes that may occur during the research process, which has been of great value (Denscombe, 2017).

3.4. Qualitative research

Based on the purpose of this study, the authors found it suitable to conduct qualitative research. Qualitative research aims to gather new insights on phenomena from words and expressions, through elaborate interpretations (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). To illustrate *"qualitative research is characteristically exploratory, fluid and flexible, data-driven and context sensitive"* (Mason, 2002. p. 24). Commonly, qualitative research is connected to small-scale studies, and the researchers are closely connected to the data (Denscombe, 2017). The purpose of this study requires the process to be of a qualitative nature, as it calls for the discovery of ideas and interpretation, which the authors have accomplished with a small-scale study (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). This research does not intent to examine relationship between variables, measure or provide falsification, evidently making qualitative research approach most appropriate (Saunders et al., 2016; Witteloostuijn, 2016).

3.5. Time Horizon

The time horizon expresses if a research has been conducted in a longitudinal or cross-sectional manner (Saunders et al., 2016). In a longitudinal study, the data is collected over an extended time period (Denscombe, 2017; Saunders et al., 2016). Contrary, a cross-sectional study takes place at one point, or over a short period of time (Levin, 2006). This research is cross-sectional, and therefore illustrates a snapshot from a specific time period (Saunders et al., 2016). The data was collected from the 12th of April until the 24th of April in 2019, it does not aim to present any changes over time. This time horizon was preferred as the research needed to be conducted in a short period of time, and the purpose does not require a longitudinal study.

3.6. Sampling

3.6.1. Sampling of Population

Probability- and nonprobability sampling are the two main alternative sampling plans that can be utilized (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). For this research, a nonprobability sampling technique was applied to sample the population for both the focus groups and semi-structured interviews. The researchers opted for this technique as they needed to influence the selection of the sample, since the sample is exploratory, the experience of the sample is important and the sample is relatively small (Denscombe, 2017). Although it is statistically inappropriate to project data from a nonprobability sampling beyond the sample, it is the best suited sample for specific research purposes (Babin & Zikmund, 2016).

A judgement sample (purposive sample), was seen as appropriate for this study. It bases its relevance on the thought that it is possible to get the most valuable information from a small sample, being based on known attributes (Denscombe, 2017). The authors therefore based the sample on important and appropriate characteristics and criteria's (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). The participants had to belong to generation Y. They could neither love or hate online casino gambling, as the authors believed that those who stand on either of the extremes would be influenced by their standpoint, which could impact their perception of the advertisements. They had to be Swedish and watch on-demand television. To access the sample, 50 emails were sent out to individuals that the authors knew were Swedish and born between 1980 and 2000, and had access to on known premises, those unaccessible through email were initially contacted via

Facebook. An introduction to the research was provided, followed by questions concerning their view on gambling, online gambling and online casinos so the authors could judge their appropriateness. 38 people replied to the email. The sample was based on their view of gambling, including those perceived to not stand on either of the extreme sides based on judgement, as the entire range of the cohort of generation Y had to be present in the sample age was considered.

Through a judgement sample, the authors were able to create an 'exploratory sample', arguably seen as valuable (Denscombe, 2017). Two downfalls of this sample are that it is risky to project the data beyond the sample, and it is possible that the sample is unrepresentative if participants are chosen based on biases (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). In an attempt to achieve a representative and valid sample, the criteria's the authors used in order to select the participants were discussed during debriefing sessions.

3.6.2. Sampling of Advertising

It is important to study advertisements shown on television because of their persuasive power within society (McArthur & Resko, 1975). The way Swedish consumers watch television has changed, as web-based television (on-demand) is more commonly watched than regular television, specifically by younger generations (Frick, 2018; "Fler tittar på video på internet", 2018). As this thesis is delimited to generation Y, the authors deemed it appropriate to sample the advertisements through on-demand television.

The first attempt to sample the advertisements was to contact television companies (with on-demand services) in Sweden. The aim was to get a list of all current casino advertisements broadcasted during a specific time period. TV4, Dplay, Channel 3 and Channel 5 were contacted, but none could provide the information.

The authors then considered to sample the advertisements from YouTube, being appropriate based on the internet behavior of generation Y (Davidsson & Thoresson, 2017). Youtube tailors their advertisements based on e.g. the websites someone has visited, which made the authors reconsider it ("Ads you see on videos", n.d.). The authors realized that the sample could be inaccurate based on the tailored advertisements, thus finding the use of YouTube inappropriate. Instead, the authors turned to Viaplay to sample advertisements, as the Swedish Authority for

Press, Radio and Tv (2018) found that 21,2% of Swedish households are subscribed to this on-demand service. Viaplay presented the benefit that the advertisements are not tailored, but the same broadcast goes out to everyone.

The advertisements were recorded over 7 days. The channels used were Channel 3, Channel 5 and TV 6, chosen based on convenience, potentially presenting the sample with limitations. The aim was to utilize channels that generation Y in Sweden watch the most, but no data that indicated any channel preferences was identified. To gather a good representation of advertisements, recordings took place during different three-hour long-time periods of the day (See Table 2), from April 1st until April 7th, 2019. Viaplay made it possible for the authors to record the advertisements after being live, as they were still available online after the broadcasting. Therefore, the advertisements could be recorded in a time-efficient manner. In total, 13 advertisements were collected (See Table 3). Initially, more gambling related advertisements were recorded, but only those promoting online casinos were selected. One limitation that the period selected for analysis presents is that no advertisement contained any aspects of celebrity endorsement. Thus, making it impossible for the authors to explore whether or not celebrity endorsement in advertising contribute to brand avoidance in the industry.

Table 2 Visual Overview of When Recordings, starting at April 1st, 2019 and Ending at April 7th, 2019

	08-11	**11-14**	**14-17**	**17-20**	**20-23**	**23-02**
Monday	X		X		X	
Tuesday		X		X		X
Wednesday	X		X		X	
Thursday		X		X		X
Friday	X		X		X	
Saturday		X		X		X
Sunday	X		X		X	

Source: Developed by the authors.

The numbers (08-11, 11-14, 14-17, 17-20, 20-23, 23-02) indicate which time of the day the recording took place.

Table 3 Sampled Advertisements

Advertisement	Length of Advertisement
A1. Video Slots	10
A2. Svenska Spel Casino	14
A3. Storspelare	15
A4. Speedy casino	5
A5. Snabbare	20
A6. Pronto Casino	20
A7. Play Ojo	21
A8. Ninja Casino	10
A9. Maria Casino	15
A10. LeoVegas	5
A11. Vera & John	10
A12. iGame	20
A13. Hajper	20

Source: Developed by the authors.

After careful ethical consideration, the authors made the decision to not upload the advertisements online. As the authors do not have rights to the material, it was only collected for the purpose of this study and is to be deleted as soon as possible. Instead, a description of all 13 advertisements can be found in Appendix 1.

3.7. Data Collection

3.7.1. Secondary Data

Secondary data is commonly described as data that has been priory collected by somebody else, for a different purpose and aim (Babin & Zikmund, 2016; Denscombe, 2017). Secondary data was collected to allow the authors to review and explore the topic. This allowed for efficient and specific collection of primary data and played an important role in identifying a research gap (Denscombe, 2017). Secondary data is readily available and can quickly be collected, which is valuable as this research was conducted over a short time period. To ensure reliability of the secondary data, there was an ongoing process of evaluation in terms of value and relevance. The secondary data had to be up-to-date, provide aid in answering the research question, provide sufficient methodological information and be accessible (Babin & Zikmund, 2016).

The primary goal was to identify peer-reviewed academic journals, as these publications are both written and evaluated by experts, which implies that they are of high quality (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.7.1.1. Literature Search and Review

The literature search enables identification of relevant and useful sources, and often requires the use of four to six keywords and trustworthy databases (Denscombe, 2017). Previous data and literature regarding brand avoidance, service brands and advertising were found and accessed through physical and electronic sources (See Table 4 for overview). Google Scholar and Primo were the main electronic databases utilized. Both offer valuable insights on publications, as Google Scholar displays how many times a specific source has been cited, and the date of publication, while Primo allows one to specify the searches. To gain access to physical books, the library of Jönköping University was visited. Throughout the literature search, the date of publication and number of citations was considered to determine the relevancy. It was considered that brand avoidance is not commonly researched, and the date of publication can indeed affect the number of citations.

In order to present a valuable and accurate overview of the existing literature, the way in which the researchers review secondary data is important (Denscombe, 2017). It entails both a description of key elements and an overview of the literature. This research aims to present and provide an analysis of the various sources presented, rather than a sequence of summaries. To succeed, the process was systematically approached and recorded.

Table 4 Overview of The Literature Search

Overview of the literature search	
Databases	Primo, Google scholar, Jönköping University Library
Main theoretical field	Brand Avoidance
Key words	Brand Avoidance, Anti-Consumption, Service Brand, Advertising, Consumer Behavior
Types of Literature	E-Books, Peer-reviewed Articles, Predatory Published Articles
Criteria considered	Date of publication, Number of citations, Keywords

Source: Developed by the authors.

3.7.2. Primary Data

Primary data present data that have been originally collected by researchers, to answer the research question (Hox & Boeije, 2015). For this specific research purpose, a collection of primary data was necessary and individually tailored for the purpose (Malhotra et al., 2006). The data were collected through focus groups and semi-structured interviews, elaborated in sections 3.8.3.2. and 3.8.3.3. Focus groups and semi-structured interviews are commonly combined by researchers, as it provides confirmation of the data, which this exploratory study requires (Saunders et al., 2016). A large amount of primary data was collected from a relatively small sample in order to fulfill the purpose (Hox & Boeije, 2005). Through qualitative primary data, one can further explore the participants perspectives on specific situations and topics (Maylor & Blackmon, 2005).

The data was collected in Swedish, as the advertisements were in Swedish. To ensure the efficiency and value of the primary data collection, a pilot study was conducted (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). The pilot study allowed the researchers to identify areas of improvement i.e.,

the open-ended questions, and the group composition of the focus groups (Denscombe, 2017; Babin & Zikmund, 2016).

3.7.2.1. Focus Groups

A focus group is a free-flowing interview with a small group of people, ideally containing 6-9 participants, arranged by the researchers and led by a moderator (Denscombe, 2017). They often last for 1,5-2 hours, a flexible format that encourages dialogue and discussion is required. Focus groups enable gathering of interactive data, as it plays on the differences and similarities of the participants (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). The moderator has an important role in focus groups, by facilitating the setting and group dynamic, therefore the choice of moderator was based on prior experience (Denscombe, 2017). The researchers studied important qualities that a moderator should have, e.g. making everyone feel comfortable, be a good listener and not injecting their own opinion into the discussion. The aim with the focus groups was to gather data not only on what the participants thought about the online casino advertisements, but also to explore the underlying experiences. The focus groups allowed the data to be collected in a short period of time, whilst gathering different perspectives (Babin & Zikmund, 2016).

It was important to provide the participants of the focus groups with a written consent form, as the topic needs special ethical consideration because of the nature of gambling (See section 3.9.5). This enabled the participants to make an informed decision to participate in the study (See Appendix 3) (Denscombe, 2017). The focus groups were initiated by a welcoming and introduction of the authors, the aim of the study and the agenda. Then, introductory questions were asked to break the ice, and questions then became more specified towards online casinos, to end in an advertisement focus when the 13 advertisements were shown. The authors utilized an interview guide throughout the process (See Appendix 2) (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). As the focus groups were face-to-face, important non-verbal cues, e.g. facial expression and body language were also documented (Saunders et al., 2016). The focus groups showed further advantages, such as the speed and ease of collecting data, the possibility for piggyback riding and flexibility (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Three focus groups took place with six participants in each (See Table 5). A number of the participants had tried gambling through an online casino a few times before, none had a history of problem gambling and none expressed to do it on a regular basis. None identified themselves as a gambler. This study does not compare the thoughts of those who had tried gambling and those who had not tried gambling before.

Table 5 Participants of Focus Groups

Participant (M= Male F= Female)	**Year of birth**	**Focus Group**	**Length of Focus Group** (Minutes)	**Date** (Month, Day, Year)	**Gambled before** (on an online casino)
M1	1990	1	105	April 12th, 2019	Yes
M2	1992				No
M3	1999				No
F1	1991				Yes
F2	1985				No
F3	1996				No
M4	1982	2	93	April 15th, 2019	Yes
M5	1998				No
M6	1993				Yes
M7	1991				Yes
F4	1983				No
F5	1994				No
M8	1997	3	99	April 16th, 2019	Yes
M9	1999				No
M10	1984				Yes
F6	1986				No
F7	1981				No
F8	1999				Yes

Source: Developed by the authors.

3.7.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

It was decided to complement the data from the focus groups with interviews to further explore and gain personal insights on the subject. As it was difficult to arrange that all of the participants in the study could be present for a focus group, semi-structured interviews were conducted with those who could not attend a focus group. This made it possible for the authors to confirm the data (Saunders et al., 2016), which was valuable since the authors thought that the focus groups

could be influenced by the more opinionated participants, with the risk of biases. The interviews allowed the authors to gather data until no new codes or themes were identified, in an attempt to achieve saturation and confirmation (Urquhart, 2013; Given 2016; Saunders et al., 2016). The planning of the interviews was flexible, as it only required availability of one participant at a time. Arguably, the participants that could not attend any focus groups might have valuable insights and opinions, and it was important to access them. The semi-structured interviews were not of a follow-up manner, and the same advertisements and interview guide was used in both the focus groups and interviews (See Appendix 2). Structured interviews were not preferred, as they do not allow for probing questions or flexibility, neither unstructured interviews were conducted, as the researchers thought that an interview guide would facilitate the process. The authors considered their lack of research experience and found unstructured interviews to be too advanced (Denscombe, 2017). Semi-structured interviews made it possible for the researchers to ask probing questions and a majority of the questions were open-ended. As the interviews took place in a face-to-face setting, non-verbal cues were documented to add richness to the data (Saunders et al., 2016). It was important to present the participants of the interviews with a written consent form, so that they all knew enough about the study to be able to make an informed decision to participate, again because of the ethical consideration the topic requires (See Appendix 3) (Denscombe, 2017).

The interviews were initiated with a welcome and an introduction of the topic and authors. Then, a few general and introductory questions were asked to establish trust and get the conversation going. Gradually questions became more specific, and the 13 advertisements were shown, the authors utilized an interview guide throughout the process (See Appendix 3.) (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). In total, six semi-structured interviews were conducted (See Table 6). Some of the participants had tried gambling through an online casino a few times before, none had a history of problem gambling and none expressed to do it on a regular basis. No one identified themselves as a gambler. The study does not compare the thoughts of those who had tried to gamble and those who had not tried to gamble before.

Table 6 Participants of Semi-Structured Interviews

Participant (M= Male F= Female)	**Year of birth**	**Length of Interview** (Minutes)	**Date** (Month, Day, Year)	**Gambled before** (on an online casino)
M11	1998	66	April 17th 2019	Yes
M12	1989	72	April 18th 2019	No
M13	1981	58	April 22nd 2019	Yes
F9	1996	64	April 22nd 2019	No
F10	1990	78	April 24th 2019	No
F11	1987	62	April 24th 2019	Yes

Source*:* Developed by the authors.

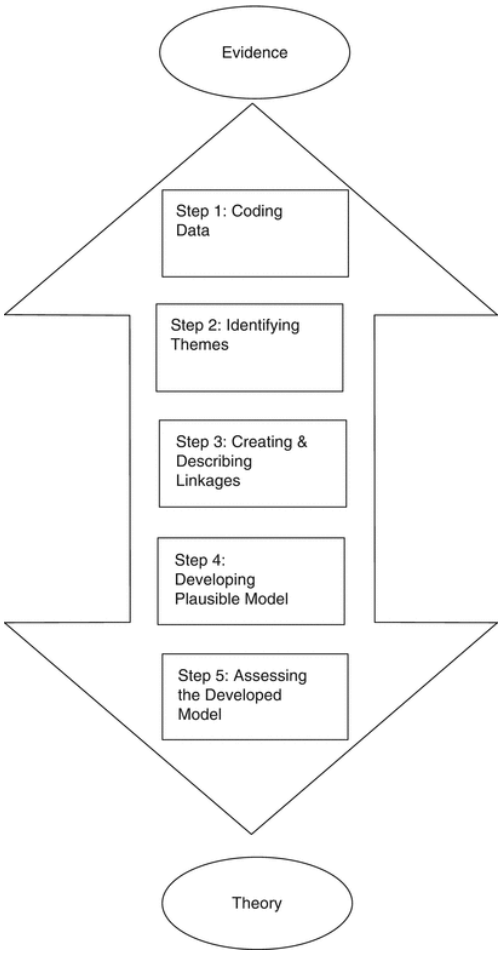
3.8. Data Analysis

The data were kept private and protected throughout the entire data analysis, and participants were given pseudonyms names to promote anonymity. Before finalized, the findings have been validated by the respondents to enhance credibility. Denscombe (2017) argued that before one can start to analyze qualitative data, it is important to consider that raw data needs to be protected. Firstly, the audio recordings of the focus groups and interviews were duplicated. The next step in the process concerned the transcription of the recordings, which was one of the more time-consuming aspects of the analysis, as it does not simply just involve writing down what the participants have said, but also involves analytical judgement (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Then, the notes from visual cues were matched with the transcriptions of the audio recordings to provide better overview and richer meaning (Denscombe, 2017). The quotations that were part of the final themes were lastly carefully translated into English.

A common strategy to analyze qualitative data is the thematic analysis, where the aim is to identify themes and codes in the data to form a codebook/template that allow for a structured interpretation (Cassell & Bishop, 2018). Seal (2015) defined a code as *"a descriptor of a data segment that assigns meaning, whereas a theme is a theoretical construct that explains similarities or variations across codes"* (p. 452). After careful consideration, the authors decided to opt for a thematic analysis, to ensure an effective analysis and the authors gathered enough data to have a contextualized and comprehensive understanding (Bazeley, 2013).

There are different ways in which a thematic analysis can take place (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016; Morse, 2011). Rambaree (2018) proposed the Abductive Thematic Network Analysis (ATNA), which combines ideas from Attride-Stirling's (2001) Thematic Network Analysis (TNA) and Haig's (2015) Abductive Theory of Method (ATOM). ATNA presents an abductive reasoning, aiming to explain the links between the themes of the primary data, and consists of five steps (See Figure 6).

Figure 6 Process and Steps in the Abductive Thematic Network Analysis



Source: Rambaree, p. 67 (2018).

To follow the abductive reasoning of this study, the authors came to the conclusion that they should analyze their data through ATNA. The first step involved a systematic examination of the data, enabling identification of appropriate codes (Rambaree, 2018). Fereday and Muir-Cocharane (2006) asserted that for a code to be good, the aim is to capture the richness of the qualitative data. Coding is an evolving process, that allows researchers to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomena (Clarke & Braun, 2013), therefore it is common that

researchers have to revisit and modify codes. Birks, Chapman and Francis (2008) argued that researchers need to assume a 'reflexive stance', i.e. one has to be aware of biases in the analytical process. The second step involves the identification of themes, which can be described as a fuzzy concept that is based on a grouping of codes to characterize findings (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Feredary & Muir-Cocharane, 2006). To identify themes in the primary data, the authors studied the codes in relation to the context and associated quotations, with an aim to make analytical and reflective memos (Rambaree, 2018).

The third step concerns creating and describing the linkages between the themes through an abductive reasoning. Rambaree (2018) argued that researchers;

> *Need to go deeper in deconstructing the gathered data by further exploring the themes, the linkages, and the emerging patterns to provide interpretive explanation on the phenomena being observed with reference to the gathered evidence. This particular task requires the beginning of abductive reasoning (through making inferences) with a back-and-forth movement between themes and gathered evidence (data) to identify what is emerging as knowledge in answering the research question/s* (p. 74).

According to Rambaree (2018) the researcher develops a plausible model in the fourth step. The authors have to take the themes and arrange them into a plausible model that answers the research question. The model is a graphical presentation that shows and explains inter-linkages between the themes. This presents an important step towards a theorization of the explored phenomena (Rambaree, 2018). Lastly, the fifth step is the assessing of the developed model. Here, the researcher asses their model in comparison to the existing model, for this study figure 4 (Haig, 2015; Knittel et al., 2016). The aim is to assess if the plausible model is coherent, theoretically aligned and scientific (Lipton, 2000). Rambaree (2018) asserted that;

> *ATNA helps researchers' structure qualitative data analysis through stepwise application of abductive theory of method. Such approach allows researchers to go into deep details in exploring and working with qualitative data. It therefore allows researchers to theorize their findings through the development of conceptual/thematic model/s, which can be tested and validated through further research. It therefore brings rigor to qualitative data* (p. 83).

By using ATNA, the authors aimed to follow their abductive research approach. The authors gathered qualitative data and then went back and forth between their themes and Knittel et al.'s (2016) model to assess the findings.

3.9. Trustworthiness

To succeed in presenting a research with credible data of high quality, criteria that are concerned with qualitative research have been considered. To ensure that this research is trustworthy, it has been prioritized to recognize credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability and ethics throughout the work.

3.9.1. Credibility

Credibility is arguably one of the most important aspects to consider, ensuring trustworthiness. It deals with how well researchers can show that their data is appropriate (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As qualitative researchers cannot prove that their results are truly correct, the aim should be to convince the reader that the data is 'reasonably likely' to be legitimate (Denscombe, 2017). There are various actions researchers can take to ensure credibility. To realize flaws of the study and alternative ways in which the research can be conducted, frequent debriefing sessions and peer scrutiny of the research can be useful (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Respondent validation, i.e. when participants receive the data and findings to check validity of the findings, helps confirm the factual accuracy of researchers' understandings (Denscombe, 2017).

3.9.2. Dependability

Denscombe (2017) asserted that the 'selves' of researchers are often connected to the research instrument, e.g. the interviewers can become an integral part of the data collection. Therefore, instead of ensuring that the research, if it was to be repeated by other researchers, all other things being equal, would present the same results, qualitative research needs to show that *"if someone else did the research, would he or she have got the same results and arrived as the same conclusions?"* (Denscombe, 2017, p. 327). In qualitative research, dependability can be expressed through a thorough demonstration of the reasoning behind the different methodological choices, as well as changes within the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Saunders et al., 2016). For others to be able to review the decision-making behind different procedures,

an audit trail is valuable (Denscombe, 2017). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued *"an inquiry audit cannot be conducted without a residue of records from the business transactions involved"* (p. 319). The third chapter of this study aims to present an audit trail so that the decision-making can be followed.

3.9.3. Transferability

As qualitative research commonly bases their studies on small samples, the representative power of the data is often questioned. Statistically speaking, it is not possible to generalize the findings of a qualitative study to other cases (Denscombe, 2017). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that researchers who engage in qualitative studies therefore need to consider the transferability of their findings. Transferability can be described as *"an imaginative process in which the reader of the research uses information about the particular instance that has been studied to arrive at a judgement about how far it would apply to other comparable instances"* (Denscombe, 2017, p. 328). To assure transferability, researchers should provide an accurate description of the research design, interview questions, context of the study, interpretations and findings (Saunders et al., 2016; Shenton 2004). The reader can only consider transferability when all the appropriate data and information is presented (Denscombe, 2017).

3.9.4. Confirmability

Denscombe (2017) argued that as qualitative data always stems from a process of interpretation, it is never truly free from the influence of the researchers. Researchers that engage in qualitative methods need to consider to which extent they involve their 'self' into the interpretation of data, as well as ensuring an open mind throughout the research process. To ensure confirmability, researchers might provide some biographical detail about themselves (See Appendix 4), and present how they have approached the research open mindedly. Additionally, they need to ensure that they do not neglect data which does not fit into the analysis and explore alternative explanations within the data set (Denscombe, 2017).

3.9.5. Ethics

The underlying assumption of research ethics is that "*researchers have no privileged position in society that justifies them pursuing their interests at the expense of those they are studying - no matter how valuable they hope the findings might be"* (Denscombe, 2017, p. 337). Saunders et al. (2016) illustrated that ethics considers how the researcher behaves in relation to the rights of those being studied, and those affected by the research. There are four core principles of research ethics to consider; *"Participants interests need to be protected"*, *"Participation should be voluntary and based on informed consent"*, "*Researchers should operate in an open and honest manner with respect to the investigation"* and *"Researchers should comply with the laws of the land"* (Denscombe, 2017, p. 341-347).

The authors realized that the topic and industry studied raised important ethical considerations. The question whether or not it is right to advertise gambling and if gambling should be present in society are two ethical aspects to acknowledge (Binde, 2014). Cassidy (2014) argued that one of the most prominent ethical considerations in research concerning gambling is where the funding comes from. This can be dismissed as this research does not have any type of funding. The ethics of gambling advertising has various dimensions. Individuals who believe that society would be better without gambling are likely to find any type of advertising promoting such action to be wrong (Binde, 2014). Cowlishaw and Thomas (2018) argued that the most critical type of gambling research is studies that looks into problem gambling, its causes and consequences, which this study does not. The authors of this research find the most critical ethical consideration to be that managerial implications might help casino advertising managers to enhance their marketing efforts. The most prominent ethical consideration regards whether or not it is right to advertise gambling. The authors of this paper have done their best to not emphasize whether or not gambling advertising is ethically correct. However, the authors did consider that the topic is ethically *sensitive* throughout the entire research process.

To ensure an ethical treatment of the participants, all were asked to participate voluntarily. The written consent form (See Appendix 3) was used to provide the participants with enough detail about the research and its intention, and it provides evidence that all participants have agreed to engage in this research (Denscombe, 2017). One aspect that is important, is that the form ensured the participants the right to withdraw their consent at any time. To further protect the interest of the participants of this research, anonymity has been guaranteed, and all have been

treated equally. The nature of this study does not put the participants in the risk of physical, psychological or personal harm.

Saunders et al. (2016) argued that researchers must strive to be as objective as possible, as the quality of the research is dependent on it. To ensure that this research has been conducted in an ethical manner, thus providing research of high quality, the researchers have considered multiple aspects concerning ethical behavior. Throughout the process, the researchers have considered that they need to; act professional and honest, minimize personal preferences and ideals and interpret, present the findings as unbiased as possible, personal preferences and ideals have been realized and minimized, the interpretation and presentation and not to plagiarize others work.

4. Empirical Findings

The following chapter will present the empirical findings from the focus groups and interviews. For the data to follow a logical order, it has been presented in a thematic order, which is coherent with the proposed findings of this thesis. The empirical findings serve as a base for the following chapter, Analysis. The sample display of the participants can be found in section 3.7.2.2 and 3.7.2.3.

The focus groups and semi-structured interviews were concentrated on exploring the reasons of brand avoidance based on the presented advertisements. A total of 13 different casino advertisements were shown to the participants (See Appendix 1 for description of the advertisements), and they were able to share their opinions and thoughts of these presented advertisements and the affiliated brands. The empirical data is presented based on the identified themes, as it offers an easy overview of the data, and is concerned with all of the advertisements that where shown. At first, the data from the introductory questions are displayed to offer some insights to the participants. Then, each theme is presented, some including sub-categories. To be able to present the reader with a clear structure, each quotation will be followed by an indication of the participant, **M1-13** and **F1-11**, followed by **A1-A13** which indicates which advertisement that had been shown before their statement (see Appendix 1). The data from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews are presented simultaneously since the aim with the different data collections was to achieve saturation, confirmation and minimize bias, not to compare them, no difference was seen in the responses. The data was treated equally from participants who had tried gambling and those who had not, as no difference between them was identified.

4.1. General Knowledge and Impression of Industry

Table 7 provides an overview on which participants had tried gambling before. As an introduction to the focus groups and interviews, Q5 & Q6 in the interview guide (See Appendix 2), provided insights into what casino brands the participants already knew about (See Table 8) and the participants first thoughts and impressions of casino advertising (See table 9). The participants were also asked to rank the advertisements based on their liking of them, from worst to best, which are presented in table 10. The rankings are based on the mean score of each

advertisement. With these tables we do not wish to apply any statistical consideration to the data, rather that it presents valuable insights about the participants.

Table 7 Previous Gambling Experience

Participant (M= Male F= Female)	**Had gambled before**	**Had not gambled before**
M1	X	
M2		X
M3		X
M4	X	
M5		X
M6	X	
M7	X	
M8	X	
M9		X
M10	X	
M11	X	
M12		X
M13	X	
F1	X	
F2		X
F3		X
F4		X
F5		X
F6		X
F7		X
F8	X	
F9		X
F10		X
F11	X	
Total amount	**11**	**13**

Source: Developed by the authors.

Table 8 Brand Awareness Among Participants

Online casino brand	**Amount** (Of participants that knew about the brand)
Ninja Casino	22
Maria Casino	21
LeoVegas	18
Vera & John	16
Casinostugan	15
Snabbare	10
Casumo	8
Mr. Green	8
Royal Casino	4

Source: Developed by the authors.

Table 9 Participants First Impression of Casino Advertising

First word (associated with casino advertising.)	**Amount** (how many participants that associated casino advertising with this word)
Aggressive	7
Annoying	5
Irritation	5
Jingles	3
Bonuses	2
Brainwashing	1
Loud	1

Source: Developed by the authors.

Table 10 Liking of Advertisement

Liking of Casino Advertisement	
1.	(Least liked) **Pronto**
2.	**Snabbare**
3.	**Hajper**
4.	**iGame**
5.	**Storspelare**
6.	**Videoslots**
7.	**LeoVegas**
8.	**Ninja Casino**
9.	**Speedy**
10.	**Maria Casino**
11.	**Play Ojo**
12.	**Vera & John**
13.	(Most liked) **Svenska Spel**

Source: Developed by the authors.

4.2. Advertising Avoidance and Online Casinos

The different aspects of advertising that contribute to brand avoidance will be presented below. These themes are based on the data gathered from all 13 presented advertisements.

4.2.1. Content

The content of the advertisements played a central role in the mind of all participants. There were various aspects that were brought up in connection to the content. To provide a clear structure they were divided into the sections of attractiveness, focus on wins, message about rapid cash-out, focus on female gambler and brand name and slogan. All of the following quotes are based on Q9-Q16 in the interview guide (See Appendix 2).

4.2.1.1. Attractiveness

The visual aspects of the advertisements played a central role in the perception of attractiveness of an advertisement. The reasons for the negative perception of a brand was seen through various aspects, including the colors and the perceived childish approach in the content of the casino advertisements.

"It is so ugly [...] It does not speak to me at all, is this what their site looks like? Then I would definitely choose another brand" (F3, A12)

Most of the participants mentioned that the use of human beings in real settings gave them a somewhat positive response to the content, while animations on the contrary, made the brands look less attractive.

"I think that it matters whether or not the advert portrays real people or animated things [...] I find the animated content to be negative and not as appealing" (M1, A11)

In addition to the aesthetics of the content, the participants also agreed that it was of importance of how these visuals were shown, especially focused on the speed (tempo) and sequences. Regarding advertisement 5, participant M4 felt overwhelmed by the speed of the content and restricted him from processing the content.

"*Very annoying ad. I get a headache from it. There is too much going on, and I get the impression that they are just trying to cram in as much information about the brand as they can. I get stressed and would not choose this brand."* (M4, A5)

4.2.1.2. Focus on Wins

It was evident that the display and focus on wins in the advertisements caused a reaction among participants. A majority found it to make them feel disbelief and negativity towards the brand, and most had clear standpoints against it. According to many, it was expressed to be both unethical and misleading to focus on wins in the advertisements.

> *They should not be allowed to show people that win in the games, it is too pushy and makes it look easy to win a lot. I am not mad, but I would never gamble on their casino. [...] they are just lying, trying to take advantage of those who are already addicted* (M11, A6)

Some participants even noted on auditory cues which made it sound as if someone had won a spin, which was evident in the following statement;

"They make a winning sound effect, so even if they do not show someone winning, they try to imply it. I hate that" (M12, A12)

Another common thought the participants shared was that slogans that tried to portray it to be easy or common to win negatively affected their view of the brand.

"Their slogan is 'The feeling of winning', that really makes it look like everyone is going to win. So, deceiving." (F10, A9)

The central focus on wins in A13 even made participant F7 suspicious of the brand. She believed that the fact that the company emphasized the fact that those who decide to utilize their service would win was an attempt to suppress other aspects of the brand and gambling.

> *... 'oh, with others you may not win, but with us you will', but all casinos try to portray that. Then I cannot connect with this brand, it makes me feel as if they have something to hide, so I don't believe them.* (F7, A13)

4.2.1.3. Message About Rapid Payment and/or Cash-Out

A majority of the participants mentioned that many of the advertisements and brand names tried to highlight the ease and speed of cash-outs. Frequently, this aspect made the participants irritated, as it was deceiving in various ways. Some found that the advertisements portrayed that it is very common for people to win whilst gambling.

"They make it seem so simple, easy and fast to gamble away all of one's money, so the brand is trying to deceive us." (M6, A12)

For others, it was described to be a cheap trick that aimed to tempt individuals to gamble, as expressed by M1;

> *It bothers me that the logo shows up like it's 'pronto' and fast, and then a flash. [...] It is shallow and the whole thing is just terrible [...] just a cheap way to try to get people to gamble.* (M1, A6)

Another common impression the rapid cash-out indication had on the participants had to do with trustworthiness.

"... with 'Speedy' I think that it's supposed to be easy, you finish a game quickly and get your profits quickly. To me, that feels very unserious, and not a company that I would trust my money with." (M6, A4)

4.2.1.4. Focus on Female Gamblers

Many of the participants noticed a specific focus on female gamblers, especially in advertisements A9, A2, A7 and A13. This made the participants respond differently, as some thought of it as the company trying to get more women engaged in gambling and found it as something controversial and disturbing.

"They want to make women gamble more, but I do not think they are portraying a fair picture of what scenarios and type of people that gambles. I never see honest statistics or situations" (M6, A9)

One participant thought that the advertisement was femininely coded and that it played on stereotypes. Participant F2 expressed a negative response to the advert whilst arguing;

> *It annoys me that it is so directed towards women, and it is femininely coded. Playing on female stereotypes is so typical. Even the name is femininely coded, then there are two normative white women that are happy, walking around after a shopping spree.* (F2, A9)

Whilst another instead expressed that the fact that the advert was seen as having a more 'female approach' made the participant to believe that he simply would not turn to this brand, as he did not feel a connection with it.

"This has a female approach, which does not matter overall, but it would affect my choice of casino, since it only shows womanly things it does not attract me" (M10, A9)

4.2.1.5. Brand Name and Slogan

The name of the company was highlighted to contribute to the perceived credibility and reliability of the online casino brand. The brand name was commonly expressed to have a negative influence on the participants response to the advertisement. For many it was important that the brand name should be connected to the service, otherwise it was confusing.

"I believe that the name of a brand is very informative, so I would not choose this based on the fact that I don't understand the name and cannot connect it to their service" (M6, A12)

Many elaborated on what the slogans tried to portray, participant F11 believed that A7 had a slogan that was very deceiving.

"Such a stupid slogan, because no casino is nice [...] It's not that many people that leaves with a profit. Often people gamble the money they win away anyway." (F11, A7)

4.2.2. Auditory Cues

Another contributing reason for the negative connotation with the brands based on the advertisements was the auditory cues present in the advertisements. Commonly, they were expressed to be based on the music, sound effects, narrative voice and jingles.

4.2.2.1. Music

Participants found the music to often be too loud or fast, which was said to either annoy or stress the participants. Sometimes, when the music was too loud, some found it difficult to grasp the other content of the advertisements.

"The music is too much! Too loud, too bright [...] It annoys me since it is so, in your face, it makes me view the company in a bad light." (F1, A10)

A common way in which the participants described the music was that it was childish, making it seem to participant M13 as if the brand in A6 tried to address a younger target.

"I would never go for this brand, the sound is too much. So irritating, and the music was childish, it does not feel like they are trying to address adults." (M13, A6)

4.2.2.2. Sound Effects

A lot of the participants noted on the sound effects present in the advertisements, commonly they were expressed to affect their view negatively. It made the other aspects of the advertisements unimportant, especially when the sound effects made them feel stress or annoyance.

"The sound effects make a big difference in advertisements, if it is annoying it does not matter how good the editing is. This sound is so annoying, too speedy and stressful" (F10, A12)

Many expressed disbeliefs towards advertisements that contained the sound effect of 'winning', i.e. the sound of money dropping down from a slot machine. It was a common belief among the participants that the sound effect was misleading, and thus placed bad viewpoints towards the brand.

"They make a winning sound effect [...] I hate that" (M12, A12)

Most sound effects that were visible in connection to a presented win, regardless if it was coins dropping to the floor or some sort of 'hallelujah' choir in the background, was perceived as a disturbance.

"When she won the jackpot, or got the plastic bag, they had such annoying sound effect, like a hallelujah moment" (F1, A2)

4.2.2.3. Narrative Voice

The auditory cues of the advertisements were mentioned to be of great association with commercials in general, no matter the specific industry the brand operates in. It was argued by several participants that the narrative voice was of an intrusive manner, which did not make the advertisement appealing to them.

"I hate the typical 'Gamble more' manly voice. It is intrusive and unreliable" (M5, A1)

For some participants, the narrative voice in A3 already had an association with advertisements. This was expressed to have an immediate effect on their view of the company, as M11 mentioned;

> *When I hear this voice I immediately think of commercials. I associate this commanding voice with ads [...] I get pissed off that the voice is so intrusive, and I just feel that I want them to leave me alone. You are not talking to me like I am a normal person, it is just a voice that is there.* (M11, A3)

When the voice was perceived to be more childish, many participants found it to be disturbing, clearly expressed by F11;

"*I don't like the voice; it is very childish, and everything looks like a cartoon. I do not get the impression that this brand is offering a service for adults, I could never gamble there"* (F11, A13)

4.2.2.4. Jingle

Many of the advertisements collected for the study contained jingles, participants often found these to be annoying. Either, it gave a childish impression of the brand and advertisement;

"I kind of liked this one until their brand came into the ad with their jingle, it made it seem childish." (F2, A7)

Or made them react to the fact that it would be a cause of annoyance. Even when all other aspects of an advertisement were not expressed to be negative, the jingle on its own made participant F3 have a negative response.

"I instantly find this advert annoying, and when you hear them singing all the time it gets to you. It is not the advertising itself, but the jingle that would get to me." (F3, A9)

4.2.3. Emotional Response

By presenting the 13 different casino advertisements, the outcome generated various responses. Many of the participants expressed their response in terms of their attitude towards the brand, while most of them indicated that their impression from the advertisement directly influenced their perception of the brand itself and thus made them want to avoid the brand instead.

"I get annoyed at the company, because I am annoyed by their ad. I would then not visit their casino based on the fact that they already annoyed me." (F6, A5)

For some of the advertisements, many argued that the brands were attempting to utilize the time as much as possible, which created an overload of details under a short-period of time. This created response expressed in the feelings of annoyance and disturbance and caused many to dislike the advertisement and the associated brand.

> *This bothers me, there are so many things going on which makes it stressful. They have the cartoon, okay cool, but then all of sudden you are in the game and it feels out of place. Why would they show me this? I would never have picked them* (M13, A13)

The responses even took on a more aggressive feeling when participants perceived the advertisement to be misleading, especially in such ways when it was perceived as unrealistic and unfair.

> *Everything looks so glamorous, and then it just rains money. They are trying to make people believe that if they just gamble, they will get a new meaning in their life. I hate these types of advertisements as soon as I see them* (F8, A1)

4.2.4. Advertising Ethics

The controversy of moral in advertising was greatly discussed by all participants in this study. It was suggested that online casino advertising often promoted unrealistic situations and normalized online gambling as an everyday activity.

"They really try to normalize gambling as an everyday activity. It is odd that she is just at a cafe and gambling whilst drinking her coffee, I do not think that this portrays a real casino player at all." (F11, A9)

It was also seen as deceiving when brands portrayed it to be very easy and quick to be able to gamble through their service.

"I do not like that they normalize gambling, they make it look easier than you think that it is to gamble, like 'you don't even have to make an account' and I do not think it is that easy." (M3, A6)

The accessibility of online casinos was also questioned, as the majority of the participants argued that many brands incorporated actual mobile phones in their advertisements, which could contribute to an unhealthy habit and possibly even an addiction.

> *They use a phone because everyone has one, they make it seem very accessible. They try to tell us that if we just own a phone, we can win money. It is horrible, because people who do not have a critical mindset will gamble and might get addicted. It is a trigger! And then, they even have the support line, so they know about it* (F7, A10)

At first sight, many of the participants argued that it was a good practice from the brands when they had incorporated anything about responsible gambling in their visual and auditory content. However, participant F10 saw a contradiction in that action after a few seconds of an advertisement and stated;

> *They also have a call to play more responsible, they do not say it but it is there in text. That makes me suspicious. It's almost like buying cigarettes and also providing a number to a doctor for help later on* (F10, A3)

For some, the moral response to the advertisements were colored by the brand behind the advert. As for A2, participant F9 found it to be immoral of state-owned online casinos to engage in advertising, as they were perceived to have higher standards to live up to.

> *I find this a bit disturbing, and this is supposed to be a serious gambling company, as they are state owned, they should protect their customers. The fact that they engage in such advertising is disturbing* (F9, A2)

4.2.5. Preconceived Notion of the Industry

Many participants expressed that their already established thoughts and attitude towards the online casino industry that made them have a negative preconceived notion towards the advertisements. Often, they tried to ignore the advertisements.

"The feelings and thoughts that I already have about casino commercials make it so that I do not really take them in, no matter how often I see them. I just try to ignore them." (M9, A8)

For some, their preconceived notions made their response to the advertisement itself to be neutral. Still, they expressed that they got worse associations with the brand, as seen in the statement of M2;

> *Even though I feel like more resources have gone into this advertisement, my established opinion about online casinos make it so that the advert does not affect me at all. It only makes me want to not associate with the brand even more (*M2, A2)

4.2.6. Frequency

The participants often highlighted the frequency of both casino advertisements in general, and the brands displayed in the advertisements. Many argued that the frequency of these types of advertisements plays a central role of how they view them and that the content of the advertisement itself can either enhance or decrease an annoyance of viewing them again.

> *There are so many ads today that promotes online gambling […] this one with straight up info about where and what the can gamble becomes really repetitive and annoying.*

All of the ads just become the same. I would not turn to a brand that is just one in a million (F11, A1)

For many, the frequency of the advertisements provoked annoyance, which was expressed to make them look at the brands behind the advertisements in a negative way.

"I would have been annoyed if this advertisement was played more than once, that would have made me look at the company negatively" (M3, A1)

The actual length of the advertisements was said to also play a role in their response, as longer advertisements were commonly argued to be more annoying when recurring.

"It would be annoyed if this one reoccurred. And it is very long, which would annoy me even more, if this came up during a commercial break it would really irritate me." (F11, A12).

4.3. Summary of Findings

Our findings suggest that the themes covered in this part of the study all contribute to brand avoidance. To present a clear overview of how many of the participants mentioned each aspect, or statements that could be interpreted to be connected to each aspect see table 11. With this we do not aim to provide any statistical consideration to the findings, rather we wish to show how commonly each theme was expressed by our participants to provide more detail about the findings.

Table 11 Overview of Aspects Contributing to Brand Avoidance

Aspect Contributing to Brand Avoidance	**Number of participants expressed this aspect** (Out of 24)
Attractiveness	22
Focus on Wins	18
Message About Rapid Payment and/or Cash Out	18
Focus on Female Gamblers	11
Brand Name and Slogan	16
Music	23
Sound Effects	20
Narrative Voice	18
Jingle	24
Emotional Response	24
Advertising Ethics	17
Preconceived Notion of Industry	11
Frequency	24

Source: Developed by the authors.

We have found evidence that these aspects contribute to brand avoidance as our participants have expressed things such as; "*I would definitely choose another brand", "I get stressed and would not choose this brand", "I would never gamble on their casino", "To me, that feels very unserious, and not a company that I would trust my money with", " it would affect my choice of casino", " I would not choose this based on the fact that I don't understand the name and cannot connect it to their service", "I would never go for this brand", "I could never gamble there", "I would then not visit their casino based on the fact that they already annoyed me." and "Why would they show me this? I would never have picked them".* These statements show how the advertisements and the themes we have identified as aspects contribute to brand avoidance. Arguably, statements that do not express brand avoidance as evidently still indicate how the aspects contribute to brand avoidance based on irritation, perception of deceitfulness and negative emotions.

5. Analysis

In this following chapter, the findings from our focus groups and semi-structured interviews are elaborated upon. The findings have been analyzed with the use of the ATNA approach, as further elaborated in section 3.8, the authors have applied a back-and-forth process between the findings and previous research presented in the study. Lastly, the revised framework that has been developed by the identified themes has been assessed in comparison to the proposed research framework and previous research, resulting in a proposed research framework.

5.1. Advertising Avoidance and Online Casinos

Researchers have noticed aspects contributing to brand avoidance in advertising based on content, celebrity endorser, music and response included in the advertisement (Knittel et al, 2016; Berndt et al., 2019; Odoom et al., 2019). Similar to De Pelsmacker and Bergh (1999) who identified the media, content, product category, repetition, and consumer characteristics as factors for irritation in advertising. By using the ATNA approach, we found specific themes in online casino advertising that contribute to brand avoidance among Swedish generation Y individuals. The identified themes included 'Content', 'Auditory Cues', 'Emotional Response', 'Advertising Ethics', 'Preconceived Notions of the Industry' and 'Frequency'. Dense et al. (2008) argued that a negative reaction from advertising consequently leads to a negative view of the brand. All themes identified in this study were contributions to brand avoidance led by negative affective reactions.

5.1.1. Content

Similar to the findings of Berndt et al. (2019) and Knittel et al. (2016), consumers could find advertisements content distasteful and thus lead to an act of avoidance, which is reassured in this study. The data regarding content as a contributor for brand avoidance was substantial and was divided into the sections of 'Attractiveness', 'Focus on Wins', 'Message of Rapid Payment and/or Cash-out', 'Focus on Female Gamblers', as well as the 'Brand Name and Slogan'.

5.1.1.1. Attractiveness

In this study, the participants clearly showed a distaste for the content of certain advertisements, when the content did not appeal to them, which made them see the brand as less attractive. In relation to the arguments of Berndt et al. (2019) and Odoom et al. (2019), we found that many participants expressed that they would avoid certain brands when they were not attracted to the content or when it evoked negative feelings. A connection was made between the content of the advertisement displayed and the brand's own servicescape, as participant F3 stated; *"It is so ugly [...] It does not speak to me at all, is this what their site looks like? Then I would definitely choose another brand"* (F3, A12). Based on the statement from participant F3, it is arguably important for brands to show appealing content in their advertising, as it otherwise may lead to an act of avoidance. When the content of an advertisement was not appealing, many participants thought that the brand itself would have the same unappealing characteristics on their service. It was discussed by a majority of the participants that the content itself must show a form of attractiveness to spark an interest for them to take the step from watching an advertisement to an actual action of visiting their website and using their service. And when it instead was distasteful to them, they expressed that they would avoid the brand behind the advertisement. It was evident that the participants wanted to see an advertisement that they as individuals found attractive, however this was seen as a rather complicated matter, as each individual may have their preferences of what actually is 'attractive'.

Not only did the design play a central role for the participants to actively decide to avoid a brand based on their advertisement, but also the content in terms of what was happening in it and the story told by either actors or the animation portrayed. Monaghan et al. (2008) argued that animations in gambling advertisement appeal to children, and since our participants are adults one can assume that it is not appealing to them. Many participants stated that they had a hard time to connect with advertisements that only contained animated content. *"I think that it matters whether or not the advert portrays real people or animated things [...] I find the animated content to be negative and not as appealing" (*M1, A11).

We can interpret this statement and assume that the participants show a tendency to dislike advertisements that are solely based on animations. Thus, leading to a dislike of the advertisement and an avoidance of the brand behind it. Similar Odoom et al. (2019), whom have previously argued that the message or storyline of advertisements have the power to evoke

feelings towards brands. Frameworks such as animations, fantasies and slice-of-life were also stated to have an influence on the risk of brand avoidance. Based on the empirical findings from this study, it is evident that a majority of the participants were more likely to avoid a brand which only displayed animations in their advertisements. The advertisements were described to be 'childish' and more difficult to relate to, in comparison to the advertisements with actual human beings that portrayed the storyline and message. However, it was also argued that the content itself did not show an attraction to the participants if there was 'too' much of it during a short-period of time, creating an 'information overload' "*Very annoying ad. I get a headache from it [...] I get stressed and would not choose this brand."* (M4, A5). These findings show that the participants in this study considered the contents' attractiveness in terms of design, as well as the story portrayed and the editing of it.

5.1.1.2. Focus on Wins

When the content in any way had any form focus and/or attention directed towards winning, a majority of participants expressed disbelief and argued that it contributes to brand avoidance. This can be connected to the findings of Xie et al. (2014) and Monaghan et al. (2008) as the participants perceived the focus on wins to present untruthful odds, making the advertisements deceiving, thus creating a negative view of the brand, contributing to brand avoidance.

They should not be allowed to show people that win in the games, it is too pushy and makes it look easy to win a lot. I am not mad, but I would never gamble on their casino. [...] they are just lying, trying to take advantage of those who are already addicted (M11, A6)

This can be interpreted as a form of avoidance related to the content, which demonstrates a win in the advertisement. Odoom et al. (2019) discussed that the framework of demonstrations in advertising can evoke negative feelings if not adjusted correctly to the preference of the target audience. Our empirical findings suggest that a majority was negatively influenced when advertisements had a focus on wins. Most of them argued that it was not a realistic illustration of how the service works, which made them distrust the brand, leading to avoidance. Some even expressed that online casino advertisements should be regulated so that wins no longer can be demonstrated, as it was thought to take advantage of those already addicted to the service. Hing et al. (2014) argued that online casinos rarely attract new users with their advertisements and instead affect those who already gamble in one way or another. This is

aligned with our findings from participant M11, as it could be interpreted that he might be attracted to the demonstration of a win if he already gambled.

In addition to the visual demonstration of a win, other cues of winning were discussed. When an advertisement did not include any visual illustration of a win, but a sound which the participant interpreted to be related to a win, it evoked the same dislike as the visual demonstration. *"They make a winning sound effect, so even if they do not show someone winning, they try to imply it. I hate that"* (M12, A12). One can assume that a form of brand avoidance was evident when participants believed that advertising that portrayed it to be easy to win in a less realistic manner than the participant perceives it to be. *"Their slogan is 'The feeling of winning', that really makes it look like everyone is going to win. So, deceiving."* (F10, A9). The slogan the brand used in the advertisement was commonly argued to have a focus on wins, and not the service itself, only the potential outcome of the use of the service. It was also evident that the demonstration of winning was illustrated in such ways that the participants started to question the brand and its intentions. "... *'oh, with others you may not win, but with us you will', but all casinos try to portray that [...] it makes me feel as if they have something to hide, so I don't believe them."* (F7, A13).

When the content of online casino gambling in any way demonstrated a win, participants expressed disbelief. We interpret the fact that it did not matter whether the demonstration was made through visual-, auditory content or the slogan, to indicate that content that tries to portray it to be common or easy to win, to contribute to brand avoidance. We interpret that the focus on any type of a win is seen distasteful by the participants, which according to Berndt et al. (2019) can play a large role in brand avoidance. With our research, we can conclude that when online casino advertisement demonstrates wins, it does play a large role in brand avoidance.

5.1.1.3. Message About Rapid Payment and/or Cash-Out

The findings from this study suggest that a message about rapid payment and/or cash-out in advertising contributes to a behavior of brand avoidance*." They make it seem so simple, easy and fast to gamble away all of one's money, so the brand is trying to deceive us."* (M6, A12). The participants argued that the content of the advertisement demonstrated a quick accessibility to the service by a rapid payment to the brand, which led to an irritation in such way that an avoidance would arise. This was believed to be a reason to dislike the brand, as participants showed disbelief towards the brand based on the demonstration included in the advertisement.

The message of how 'quick' the brands' service provided to their users was also visible through the logo and brand name, which caught the attention of participant M1 and M6. *"It bothers me that the logo shows up like it's 'pronto' and fast, and then a flash [...] It is shallow and the whole thing is just terrible [...] just a cheap way to try to get people to gamble."* (M1, A6). By this statement, we can understand that the participant showed a dislike toward the brand based on the emphasis put on phase of the service, instead of the actual quality. It was seen as a deceiving approach to get the attention of viewers, and that it instead contributed to brand avoidance. When the name and logo was perceived to demonstrate a rapid cash-out, participant M6 stated; *"... with 'Speedy' I think that it's supposed to be easy, you finish a game quickly and get your profits quickly. To me, that feels very unserious, and not a company that I would trust my money with."* (M6, A4). It is possible to interpret that the participant perceived the brand to be untrustworthy and unreliably, as he would not trust them with his money based on the fact that they emphasize the phase of the service.

5.1.1.4. Focus on Female Gamblers

From our findings, it was evident that a majority of the participants reacted when the content of advertisements was perceived to have an emphasized focus on female gamblers. It was evident that advertisements portraying women in real life settings, was seen to aim to encourage females to gamble. This evoked negative feelings and disbelief towards the brand for many participants, as they did not believe that it portrayed a realistic female that would gamble according to them, or in a realistic situation. *"They want to make women gamble more, but I do not think they are portraying a fair picture of what scenarios and type of people that gambles. I never see honest statistics or situations"* (M6, A9). Interestingly, some clearly stated that online casino advertisements never portray honest pictures or statistics of gambling.

Some participants had negative reactions towards advertisements that they perceived as 'femininely coded'. We believe that this can be connected to the arguments of Odoom et al., (2019) whom state that sensitivity and the way in which the audience interpret the advertisement matter. This aspect was not as commonly mentioned as others for brand avoidance. We interpret that the reasoning behind this is that the sensitivity and awareness of the participants varied. We could see a clear pattern, as some tended to mention such aspects more often than others.

It annoys me that it is so directed towards women, and it is femininely coded. Playing on female stereotypes like this is so typical. Even the name is femininely coded, then there are two normative white women that are happy, walking around after a shopping spree. (F2, A9)

Interestingly, the focus on female gamblers made a male participant react negatively towards the brand behind the advertisement but not the advertisement itself. It was not that he found that the content tried to illustrate a deceiving situation, or female stereotypes presented, instead, he was not attracted to the brand itself. The content demonstrating a female gambler did not appeal to him. *"This has a female approach, which does not matter overall, but it would affect my choice of casino, since it only shows womanly things it does not attract me"* (M10, A9). Evidently, this contributes to brand avoidance, as the content of the advertisement did not show appeal to him.

5.1.1.5. Brand Name and Slogan

As a visual cue, we found that the brand name, as well as the slogan used in the advertisements contribute to brand avoidance. A majority of participants expressed negative emotions when the name of a brand had a vague connection to the service, as it sometimes led to confusion when they could not relate the brand name to the service. *"I believe that the name of a brand is very informative, so I would not choose this based on the fact that I don't understand the name and cannot connect it to their service*" (M6, A12). For some, the non-existent perceived relationship between the brand name and service the brand provides was reason enough to avoid a brand. Arguably, this made participants annoyed and irritated, causing negative emotions towards the brand, which is aligned with the thoughts of Odoom et al. (2019).

When the slogan of a brand was perceived to be misleading, participants expressed disbelief. *"Such a stupid slogan, because no casino is nice [...] It's not that many people that leaves with a profit. Often people gamble the money they win away anyway."* (F11, A7). We can interpret that this participant found the slogan to be of a misleading manner, as she did not believe that any casinos are trying to be nice towards their users. It was argued to portray a false picture, since she thought it implied that everyone would be lucky enough to win. We can see a clear pattern of disbelief, in scenarios where brands portray it to be easy and common to win, instead of the perceived reality where most end up losing. This made participants often express that they would avoid the brand behind the message.

5.1.2. Auditory Cues

Consistent with Berndt et al. (2019) and Knittel et al. (2016), our empirical findings show that sound effects, narrative voice, and jingle together with the music are contributing to brand avoidance. Dens et al. (2008) argued that advertising stimuli can evoke negative reactions, which could lead to a negative reaction towards the brand. This is applicable to the four auditory cues, which are stimulus and therefore they can contribute to negative reactions. After careful consideration for previous research and our data, we propose that 'Auditory Cues' is a more fitting umbrella term for online casino advertising than solely music. This is followed by four sub-categories of 'Music', 'Sound Effects', 'Narrative Voice' and 'Jingle'.

5.1.2.1. Music

Both Odoom et al. (2019) and Berndt et al. (2019) argued that music influences the action of brand avoidance based on advertising, which is aligned with the findings from this study. *"The music is too much! Too loud, too bright [...] It annoys me since it is so, in your face, it makes me view the company in a bad light."* (F1, A10). This implies that the music evoked a negative reaction from the participant, which had a negative impact on her opinion about the brand. This in accordance with the thoughts of Berndt et al. (2019) whom state that music that is too loud can cause brand avoidance. We interpret that the volume of the music made the participant feel as if the advertisement was intrusive, which made her feel annoyed. Commonly, participants expressed irritation and negative responses when the music did not add any value to and/or fit the rest of the content. *"I would never go for this brand, the sound is too much. So irritating, and the music was childish, it does not feel like they are trying to address adults."* (M13, A6). Because the participant found the music to be of a childish nature, giving an unreliable and inappropriate impression of the advertisement. Arguably, the volume of the music was not the issue, but rather the nature of the music that was seen as irrelevant and distasteful in the context of online casinos as it should address adults. This supports Monaghan et al. (2008), who argued that casino advertising contains youth-oriented music.

5.1.2.2. Sound Effects

Another auditory cue that was commonly mentioned to contribute to brand avoidance were various sounds effects present in the advertisements. *"The sound effects make a big difference in advertisements, if it is annoying it does not matter how good the editing is. This sound is so annoying, too speedy and stressful"* (F10, A12). It is clear that the participant found the sound effects to have impact on her perception of the advertisement, which in turn affected her

perception of the brand itself. Arguably, the auditory cue can affect the viewer in such way that the other aspects of the content, for example the editing, no longer matters. We also found evidence that in addition to volume (Berndt et al., 2019), the speed of the sound also led to avoidance, since it had a negative effect on the participants feelings.

In relation to section 5.2.2. (Focus on Wins), participants argued that the mere sound effect that they associated with a win was a reason for disliking an advertisement, leading to an act of brand avoidance. *"They make a winning sound effect [...] I hate that"* (M12, A12). It was evident that the sound of coins falling down from a slot machine illustrated a win, which was seen as irritating and made the participant feel negative emotions towards the brand. Interestingly, not only the sound effect related to slot machines were mentioned, but also other sound effects that the participants related to winning situations. *"When she won the jackpot, or got the plastic bag, they had such annoying sound effect, like a 'hallelujah moment'"* (F1, A2). We interpret that it is not only the fact that the sound effect is related to a win that causes brand avoidance, but also the nature of the sound effect. We believe that the way in which people interpret auditory cues vary, which highlights the importance of an understanding of the target audience.

5.1.2.3. Narrative Voice

It was common that the casino brands that we managed to sample advertisement from used narrative voices to convey their message. The nature of the voices was heavily discussed among the participants. The majority reacted negatively when the voice was of an intrusive and aggressive manner. *"I hate the typical 'Gamble more' manly voice. It is intrusive and unreliable"* (M5, A1). The participants expressed that there was a 'stereotypical' voice commonly present in online casino advertisements, which they did not like. It gave an unreliable impression of the brand, and they felt that the voice made the advertisement invasive. We draw a connection between this and the arguments of Berndt et al. (2019), as they found the narrative voice to be distasteful, which led to an act of brand avoidance. For some, the narrative voice took away the focus of the message that the brand aimed to portray in the advertisement, as the voice itself caused irritation enough for the participant to avoid the brand. *"When I hear this voice I immediately think of commercials. I associate this commanding voice with ads [...] I get pissed off that the voice is so intrusive ..."* (M11, A3).

From the empirical findings, we can conclude that it was important that the narrative voice had to be relevant to the audience and service promoted, which is aligned with the arguments of Berndt et al. (2019). "*I don't like the voice; it is very childish, and everything looks like a cartoon. I do not get the impression that this brand is offering a service for adults, I could never gamble there"* (F11, A13). The participant found it to be inappropriate and irrelevant to use narrative voices with childish influences in the context of casino advertising. It made the participant question the target the brand intended to reach with the advertisement. As the nature of the narrative voice was argued to be more suitable for younger consumers, the irrelevance of the voice, contributed to brand avoidance.

5.1.2.4. Jingle

The jingle of the advertisements was commonly brought up by the participants. As shown in table 9, for three of the participants, jingle was the first word associated with online casino advertising. *"I kind of liked this one until their brand came into the ad with their jingle, it made it seem childish."* (F2, A7). The jingle and brand were the sole reason for the dislike of the brand in this advertisement for participant F2. It gave a childish impression. As jingles were so commonly mentioned by our participants, we can conclude that for online casino advertising, jingles can indeed contribute to brand avoidance. We found that many participants believe that jingles are more commonly present in online casino advertisements than in other industries, which might be a contributing factor. It was evident that not only the advertisement played a central role in the mind of the participants, but the jingle had a large impact on their viewpoint of the brand. *"I instantly find this advert annoying, and when you hear them singing all the time it gets to you. It is not the advertising itself, but the jingle that would get to me."* (F3, A9).

5.1.3. Emotional Response

In accordance with Knittel et al. (2016) our findings suggest that a response could be visible as negative when the participants found an advertisement as annoying and/or irritating. *"I get annoyed at the company, because I am annoyed by their ad. I would then not visit their casino based on the fact that they already annoyed me."* (F6, A5). This showed that the emotional response had an influence on their decision for avoiding a casino brand.

We found evidence suggesting that advertisements that the participants perceived to be of a stressful manner, based on its high amount of various content in a short amount of time, generally led to a negative response. *"This bothers me, there are so many things going on which makes it stressful."* (M13, A13). Arguably, these types of adverts were too complex, as the participants did not manage to comprehend the information, which confirms the arguments of Kirmeyer (1988) and Greyser (1973) as too complex and informative advertisements led to irritation. When the participants got a negative response from the advertisements, many expressed that they would not use the brands service, thus contributing to brand avoidance.

A generalized perception of casino advertising was that the participants perceived that the brands aimed to present a glamourous aspect of gambling, which often caused a negative emotional response in the forms of irritation, and some even expressed a form of hate. *"Everything looks so glamorous, and then it just rains money [...] I hate these types of advertisements as soon as I see them"* (F8, A1). We interpret, that when participants thought of the advertisements as deceiving, they directly got a negative impression of the brand behind it, and thus expressed brand avoidance.

5.1.4. Advertising Ethics

A clear pattern could be identified in the empirical findings, which we believe be specified to the specific industry, as many participants pinpointed many aspects to be unethical in the advertisements of online casinos since it was misleading, aligned with Monaghan et al. (2008) who found gambling advertising to portray a false reality. Xie et al. (2014) argued that when consumers perceive advertising to be deceiving, it negatively affected their view on the brand, which we also found indications of. Many participants found the advertisements misleading, as they normalized gambling and entailed suspicious messages. This was expressed to contribute to an active choice of brand avoidance.

Gambling has been argued to be a public health issue (Gainsbury et al., 2014), and many participants indicated that the normalization of gambling in advertisements contributed to brand avoidance. *"They really try to normalize gambling as an everyday activity. [...] I do not think that this portrays a real casino player at all."* (F11, A9). We see a pattern, where many participants call for casino advertisements that portray what the participants see as 'real' online casino gamblers.

The portrayed accessibility of gambling in the advertisements made many participants react, as they thought it to be problematic*." They use a phone because everyone has one, they make it seem very accessible [...] people who do not have a critical mindset will gamble and might get addicted [...] they even have the support line, so they know about it."* (F7, A10). A 'double-sided' message was also argued to be visible in the advertisements, as participant F10 expressed; *"They also have a call to play more responsible, they do not say it but it is there in text [...] It's Almost like buying cigarettes and also providing a number to a doctor for help later on."* (F10, A3).

Some brands were arguably held to different standards in the minds of the participants, as expressed by F9; *"I find this a bit disturbing, [...] as they are state owned, they should protect their customers. The fact that they engage in such advertising is disturbing."* (F9, A2). When the brand behind the advertisement was a state owned and well-known brand, the negative reaction was highly emphasized, as many believe that they should be more responsible.

5.1.5. Preconceived Notions of the Industry

Our findings suggest that our participants already had a preconceived notion of the specific industry, which contributes to brand avoidance. This can be connected to Odoom et al. (2019), who found that consumers interpret advertisements differently. Participants with a preconceived notion are arguably more sensitive, therefore, they interpret the advertisements negatively. Their already established view on the industry as a whole made some of them view the advertisements and brands negatively, and while none of the participants identified themselves as a 'gambler' this could affect how they perceived the advertisements. *"The feelings and thoughts that I already have about casino commercials make it so that I do not really take them in, no matter how often I see them. I just try to ignore them."* (M9, A8). Similar to the arguments of and Hing et al. (2014), who suggest that these types of advertisements rarely attract non-gamblers. *"... my established opinion about online casinos make it so that the advert does not affect me at all. It only makes me want to not associate with the brand even more" (*M2, A2). This implies a strong indication of brand avoidance based on the preconceived notion of the service and its industry. Interestingly, this could indicate that the avoidance of specific brands could stem from an avoidance of an entire industry.

5.1.6. Frequency

Further elaborated upon the findings of Berndt et al. (2019), we found that the frequency of which an advertisement was visible to participants was contributing to brand avoidance. *"I would have been annoyed if this advertisement was played more than once, that would have made me look at the company negatively"* (M3, A1). Similar to the findings of Chih-Chung et al. (2012) and De Pelsmacker and Bergh (1999), our findings indicate that too many broadcastings of the same advertisement were said to contribute to the avoidance of a brand.

There was a clear pattern of irritation and disgust that was formed based on a tremendous frequency, however this was not only based on a single advertisement from the same brand. Many participants expressed that they perceived many of the advertisements from online casinos to be similar, then, the frequency of brands advertisements in the same industry contributed to brand avoidance. *"There are so many ads today that promotes online gambling […] this one with straight up info about where and what the can gamble becomes really repetitive and annoying. All of the ads just become the same. I would not turn to a brand that is just one in a million"* (F11, A1). Previous research argued that specific product categories irritate consumers more than others (Aaker & Bruzzone, 1985). Our findings indicate that this could be applicable for service categories, as the high frequency of casino advertisements contributes to brand avoidance. Further supporting Deverensky et al. (2010) who found that consumers dislike casino advertising because of its 'frequent prevalence'.

5.2. Revised Research Framework

In the empirical findings of this study it was possible to support three out of four already existing factors contributing to brand avoidance in advertisements. As no advertisements sampled for this study contained any celebrity endorsement, it is not possible to argue for or against its contributions for brand avoidance in online casino advertisements. There was no evidence of differences in responses between those who have and have not gambled previous to the construction of the study.

Through the use ATNA, the authors decided to add the sub-categories 'Attractiveness', 'Focus on Wins', 'Message About Rapid Payment and Cash-Out', 'Focus on Female Gamblers' and 'Brand Name and Slogan' to 'Content', some of the sub-categories were inspired by the

components found by Håkansson and Widinghoff (2019). Music was revised to 'Auditory Cues', as the findings suggest that more auditory aspects, and not only music, contributed to brand avoidance. Therefore, the following sub-categories were added to 'Auditory Cues'; 'Music', 'Sound-Effects', 'Narrative Voice' and 'Jingle'. Response was revised to 'Emotional Response' as it was evident that it was the emotions the participants expressed after seeing the advertisements that influenced their response. Two new aspects that contribute to brand avoidance in the online casino industry were evident; 'Advertising Ethics' and 'Preconceived Notions of the Industry' have been added to the revised framework. We found evidence suggesting that the 'Frequency' of advertisements, not only the advert from a specific brand, but industry, contributed to brand avoidance. Through the analysis, the authors deemed that the aspects that contribute to brand avoidance are not sequential, but rather intersectional, as they can affect each other, i.e. the content can affect the emotional response, the frequency can affect how one sees the content, and so forth. We saw a positive relation between brand avoidance and the emotion of dislike of advertisements which contribute to brand avoidance, aligned with Kavaliauskė and Simanavičiūtė (2015).

In Figure 7, the finalized proposed revised research model which aims to answer the research question is presented. It was been developed and revised from the presented framework in section 2.

Figure 7 The Revised Research Framework

Source: Developed by the authors.

6. Conclusion

The last chapter of this study restates the purpose and attempts to provide the answer to the research question based on the findings drawn from the analysis. This is followed by a discussion regarding the theoretical and practical implications derived from the process and results of the study. Societal and ethical implications are also elaborated upon, as well as the limitations and suggestions for future research.

6.1. Purpose of The Research

Understanding the aspects that contribute to brand avoidance is valuable, as it is just as important to realize what makes consumers not want to consume, as it is to understand what makes consumers consume (Hogg & Banister, 2001; Lee et al., 2009c; Knittel et al., 2016). The purpose of this research was to explore and gain insights into what aspects of online casino advertising in Sweden that contributes to brand avoidance among generation Y. This study has contributed with new insights on brand avoidance in the online casino industry, specifically regarding advertising avoidance. The revised research framework presented in section 5.2, provides a clear visual illustration of the aspects contributing to advertising avoidance in the specified industry, thus providing an answer to the research question;

RQ: *"What aspects in online casino advertisement contribute to brand avoidance among generation Y in Sweden?"*

The empirical findings of this research pinpoints 6 different aspects that contribute to advertising avoidance in online casino advertising, namely; content, auditory cues, emotional response, advertising ethics, preconceived notion of industry and frequency. For the content and auditory cues, a number of subcategories were identified, as the participants in the study mentioned several aspects regarding both. In content, the subcategories are; attractiveness, focus on wins, message about rapid payment and/or cash-out, focus on female gamblers and brand name and slogan. For auditory cues the found subcategories were; music, sound effects, narrative voice and jingle.

It is important to highlight that the identified aspects for brand avoidance interrelate. We cannot argue for a specific sequence of them, but rather that they have a dynamic interrelationship.

Furthermore, we can not specify which aspects that are the most or least prominent, or how much they influence each other, as the methodological steps of this research do not provide such insights.

6.2. Implications

6.2.1. Theoretical Implications

Prior research on brand avoidance is scarce, nonetheless, it is a topic which has recently received attention from scholars. Lee et al. (2009b) presented a theoretical model of brand avoidance, with four components. Knittel et al. (2016) expanded on the framework, and connected generation Y to the topic. They also introduced the idea of advertising as a reason for brand avoidance. Berndt et al. (2019) found that brand avoidance is relevant to service brands. This study has explored brand avoidance, in connection to both generation Y and service brands. To our knowledge, this is the first study that explores advertising brand avoidance in connection to the industry of online casinos. It is also the first research that connects the gambling industry to brand avoidance, as well as the first to connecting advertising avoidance and service brands in Sweden.

The most prominent theoretical implication that this study offers is the revised framework, (Section 5.2). The model stems from existing theory (Knittel et al., 2016; Berndt et al., 2019), and has further incorporated some components that Håkansson and Widinghoff (2019) identified. This study adds to existing theory by identifying advertising ethics, preconceived notions of the industry and frequency as contributors to brand avoidance. These findings might only apply to the specific industry. Through the analysis, we have concluded that the different aspects contributing to advertising brand avoidance interrelate, e.g. the content of an advertisement might affect the emotional response. This thesis adds valuable insights into the topic of advertising brand avoidance and service brands. This work could function as a foundation for future research that investigates other industries or age segments.

6.2.2. Practical Implications

From a managerial perspective, this study provides marketing professionals with insights on advertising and the online casino industry. It is of high importance for marketers to know what makes people not wanting to consume, as it is to understand why they want to consume (Hogg

& Banister, 2001; Lee et al., 2009c; Knittel et al., 2016). When consumers decide to 'avoid' consumption, a brand could end with a reduced return on investment, leading to a liability instead of an asset (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996; Lee et al., 2009c). Our findings are beneficial for stakeholders included in the process of advertising for brands, as it offers knowledge on the aspects of advertisements that contribute to why consumers decide to engage in brand avoidance.

As brand avoidance is a topic that lacks research, certain findings could be applicable for other industries than online casinos, e.g., frequency and auditory cues other than music have been proposed to contribute to brand avoidance. Our findings suggest that the frequency of advertising with 'irrelevant' visual and auditory cues could harm rather than benefit a brand, and the content itself should be carefully thought of. Our findings suggest that brands in industries that are characterized by a high saturation of advertising need to not only differentiate their brand, but also consider how to differentiate their advertisements. When there is a high frequency of advertisements that are similar and from the same industry, it leads to brand avoidance.

The study indicates that the current perception of online casino advertising is that it is deceiving, as none found that it portrays a situation of an 'actual' online casino gambler. Based on this, we suggest that marketers should use more realistic scenarios and characters in their advertising, thus differentiating themselves on the current market. Companies could produce more optimized strategies in their advertising by understanding their target, to better adapt their advertisements. They could thus plan their advertising campaigns in more efficient ways and reduce the risk of spending resources on unnecessary expensive advertising.

6.2.3. Societal and Ethical Implications

The spark of interest in the specific industry of online casinos stemmed from the fact that they were so highly discussed and relevant in Sweden. Even though the authors of this study have done their best to not consider the ethical views of online casino advertising, throughout the process, it is now clear, that one can question whether or not it is ethical to conduct research which might lead to a more efficient way of advertising online casinos.

When exploring a topic that is of ethical and societal consideration by nature, it can be difficult to separate the societal and ethical implications (Binde, 2014). We argue that the societal implications arise from the ethical standpoint that society has towards online casino gambling. From a utilitarian perspective, individuals should have the freedom of choice to gamble, but society would benefit if casino advertisements encourage brand avoidance. We believe that one societal implication this research offers, is the contribution of development of knowledge regarding advertising avoidance.

Throughout this study, online casinos and their advertising was highly discussed in Sweden. Lindberg (2019) indicates that there is a possibility that the type of advertisements we have sampled for this study might be illegal in 2020. Thus, our study could help policy makers and the government in their attempt to further control the advertisements that online casinos produce, as it provides valuable insights on aspects of casino advertising that contribute to brand avoidance. It offers valuable insights to those who work with societal issues related to gambling, and if policies are made so that advertisements contain brand avoidance contributing factors it would lead to less gambling.

Our findings imply that those who do not already gamble might have a preconceived notion about the industry as a whole, contributing to a behavior of brand avoidance based on the advertisement. Nonetheless, they expressed that they were disturbed by online casino advertising because of the frequency. We suggest that casino advertising should be regulated to be broadcasted during specific time periods of the day, which would lower the total frequency.

6.3. Limitations

Throughout this study, the authors encountered limitations and shortcomings. There is no prior research that connects the casino industry with brand avoidance. This research presents the first study on the topic, so the authors had to reconsider many methodological steps. The authors realize that the advertisements were shown in unrealistic settings in the focus groups and semi-structured interviews, which might affect the data. If they instead would have seen the advertisements whilst watching a show, other aspects could have influenced their thoughts.

As this study is of a qualitative nature, the researchers have been the primary instrument throughout the entire process. This raises the question of objectivity, which the authors have

strived for. The findings cannot be generalized to wider populations, which a quantitative study has the ability to do. The authors believe that the purpose suited a qualitative study, as it explores a phenomenon. We argue that this topic should be explored before being quantified.

The sample of the participants and the advertisements present limitations. As the population was sampled through a judgement sample, the authors have influenced the population, thus, it might present a potential sample selection bias. This led to a nonprobability sample of Swedish generation Y consumers. The findings cannot be generalized for other populations with other demographic- and age segments. It is possible that the sample has a volunteer bias. The authors sampled 13 casino advertisements for the study. This sample size may not provide a complete representative of the number of advertisements that were present during the period selected for analysis, thus presenting a limitation, as the participants may have reacted differently if other advertisements were presented. If the sample would have included advertisements containing any type of celebrity endorsement, it would have made it possible to understand if it contributes to brand avoidance.

Another limitation concerns the execution of the focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Babin and Zikmund (2016) highlighted the importance of the moderator when gathering primary data through focus groups. As none of the authors of this study has a long history of conducting research, and has limited prior experience and knowledge, we realize that this presents a limitation. It is a challenge to stay truly objective and to control the environment when you lack resources and experiences. This limitation presents the possibility of both interviewer and response biases (Saunders et al., 2016).

6.4. Suggestions for Future Research

This study explored brand avoidance among participants who did not identify themselves as gamblers, however, some had previously tried online casinos. For future studies, it would be of interest to investigate a population of regular gamblers, as the individuals who actually use the service advertised might view the advertisement differently than the population in this study. By exploring the thoughts of regular gamblers other aspects might be identified, this would offer valuable managerial implications. It would also be beneficial to be able to put statistical evidence on the matter now that it has been explored, thus a quantitative study should look into brand avoidance.

There was no effort in this study to include a population of self-described gamblers and neither to compare population groups, i.e. non-gamblers vs. gamblers. This leads to the second suggestion, as it would be valuable to compare population groups, and investigate the differences and similarities between regular gamblers and non-gamblers in relation to brand avoidance.

It would be beneficial to study another population than Swedish generation Y, either based on age or demographics, or both, as it could provide new insights. By using the revised research framework produced in this study, future researchers could capitalize on the generated knowledge and apply it to other countries, populations and industries.

We suggest that researchers with more experience and resources look into online casino advertising and its effect on either individual or societal levels. This would require more ethical consideration, but arguably, the findings would provide valuable societal implications.

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8. Appendix

8.1. Appendix 1: Description of Advertisements

1. **Brand:** Video Slots **Length of Advertisement:** 10 Seconds

Narrative voice: "The program is presented by the online casino Video slots dot com"
What is displayed: The background is green, almost the entire screen displays different games that all look animated. It then turns over and displays a game for a few seconds. "Battle of the slots" is then shown big in the middle of the screen. Lastly, it is the logo of Video slots that comes up to a black background, with a slot machine arm to the right being pulled down, and a lot of gold coins falls down behind the logo.
Sound effects: When the screen flips, a fitting sound effect comes. At the end, the sound of a slot machine arm being pulled down comes and you can hear money fall down. Below the logo, in medium sized text in white it says "www.videoslots.com". Below that, very tiny, it says "Gambling can be addictive. Age limit 18 years. Contact www.stödlinjen.se if you have a gambling problem"
Music/background sound: The music throughout the advertisement thrilling.
Jingle: No jingle

2. **Brand:** Svenska Spel Casino **Length of Advertisement:** 14 Seconds

Narrative voice: There is no narrative voice in the advertisement
What is displayed: At the start, it is zoomed into the legs of a woman dressed in red, we see her holding a dog and dog poop right by her. It zooms out, the woman in red is standing to the left on a road, and an older lady is standing a few meters away from her to the right. The older lady stares at the woman in red. The woman in red looks stressed and is looking for something

in her bag and pockets, at last she picks up a small piece of paper. As she bends down to try and pick up the dog poop, a pink plastic bag is being blown into her feet. She picks up the pink bag, her face and the bag are zoomed in, and it says “Jackpot” in white. It zooms out again, and the woman in red bends down to pick up the poop with her newly founded plastic bag. The logo of Svenska Spel is shown, and it says “Casino” in pink next to it. At the bottom, tiny, it says “Games from Svenska spel sport & Casino AB. Age limit 18 years. Stödlinjen xxx-xxxxxx. Spelalagom.se”

Sound effects: There is a windy sound present before the pink plastic bag is blown into the woman in red. As she picks it up and we see her face zoomed in, a sort of angle choir sings.

Music/background sound: The background sound imitates the real-life situation, we hear some wind and birds for example.

Jingle: No jingle

3. **Brand:** Storspelare **Length of Advertisement:** 15 Seconds

Narrative voice: “Big gamblers believe that safety is important. Therefore, we made it easy with deposit limits and spelpaus. Make your deposits with Swish and create an account securely with BankID. Welcome to storspelare dot com”.

What is displayed: Everything in the advertisement is animated. We see the word “Casino” in gold behind a dice that is spinning. The word in gold changes in “Safety” and a golden coin is thrown in front of it. The word in gold changes to “Deposit limits” and a black and golden a card is moving around behind the word. The word in gold changes into “Playing pause”, a golden coin is displayed in front of the word. The word in gold changes into “Bank ID Swish” and the A card is moving around in front of the words. The word in gold changes into “Secure” and a golden dice is displayed in front of the word. Two golden dices are thrown in the air, spinning slowly towards a black background. They go away and the logo “Storspelare” is shown large in gold towards a black background. Tiny, at the bottom it says “+18 years. Terms and conditions apply. Stödlinjen.se. Gamble responsibly”

Sound effects: We can hear the coin as it comes flying in front of “safety”.

Music/background sound: The background music is thrilling.

Jingle: No Jingle

4. **Brand:** Speedy Casino **Length of Advertisement:** 5 Seconds

Narrative voice: "The program is presented by, Speedy Casino"
What is displayed: Everything in this advertisement is animated. In the middle of the screen, there is a mobile phone. The background displays a white sky with a few clouds and orange hills. To the right of the phone, coins are thrown in the air. To the left, a slot machine is present. Everything goes in a dark blue, white and orange color scheme. Above the phone, it says "SpeedyCasino", to the left of the text, the logo of the brand is present. The phone then displays the logo on top, "Speedy casino, an online casino" below the logo, and the same sky and hill as we see in the background. "Speedy casino, an online casino" spins around one time. Below the phone, it says, rather small, "Age limit 18 years. Terms and conditions apply. www.spelinstutet.se" in white.
Sound effects: We hear the sound of someone pulling down the arm of a slot machine, followed by some bird sounds.
Music/background sound: There is no music or background sound present.
Jingle: No jingle

5. **Brand:** Snabbare **Length of Advertisement:** 20 Seconds

Narrative voice: "Welcome to Snabbare, for us, it is important that things go quickly, therefore we are proud to now present the quickest customer service in Sweden. So, if you want to ask us something, we always reply within a few seconds. Gamble on hundreds of the best casino games, without troublesome registration. And by the way, your wins can be cashed out in a few minutes"
What is displayed: Everything except for the people and what they sit in is animated in this advertisement. The background is blue. There is a blue round animated platform in the middle. A girl sits on a chair with a phone in her hand, above her it says "Snabbare, faster betting and casino" in white. The platform spins, the background and platform turn purple. Now, someone sitting by a desk with a laptop that says 'snabbare' on it is on the platform, to the right there is a smiley with a headset, to the left, it says "Sweden's fastest customer service 2019". The platform spins, the background and platform turn red, a man sits on a chair focusing on his phone. To the right there is a clock and to the left it says "Answers within seconds" in white. The platform spins the background and platform turns green, the first girl in the chair comes back, she puts down her phone. Above her it says, "No troublesome registration" and there is a

clock. Then, all we see is a blue background with “Snabbare” big in white in the center, at the bottom, tiny in white, it says “18+. Gamble responsibly. www.stödlinjen.se”

Sound effects: Each time platform spins there is a “swish” sound. We hear a “win” sound, a mouse clicks sound, another cashing sound, and a deposit sound.

Music/background sound: The background music is upbeat with quite a lot of bass to it.

Jingle: At the end, they sing “Play faster, with Snabbare dot com”

6. **Brand:** Pronto Casino **Length of Advertisement:** 20 Seconds

Narrative voice: “Welcome to the new and modern pronto casino. Here you easily log on with your bank identification. Choose the amount that you want to gamble with, play the best games, and cash out in less than five minutes. Pronto casino, it is as easy as that.

What is displayed: Everything in this advertisement is animated. The background is blue. It says “Pronto” large in white, and “Casino” large in gold in the middle of the screen. A yellow lightning bolt appears next to the logo. The logo and lighting bolt move to the left corner, a mobile phone appears. The phone is using Bank identification to log on. The, the screen changes and the phone displays a deposit of 100 kr. The phone flips to the side, and now displays a slot game. It plays and wins, it says “You won” in golden and shows a win of 73415 kr. The background of the phone turns white, and it says in blue “Money is currently being transferred to your account”. The phone goes away, the logo is in the center again, some lighting strikes around the screen, it says, “Swedish gambling license” and “Tax free winnings” in gold below the logo. At the bottom, it says “Age limit 18 years. Terms and conditions apply. www.spelinstitutet.se”, tiny in white.

Sound effects: There is a lighting sound when the strike appears, and at the end when the logo comes back into the middle.

Music/background sound: The music is upbeat and very “fun”.

Jingle: They sing “Pronto casino” with a sound to it at the end.

7. **Brand:** Play Ojo **Length of Advertisement:** 21 Seconds

Narrative voice: (It is the alpaca speaking) “I was disappointed at unfair welcome bonuses, then I found a nice casino that gave me 100 free spins without turnover requirements. Now I have finally found my Ojo, find your Ojo at play Ojo dot com”

What is displayed: The background of this advertisement is not animated, but the last seconds of it is. At first there is an Alpaca on a field, it is grey around it and the weather is bad. It starts raining as they zoom into its head, and a bird poops on the head of the alpaca. Then, as she says that she finds a nice casino, the sun comes up, the alpaca smiles. It zooms out, now the grass is a lot nicer and the surrounding area is as well. The alpaca runs around happy, and then starts dancing. They show the back of the alpaca, which has "playOjo" written on it in blue purple and red. They show the 'hand' of the alpaca holding a tablet, where it is playing a slot game. It wins over 2500. It changes to a pink and blue background, it says "Play Ojo, The nice casino" in white big in the middle. Below it, still in large writing and white, it says "100 free spins without turnover requirements". Tiny, in white, below it says "Age limit 18 years. Terms and conditions apply. Gambling can be addictive, gamble responsible www.stödlinjen.se. Offer: 100 free spins on Book of Dead. Minimum deposit 100 kr. Only applies for new members".
Sound effects: We hear thunder and rain at the start when the alpaca is sad.
Music/background sound: The music comes in halfway through the advertisement, just before the alpaca starts dancing. It is upbeat and 'fun'.
Jingle: They sing "The best casino, play ojooo"

8. **Brand:** Ninja Casino **Length of Advertisement:** 10 Seconds

Narrative voice: "The program is sponsored by, Ninja casino, an online casino".
What is displayed: There is a blue brick wall in the background, we see a ninja with red hair that is trying to break a plank with a stone. It fails. Then the ninja brings out a saw and saws the plank quite a lot, she then hits it to make it breaks. As she stands up and walk away, it says "Ninja casino, and online casino" in front of her, and the casinos logo is present above the text. At the bottom, it says "18 years limit. All rules and conditions can be found at ninjacasino.com. Gamble responsibly" in tiny white text.
Sound effects: We hear the stone hit the plank, and the sawing. She screams as she hits the plank.
Music/background sound: There is no direct music, but a recurring beep.

9. **Brand:** Maria Casino **Length of Advertisement:** 15 seconds

Narrative voice: “Meet spring with the new Maria casino, by the way, now you can deposit your money with swish! Enjoy the sun and play mega fortune dreams”
What is displayed: Two girls are walking out from a store. It says “Maria Casino, The feeling of winning” in white and red in front of them. To the left of the text there is a phone which displays the website of the casino. As the girls say goodbye to each other, the text and phone goes away. We follow one girl as she sits down drinking a smoothie on a chair, behind her two men are working. She bends down to pick up her phone, at the same time, a worker behind her brings a plank right over her head. She starts playing a slot game on her phone, they show her happy face, then back to the phone where the number goes up above 2000. The text “Maria Casino, everyone can win” comes up in front of her in white and red. At bottom right corner it says “Age limit 18 years, Terms and conditions apply, stödlinjen.se, spelpaus.se, Gamble responsibly” in a tiny white font.
Sound effects: No specific sound effects
Music/background sound: The music is thrilling
Jingle: They sing “Maaaaria you gotta see her”

10. **Brand:** LeoVegas **Length of Advertisement:** 5 Seconds

Narrative voice: “The program is presented by LeoVegas.com”
What is displayed: There are orange and yellow sparks on a black background. It says “The program is presented by” in white, at the bottom it says “Age limit 18 years. www.stödlinjen.se” tiny at the bottom in white. The text goes away, and a phone comes spinning, it displays a golden, yellow and orange background. There is a slot machine arm on the right side of the phone, which has a Swedish flag on top of it. It says “LeoVegas.com” in a bold white font and the logo is present above the text.
Sound effects: No specific sound effects
Music/background sound: The music is quite thrilling.
Jingle: They sing “LeoooVegas”

11. **Brand:** Vera & John **Length of Advertisement:** 10 Seconds

Narrative voice: “The program is presented by, Vera & John, a more fun casino”

What is displayed: There is a blue background, there are several pink balls going up and down. They all say “Vera & John” in white. One of the balls lands on the blue background with the text facing upwards, the camera zooms into the ball, it says “A more fun casino” in white below the ball. Below that text it says “Age limit 18 years. Stödlinjen.se” in white tiny text.
Sound effects: No specific sound effects
Music/background sound: There is a “falling” sound.
Jingle: They sing “Love Vera and Jooohn”

12. **Brand:** iGame **Length of Advertisement:** 20 Seconds

Narrative voice: “What do you think about being able to register an account with bank ID and making deposits with swish? You can do that on the online casino iGame, by the way, do not forget to put a deposit limit which fits you. It is important to play responsibly; the age limit is 18 years and there is help to get at Stödlinjen. Welcome to iGame.”
What is displayed: Everything in this advertisement is animated. There is a blue background, “Register an account” is displayed large in white. Then a phone comes, and the text goes away, they display Bank ID on the phone. Then a 100 kr bill come out of the phone, a slot machine in yellow appears on a green background, the money goes into the machine. The slot machine arm goes down and a win is displayed. The machine goes away, the background turns yellow, and a red bar comes up, next to a white diagram that says, “Deposit limit”. As the bar gets smaller, it turns blue instead of red. Then a blue box appears on white background with a green check on it. At the bottom, it says “Age limit 18 years. Terms and conditions apply. Stödlinjen.se. Gamble responsibly” in tiny black font. The check in the blue box becomes “18+”. Then the logo appears all over the screen.
Sound effects: No specific sounds effects
Music/background sound: The music is upbeat.
Jingle: No jingle

13. **Brand:** Hajper **Length of Advertisement:** 20 Seconds

Narrative voice: “Why is it not possible to win a jackpot on regular casino games? No problem for Hajper Man! With the brand new “Hajpermillion” your favourite game all of a sudden has one million in its jackpot. I will see you at Hajper dot com!”

What is displayed: We see a cartoon in a tv, a guy is sitting on his phone and there is a question mark coming out of his mouth in a speech bubble. Then it cuts to a guy whom is dressed as a superhero, who also is on his phone. He looks similar to the first guy, but in a sort of superhero suit. He jumps down next to the normal guy, who looks confused, with a drink in his hand. Then it cuts and shows a slot game, where someone wins. Then it cuts again to a phone with the casino’s website displayed in it with a blue and green background. Above the phone it says “The Hajpermillion” in gold. On the phone display, it says “Jackpot 1,000,000 in white”, below it says “Reacroonz” in white. At the bottom, in tiny white text, it says “18-year limit. All terms and conditions can be found on hajper.com. Gamble responsibly, stödlinjen.se”

Sound effects: When we see the slot game there is a short sound effect, the same reoccurs when they show the jackpot.

Music/background sound: The music is upbeat.

Jingle: No jingle

8.2. Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Interview guide for focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

Welcome the participant(‘s) and introduce ourselves briefly. A short description of the purpose and aim of the study is given, and we carefully explain the distinction we make between luck-based gambling (casinos online) and betting or other types of gambling so that everyone is aware of what we are interested in. Make sure that everyone knows that we do not put any ethical consideration on online casinos. Explain the agenda and process, make sure that everyone has signed the written consent form, then go over the anonymity carefully. Ask if it is okay that we record the conversation.

Introductory questions

Q1. Is there any brand in your everyday life that you avoid today?
Q2. What is your thought on companies that market themselves through linear online video advertisements, more specifically on-demand services?
Q3. If I say on-demand advertisement, what companies and industries comes to your mind?

General questions about online casinos

Q4. Have you ever gambled on an online casino?
Q5. What online casino brands do you know of today?
Q6. If i say online casino advertising, what is your first thought that comes to mind?
Q7. Do you believe that there is a specific group or type of people that gamble on online casinos?
Q8. What is your tough on the marketing of online casinos?
Follow up: Should it be allowed?

Show the advertisements one by one, then aim to conversate about them. Ask any of following question(s) when needed to spark the conversation further. *
Q9. Could you please indicate whether or not your response to this advertisement is “Completely positive”, “Somewhat positive”, “Neutral”, “Somewhat negative” or “Completely negative”.
Q10. What is your first thought of this advertisement?
Q11. What does this advertisement make you feel?
Q12. What is your opinion on the auditory cues?

Q13. If this advertisement was to recur several times, would it change your opinion or feelings? (Here, we can play it again if they ask us to do so)
Q14. What do you think that the brand wishes to portray with this advertisement?
Q15. What type of impression do you get of the casino, based on the advertising?
Q16. Are there any additional specific things that you think of regarding this advertisement?

Wrap up

Q17. Do you wish to add anything regarding casinos and their advertising?

Thank the participant(‘s) for taking their time to participate. Say that we will contact them through mail and give them a version of the thesis before anything is published for respondent validation.

*****For an efficient transcription and coding of the data, show all advertisements in the same order for each focus group and interview.
1. Videoslots
2. Svenska spel
3. Storspelare
4. Speedy
5. Snabbare
6. Pronto
7. Play Ojo
8. Ninja casino
9. Maria casino
10. Leovegas
11. Vera & John
12. iGame
13. Hajper

8.3. Appendix 3: Written Consent Form

Appendix 3. Written consent form (for both focus groups and semi-structured interviews). Inspired by (Denscombe, 2017)

The research is being conducted by Malin Hornebrant and Julia Henriksen. If you have any questions about the conducted research, or wish to get in contact with us, any of the following contact information can be utilized.

Julia Henriksen
Phone number: +4673-XXXXXXX
E-mail: XXXXXXXX@Student.ju.se

Malin Hornebrant
Phone number: +4673-XXXXXXXXX
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The aim with this study is to explore brand avoidance within the online casino industry. The aim with the research is not to explore any ethical considerations within the industry, the focus will instead lie on what aspects of the online casino linear online video advertisements that can lead to brand avoidance. It will be conducted during January to May of 2019. For this study, we have decided to sample our population through a nonprobability sample, more precisely through judgement sampling. Our criteria were as follow, "Being born between 1980 and 2000", "Neither loving or hating online casinos" and "Have to watch on-demand linear television. We have reached out to you, as we believe that you have the appropriate characteristics to fit into our sample. We wish to invite you to a focus group/interview, that is estimated to take from one to two hours. There will be fika and coffee provided during the period!

During any time, if you wish to withdraw your consent to participate in this study, by signing this contract you do not bind yourself to be a part of the research. You can withdraw your consent by contacting either of the authors through the contact information above.

With this contract, the authors promise to conduct the study in an ethical manner. The data will be treated carefully, so that confidentiality can be provided. The authors will also make sure that anonymity is ensured, by eliminating all the names of the participants, and exchanging them into either F/M depending on the gender of the participant (Female or Male), followed by a number to distinguish them from one another. By signing this consent form, the participant agree that the authors may display the gender and birth year of the participant. The participant also allows the authors to record the data, in turn, the authors promise to delete the recording as soon as possible, and if the participant express that they wish to withdraw from the study.

Signature of participant	Date	Signature of authors	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____

8.4. Appendix 4. About the Authors

Julia Henriksen
My name is Julia Henriksen. I was born and raised in a small-town in northern Sweden in 1995, which makes me a part of generation Y. I played lots of sports as a child, where most were team sports including soccer, ice-hockey and floorball.

My previous experience with gambling is pretty much non-existent. I have been exposed to the casino industry, as I have visited casinos in Macau, China and Milwaukee, USA. However, I have never gambled with monetary incentives. I know the 'rules' of various games but have never joined and actually gambled myself. For a short-period of time, I worked extra as a 'Blackjack Dealer' aside from school, which also exposed me to the gambling industry. I have tried games such as Blackjack and Poker, but only for leisure purposes with friends with no monetary incentives. I have no love nor hate towards the gambling industry. I have approached the research with an open-mind, considering that I do not have any preconceived notions of the industry that I believe would affect the study. I have done my best to separate my own opinions in the process of conducting this study.

Malin Hornebrant
I was born in 1994, which puts me within the cohort of generation Y. I have never gambled with money at a casino, either in real life or online. I have on the other hand gambled with real money through games, such as CS:GO, where the premises of there only being a chance and no skill involved in the gamble being the same as for casinos. Before the writing of this thesis, I had never considered any ethical aspects and online casinos or gambling industry as a whole. My only initial mindset at the start of this project had to do with the large amount of advertising that online casinos do. There is no one (that I know of) in my surroundings that have a gambling issue, or that gamble frequently. I do however know people who put bets on sports games, but for that one has to consider that there is a skill factor as one can research games beforehand. I do not judge those who gamble, and I do not think that online casinos should not be allowed to operate. I do not hate the industry, neither do I love it. Based on my history and experiences, I

believe that I have managed to approach the research and topic with an open mind, and I have considered the issue of objectivity throughout the process.