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## THE CONCEPT OF MASCULINITY IN BRAND PERSONALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

**Doctoral Thesis** 



#### RIGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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# THE CONCEPT OF MASCULINITY IN BRAND PERSONALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

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#### **ANOTĀCIJA**

Patērētāju mainīgie uzskati par vīrišķību ir radījuši problēmu zīmolu stratēģiem un reklāmdevējiem. Ņemot vērā, ka zīmoli pasniedz vīrišķību savā komunikācijā ar patērētājiem, un patērētājiem reklāmā tiek piedāvāti dažādi vīrišķības veidi, vīrišķība tiek uzskatīta par vienu no nozīmīgākajiem sociālajiem resursiem reklāmas nozarē. Tomēr zīmola stratēģiem un reklāmas speciālistiem ir problēma saprast, kā pareizi atveidot vīrišķību zīmola personībā un komunikācijā, lai tā rezonētu ar auditoriju un neizraisītu negatīvu pretreakciju no patērētājiem un sabiedrības. Šie jautājumi ir it īpaši sarežģīti komunicējot ar jaunākām paaudzēm, kā piemēram, ar auditoriju vecumā no 15 līdz 24 gadiem (Z paaudze) un no 25 līdz 35 (mileniāļu paaudze), kam ir bijusi liela pop kultūras ietekme uz dažādiem sociāli konstruētiem konceptiem. Promocijas darba pētījuma aktualitāte ir saistīta ar izaicinājumiem, ar kuriem saskaras zīmola stratēģi, mainoties patērētāju uzskatiem par vīrišķību. Pētījuma mērķis ir noskaidrot, kā veidot un stiprināt zīmola personību, iekļaujot šo patērētājiem nozīmīgo konceptualizāciju, un izstrādāt metodiku vīrišķīgas zīmola personības veidošanai un komunikācijai.

Lai sasniegtu promocijas darba mērķi, tiek analizēta vīrišķība, tās dažādie tipi, un patērētāju uzskatu ietekmējošie faktori par vīrišķību. Zīmola personības teorijas tiek izmantotas, lai izveidotu teorētisko ietvaru empīriskajam pētījumam par vīrišķību reklāmā. Promocijas darba pētījums sniedz atbildes uz to, kādas zīmola personības dimensijas, zīmola arhetipus un vīrišķības tipus Latvijas Z paaudze un mileniāļi novērtē un sniedz priekšroku reklāmā. Pamatojoties uz pētījuma rezultātiem, izstrādātā vīrišķīgas zīmola personības veidošanas metodika tika pielietota, un aprobēta dažādos uzņēmumos, kā piemēram, Madara Cosmetics, reklāmas aģentūrā WKND ar klientu Virši-A un komunikācijas un mediju aģentūrā Denstu Latvija.

Promocijas darbs rakstīts angļu valodā. Promocijas darbs ietver ievadu, četras daļas, secinājumus un priekšlikumus, izmantoto 194 avotu bibliogrāfisko sarakstu. Darbā ir 44 tabulas un 44 attēli. Darba apjoms ir 194 lapas, neieskaitot 43 pielikumus.

#### **ABSTRACT**

Consumers' changing perception of masculinity has created a problem for brand strategists and advertisers. Since masculinity is now branded, and men are increasingly marketed to and offered visions of masculinity for consumption, masculinity is now considered to be one of the most prominently used social resources within advertising. However, it is difficult to create a masculine brand personality and depict masculinity in a way that will resonate with the audience and not create an intense backlash from consumers and society. This issue is particularly pressing when a brand is communicating with younger audiences aged 15–24 years (Generation Z) and aged 25-35 (millennials) that have been influenced by popular culture besides more traditional upbringing.

The topicality of the Doctoral Thesis research is related to the challenges the brand strategists and advertisers face concerning the ever-changing consumer perceptions of masculinity. Given the importance of masculinity in advertising, this research is relevant in terms of both marketing and economic considerations.

To achieve the goal of the Thesis, masculinity as a concept, various types of it, and consumer perception influencing factors of it are analyzed. Brand personality theories are used to create a theoretical framework for assessing masculinity depiction in brand personality and advertising. The research answers what Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers think about masculinity in advertising and which brand archetypes, brand personality dimensions, and types of masculinity are the most preferable in advertising. The developed methodology of creating a masculine brand personality was applied and approved in various companies such as Madara Cosmetics, advertising agency WKND and their client Virši-A, and communication and media agency Dentsu Latvia.

The Doctoral Thesis has been written in English. It comprises an introduction, four chapters, conclusions, recommendations, and a list of references of 194 sources. It has been illustrated with 44 tables and 44 figures. The volume of the Thesis is 190 pages, excluding 43 annexes.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wholeheartedly would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor and mentor, Professor Dr. Oec. Deniss Ščeulovs for his guidance and support throughout these four years of hard work. I am proud of what we have achieved with this research and look forward to continuing to research this topic. Many thanks to faculty and staff of the Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management for consultations in statistics, academic writing, and research methods; I truly appreciate it.

I also want to thank the companies that used my methodology to create their new masculine brand personalities. I want to thank Assistant Professor Ph.D Linda Saulīte and the "Denstu Latvia" staff; I want to thank Edgars Pētersons and the staff of WKND and Kristiāna Antonišķe and the marketing staff of Madara Cosmetics.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to my family and friends for their emotional support throughout these four difficult years. I could not complete my studies without your love and support.

#### INTRODUCTION

The interplay between masculinity in advertising and brand personality is an essential aspect of contemporary marketing that delves into the complex realms of brand positioning and consumer expectations. Branding and advertising both have a significant role in the prosperity of a company since they affect consumers' attitudes toward the brand and the products and services of that company. Advertising reflects core aspects of the brand, and it is the visible part of brand strategy that can be viewed and analyzed. After all, the primary role of advertising is to convey a brand's core message in support of an overall brand positioning. Advertising is also significant for any brand because it strongly influences brand perception. However, advertising is complicated because it is more than just creativity, humor, and entertainment; it is researching and understanding consumer behavior and effectively communicating brand identity to consumers. A significant part of that brand identity is brand personality, which is one of the main focuses of this Doctoral Thesis. Consumers communicate their personality through consumption, seeking to find brands that match their personality. Consumers view brand personality as an extension of their own, and advertising expresses that brand personality.

In the last two decades, marketers and researchers have understood that masculinity could also be crucial to brand personality building. Therefore, research analyzing masculinity's significant effect on branding and advertising has increased exponentially. Advertising has long been a powerful tool for shaping perceptions and influencing consumer behavior, and the portrayal of masculinity within this context plays a pivotal role in constructing brand personalities. Many researchers suggest that masculinity is now branded, and men are increasingly marketed to and offered visions of masculinity for consumption. Masculinity is now considered one of the most prominently used social resources within advertising. Masculinity in advertising helps the company connect with its audience and convince them that the advertised product is crucial to achieving such a version of masculinity as portrayed.

The problem is that consumer perception of masculinity is changing, so advertisers do not know how to speak to consumers' perceptions. The research suggests that when brands understand the audience's preferences, they can communicate more effectively and depict essential and sensitive topics in their advertising, such as masculinity, in a more favorable way. It is necessary because brands do not want to receive negative backlash but instead want their message to resonate with the audience. In other words, marketing communication will sync with what consumers think and appreciate. Furthermore, appropriate and contemporary depiction of masculinity in advertising also presents an opportunity since men now consume products that

until recently were deemed as wrong to them because they were considered too feminine. This trend is particularly evident in the grooming product industry and younger generations, where men spend much more money on these products and services than ever before, mainly because of the increase in promotion in mass media. For instance, in the US, 39% of the Gen Z demographic (18-25) purchase makeup products (21% with high regularity), and 35% of men aged 26-40 shop for makeup at least once a month. The men's beauty and personal care (BPC) segment is one of the fastest and most stable growing segments in the cosmetics industry. According to industry experts, the market for men's personal care in Europe is expected to grow by 9-10% from 2022 to 2030. Furthermore, companies like Madara Cosmetics have tripled their male audience from 2019 to 2020, proving this trend of increasing male interest in beauty and personal care products, as well as locally in Latvia. However, research on masculinity in brand personality and advertising is relatively limited, and there is a significant lack of academic literature on this topic, which further emphasizes the importance of this Thesis research within the field of branding and advertising.

The focus on masculinity in branding and advertising presents some complicated decisions regarding how to portray men. For instance, should the man be depicted as an assertive and decisive breadwinner who takes care of the whole family, or should the man be portrayed as someone who is confident and charming and seduces all the women he encounters, or perhaps as someone who is a caring father and expresses emotion, sense of equality and shows sensitivity? This research is conducted not only to understand which type of masculinity the consumers appreciate more, therefore, on which masculinity type the marketers should focus on in their branding but also to understand which masculinity archetypes, brand archetypes, and brand personality dimensions consumers appreciate more, thus suggesting the relevance for the advertisers.

The **topicality** of this research is centered on the challenges of ever-changing consumer perceptions of masculinity that brand strategists and advertisers face today. Given the importance of masculinity in advertising, this research is relevant in terms of marketing and economic considerations.

The **research aim** is to ascertain the most appropriate ways to create a masculine brand personality that can be effectively communicated through advertising to the respective audience of a particular brand.

To reach the goal of the Doctoral Thesis, the following objectives are set:

- To analyze the theoretical background of the masculinity concept, including masculinity definitions, various types of masculinity, influencing factors of consumers' perceptions, and archetypes of masculinity.
- Examine the theoretical background of brand personality, including brand personality dimensions, brand archetypes, and their convergence with masculinity.
- > To analyze how masculinity is used in creating a brand personality and communicating it to the consumers through advertising.
- > To explore Latvian consumers' (Gen Z's and millennials') perception and reaction of how masculinity is currently presented in advertising.
- Based on Doctoral Thesis research, to develop a methodology for marketing professionals to create a new masculine brand personality that can be effectively communicated to consumers.

To better understand the research topic, the author raised research questions from the study but also put forward a hypothesis to test the theoretical issues drawn from the literature review.

#### The research questions are:

RQ1. What is the concept of masculinity, and how significant is it in the context of brand personality and advertising?

RQ2. How is masculinity currently depicted in brand personality and advertising, and which brand personality dimensions and brand archetypes are used to display various types of masculinity?

RQ3. What type of masculinity, brand archetypes, and brand personality dimensions do Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers prefer the most in advertisements emphasizing masculinity?

The **object** of this doctoral thesis is masculinity in brand personality.

The **subject** of this doctoral thesis is the impact of masculinity in brand personality on advertising effectiveness.

The following **hypotheses** are put forward:

- H1. Masculinity as a concept has significant importance in creating a brand personality and expressing it to consumers through advertising.
- H2. Branding and advertising professionals mainly focus on traditional masculine stereotypes when creating brand personalities and depicting men in their advertising.
- H3. Generation Z and millennial consumers in Latvia prefer brand personalities centered around more modern and inclusive versions of masculinity and more modern portrayals of masculinity in advertising.

The Doctoral Thesis employs generally accepted theoretical **research methods**. This research's theoretical and methodological base is scientific studies and research conducted outside Latvia described in scientific journal publications, conference proceedings found on Scopus and Web of Science databases, and the author's empirical research analysis.

The methods for this doctoral thesis include scientifically approved quantitative and qualitative research methods for data analysis. The scientific research analyzing consumer perceptions and opinions of masculinity in advertising included the survey method, A/B test method, and focus group interviews. Furthermore, qualitative content analysis, sentiment analysis, discourse analysis, statistical analysis, comparative, analytical, and graphic methods were applied in the research.

The programs used for data processing were SPSS 23, Nvivo 11, Trint, and Microsoft Excel.

#### Theoretical and methodological basis for the doctoral thesis:

(Aaker, 1997), (Mark, Pearson, 2001), (Birch et al., 2017), (Smith, 2012), (Bordo, 2011), (Månsdotter et al., 2009), (Kimmel, 1996), (Zayer et al., 2020), (Rogers, 2019), (Connell, 2014), (Ging, 2013), (Oswald, 2007), (Ging, 2019), (Eisen et al., 2019), (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019), (Salzman et al., 2005), (Kimmel, 2006), (Branchik et al., 2012), (Alexander, 2003), (Montemurro et al., 2019, 873), (Moore, Gillette, 1990), (Jung, 1954,), (Valaei et al., 2016), (Ourahmoune, 2016), (Bechter et al., 2016)(Xara-Brasil et al., 2018), (De Meulenaer et al., 2018), (Quesenberry, 2018), (Graves 2010), (Fairclough, 2013), (Artun, Levin, 2015), (Hsieh, Shannon, 2005).

**Research limitations** consist of several aspects. This research is limited to masculinity and its impact on brand personality in advertising. The research focuses solely on brand personality

regarding branding, which plays a vital role in the science of marketing. This research is limited to advertising to express the brand personality to the audience. The research does not focus on direct marketing, public relations, product placement, or other means to represent the brand. Regarding advertising effectiveness, the research mainly focuses on consumer perceptions of the advertisements; therefore, it primarily uses qualitative data, not quantitative. The research makes general assumptions about advertisers' goals since each company might have different goals for their specific advertising campaign, which would be unknown to a researcher. Nevertheless, there are general goals that all advertisers would want to accomplish, such as getting positive feedback from consumers, reaching a high consumer engagement rate, and increasing brand awareness, to name a few. Finally, the research does not look into sales numbers, which would be the primary goal of any company when it comes to branding and advertising, because sales numbers could increase or decrease for a variety of reasons, such as new product features, price changes, geopolitical reasons, competitor activities, and other factors.

#### The Doctoral Thesis's research scientific novelty:

- For the first time, a classification of masculinity types based on their characteristics is presented, which could be applied to identifying these types of masculinity in advertising and other forms of marketing communication and applied in different scientific areas, not only marketing.
- Defining masculinity as a concept is used in marketing research with brand personality and archetypes to understand brand personality and its possible connection with the audience.
- A new interdisciplinary approach using the convergence of masculinity type classification with elements from several theories, such as brand archetypes, brand personality dimensions, and masculinity archetypes, has been made in the Thesis research.
- 4. The developed approach of grouping brands of an entire industry in their masculinity types displayed in their marketing communication is revealed.
- A new approach is presented to analyze the advertising effectiveness of the new
  masculine brand personality to understand consumer perceptions of masculinity in
  advertising.

6. Based on the Thesis research, the methodology of creating a new masculine brand personality is developed and validated within Latvian companies, which includes strengthening their brand personality and increasing the chance of resonating with their audience. Furthermore, the research design and methodology could be adapted to help researchers and marketing professionals research and analyze femininity in branding and advertising.

#### The practical contribution of the Doctoral Thesis research to the advertising industry:

- The methodology of creating a new masculine brand personality enables brand strategists and advertisers to assess and implement masculinity in their brand's personality to form a stronger connection with their audience. Furthermore, the research design and methodology could be adapted to help marketing professionals with femininity in branding and advertising.
- The research results allow marketing practitioners to understand better and pay attention to the significance of brand personality, the role of masculinity in it, and consumers' ever-changing perceptions of it.
- 3. The methodology of creating a new masculine brand personality also enables brand strategists and advertisers to find appropriate influencers who could resonate with the audience and express the brand personality.
- 4. The developed methodology was assessed and integrated into companies to strengthen their brand's growth and appeal. References from each company confirming the practical contribution to the industry are included in Appendix 41 to 43 of the Thesis.
- 5. The research results have been approved and included in study materials of study programs and courses devoted to marketing in higher educational institutions.

#### **Defense arguments:**

- Masculinity is a complex concept for brand personality that requires a deep understanding of consumers' perceptions. By understanding masculinity, it is possible to better reach the audience with advertising and brand personality regarding the message resonating with them.
- Consumer preferences for masculinity characteristics, masculinity and brand archetypes, and brand personality dimensions differ from branding and advertising practitioners' perceptions.

➤ Branding and advertising professionals could benefit from the methodology of masculinity used in the brand personality creation process to increase the effectiveness of their advertising efforts.

**Structure and volume** of the Doctoral Thesis. The Doctoral Thesis includes an introduction, four main chapters, conclusions, and recommendations. The volume of the Thesis is 194 pages, excluding appendices. Forty-four figures and 44 tables illustrate the content of the Thesis. The Thesis has 43 appendices. The bibliography contains 190 reference sources.

Chapter 1 of the Thesis defines the research area and examines masculinity. From analyses of masculinity definitions, it was established that it is a socially constructed concept; therefore, social construction theory was applied to deepen the understanding. The literature review uncovered three major masculinity types: traditional, hybrid, and modern. These types of masculinity are used throughout the research. There is also the identification of factors that impact consumer perceptions of masculinity and analysis of masculinity archetypes. The research question (RQ1) is partially answered.

Chapter 2 of the Thesis further defines the research area and examines brand personality and advertising as a way to communicate brand personality. The chapter also describes masculinity's significant role in brand personality and advertising. The author focuses on the two major theoretical frameworks of brand personality, such as brand personality dimensions (Aaker, 1997) and brand archetypes (Mark, Pearson, 2001). There is also a literature review analysis of traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity in advertising. As a result of these analyses, the research topicality, aim, and research questions were formulated. The research question (RQ1) is fully answered, and the research question (RQ2) is partially answered. Hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

Chapter 3 of the Thesis explains quantitative and qualitative research methods and methodology. The mixed method analysis provided inconclusive results; therefore, additional studies were conducted, such as surveys, A/B testing, and focus group consumer interviews. The data analysis of quantitative and qualitative studies and results are provided, along with the explored and confirmed research questions and hypotheses. The research question (RQ2) is fully answered. Qualitative video content analysis showed that advertisers and brand strategists use traditional masculinity more frequently in advertising (confirming H2). At the same time, A/B testing and focus groups proved that Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers find

modern masculinity depictions more appealing and preferable (confirming H3). The research question (RQ3) was answered.

**Chapter 4** of the Thesis presents the methodology of creating a new masculine brand personality. It describes the Thesis research findings and proposed methodology approbation within Madara Cosmetics, the advertising agency WKND and their client Virši-A, and the media and communication agency Denstu Latvia.

The research was conducted from 2019 to 2023, and data approbation was made by presenting the progress and results of the research at **sixteen** international academic conferences, in **eleven** internationally recognized scientific publications indexed in the SCOPUS database, and in conference proceedings and anonymously peer-reviewed scientific articles published in international journals and available in other databases.

#### Topics of the Doctoral Thesis presented at **scientific conferences**:

- The 27th World Multi-Conference on Systemics, Cybernetics, and Informatics (WMSCI 2023), academic report "Consumer Perceptions of Masculinity in Advertising: The Viewpoint of Generation Z and Millennials." September 12-15, 2023, Orlando, Florida, USA.
- 2. Society of Open Innovation & Department of Economics, Management, Institutions of the University of Frederico II of Naples 2023 Conference "New Way of Open Innovation and Open Business Model after Pandemic for the Recovery of World Economy," academic report "Brand and masculinity archetypes as an innovative research approach for analyzing consumer preferences on masculinity in advertising", July 12-15, 2023, Naples, Italy.
- The 14th International Conference on Society and Information Technologies: ICSIT 2023, academic report "Mixed Method Research on Consumer Perception of Traditional and Modern Masculinity in Advertising," March 28-31, 2023, Orlando, Florida, USA.
- 4. Scientific conference on Economics and entrepreneurship" SCEE 2022, academic report "A Quantitative research study of Gen Z's and Millennials Opinions on Masculinity in Advertising," October 13, 2022, Riga, Latvia.
- 4th International Conference on Advanced Research Methods and Analytics (CARMA 2022), academic report "What are Gen Z's and Millennials' Opinions on Masculinity in Advertising: a Qualitative Research Study", June 30- July 1, 2022, Valencia, Spain.

- 12th International Scientific Conference "Business and Management 2022" academic report "The Analysis of Masculinity in Advertising: A Qualitative Study Based on Consumer Engagement in Digital Environment", May 12-13, 2022, Vilnius, Lithuania.
- 13th International Multi-Conference on Complexity, Informatics, and Cybernetics: IMCIC 2022, academic report "The Phenomenon of Traditional Masculinity and Its Impact on Advertising: a Qualitative Study Based on Consumer Engagement in Digital Environment," March 8-11, 2022, Orlando, Florida, USA.
- Riga Technical University 62nd International Scientific Online Conference "Scientific Conference on Economics and Entrepreneurship", academic report "Qualitative Research Study of Traditional Masculinity in Advertising: Analysis of Consumer Perceptions," October 14, 2021, Riga, Latvia.
- 18th International Scientific Conference hosted by the Faculty of Business and Management, Brno University of Technology, academic report "The Use of Traditional Masculinity to Enhance Advertising Effectiveness: a Qualitative Study of Consumer Engagement in Digital Environment," September 16-17, 2021, Brno, Czech Republic.
- 10. 2021 IEEE ICTE Leading Digital Transformation in Business and Society Kaunas Technical University, academic report "Consumers' Behavioral Psychology Research Using Big Data Analysis: Case Study of Masculinity Perceptions in Advertising and Popular Culture Channels." August 24-27, 2021, Kaunas, Lithuania.
- 11. SOI & Riga Technical University (2021). Conference: Open Innovation and Business Model after Pandemic of Covid-19, academic report "The Effectiveness of Depicting Traditional Masculinity in Advertising," July 12-15, 2021, South Korea.
- 12. 11th International Conference on Applied Economics: Contemporary issues in the economy, academic report "How Can Traditional Masculinity Affect Advertising Efficiency?", June 17-18, 2021, Poland.
- 13. 61st Riga Technical University International Scientific Online Conference: "Scientific Conference on Economics and Entrepreneurship" SCEE'2020, academic report "The Use of Various Types of Masculinity in Company's Marketing Message", October 16, 2020, Riga, Latvia.
- 14. The 11th International Multi-Conference on Complexity, Informatics, and Cybernetics: IMCIC 2020, academic report "Discourse Analysis of Modern Masculinity in Advertising," March 10-13, 2020, Orlando, Florida, USA.

- 15. 60th International Scientific Conference "Scientific Conference of Economics and Entrepreneurship", academic report "Discourse Analysis of Modern Masculinity in Advertising", October 14, 2019, Riga, Latvia.
- 16. International Camp- Conference "Smithy of Ideas 2019", academic report "Gender Discourse Analysis of Modern Masculinity in Marketing Communication," October 10-12, 2019, Kelme, Lithuania.

#### Approbation of the Thesis research results in publications

#### Scientific articles indexed in the Web of Science and/or Scopus and/or Erih database:

- Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2023). "Generation Z's and Millennials' Perception of Masculinity in Advertising: A Challenge for Advertisers" Trends in Economics and Management, Vol. 17, No. 41, pp. 21-39. <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.13164/trends.2023.41.21">http://dx.doi.org/10.13164/trends.2023.41.21</a>
- Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2022). "The Use of Brand and Masculinity Archetypes in Assessing Consumer Engagement in Advertising" Trends in Economics and Management, Vol 16, No. 40, pp. 21-38. <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.13164/trends.2022.40.21">http://dx.doi.org/10.13164/trends.2022.40.21</a>
- 3) Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2024). "A Qualitative Study of Consumer Perceptions About Masculinity in Advertising: Content, Sentiment, and Discourse Analysis". *International Journal of Learning and Change*. Vol. 16, No. 2/3 (Accepted for publication and scheduled to be published in April 2024). http://dx.doi.org/10.1504/IJLC.2023.10060129
- 4) Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D., Bernovskis, A. (2024). Brand and masculinity archetypes as an innovative research approach for analyzing consumer preferences on masculinity in advertising. Journal of Open Innovation, Vol. 10, Issue 1. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joitmc.2023.100184

## Publication (anonymously reviewed) in a journal with an international editorial board indexed in other databases:

- 5) Kreicbergs, T. (2023). "The Analysis of Masculinity in Advertising: A Qualitative Study Based on Consumer Perceptions". *Economics and Business*. Vol. 36, No. 1. pp. 135-151. https://doi.org/10.2478/eb-2023-0009
- 6) Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2023). "Consumer Perceptions of Masculinity in Advertising: The Viewpoint of Generation Z and Millennials". Journal Systemics, Cybernetics, and Informatics. Vol. 21, No. 2. pp. 47-54. https://doi.org/10.54808/JSCI.21.02.47

#### Publications in conference proceedings indexed in Web of Science and/or SCOPUS:

- Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2023). Consumer perceptions of masculinity in advertising: The viewpoint of Generation Z and Millennials. Proceedings of the 27th World Multi-Conference on Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics (WMSCI 2023) <a href="https://doi.org/10.54808/WMSCI2023.01.299">https://doi.org/10.54808/WMSCI2023.01.299</a>
- 8) Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D. (2023). Mixed Method Research on Consumer Perception of Traditional and Modern Masculinity in Advertising. Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Society and Information Technologies (ICSIT 2023) https://doi.org/10.54808/ICSIT2023.01.129
- 9) Kreicbergs, T., Ščeulovs, D., Andersone, I. (2022). The Phenomenon of Traditional Masculinity and Its Impact on Advertising: A Qualitative Study Based on Consumer Engagement in Digital Environment. IMCIC 2022 - 13th International Multi-Conference on Complexity, Informatics and Cybernetics, Proceedings 2, pp. 65-70. <a href="https://doi.org/10.54808/IMCIC2022.02.65">https://doi.org/10.54808/IMCIC2022.02.65</a>
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#### ACCOUNT OF CONTENTS OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

In order to provide a clear layout of the results achieved with the Doctoral Thesis, the author offers a logical scheme portraying the parts of the thesis, as well as the primary study activities and elaborations (Figure 1).

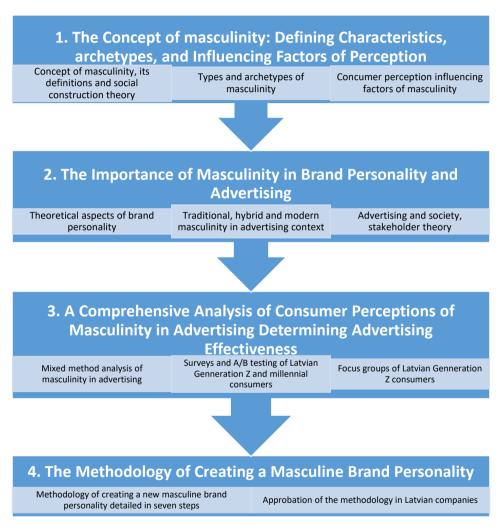


Figure 1. Logical scheme of the Doctoral Thesis (Author's original work)

### 1. THE CONCEPT OF MASCULINITY: DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS, ARCHETYPES, AND INFLUENCING FACTORS OF PERCEPTION

The concept of masculinity and the perception of what is considered masculine have drastically changed over the years. For instance, it was standard to put young boys in dresses, and it can be seen in childhood photos of novelist Ernest Hemingway or US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Up until the 1940s, boys wore pink, and girls wore blue; as a popular magazine at that time put it, "pink is a stronger and more decided color" (Henley, 2009), or the fact that high heels were worn by men who were nobles or of high class, for instance, French king Louis XIV. Cheerleading, for example, also used to be a men's activity up until World War II; therefore, many researchers argue that the perception of masculinity is changing (Watkins, 2008; Branchik et al., 2012; Ging 2019; Zayer et al., 2020). "Masculine" or "feminine" characteristics stereotypically assigned to sex or gender are no longer defined (Moynihan, 1998, 1072), and most likely will change for as longest as humans will exist. Therefore, to understand how marketers use masculinity in forming their brand personality strategy and executing advertising campaigns, there is a need to first understand the concept of masculinity itself. In this Chapter, the author discusses the findings from an extensive literature review conducted about masculinity as a concept. The author analyzes definitions of masculinity, classifies types of masculinity, identifies consumer perceptions of masculinity, and analyzes masculinity archetypes.

The author chose the literature overview method from the literature review methods, which included identifying the topic for review, conducting a literature search, reading the research that was found and taking notes, and finally, organizing the notes and creating the literature review itself and incorporating it in the research. The author used the Scopus and Web of Science databases to search for relevant latest research (years 2018 and 2019, when the study was started) with the keyword "Masculinity" in the article title, abstract, or as a keyword of the article. In the subject area of checking social sciences, in the document type checking articles and limiting articles to only English Scopus and Web of Science databases provided 1100 articles. By going through the search results, the author chose articles that extensively focused on masculinity, defining masculinity, and concentrating on various types of masculinity (Figure 1.1).

Since some researchers (Kimmel, 1996; Salzman et al., 2005) argue that the cultural shift regarding masculinity is taking place in the Western world, the author, therefore, also focused on studies that are conducted in the 'Western world.' "Western world is Europe, the Americas and generally any country whose cultural and ethnic origins can mostly be traced to Europe, collectively" (yourdictionary.com). The author argues that masculinity is a broad subject as it is, let alone consider this concept in the context of the entire world.

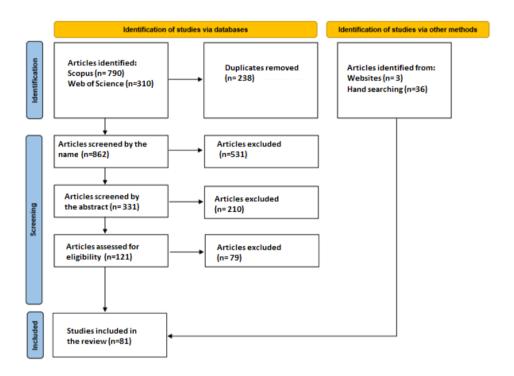


Figure 1.1. Literature search and selection process of research articles about masculinity as a concept (Author's original work)

Upon reading the title and later the abstract of the articles, many were disregarded as not fitting the criteria of the focus on masculinity and the Western countries. Some articles were added by hand researching, which meant that these articles were discovered by reading the articles from the initial identification stage and were later looked up and included in the review. In the end, there were 81 articles that were selected. These articles helped the author to first understand and then analyze traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity and various other important elements for this research about masculinity as a concept. Moreover, to analyze masculinity in

the context of branding and advertising, there was a new literature review conducted (Chapter 2.2.).

#### 1.1. Definitions of masculinity

Based on the literature review (literature overview method Figure 1.1), the author found and analyzed the definitions of masculinity, which is necessary to understand how the concept of masculinity can be defined. Several scholars have made attempts to define this complex concept (Table 1.1). The author calls masculinity a concept because a concept is an abstract idea, and as it is noticeable from the masculinity definitions, the scholars prefer to leave a certain amount of ambiguity when it comes to defining masculinity.

Table 1.1.

Definitions of masculinity (Author's original work)

Author	Definition of masculinity
(Diffrient, 2019, 822)	Masculinity is a <b>paradoxical phenomenon</b> - this socially encoded set of values tied to performed manliness- "is at once everywhere and yet nowhere, known and yet unknowable".
(Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 223)	Masculinity is a <b>social institution that is constructed, reproduced, and contested</b> at structural, interactional, and individual levels.
(Lee et al., 2019)	Masculinity ideology refers to the importance men associate with adhering to cultural beliefs regarding male behavioural standards.
(O'Gorman et al., 2019, 112)	Masculine norms refer to the dominant set of characteristics that define what it means to be a male within a society or culture. Traditional masculine norms in Western culture include traits such as stoicism, not showing weakness, avoiding femininity, and avoiding feelings of vulnerability.
(Berke et al., 2018)	The term masculinity refers to a <b>socially-defined set of attributes</b> , behaviours, and roles associated with boys and men. Masculinity is neither static nor monolithic, but rather a dynamic process- <b>culturally shaped</b> and maintained by contextual cues and structural resources.
(Berke et al., 2018)	Masculinity is both a <b>product of social learning and a process, subject to ongoing construction in social interaction.</b> Influence of masculinity on men's lives varies across context, time, and individuals.
(Srivastava, 2015, 334,)	Masculinity refers to the socially produced but embodied ways of being male. Its manifestations include manners of speech, behaviour, gestures, social interaction, a division of tasks "proper" to men and women, and an overall narrative that positions it as superior to its perceived antithesis, femininity.
(Wortmann et al., 2011, 2)	Masculinity is a term generally used to denote a set of <b>characteristics</b> , <b>actions</b> , <b>attitudes</b> , <b>expectations</b> , <b>and ways of being</b> that a particular society maintains for men. What is considered masculine changes over time and varies between and within social classes, racial and ethnic groups, subcultures, cultures, and societies.

There is some repetition and overlap within the definitions of masculinity, meaning that some words are evident in several definitions. The most frequently used terms in masculinity definitions are social, culture, society, and behavior. Characteristics, attitudes, time, constructed, interactional, and structure are other words that bear repetition (Figure 1.2).

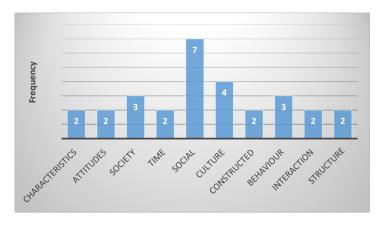


Figure 1.2. The frequency of the used words in masculinity definitions (Author's original work)

It is worth noting that the definition of masculinity also depends on the theoretical view through which the concept of masculinity is looked upon. For instance, in the positivist view, membership of the male sex is signified by the male anatomy. While in the social constructivist view, the male gender is practiced in social interactions and is signified by beliefs and behavior (Moynihan, 1998). Nevertheless, it is clear that many authors consider masculinity to be a socially constructed concept or phenomenon; therefore, there is a need to analyze social construction theory which further explains these most frequently used terms in masculinity definitions.

#### 1.2. Social construction theory

Based on masculinity definitions as well as the literature review of analyzing masculinity as a concept (Figure 1.1) from 88 scientific research articles, it became clear that masculinity's most critical aspect is the socially constructed concept. It means that the idea of masculinity is not created individually but rather collectively by society as a culturally and socially constructed phenomenon. That gives a significant relevance to social construction theory. The theory argues that reality is being constructed by social interaction and not by the thoughts of individuals. The idea of social construction theory is that many aspects of our world are considered objective facts of life when in fact, these aspects derive from patterns of social interaction that have become institutionalized (Gergen, 2009). Social construction theory is one of the most prominent theoretical approaches in the social sciences (Pfadenhauer et al., 2019). The theory aims to recognize and emphasize the power of social facts in enabling and constraining our

daily lives. The theory also argues that what people experience in this world is often just constructs, and people experience the world through that lens of constructs. Furthermore, the theory argues that much of the knowledge is not real in itself. The knowledge only exists because people give them a reality through social agreement (Figure 1.3).

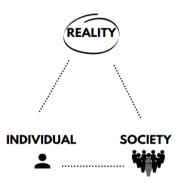


Figure 1.3. Social construction theory (Adapted from Berger and Luckmann (1966))

The foundation of the theory is asking questions such as what is the appropriate way to interact with other members of the social group; and what makes something real (Kessler, 2013, 715). Some of these questions are certainly relevant in understanding what is the appropriate display of masculinity in our society for the advertisers to depict in their marketing communication with the audience. Social knowledge is fundamental in social construction theory. It can take place with parents teaching their children whether something is socially appropriate or not, but it also happens in people's daily lives, without them even noticing it, by interacting with friends, the community, and being exposed to the media messages. These appropriate ways of doing things in a social group can become habitual over a certain period of time. It means that individuals take on a character of what they perceive as an objective reality based on their interactions with various social groups.

The idea that human practices become desirable through social interaction points out that social construction theory largely resembles social identity theory. Social identity theory, which offers insights into identity formation and change, suggests that individuals seek a positive sense of self, and one way to achieve this is to emphasize the desirability of one's own social group (the "in-group") while distinguishing one's group from the lesser "out-group". Social identity

theory, just like social construction theory, argue that individuals desire to perform their practices in a way that will please their social group, where such practice performance is appropriate. Thus suggesting that individuals are performing masculinity in a way that is appropriate and desired by the community and the social group with which the individual is a part. Social construction theory also is valid in understanding how the depiction of a certain concept, such as masculinity, is being formed and changed. For example, an argument is made that the spirit of the #TimesUp movement about toxic masculinity brought individuals together to form a collected opinion of society and changed the reality of advertising (Zayer et al., 2020). As a result, illustrations of more inclusive forms of masculinity started to appear in advertising, such as Gillette's "We Believe: The best man can be" advertisement aimed at toxic masculinity in society.

Social construction theory is also about three major forces: functional, social, and political. These forces are currently changing the perception of masculinity and gender norms. The functional force, which includes advertising, is logically based on perceived "realness" and is currently replacing the appeal of idealized masculine standards with more inclusive forms of masculinity. Social force is about gender role norms in society, which are becoming more ambiguous and closer to equality. Finally, the political force includes relevant legislation, such as the fact that several resolutions have been proposed and passed (in Europe), which aim to use regulative forces to tackle issues of gender in advertising (Zayer et al., 2020, 253). Therefore, the author argues that the ideas of social construction theory are closely connected to actual practices taking place regarding masculinity as a concept in society, which naturally affects brand strategists and advertisers. It particularly affects them since it might be difficult to understand which type of masculinity they should focus on in their advertising. The social construction theory helped the author understand the root of how masculinity as a social concept is constructed within society, which is something that advertisers using masculinity in their marketing communication should also understand.

#### 1.3. Defining characteristics of various types of masculinity

After conducting an extensive literature review of analyzing masculinity as a concept (Figure 1.1) using the literature overwiev method from 88 scientific research articles, the author concluded that researchers mainly distinguish three different types of masculinity such as traditional masculinity, hybrid masculinity, and modern or inclusive masculinity (Table 1.2).

The masculinity characteristics were confired during the focus groups with Latvian audience (men's, women's and mixed focus group in Chapter 3.3.2).

Table 1.2. Grouping of types of masculinity and their characteristics (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Type of masculinity	Characteristics	Authors
Traditional masculinity	Competitiveness, having physical strength,	(Franz-Balsen, 2014), (Walters et
(Including Hegemonic	virility, machoism, striving to be a hero,	al., 2019), (Birch et al., 2017),
masculinity, and Toxic	having financial success, emotionally strong,	(Smith 2012), (Bordo, 2011),
masculinity)	independent, rejecting displays of femininity	(Månsdotter et al., 2009), (Kimmel,
	or fear, ambition and self-reliance, being a	1996), (Jaffe, 1990), (Stern, 1992),
	breadwinner, athletic, decisive and taking risk,	(Zayer et al., 2020), (Rogers, 2019),
	sense of entitlement, dominant, patriotic,	(Connell, 2014), (Montemurro et
	powerful, wealthy, having privilege,	al., 2019), (Pollack, 2017), (Ging
	aggressive, brave.	2013), (Oswald 2007)
Hybrid masculinity	Having privilege, being strategic, sensitive,	(Montemurro et al., 2019), Connell
(Including Flexible	caring, open minded, emphatic, with an	(2014), (Ging, 2019), (Eisen et al.,
masculinity and	interest maintaining male dominance, having	2019), (Scheibling, Lafrance,
Complicit masculinity)	less rigid view of gender norms, being able to	2019), (Gee, 2014), (Zayer et al.,
	adapt, emotional availability.	2020), (Hirschman, 2003)
Modern masculinity	Having sense of equality, rejecting gender	(Rogers, 2019), (Coad, 2008),
(Including Inclusive	conformity, having feminine characteristics,	(Salzman et al., 2005), (Lalancette,
masculinity and New	emasculating, metrosexuality, choice based	Cormack, 2018), (Cheng, 1999),
masculinity)	rhetoric, forward-thinking, progressive, having	(Kimmel, 2006), (Branchik et al.,
• ,	an interest in culture, emotionally expressive,	2012), (Kimmel 1996), (Oswald,
	sensitive and compassionate, narcissistic,	2007), (Coad, 2008), (Ging, 2019),
	immature, open minded, having an interest in	(Ging 2013)
	fashion, being brave enough to be whoever the	
	man wants to be.	

In the next subchapters, there is a more detailed discussion of the three masculinity types, their characteristics, attributes, behaviors, and rhetoric. It was essential to understand each of these masculinity types for the author to accurately identify them in advertisements for further research.

#### The concept of Traditional masculinity

The literature review of 88 research articles showed that traditional masculinity, which includes hegemonic masculinity, is known for its stereotypical aspirations and views linked to it (Table 1.2). Traditional masculinity is not only discussed in the academic literature but also in the media, with the rhetoric being very similar in that traditional masculinity essentially embodies all the negative aspects that society sometimes associates with toxic and hegemonic masculinity. For instance, in 2019, both the New York Times and the L.A. Times came out with widely debated articles, "Traditional Masculinity Can Hurt Boys, Say New A.P.A. Guidelines," arguing that traditional masculinity is now considered harmful by the American Psychology Association. Articles released in the wake of the #MeToo movement seemed to reflect contemporary conversations about gender, bullying, and harassment, just like previously mentioned Gillette's 2019 advertisement. In these articles, the researchers argue that men have higher suicide rates and men are lonelier as they get older due to traditional masculine stereotypes that affect men's thinking and self-esteem.

#### **Hegemonic masculinity**

The author found that there is a substantial overlap between traditional masculinity and hegemonic masculinity, as gender theorists argue. Hegemonic masculinity is mainly associated with all the negative aspects of traditional masculinity. As a concept developed to comprehend the social dynamics that produce hierarchical power relations between both men and women and among different masculinities, hegemonic masculinity is conceptualized as the contextually most valued and idealized configuration of masculine practice and, therefore, something men strive to live up to (Bach 2017, 340). Birch (2017) concurs, arguing that hegemonic masculinity is being dominant, aggressive, non-caring, non-emotional, and rejecting displays of femininity or fear. That puts a great amount of pressure on men to conform and be a certain way to be considered masculine.

There is a consensus among social scientists that the brand of masculinity that a society holds in the highest esteem at any given time is exactly hegemonic masculinity because it is most prevalently organized around dominance (Rogers, 2019, 732). It has been suggested in the scientific literature that hegemonic masculinity relates to a cultural system in which men occupy a central position within the gender order.

Similarly, a concept that is getting increased attention in the scientific literature and the media and is directly related to hegemonic masculinity is toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity was the central target in Gillette's 2019 ad, which is discussed further in Chapter 3. Toxic

masculinity ranges from sexual rejection and unstable employment to video game violence and pornography. Although the term "toxic masculinity" has become widely used in academic and popular discourses, its origins are somewhat unclear. In psychoanalytic contexts, it has been used in essentialist terms to describe "the need to aggressively compete and dominate others and encompasses the most problematic tendencies in men" (Ging, 2019, 643). Another concept related to hegemonic masculinity and toxic masculinity is machoism. Machismo is one of the central features often attributed to men of Latino or Hispanic Descent. Machismo refers to exaggerated displays of masculinity with traits that often include being perceived as strong, virile, courageous, emotionally stoic but sexually adventuresome, brave, self-sufficient, and, perhaps above all, decidedly non- feminine (Walters et al., 2019). Some men might perceive some dimensions of machismo as desirable. However, overall the concept also limits men and might fall into gender conformity issues.

#### Crisis in masculinity

Several studies about the contemporary perceptions of masculinity with a focus on traditional masculinity have discussed the theme of "Crisis in masculinity", which symbolizes the idea that men do not know how to behave anymore, what is appropriate and what is not, and what society expects from men. One such author that is often discussing the "crisis in masculinity" concept is Professor of Toronto University Jordan Peterson. The New York Times calls him "the most influential public intellectual in the Western world right now" (Brooks, 2018). Jordan Peterson has written several books, arguing that men have lost their sense of masculinity (Peterson, 2018), mainly due to media, feminism, and political correctness. To Peterson's point, some other authors concur, also blaming the media, saying that "societies changing notions of who men should be, combined with media images that derided who they currently are, leave many men confused as to whether they can do anything right" (Salzman et al., 2005, 48). The author argues that the "crisis in masculinity" narrative seems like an effective way how to capture the attention of the audience because a crisis in masculinity sounds rather shocking and eye-opening, while in reality, it seems like a cultural shift that society naturally goes through every couple of years.

#### The concept of Hybrid masculinity

During the literature review process the author found that many constructions of masculinity now include conventions associated with older and newer ideologies of gender. Some researchers call this a "hybridization" of masculinities whereby male identities are constructed

through a combination of elements drawn from different and contrasting cultural doctrines (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 225). Raewyn Connell calls this "complicit masculinity," which refers to men who do not achieve hegemonic masculinity but who nevertheless experience power and prestige in society from supporting, in principle, these ideals. In one study by Ging (2019), it is argued that 'masculinity' represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices (ibid, 643). This type of masculinity sometimes is referred to as flexible masculinity, which is associated with hybrid masculinity. For instance, Gee (2014) defines "flexible masculinity" as follows: "A form of identity practice that adapts to accommodate a range of dominant male stereotypes and more alternative versions of masculinity" (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 225). Ging (2019) argues that some men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable, but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. In other words, these men use traits of traditional masculinity when it is needed and traits of modern masculinity in other convenient situations and social groups. Therefore, there is some overlap between hybrid masculinity and traditional on one end and modern on the other (Figure 1.4). The characteristics of these masculinity types are later tested and confirmed during empirical research in both analyzing advertisements from conducting qualitative video content analysis and conducting A/B testing and focus groups, which makes it a triangulation method approach.

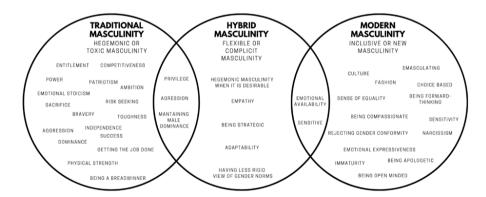


Figure 1.4. Types of masculinity and their key characteristics, behaviors and rhetoric (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

From analyzing scientific literature about hybrid masculinity, the author found that hybrid masculinity shows a resemblance to role theory which is vital in explaining consumer behavior.

For this research, role theory helps understand hybrid masculinity, gender conformity, gender roles, and stereotypes. According to role theory, consumer behavior can, in some cases, resemble actions in a play. As in a play, each consumer has props, lines, and costumes necessary to put on a desirable performance to get what the consumer wants. Due to the need to give a performance, consumers' consumption decisions may alter. Consumers use this technique subconsciously to evaluate products and services in one of their roles that may be quite different from another role (Solomon, 2007). When it comes to masculinity and role theory, then researchers use social role theory to help describe the phenomenon of hybrid masculinity and gender stereotypes. Social role theory suggests that gender stereotypes derive from the traditional distribution of men and women into social roles, especially men's role as breadwinners having a higher status than women's role of homemaker. A number of studies have suggested that men are typically ascribed agentic characteristics, which reflect an assertive, controlling, and confident tendency because men are traditionally concentrated in strength-intensive roles and in high-status roles (De Meulenaer et al., 2018). Gender roles are often normative in the sense that they describe qualities or behavioral tendencies believed to be desirable or appropriate for each sex (ibid). As a result of that, when something diverges from the normative element of the stereotype, it runs the risk of being evaluated negatively, which explains why sometimes traditional masculinity advertising is perceived favorably by consumers and modern masculinity advertising is not (more in Chapter 2.2.)

#### The concept of modern masculinity

The literature review process showed the author that modern masculinity, also known as inclusive masculinity, represents a broader set of characteristics than traditional masculinity. The argument is that modern masculinity includes more choice-based rhetoric, meaning that men choose who they want to be (Salzman et al., 2005) instead of conforming to what society tells them how men should behave. Naturally, modern masculinity derives from masculinity itself (Wortmann et al. 2011); the question is, where is the line between the two? As some authors argue, "Modern men are more sensitive, and boundaries are blurred between male and female" (Salzman et al., 2005, 20). Sensitivity and emotionality are typically constructed as feminine characteristic (Cheng, 1999); however, with modern masculinity, emotion, and sensitivity are key characteristics of the phenomenon.

There is a consensus that modern masculinity emerged from men losing their status as breadwinners and women gaining independence. Therefore, men did not need to put forth characteristics that proved their ability to provide and protect because women were able to do that for themselves. The author argues that women have had a significant impact on changing the way how masculinity is displayed and perceived. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that modern masculinity is still perceived as emasculating by many men (Kimmel, 2006). Some men feel that modern masculinity is taking away their sense of being a man. In fairness, this cultural shift is not evident all around the world. As some researchers point out, the Western version of masculinity is fairly modern and geographically limited" (Salzman et al., 2005, 45). Other researchers concur, saying that there is a reason to believe that hegemonic masculinity is losing its grip on men in Western cultures (Rogers, 2019, 732) and thus shifting to a more modern idea of men and masculinity. Gender scholars have identified progressively elastic performances of manhood taking root, often in the form of an "inclusive masculinity" (modern masculinity) that embraces many traditional aspects of "manliness" but refuses to stigmatize other men who do not conform (ibid). Michael Kimmel urges that "we must begin to imagine a world of equality in which we also embrace and celebrate difference" (Kimmel 1996, 334). This urgency has found it's way in contemporary advertising as well (Chapter 2.2.5).

A key concept in modern masculinity that is sometimes discussed is metrosexuality. Metrosexuality is often discussed in the context of new, modern, inclusive masculinity, but the author found that, in reality, it is a much narrower concept, as it mostly speaks about appearance and fashion, not the emotional aspects of masculinity. Researchers argue that for some men, the way to break out from the stereotypes of masculinity is through fashion (Draper et al., 2018). Fashion has made it possible for men to define their masculinity through their style and consumption practices. Fashion helps create differences among men in everyday life and across consumer culture (ibid). The metrosexual male was first identified and named in November 1994 when the British cultural critic Mark Simpson published "Here come the mirror men" in the magazine The Independent. Mark Simpson stated that metrosexuals are falling for the narcissism in men's advertising (Coad, 2008, 18). Another scholar describes "a typical metrosexual is a young man with money to spend, living in or within easy reach of a metropolisbecause that is where all the best shops, clubs, gyms and hairdressers are. He might be officially gay, straight or bisexual, but this is utterly immaterial because he has clearly taken himself as his own love object and pleasure as his sexual preference" (Salzman et al., 2005, 53). The author found that the hype of metrosexuals was mainly increased by the media and advertisers. As U.S. magazine ads emphasize idealized images of masculinity, their representation of masculinity has focused mainly on appearance and grooming in response to the increasing availability of male personal care products and fashions. Alexander (2003) calls this new consumption-based masculinity a 'branded masculinity,' which is rooted in men's insecurities generated by consumer capitalism.

#### 1.4. Influencing factors of consumers' perception of masculinity

During the literature review process of analyzing masculinity and various types of it, the author identified factors that influence the way how people perceive masculinity (Table 1.3). The factors were identified from the literature review (Figure 1.1 and Figure 2.5) based on the frequency of the factor mentioned in the scientific literature. If the frequency of the factor mentioned exceeded number three, then the factor was included. The following Chapter is a brief overview of the extensive research that was done in analyzing masculinity as a subject and the factors that determine how it is perceived by consumers and society at large. Throughout the literature review, there were many factors that were discovered as potential factors that influence how masculinity is perceived by society or the audience from the advertiser's perspective. The factors were confirmed during the focus groups with Latvian audience (men's, women's and mixed focus group in Chapter 3.3.2).

Table 1.3.

Influencing factors of consumers' perception of masculinity (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Influencing factors	Brief description	Source/ Authors
Family and upbringing	Primary socialization agents (especially parents) strongly influence the perception of everything, including masculinity perception, in a child growing up. Men are likely to associate fatherhood with masculinity, and fathering a child is seen as proof of masculinity.	(Gannon et al., 2004), (Molander et al., 2019), (Tamir 2019), (Bach, 2019), (Marshall et al. 2014).
School and government policies	Education plays a pivotal role in the construction of masculinity, where the school is conceived of as a microcosm of what the state aspires to be, and sport is a traditional signifier of ideal masculine and national qualities. State policies define the conditions under which individuals and families organize their lives.	(Ging, 2013), (Molander et al., 2019), (Reichert et al., 2019)
Culture	Masculinity is shaped by culture. Culture and gender reflect what emotions are to be shown and who is entitled to these emotions in terms of gender.	(Oswald, 2007), (Birch et al., 2017), (Valaei et al., 2016), (Paek et al. 2009), (Yeu et al., 2013), (Saleem, 2017), (Min Jung et al., 2009) (Sook Moon, Chan, 2005) (House et al., 2004) (Hofstede, 2001) (Paek et al. 2009) (Zhang and Gelb, 1996) (Yeu et al., 2013)

Stereotypes, social norms, and gender conformity	Stereotypes of masculinity continue to further shape masculinity, which is called gender conformity. Stereotypes of society can also be called social norms. Social norms represent collective expectations that the majority social groups socially construct about the proper role and conduct of different groups in society.	(Eisen et al., 2019), (Alexander, 2003), (Akpanudo et al., 2017), (Beutel et al., 2019), (Berke et al., 2018)
Equality and feminism as concepts	In Western society, there is increasing political and social pressure for fathers to spend time at home with their children as the primary caretaker. Greater appreciation for equality primarily comes from feminism as a consequence.	(Bach, 2017), (Kimmel, 1996), (Molander et al., 2019), (Reichert et al., 2019), (Ging 2019)
Sexuality	Men increasingly came to view their heterosexuality as an emblem of manhood. Homosexuals on the public scene intensified men's anxieties about their masculinity. Individuals' willingness to engage in uncommitted sex is systematically higher in men than in women and can be considered a typical male trait.	(Kimmel 1996), (Montemurro et al., 2019, 873), (Birch et al., 2017
Traditional media	The media not only reflects but also helps to create popular ideas about what it is to be masculine. By using certain masculine images (for example, the "bad boy" image), the media helps the audience better understand the story.	(Salzman et al., 2005), (Gannon et al., 2004), (Gopaldas, Molander, 2020)
"Manospheres", and social media	Social media groups and "manospheres" (certain groups on platforms such as Reddit, etc.) can create an image of men in a society that results in an extreme set of discourses and ideological positions.	(Ging, 2019), (Rogers 2019), (Papacharissi 2016)
Advertising and consumption	In a society based on consumer capitalism, men increasingly share the belief that constructing one's gender identity is merely a matter of purchasing acceptable brand-name products, hence the term branded masculinity.	(Alexander, 2003), (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019), (Zayer et al., 2020)
Popular culture	Masculinity is largely constructed with a popular culture that includes music videos, magazines, movies, and TV shows. The narratives and relationships played out on screen generally reflect the way people understand their own lives. Popular culture can create phenomena such as "bad boy" or "bromance," which largely constructs various masculinity images for today's consumers to adapt.	(Lindsay, Lyons, 2018), (Robinson et al., 2019), (Coulter, 2014), (Alexander, 2003), (Ostberg, 2010), (Crownover, 2014) (Gopaldas, Molander, 2020)

#### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Family and upbringing

The scientific consensus is that primary socialization agents (especially parents) strongly influence the perception of everything, including masculinity, in a child growing up (Tamir 2019). Researchers have also found that fathers' choices, likes, and dislikes strongly influence the choices, likes, and dislikes of their children and level of identification with, for example, a sports team (ibid). Fatherhood not only influences offspring's perception of masculinity but

being a father itself is considered to be masculine according to researchers. Men are likely to associate fatherhood with masculinity, and fathering a child is seen as proof of masculinity (Gannon et al., 2004). In addition, researchers from Nordic countries have highlighted the emergence of new family practices, emphasizing how the nurturing practices involved in fatherhood change and challenge conventional ideas about what it means to be a man (Bach 2017, 339). To sum up, the large number of studies about the importance of family and upbringing as determining factors in one's perception of masculinity certainly make it a crucial aspect to consider among the influencing factors.

#### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: School and government policies

Ging (2013) argues that traditional masculinity is formed in schools and sports. "Education plays a pivotal role in the construction of masculinity, where the school is conceived of as a microcosm of what the state aspires to be and sport is a traditional signifier of ideal masculine and national qualities" (Ging, 2013, 25). School cultures in which conventional masculinity is fervently policed (by exclusion and bullying) ensure that boys who do not "measure up" appreciate their peril. Being "cool," academically disinvested, and anti-school is typically praised within these cultures (Reichert et al., 2019). Some researchers argue that the way how young boys are being brought up in life is very troubling. Boys are losing the capacity for emotional expression, educational investment, intimacy and connection, health and well-being, and virtue (Reichert et al., 2019, 914). Besides school, an argument is made that upbringing has a lot to do with the state (the government) and its policies. The Swedish context enables the theorizing of the state as an involved actor with the legitimacy to influence individual citizens' lives and consumption choices (Molander et al., 2019, 435). State policies define the conditions under which individuals and families organize their lives concerning childcare, participation in the labor force, and consumption of market offerings, thus helping fathers to be more involved in raising a child and breaking stereotypes of gender roles.

#### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Culture

An important factor when discussing how masculinity is being influenced is culture. Researchers often state that "Masculinity is shaped by culture" (Oswald, 2007, 36). Culture and gender reflect what emotions are to be shown and who is entitled to these emotions in terms of gender (Birch et al., 2017). Masculinity ideology refers to the importance men associate with adhering to cultural beliefs regarding male behavioural standards (Lee et al., 2019). What is considered masculine changes over time and varies between and within social classes, racial

and ethnic groups, subcultures, cultures, and societies. (Wortmann et al., 2011). Researchers (Birch et al., 2017) also argue that a severe and negative consequence of boys and young men being enculturated into a traditional hegemonic masculine culture and related attitudes is the denial of their 'female' or 'human' emotions, such as their need for intimacy and the lack of acceptance of their emotional states.

## Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Stereotypes of masculinity, social norms and gender conformity

Although several social scientists like Michael Kimmel and Raewyn Connell provide a nuanced way to understand gender, sexuality, and masculinity, cultural gender norms are still taken from Parsons's (1954) stark distinctions between men's "instrumental role" and women's "expressive role" (Eisen et al., 2019, 802). The scientific literature shows numerous examples of how stereotypes of masculinity continue to further shape masculinity, which is called gender conformity (Alexander, 2003). At the root of the gender conformity is individuals adapting or being forced on gender ideals. Gender ideals are "the shared beliefs or models of gender that a majority of society accepts as appropriate masculinity or femininity" (ibid, 537). For example, it is illustrated how engineering was historically framed as a profession that excluded the participation of women, promoted dominant images of masculinity to attract young boys to engineering, and became an occupational space for "proving manhood" (Akpanudo et al., 2017). Therefore, it could be well argued that one of the reasons why the field of engineering is dominated by men is because society tell people that this is a male profession; thus, men want to become engineers and continue to reinforce the stereotype, and the cycle continues.

Researchers argue that the stereotypes of masculinity are rooted in a muscular, athletic body and cultural mandates to be aggressive, independent, emotionally absent, and driven to succeed (Eisen et al., 2019, 802). These constructions of masculinity are embedded within institutions such as sports and the media, which glorify hypermasculinity, violence, and the athletic body and maintain the saliency of cultural narratives that link men to masculinity (ibid). Stereotypes of society can also be called social norms. Social norms represent collective expectations that are socially constructed by majority social groups about the proper role and conduct of different groups in society (Akpanudo et al., 2017). Social norms related to masculinity are often associated with emotional regulation, the exertion of significant dominance over others, and the desire to win (ibid). Emotional regulation is a particularly old stereotype of masculinity but one that is still present in our societies. Emotion regulation is the process by which men modify their emotions to respond to the varying demands of their environment (Berke et al., 2018).

Another author concurs, saying that "being a man is a political act that hinges on one's ability to successfully complete masculine dramaturgical performances" (Eisen et al., 2019, 803), which is an indirect reference to role theory as discussed in the Chapter 1.3.

### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Equality and feminism as concepts

The importance of engaging with the conceptualization of gender equality is growing (Bach 2017, 340), which naturally shapes how men and women view masculinity and femininity. Michael Kimmel insists that "we need a new definition of masculinity for a new century" and that it should be 'democratic manhood' which means a gender politics of inclusion, of standing up against injustice based on difference (Kimmel, 1996, 333), perhaps that is something that advertisers also should consider. In addition, a growing body of research is pointing out that men value gender equality more and more, particularly in Western countries (Bach, 2017). Furthermore, in Western society, there is an increasing political and social pressure for fathers to spend time at home with their children as the primary caretaker (Molander et al., 2019), which also is a result of the equality debate in society, shaping the perception of masculinity. Another author argues that the greater appreciation for equality largely comes from feminism as a consequence (Reichert et al., 2019). However, some recent studies draw attention to the fact that a growing number of people join antifeminist movements, particularly in the online environment (Ging 2019). A more detailed overview of this process in society is discussed in the next sub-chapter.

### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: "Manospheres" and social media

As with almost everything nowadays, social media influences how masculinity is constructed and perceived, particularly with the creation of "manospheres" (certain groups on platforms such as Reddit, etc.). Some men refer to themselves as men's rights activists in the manosphere. These groups have established complex connections with interconnected organizations, blogs, forums, communities, and subcultures, resulting in an extreme set of discourses and ideological positions (Ging, 2019, 639). It is stated that men in online gaming communities, populated heavily by men, players routinely joke about sexual violence and lash out at any objection (Rogers 2019, 732). Extreme discussions on masculinity travel to whichever online environment spaces are perceived as threatening male privilege and thus also exert a powerful chilling effect on the Internet's nonmanosphere spaces (Ging, 2019). As it was discovered later in the research in mixed method analysis, social media can indeed be a place where men put

forth the most hateful comments, and considerable negativity is displayed when discussing modern masculinity (Gillette's example).

### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Traditional media

Media also plays a role in this construction of a particular masculinity perception. "The media not only reflects but also helps to create popular ideas about what it is to be masculine" (Salzman et al., 2005, 47). Media creates images of types of masculinity; for example, it is noted that news media invokes the bad boy image as a journalistic frame for polarizing celebrities (Hoffman, 2014; Gopaldas, Molander, 2020) to help the audience better understand the story. A great deal of previous research has concluded that there is also a growing consensus among the media that men, at least in developed Western societies, are in crisis due to losing the sense of their masculinity. Often, men are positioned as vulnerable and threatened by forces outside their control, and the current "crisis" represents a contemporary manifestation of long-standing anxieties about the nature of masculinity and the role and function of men. (Gannon et al., 2004). The crisis in masculinity narrative, which, as stated, is often a theme in traditional media content, is also on full display in advertising, particularly traditional masculinity advertising.

### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Popular culture

Many recent studies have shown that masculinity is largely constructed with popular culture (Lindsay, Lyons, 2018), which includes music videos, magazines, movies, and TV shows. It affects men's psychology of how men should behave to get what they want and to be admired by their peers, and as a direct consequence, it also affects marketing decisions for advertisers. The narratives and relationships played out on screen generally reflect the way we understand our own lives (Robinson et al., 2019). Pop culture's influence on masculinity is certainly nothing new. For instance, Playboy magazine's success was based on unique marketing strategies of forging the persona of idealized masculinity with particular lifestyles and taste preferences (Coulter, 2014). However, in modern times this construction of masculinity through popular culture has increased to unprecedented levels. It has been suggested that in postmodern society, masculinity is shaped by the images incorporated in popular culture (Alexander, 2003). Popular culture is also increasingly ubiquitous, creating the process of men in Western consumer cultures being overwhelmed with various mixed signals about what men should be like and how to present themselves to society (Ostberg, 2010), making the task of advertisers

understanding consumer psychology even more difficult. Such an example is the "bad boy" image that is present in popular culture and, therefore, also in advertising (Crownover, 2014; Gopaldas, Molander, 2020). Another example is the "Bromance" phenomenon, which is a complex and dynamic relationship grounded in male closeness, trust, and homosociality and is rooted in many "buddy movies," where increasingly intimate and emotional affection is being displayed between heterosexual men (Robinson et al., 2019). An argument can be made that popular culture largely constructs the masculinity of today's consumer, suggesting the strong relevance of this topic for advertisers to monitor.

### Influencing factors of masculinity's perception: Advertising and consumption

In a society based on consumer capitalism, men increasingly share the belief that constructing one's gender identity is merely a matter of purchasing acceptable brand-name products; hence the term branded masculinity (Alexander, 2003) was coined. Researchers in the scientific literature discuss various consequential advertisements and their effect on society's perception of masculinity. Perhaps the most consequential is previously mentioned Gillette's (2019) advertising campaign tackling sexual harassment and bullying, "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be." It evoked an intense backlash, including from celebrities like British broadcaster Piers Morgan and others. This advertisement sparked an intense debate about masculinity, particularly about how young boys are raised. By analyzing the awareness of the concept of masculinity that was received when this advertisement was published, the author concluded that advertising can have a large influence on how much society is interested in this concept. In January 2019, when Gillette's advertisement was shown on television and published on YouTube, the internet experienced an enormous spike in the number of searches about "masculinity" (Figure 1.5.).

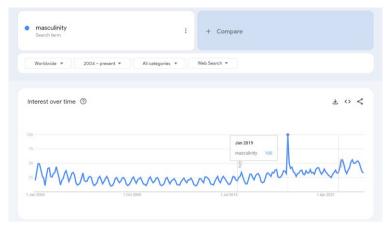


Figure 1.5. Frequency of masculinity searches on Google (Google search trends, 2022)

The world has never seen so much activity in terms of searches for "masculinity" before or since the launch of this advertisement. This illustrates how much advertising contributes to the interest in society about a certain phenomenon or concept, in this case, masculinity. A more detailed discussion of the influence of advertising on masculinity is provided in Chapter 2.2.

# 1.5. Theoretical framework of masculinity archetypes

As previously established, masculinity is a complex phenomenon that is ever-changing and, therefore, difficult to accurately classify into categories. However, over the 20th century, there have been several psychologists that have managed to make scientific sense of this complex phenomenon. Such a contribution to the science of psychology is made by Carl Jung by establishing archetypes. The archetype is a concept relating to behavior, or more specifically, a pattern of behavior, as a part of a larger theoretical model. According to Carl Gustav Jung's theory, archetypes can be viewed as components of the "collective unconscious, deeply embedded personality patterns that resonate within us and serve to organize and give direction to human thought and action" (Jung, 1954, 77). Another author says that archetypes are commonly understood characters or stereotypes that are found in stories around the world (Hollis, 2008, 173). Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette took Carl Jung's archetype theory and created four masculinity archetypes (King, Magician, Lover, and Warrior) as key concepts in masculinity. Many world-announced psychologists to this day consider these four archetypes to be the building blocks of masculinity (Figure 1.6.). It is worth noting that archetypes are also used in branding and advertising (Chapter 2.1.2.). Carol S Pearson has done another meaningful

work in this field with "Awakening heroes within," where she also built on Carl Jung's archetype concepts by creating twelve masculinity archetypes, but in many ways, it is very similar to the (Moore, Gillette, 1990) King, Magician, Lover, and Warrior masculinity concepts because each of these four archetypes has multiple shadow archetypes.

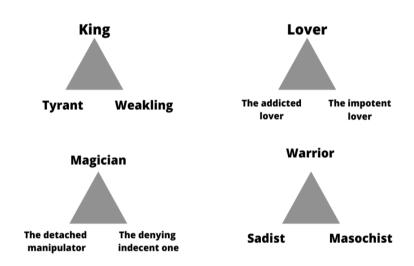


Figure 1.6. Masculinity archetype theory (Moore, Gillette, 1990)

The criticism of this theory is that some of the characteristics of one masculinity archetype overlap with another. For instance, being creative overlaps between King and Magician, while self-sacrifice overlaps between Warrior and the King, to name a few examples. However, most characteristics, according to Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, are exclusive to only one masculinity archetype (Table 1.4.). It is also worth noting that some characteristics of one masculinity archetype are the exact opposites because, according to this theoretical classification, each archetype has two other archetypes underneath it, such as shadow archetypes. Each of the four archetypes has a pinnacle that represents the fullness of the archetype with usually positive characteristics. Additionally, each archetype also has a bipolar split as shadow sides of the archetype, which is the result of the archetype not being integrated into a man (or a character) in a healthy and coherent way. This makes a lot of sense, considering that all men cannot be put into just four categories with only positive characteristics. There are certainly nuances to each masculinity archetype.

Table 1.4.

Masculinity archetypes (Author's work analyzed from Moore, Gillette, 1990)

Archetype	Description	Characteristics (positive)	Shadow archetype	Characteristics (negative)
King	The archetype of a King is a man who unites the people and cares for them while maintaining order and power over people. The King is a man who is willing to take sacrifice and puts the well-being of others above himself.	Powerful, brave, fair, taking sacrifice for the goal, organized, creative, loves order, strongly against chaos, relentless, hard-working, having self-control, sees potential in others, born leader; confident, supportive.	Tyrant	Authoritative; egocentric; narcissistic; lack of responsibility and accountability
			Weakling	Full of fears; paranoid; the fear makes him attack first; revengeful and aggressive; fragile ego
Magician	The archetype of a Magician is a man who at first takes an observing position of the world, someone who is very suspicious of everyone and tries to see through everyone's mask. The Magician is the epitome of the student who has become a master. He carefully and thoroughly chooses his methods. The Magician thinks that he can outsmart everyone.	Knowledgeable; cautious; articulate; well organized; having a long- term thinking; always curious; detail oriented; devoted to the goal; clever; respects the science and academia; determine; witty; hard- working; willing to learn; thorough.	The detached manipulator  The denying innocent one	Dishonest; arrogant; loves to create chaos, while maintaining his own order; typically amoral behavior; impulsive; unpredictable; destroying what others have created; jealous of other's talent Opposes the power, but does not want to take responsibility; jealous of other's success; dishonest; sneaky; lacking humility.
Lover	The archetype of a Lover is a man who loves beauty, both inner and outer. The ultimate purpose is love, not power or success. The Lover is against discipline, and is wired to break the rules, in the name of love. The Lover is also sensitive and in touch with his feelings.	Compassionate; extravert; open; charming; playful; empathic; passionate; having a strong sexuality; having good social skills emotionally accessible; capable to be intimate with others; charismatic; affectionate;	The impotent Lover	Lives in his fantasy; having a never ending feeling of emptiness and lack of fulfillment; delusional; indecisive; having patriarchal thinking; Being depressed; incapable of love; emotionally distant; feeling lonely and unwanted; having a victim mentality
Warrior	The Warrior goes into a conflict head on and is willing to sacrifice anything to reach that goal. The Warrior wants to be a hero, as it is the archetype of action, the one who does instead of talks about doing.	Trustworthy; brave; determined to reach the goal; does not change his mind; loyal; never gives up; respects a worthy enemy; willing to sacrifice himself, respects the code of honor; resilient; protects others	Sadist  Masochist	Insensitive; stubborn; unapologetic; desire to dominate, paranoid; constantly looking for a conflict and an enemy; Easily manipulated; psychologically weak; blind devotion to the power; loves the pain; low sense of self-worth;

The qualities of these archetypes are characterized by "positive" and "negative" qualities. Even though what constitutes positive and negative is debatable, applying common sense to what society considers a desirable character feature and a less desirable character feature is fairly obvious to most people. Nevertheless, these masculinity archetypes are useful for marketers to understand how could the main character be modeled if masculinity is chosen as a prominent social resource in the advertisement.

Chapter 1 introduced the complexity of masculinity, its definitions, types, influencing factors of consumer perception of it as well as different archetypes of masculinity. The author concluded that researchers mainly distinguish traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity types, with particularly traditional and modern having stark differences. The author also emphasizes that masculinity can mostly be characterized as a socially constructed concept or phenomenon which gives relevance to social construction theory. Research question (RQ1) is partially answered, for instance, the author found answers to RQ1 part about the concept of masculinity. However, the RQ1 part about the the significance of masculinity in the context of brand personality and advertising is answered in the Chapter 2.

# 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF MASCULINITY IN BRAND PERSONALITY AND ADVERTISING

This chapter focuses on the central aspect of the research, which is analyzing various literature sources on masculinity in brand personality and advertising, or in other words, how masculinity is relevant to companies' brand personality and advertising efforts. Since branding and advertising have a significant effect on the prosperity of companies (Valaei et al. 2016, 272), it is crucial to analyze relevant theoretical frameworks as well as conduct a thorough literature review of this matter. An increasing amount of research is focused on analyzing the links between changing masculine sociocultural norms and branding strategies (Ourahmoune, 2016; Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019; Zayer et al., 2020). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the author made an additional literature overview of masculinity specifically in the context of advertising. The author used the Scopus and Web of Science databases for this search as well. The author put keywords masculinity AND advertising and selected years of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. In the subject area, the author checked social sciences and business management. The databases provided the total of 118 articles, however after exclussion and addition of other articles the end total of eligible articles for the literature review consisted of 58 aticles (Figure 2.1).

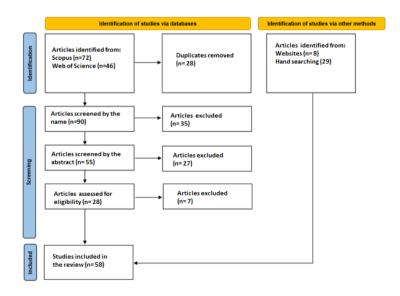


Figure 2.1. Literature search and selection process of research articles about masculinity in advertising.

Furthermore, the author of the Thesis, also analyzed books and articles about brand personality, since researchers argue that it is essential to understand what kind of personality traits are associated with a brand and what kind of self-projection occurs when consumers purchase a brand because there clearly is a psychological component to the effectiveness an ad may have (Bechter et al., 2016, 3). Above all, it is argued that strong brands are much more than a product or service; they are a unique set of companies' promises and customers' perceptions, interactions, and experiences (Xara-Brasil et al., 2018, 142). Therefore, Chapter 2 also includes a theoretical framework, such as brand personality and archetypes, and relevant findings from the research on masculinity in branding and advertising.

### 2.1. Theoretical framework of brand personality and archetypes

### 2.1.1. Theoretical framework of brand personality

Brand personality is a part of brand identity and refers to the set of human characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997). It essentially is a personification of the brand. After all, brand personality (along with physical attributes, relationships, reflection, culture, and self-image) is a part of the brand identity prism theory by Jean-Noel Kapferer (1986). The purpose of the Brand Identity Prism theory is for brands to recognize the parts of their identity and make them work coherently together to tell the brand's story to consumers. Nevertheless, this research is focused on brand personality's connection with masculinity characteristics and how it is depicted in advertising, which is the expression of brand personality.

Creating a compelling brand personality is certainly a challenge for a new company; however, established brands face this challenge since maintaining consumers' interest can become difficult for an old brand. One solution could be to built-up a specific brand personality that recreates the interest of consumers, which might have decreased over time (Bechter et al., 2016). Several researchers and scholars on the subject of brand personality argue that brands need to update their brand personality to match it with contemporary target consumers (Ellwood, 2002, 36). This statement highlights the importance of companies paying close attention to various social phenomena, such as masculinity and the changes in consumer perceptions of it, to be able to match their brand personality with the desired personality of consumers. This hypothesis is backed up by congruity theory which presents the case that individuals appreciate when the content is in alignment with the individual's preconceived notions. For instance, consumers appreciate advertisements that depict masculinity in a form that fits the consumer's view of masculinity. Congruity theory (De Meulenaer et al., 2018)

proposes that people value illustrations that are in alignment with their existing social model. In other words, congruity theory suggests that consumers seek to buy brands that they perceive to be compatible with their own self-concept. Thus the brand personality has to match the desired personality of consumers.

Brand Personality (Bechter et al., 2016) can play an important role in consumer choice because it is linked to consumer self-expression in the sense of 'this is me,' making brand personality an important strategic brand positioning tool. Other researchers concur with this premise, saying that consumed products become an extension of the consumer's personality (Kleine, et al., 1993) and thus create a series of consumer-brand relationships (Fournier, 1998) since consumers tend to express their own personality either actual or idealistic with the products they buy (Belk, 1988; Bechter et al., 2016). However, the brand personality needs to be continually monitored and updated to ensure the closest match between consumer expectations and the brand's promise (Ellwood, 2002). Several studies seem to prove the linkage between brand personality and consumer personality. For instance, Matzler et al. (2011) conducted research with 662 car enthusiasts and proved that it is possible for marketers to predict which car brand a consumer would choose based on their personality traits. Mulvey and Medina (2003) found that a considerable portion of the meaning of an ad is derived from the characters in the ad.

Susan Fournier (1998) extends the brand personality concept into the notion of consumer-brand relationships. She found a strong linkage between brand personality consistency and customer-brand relationships, concluding that inconsistencies or ambiguities in the brand personality would disrupt consumers' affective involvement with brands the same way they would disrupt any interpersonal relationship (Oswald, 2012). Thus, The author concludes that brand personality is vital in building relationships with consumers and helping consumers extend and express their own personality.

### Aaker's "Brand personality dimensions model"

To signify the importance of brand personality as well as classify the main pillars of this theoretical concept, Jeniffer Aaker (Aaker, 1997) has created the Brand personality dimensions model (Figure 2.2), in which she defined brand personality as a series of personality characteristics relevant to brands. Jennifer Aaker considers brand personality the result of advertising associations that consumers attach to brands. She developed an instrument for measuring the scope and depth of brand personality. Her research into the symbolic meaning of brands for consumers derives to some extent from McCracken's account (1986) of

advertising as a mechanism for transferring meanings from culture to goods and brands (Oswald, 2012). With brand personality dimensions, Aaker specifies a way in which brands can establish relevance in the eyes of consumers by establishing a certain human identity or character. In her research, Aaker selected 114 words about personality traits through the selection and deletion of words of personality traits and then extracted 42 main words (Fei et al., 2014). At the end of her research, she put forward five dimensions of brand personality, sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness.



Figure 2.2. Aaker's "Brand personality dimensions model" (Aaker, 1997)

Aaker's model has been widely used by various researchers who have tried to make sense of brand personalities and classify them into groups. Aaker's brand personality dimensions model has been the typical representative of brand personality inventory and has been widely applied in different studies (Fei et al., 2014). Nevertheless, Aaker's model has been criticized for its weak discriminatory power (Bosnjak et al., 2007; Romaniuk, 2008) while also suggesting that the model lacks novelty. As an alternative to Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale, some brand and marketing executives adopted the platform of archetypes to represent brands (Xara-Brasil et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the brand personality dimensions model can be used to help advertisers and branding strategists to create their brand heroes or choose their brand ambassadors. For example, the Marlboro cowboy was the central figure in Marlboro advertising displaying ruggedness, traditional masculinity, and freedom.

### 2.1.2. Theoretical framework of brand archetypes

While the theoretical concept of archetypes as well as masculinity archetypes, are discussed in Chapter 1.5., it is necessary to analyze what is brand archetypes and what role they play in brand personality. Scholars see brand archetypes as the second most prominent brand personality theory (besides Aaker's brand personality dimensions). Archetypes, in general, are seen as myths and symbols because of their universal topics in fairy tales, films, and novels (McPeek, 2008; Faber, Mayer, 2009). Researchers argue that brand archetypes and myths support the construction of brand-consumer relationships (Muniz and Woodside, 2015; Xara-Brasil et al., 2018). Another scholar claims that archetypes offer one way to project a consistent brand persona that will be understood around the world (Hollis, 2008, 173). Considering that brands are representations of modern myths, it can be well assumed that brands and archetypes have certain things in common.

A great deal of research suggests that the use of archetypes can connect deeper and quicker with the psyche of consumers and ultimately lead to purchases of a certain brand (Keller, 2012; Bechter et al., 2016) because the brand archetype is mainly the abstraction and generalization of the brand attribute of brand personality. Several studies have concluded that brand archetypes are a part of brand personality because marketing managers may use an archetypal approach to brand personality to define what a brand is, what it stands for, and the relationship with its consumers, consequently providing a real meaning associated with their customers' desires and motivations (Xara-Brasil et al., 2018, 143). It is considered that archetypes may be building blocks of a successful brand (Bechter et al., 2016), and by aligning archetypes and brand personalities, advertisers can define their campaign objectives in another deeper dimension. That is because archetypes are used to interact with consumers' deepest motivations and give meaning to the products and brands associated with their conscious and unconscious desires (Mark and Pearson, 2001; Xara-Brasil et al., 2018). Other researchers concur that consumers take brand archetype as the standard of cognition and then form an overall judgment of brands through the classification of brands (Lianxiong, Rui, 2012). When analyzing brand archetypes, researchers and authors use Mark and Pearson's (2001) brand archetype classification (Table 2.1.), which describes each of the 12 brand archetypes and their characteristics. Mark and Pearson (2001) used Carl Jung's archetypal model and proposed a business application. As mentioned, brand archetypes also correspond to brand personality dimensions from Jennifer Aaker. For example, the archetype Caregiver could be seen as the symbol of a mother, neighbor,

or service provider such as banks or insurance, making the corresponding brand personality dimension of Sincerity.

Table 2.1.

Brand archetypes according to Mark and Pearson's theory (Mark & Pearson 2001; Xara-Brasil et al., 2018)

Archetype	Description	Characteristics	Example
Outlaw (rebel)	They want to shake things up, their basic desire is revolution. They want to destroy what does not work for them or for society	Rebellious, the survivor and a rule-breaker. Can be wild and destructive	Harley Davidson
Jester	They want to live in the present with full joy	Living for fun. Entertaining, and sometimes irresponsible	Pepsi, Burger King
Lover	They want to achieve intimacy and experience sensual pleasure. Aim to maintain a relationship with people	Intimate, romantic, sensual, passionate. Seductive, delighted, warm, playful, erotic, and enthusiastic	Old Spice, Victoria's Secret
Sage	They want to find the truth. Use their intelligence and analysis to understand the world	Values enlightening and knowledge, truth, and understanding. They use their intelligence to understand the world, to discover the truth	Google
Caregiver	They want to protect others from harm, to help, and to take care of people	Caring, compassionate and generous. Protective, devoted, friendly, helping, and trusting	Nivea, Pampers, Gillette
Hero	They are all about rising to the challenge. They want to prove their own worth through difficult action.	Courageous, rescuer, crusader, persistent, strong, resilient, determent, disciplined	Nike
Magician	They want to know how the world works and influence its transformation	The visionary, the alchemist., focused on natural forces	Disney
Explorer	They seek discovery and fulfillment. Desire to be free, to find out who they are by exploring the world	Independent, adventurous, and searching for an authentic and fulfilling life	The North Face, Jeep
Creator	They live for creative self- expression and want to participate in forming a vision	Innovative, artistic, self- driven, inventive, a dreamer. Often non-social. Focused on quality	LEGO, Apple
Everyman	They have the basic desire to connect with others; want to belong, to fit in	The working-class or common person, the neighbor, realistic	GAP, Axe
Ruler	They want to control, raise a family, and/or build a successful company or community. The leader, the boss, and the judge	Influential and stubborn. High level of dominance, a strong sense of power and control	Rolex
Innocent	The desire for simple purity, goodness, happiness, faith, and optimism	Pure, faithful, naive, optimistic, child-like character; humble	Dove

In addition to this brand archetype classification, the brand archetypes are also classified into four main human drivers by Mark and Pearson (2001). These four main human drivers include: "belonging and enjoyment," "independence and fulfillment," "stability and control," and "risk and mystery" (Figure 2.3).

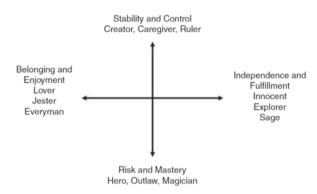


Figure 2.3. Major Human drives and brand archetypes (Mark and Pearson, 2001)

Even though each archetype is autonomous in terms of personality traits, they do have some similarities with a few other archetypes, which is why Mark and Pearson (2001) suggested creating clusters of them. The y-axis links the need for stability and control with risk/mystery, while the x-axis links the need to belong and enjoy independence and fulfillment. Scholars suggest that these motivations are deep and pull customers in different directions, so they should be included in marketing and brand strategies (Xara-Brasil et al., 2018). The author argues that brand strategists should understand these different kinds of motivations of consumers to better communicate to them through meaningful brand personality.

Finally, a great deal of research suggests that brand archetypes can be classified and positioned graphically in terms of how social or independent the brand archetype is and how much the brand archetype exhibits love for freedom or order (Figure 2.4). To some respect, this classification confirms Major human drives and brand archetypes classification because there are some similarities between both theoretical models. For instance, both theoretical models put some emphasis on independence versus the sense of belonging to a group. However, it has to be noted that Caregiver is included in the Stability and control cluster in Mark and Pearson's model, while Caregiver is included in the Social cluster in (Bechter et al., 2016) model, so there are some differences between the authors' classification.



Figure 2.4. Brand archetypes (Bechter et al., 2016)

Similarly, with Independence and Freedom cluster, both models include Explorer, but then there are differences between the two theoretical models. Finally, it has to be noted that archetypes can come in blended forms; for example, being a Hero does not exclude being an Outlaw at the same time (ibid). That is why simply using the brand archetypes model or brand personality dimensions might be too vague for an advertising agency when creating its brand personality. A combination of both theoretical models (Table 4.1 Chapter 4.1) might help branding and advertising professionals to create a clearer brand personality strategy; thus, the author has created a classification of the elements of both theory models together with masculinity archetypes and types of masculinity.

### 2.1.3. Latvian national archetype analysis

Since every nation has its own archetypes that are derived from the nation's literature as symbols of deeper meaning that the particular nation recognizes and that can potentially resonate with the audience, it is vital to analyze what are the archetypes found in the particular audience. Considering that this research is primarily focused on a Latvian audience (in empirical research), the author, with the help of an award-winning teacher of Latvian language and literature, Daiga Krišāne (from Jelgava Spidola State Gymnasium), analyzed the masculine archetypes found in Latvian literature that the Latvian audience can recognize as symbols of a deeper meaning (Table 2.2).

 $\label{eq:Table 2.2.}$  Latvian national archetypes (Author's work and interview with Daiga Krišāne)

¥ / *	GL .	
Latvian national	Character in Latvian literature	Description of the archetype and the characters
archetype	(example) The Cat (LV:	Arabatuma Vind haartad awaat daas not saak rayanga wants
Innocent (in Latvian: Nevainīgais/ labsirdīgais)	The Cat (LV: Kaķītis) K.Skalbes fairytale "Kaķīša dzirnavas"	Archetype: Kind-hearted, sweet, does not seek revenge, wants everybody to be happy and to be at peace.  The character: Runs the windmill with joy. Gives his daughters everything. When answering king's question of what to do with the evil in the world the Cat responds " I do not accept the evil there is enough pain in the world. Why increase pain. Let there be increase of good."
Ruler (in Latvian: valdītājs/ valdnieks)	1)Indrānu father in R.Blaumanis drama "Indrāni"     2)Stefans Dardeģis in A.Bels novel "Cilvēki laivās".	Archetype: stubborn, wants to control, a leader, powerful, influential.  Character: 1) Created a farm and is leading it, wants to earn profit for control, wants to keep old traditions and is stubborn about change. Wants to do his way.  2) Controlling the ship factory in a imperious manner, exercises authority over everyone, wants to achieve the goal no matter the sacrifice.
Creator (in Latvian: Radītājs)	Jāzeps in Rainis tragedy "Jāzeps un viņa brāļi"     Ansis Vairogs in J.Poruks tale "Pērļu zvejnieks"	Archetype: creative, a visionary, a dreamer, artistic. Character: 1) a fragile dreamer, who is ambitious, dreams about achieving his vision in the future.  2) Studying music, dreaming about achieving his plans, dreams about love and happiness. Wants to find pearls in the river to financially support his music studies.
Explorer (in Latvian: Ceļotājs)	1) Sprīdītis in A.Brigadere play "Sprīdītis" 2) Puisis in K.Skalbe fairytale "Kā es braucu Ziemeļmeitas lūkoties"	Archetype: brave, wants to go out in the world to find happiness, truth, adveentures, freedom and meaning in life.  Character: 1) A boy who wants to find happiness in the world, takes a journey where he meets the world of conflict and difficulty.  2) A simple boy who is tired of living in his fathers small shed and wants to go out in the world. He bravely follows the dream of meeting the woman Ziemeļmeita and receiving the magical crown.
Hero (in Latvian: Varonis)	1) Lāčplēsis in A.Pumpurs epic "Lāčplēsis" 2) Kurbads in nation's fairytale "Kurbads" 3) Artūrs in A. Grīns novel "Dvēseļu putenis"	Archetype: Strong, brave, heroic, fights for justice, wants to protect others.  Character: 1) Bravely fights for freedom of the nation against the evil forces.  2) Very strong, fights the devil and when he has liberated the world from the dark forces, he dies as a hero.  3) At a young age bravely goes to war to seek revenge for his mothers death.
Caregiver (In Latvian: Rūpētājs)	Grīntāls in R.Blaumanis novel "Nāves ēnā"	Archetype: Trustworthy, friendly, cares for others, helpful Character: One of the 14 fishermen stuck in the sea on a block of ice. Cares for others, helps everyone to survive as long as possible to wait for the rescue boat.
Sage (in Latvian: Viedais)	Kaspars Gaitiņš in brothers Kaudzīte novel "Mērnieku laiki".	Archetype: Knowledgeable, intelligent, uses his knowledge to find truth about the world.  Character: Intelligent, thinks critically himself and calls for everyone to keep calm and rational mind in the chaotic times.
Outlaw (in Latvian: Dumpinieks)	A character in A.Čaks poetry-street boy	Archetype: breaks the rules, wild, out of control Character: defiant, self- sufficient, rule breaker and a rebel.
Lover (in Latvian Mīlnieks)	Edgars in R.Blaumanis novel "Purva bridējs"	Archetype: Passionate, romantic, enthusiastic and wants to be loved. Character: Loves Kristina but is also looking at other women, enjoys life, passionate, wants to be loved, childish and impatient.

The author found several commonalities between Latvian national archetypes and brand archetypes that have been made universal in Western culture. For instance, the fearless Hero archetype that fights for justice and freedom, sacrificing himself for a more significant cause, or the pure and hopeful innocent, where the audience can quickly develop a sentimental attachment for the character, are just some of the many commonalities between Latvian national and brand archetypes. An archetype such as Explorer might be one of the most fundamental Latvian national archetypes (such as the character "Sprīdītis"), which coincided with the brand archetypes discussed previously in the Thesis as one of the most fundamental and applicable archetypes in any story to engage the audience fully. Nevertheless, all of these masculine archetypes as symbols of the characteristics that they represent can be used by brand strategists and advertising professionals when communicating to Latvian audiences.

## 2.2. Masculinity in the context of advertising

### The connection of advertising and brand personality

It is a common understanding that brand personality is communicated to consumers through various marketing communication forms, such as advertising. Advertising is the marketing communication form that a researcher can analyze to assess all the brand personality dimensions and brand and masculinity archetypes because, in advertising, the main character is on full display with his characteristics, behaviors, and treatment of others around him. The link between branding and advertising is established quite clearly in the scientific literature. After all, the role of advertising in brand management is to help generate awareness of the brand proposition and express the brand personality to a target audience (Ellwood, 2002, 74). Advertising itself is defined as the placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in mass media (Quesenberry, 2018, 36). Another researcher defines advertising as something that is influenced by the context in which it is placed (Graves 2010, 58). Finding out how to effectively advertise the product is an important marketing issue that can increase a company's competitiveness. Advertising can increase a product's sales volume and introduce new products to the market by making it known and familiar to consumers (Thongkham, Srivarapongse, 2019), as well as position the product in an appealing way to persuade consumers.

In the case of positioning masculinity to consumers (as it is discussed in Chapter 2.2.), advertisers have to depict masculinity in a way that consumers will appreciate (as argued by

congruity theory in Chapter 2.1.1), and will make the connection that the product is the key to become a man like the one portrayed in the advertisement. Advertising is significant for any brand because it has a strong influence on brand perception (Ingrassia et al., 2020). However, it has to be stated that advertising is complicated; it is more than just creativity, humor, and entertainment, but rather researching and understanding consumer behavior and effectively communicating brand personality to consumers. Furthermore, advertising serves also as a reminder to customers of the brand personality that they have purchased.

In addition, advertising can also be seen as a reflection of society (Valaei et al., 2016); more about that in Chapter 2.2. Potter (2009) and Schudson (2013) share the same view towards advertising and see advertising as a window to the culture and society that has a reflection on it. Since researchers emphasize advertising's influence on society, it is worth analyzing this topic further.

### The increasing role of masculinity in advertising

The findings from the literature review (Figure 2.1.) show that a growing body of research suggests how important and frequently used masculinity is in the context of advertising. Some research claims that masculinity is now branded (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 226) because men are increasingly marketed to and offered visions of masculinity for consumption (Zayer et al., 2020, 240). There is a term for this phenomenon called Branded masculinity, a term defined by Susan M. Alexander (2003). Branded masculinity is rooted in consumer capitalism, wherein corporate profit can be enhanced by generating insecurity about one's body and one's consumer choices and then offering a solution through a particular corporate brand. She argues that masculinity is constructed as a product available for consumption if one merely chooses the appropriate brand names. According to Cortese and Ling (2011), companies and advertisers use masculinity as a product of consumption. All of this seems to suggest that, due to the increasing role of masculinity in advertising messages, men purchase their masculinity alongside the products. This notion correlates with the subchapter "Crisis in masculinity narrative in advertising," where this particular idea is discussed in greater detail.

Some researchers say that masculinity is one of the most prominently used social resources within advertising (Zayer et al., 2020). It is found that 49% of US beer ads during sports events include masculinity as the central theme of the ad (Noel et al., 2017). The author discovered that one of the reasons why masculinity in advertising is so prominent is because it evokes a lot of emotions in consumers, and since emotional content strongly influences how advertisements are perceived and remembered, thus impacting purchasing intentions, the relevance of this topic

is quite apparent (De Pelsmacker et al., 1998; Friedman et al., 2018). For instance, tobacco companies provoke anxieties, fears, desires, and different emotions in consumers by the inclusion of autonomy, self-image, social approval, and peer bonding in their advertisements to subtly make their products more appealing, tempting, and memorable (Lovato et al., 2011; Friedman et al., 2018). However, some researchers defend advertisers, saying that brand uses of masculine archetypes are typically understood as providing male consumers with opportunities for masculine self-expression (Gopaldas, Molander, 2020, 87). Insinuating that advertisers are trying to help men discover themselves by providing an opportunity to express themselves. Therefore, not all researchers seem to criticize advertisers for their marketing tactics regarding masculinity in advertising as manipulative; some are also defending advertisers.

### Consumer perception of traditional and modern masculinity in advertising

In the scientific literature (Figure 2.1.), there is a discussion of how traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity are effectively portrayed in brand communications to be perceived positively by consumers. For starters, the results of these efforts have a wide range of success; for instance, Orth and Holancova (2003) have found that consumers tend to approve of more stereotypical role illustrations in advertising, which translates into a more positive ad and brand attitudes (De Meulenaer et al., 2018). Similarly, Putrevu (2004) concluded that men and women are likely to respond more positively to communication that is in tune with traditional gender stereotypes. In addition, several other researchers concur, saying that, for instance, competitiveness, a muscular physique, and other symbols of traditional masculinity can be effective in advertising (Brownbill et al., 2018, 358). On the other hand, other studies have come up with opposite conclusions, namely that gender stereotyping results in negative ad and brand attitudes (Bellizzi, Milner 1991; Jaffe, Berger 1994). This can be explained by the fact that counter-stereotypical appeals are more surprising and could, therefore, provoke more positive feelings (Orth, Holancova, 2003). In addition, researchers have found that effective advertising nowadays should promote a paradigm shift when it comes to gender roles (Magaraggia, Cherubini, 2017). Furthermore, it is noted that the use of stereotypes has come under increased scrutiny due to the fact that gender roles in society are changing; thus, marketers are in danger of alienating people by using traditional gender stereotypes (Hupfer, 2002; De Meulenaer et al., 2018). The questions about gender role positioning in advertising and its effectiveness in the scientific literature have not been limited to only men. There are countless studies examining whether women respond well to traditional gender roles in advertising. Some of the studies (that go as far as the 1980s and the 1990s) found that the traditional gender roles of women in advertising are no longer effective in persuading customers (Jaffe, 1990). Nevertheless, due to the limitations of this research, it will be focused only on masculinity and its effectiveness based on consumer perceptions.

### 2.2.1. Traditional masculinity in the advertising context

Traditional masculinity is one of the main types of masculinity discussed in scientific literature in the context of advertising. From analyzing the scientific literature (Figure 2.1.), the author found that some researchers argue that traditional masculinity is most often used to sell cars, alcohol, or tobacco, in particular (De Pelsmacker et al., 1998; Lovato et al., 2011; Shen et al., 2017; Friedman et al., 2018). Traditional masculinity display often includes specific roles that the man takes upon himself in advertisements, for instance, the Breadwinner role, the Rebel, and the Man-of-action hero (Holt, Thompson, 2004). As discussed earlier, Breadwinner's role is the man who is a provider for the family who puts food on the table, and the Rebel is one who does not obey the rules. Figuratively speaking, the Rebel is one who is not a sheep but rather a wolf, and a Man-of-action hero is one who defends the weak and scared. All three roles of traditional masculinity portrayed in advertising are considered very desirable, and one could understand the strong appeal of that to the consumers. There are other themes and concepts that are considered typical for traditional masculinity depictions in advertising (Table 2.3).

The research (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 225) examined the representations of men in magazine advertising from 1930 to 1980 found that the use of traditional stereotypes of men as self-reliant, strong, and successful was fairly consistent across the 50-year period. It suggests that traditional masculinity stereotypes are reinforced over a long period of time and are deeply embedded in consumers' subconsciousness. A detailed examination of masculinity in advertising by De Meulenaer (2018) found that perceived stereotyping contributes positively to ad and brand attitudes. Furthermore, it was discovered that this effect is enhanced for more masculine, more power-distant, more assertive, and less feminine-role-oriented individuals (De Meulenaer et al., 2018, 894). That makes sense since men who are more traditionally masculine also prefer more traditional gender roles in advertising regarding masculinity.

Table 2.3. Themes and concepts depicted in traiditional masculinity advertising (Author's original work)

Themes/ Concepts	Description	Authors discussing the theme/ concept
Crisis in masculinity	This theme creates a conflict or drama. It represents a contemporary manifestation of long-standing anxieties about the nature of masculinity and the role and function of men. Researchers have created a similar theme to this called "Manning Up," which indicates ads that show that men have lost their sense of manliness and must reestablish themselves in a more 'masculine' (traditional) way.	(Gannon et al., 2004)(Salzman et al., 2005) (Green et al., 2013) (Brooks, 2018) (Peterson, 2018) (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019)
Hegemonic masculinity	Displaying hierarchical power relations between both men and women by showing men being more superior and competent. The display of "hegemonic masculinity," is mostly organized around dominance.	(Birch et al., 2017) (Bach 2017) (Rogers, 2019) (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019) (Ging 2019)
Broken masculinity	Making men feel inadequate in their traditional masculine capabilities (typical concept in, for example, Viagra pill advertising and other erectile dysfunction disorder medicine advertising. While crisis in masculinity is more about men losing their power, broken masculinity is more about losing physical capabilities.	(Moynihan 1998) (Akpanudo et al., 2017) (Simpson, 2019)
Breadwinner	The man who is a provider for the family, who puts food on the table. The man who is primarily the earner in the family.	(Kimmel, 1996) (Eagly et al., 2000) (Salzman et al., 2005)
Rebel/ Man of action	The Rebel and the Man of action as themes have similar expressions in traditional masculinity advertising. They both have common strong physical appearance and rule breaking (Rebel) to advance their own life or help others (Man of action).	(Holt, Thompson, 2004) (Crownover, 2014) (Gopaldas, Molander, 2020).

It is not only tobacco, alcohol, and car ads where traditional masculinity is often displayed. It can be various other products, for instance, grooming products such as shaving cream. There is a Nivea ad for shaving cream, where several men are in casino, which is considered as a highly masculinized public space. The men are gambling at a roulette table with drinks by their side. Writing beside the photo reads, "The man who gives a damn is the man who comes out on top" (Nivea, 2011). The drive to "come out on top," in other words, to win, is a conventional male pursuit linked to traditionally masculine ideologies of competition and aggression (Kimmel, 2009). It is claimed that men who have come out on top are those who have "manned up" and have thus secured their dominant status (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 230). Nivea chose to show men in a highly masculine setting to emphasize their manhood, as well as the activity such as

gambling, which is linked in the literature about masculinity, to display traditional characteristics of being masculine. Similarly, sports betting advertising continues to emphasize that gambling should be perceived as a more controllable activity, and this sense of control is tied to masculinity (Lopez-Gonzalez et al., 2018, 51). There is an attempt to depict men as winners in advertisements for betting and gamble while also emphasizing that it is not just luck but rather knowledge and experience (Deans et al., 2017). In addition, some authors argue that in advertising, masculinity often aligns with a representation of decisive and courageous behavior (Lopez-Gonzalez et al., 2018, 48). It, therefore, strongly confirms the findings discussed in Chapter 1.3, and Table 1.2.

As it is discussed in Chapter 1., masculinity has strong ties with sexuality, particularly hegemonic masculinity, and heterosexuality. Many grooming product ads display overtly heterosexual imagery and narratives. For instance, in 2013, Gillette released an interactive campaign that allows readers to "read the mind" of three female celebrities that are widely considered to be very attractive: Hannah Simone, Kate Upton, and Genesis Rodriguez. In these ads, the women are seen positioned very seductively by a light blue rooftop pool with a text that asks, "How does Kate Upton like her man's body styled?" (Gillette, 2013). One of these ads is later included in the A/B test as the traditional advertisement for consumers to choose between Gillette's Gillette's traditional and modern masculinity advertisements. Grooming, in this instance, is promoted as an activity to be done in the interest of pleasing women, thus being tied with heterosexuality (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 231). The authors of this research continue to explain that constructing grooming in this way serves two purposes. First, it supports consumption by representing male body hair as unwanted by attractive females and, therefore, in need of eradication of body hair, which the products help to do (ibid). Second, it removes any possible feminizing or homosexualizing stigmas associated with using cosmetics, which many men have certain reservations about. Therefore, men are given a heterosexual rationale for grooming, which effectively reconstructs this type of bodywork as an inherently normative and masculinizing activity (ibid). This finding supports the idea that traditional masculinity is closely tied to traditional sexual orientation in advertising.

One of the most frequently used traditional masculinity characteristics that are visible in advertising is the physicality of men. The content of advertising where masculinity is at the core of the ad is often dominated by images of young men, particularly athletes, who are depicted as "tough" through both their physical features and their sports participation (Brownbill et al., 2018, 357). This tactic is associated with the physical strength of men, while some

commercials focus particularly on the mental strength of men by offering new body products that can help restore men's power and control. It is noted in the relevant literature that men like their strength, both physical and mental, to be natural and, therefore, authentic, while at the same time taking supplements from pharmaceutical companies to enhance their strength. Contemporary social theorists emphasize the cultural quest for masculine authenticity under conditions of increasing artificiality (Gurevich et al., 2017). Indicating that while men want to be authentic in their strength, they are willing to use supplements and medication to enhance their strength and performance to keep up with the idealized masculinity image provided by the media and advertising.

### 2.2.2. The harm of traditional masculinity stereotypes in advertising

Regarding traditional masculinity in advertising, one might ask, what is the harm of men continuing to conform to the traditional stereotypes of masculinity and perpetuating the same old-fashioned image of men in advertising? According to the scientific literature (Figure 2.1.), the social pressure to conform to traditional ideologies of masculinity has been shown to adversely affect men seeking help when it is needed (Akpanudo et al., 2017). Thus, men's selfreport measures may be biased. For instance, men who present themselves as "highly masculine" underreport symptoms (Moynihan, 1998, 1072). If both doctors and patients are locked together in perpetuating male gender myths based on sexual differences and expectations, they will never be able to talk honestly in times of illness and in health (ibid). Research shows that men whose health deviates from the "norm" immediately feel less masculine (Gannon et al., 2004). Similarly, the disorder of erectile dysfunction prompted academics to coin the term "broken masculinity," which is what men feel when they feel inadequate in their traditional masculine capabilities (Simpson 2019, 680). The concept of "broken masculinity" is also widely used by advertisers, particularly in Viagra advertisements. A growing number of studies have also examined men's experiences during college, including academic underperformance, excessive drinking, sexual aggression towards women, and nonacademic violations of campus judicial policies. There is some evidence that engagement in these behaviors is related to men's attachment to masculine norms (Beutel et al., 2019). Another potentially harmful way to depict men in advertising in a traditionally stereotypical way is regarding the physical attributes of a man. Research suggests that a considerable number of men experience body dissatisfaction (O'Gorman et al., 2019), possibly because they cannot match the image that advertising is perpetuating, causing pressure on men. According to researchers, it is not just height but also physical strength and aggression that are defining characteristics of manhood in the cultural imagination (Rogers, 2019, 732). Traditionally, a man's deviance from these norms has made him an object of pity, disgust, and ridicule (ibid). Therefore, the author concludes that the harm is very real of continuing to push stereotypical narratives in advertising on society and men in particular.

Finally, a harmful consequence of promoting traditional masculinity is increased violence in men. Traditionally, violence, or rather the capability of violence, is depicted as a key cultural marker of masculinity (Ravn, 2018, 291). The scholars (Adubato, 2015), who research the connection between masculinity and violence, particularly violence in sports, argue that promising violence excites the fans and guarantees viewers. Fans of the National Football League (NFL) do not watch the game to see delicate acts of athleticism, but rather they watch for hard-hitting bursts of masculinity (Siegel, 2019, 560), which is why the promotion of upcoming NFL season and games nearly always include violent tackles and traditional masculinity characteristics.

There are also more dangerous depictions of traditional or hegemonic masculinity that are, for example, linked with male violence against women. Research suggests that some gender stereotypes in advertising have an effect on male violence against women because some advertisements portray women as objects and argue that it is easier to do harm to an object than to a human being (Magaraggia, Cherubini, 2017). Some advertisements go as far as making references to rape, for example, the 2016 ads by Dolce & Gabbana (ibid, 446). In this particular advertisement, the woman was lying on the ground surrounded by multiple men suggesting that she has been or is about to be raped. The advertisement was later disallowed by the institutions and has been discontinued.

There is an argument that, in some cases, the illustrations of traditional masculinity in advertising can have a significantly negative effect on the entire society. The research suggests that the violence occurring behind domestic walls is a symptom of the cultural order that combines our gender identities, deeply affecting the nature of intimate relationships (Magaraggia, Cherubini, 2017, 452). As many studies have shown, traditional masculinity in advertising causes men to conform to a certain stereotypical way with aggression, seeking dominance, and many other ways. This depiction of men can lead to harmful consequences for not just men but also women and society. These findings suggest the relevance of social responsibility for advertisers and to consider more stakeholder groups than just customers and their shareholders.

### 2.2.3. Stakeholder consideration when depicting masculinity in advertising

An important finding from the literature review process (Figure 2.1.) that emerged was that advertisers' depiction of masculinity has great importance on the well-being of society. Furthermore, it was found that advertising considerably influences the way how society perceives masculinity. Therefore, another crucial theory that has been selected to discuss further is the stakeholder theory (Friedman et al., 2006). A stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect the organization or is affected by the organization (ibid). Freeman argues for the Responsibility principle, which means that large organizations have to see that they have an enormous influence on society and, therefore, have to assume their responsibility to society (ibid). Researchers and scholars emphasize the importance of stakeholkder consideration in any business practice (Philips, 2003, Bonnafous-Boucher et al., 2016). From analyzing the scientific literature, the author argues that society is asking for companies to act socially responsibly, not just with their actions but also with their advertising. A 2018 survey finds that over half of consumers aged 16 to 34 believe that brands should be a "force for good". Therefore, the extent to which gendered ad messages are deemed legitimate by audiences is of utmost importance to industry professionals for both brands and ad agencies (Zayer et al., 2020, 254). Creating and implementing socially responsible initiatives isn't just what the brand should be doing for society and other key stakeholders. It is also what the brands should be doing for themselves since effective corporate social responsibility strategies that focus on gender equality can be effective and result in brand loyalty from customers. In addition, socially responsible brands tend to get great publicity from the media and members of society through word of mouth, which is free advertising. The author, therefore, argues that when it comes to depictions of masculinity in advertising, there are two main stakeholders (besides customers) that need to be considered: society and the government.

### **Society**

Stakeholder theory has particular importance for this research since advertisers have a responsibility toward the public considering their advertising message, which can have a profoundly positive or negative impact on society. For instance, gender stereotypes in advertising can continue to reinforce old-fashioned stereotypes that make men and women conform to narrower and narrower roles in society. As mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, several studies have found that the stereotypical illustrations of men and women in today's advertising are problematic for several reasons, such as creating or reinforcing unwanted prejudice and negatively affecting men's and women's self and body esteem (Coltrane and

Messineo 2000, De Meulenaer et al., 2018). Researchers have also found that advertisers create and perpetuate gender stereotypes, which may erode gender equality and harm society at large (MacKay, Covell 1997; Oppliger 2007). Therefore, advertisers have to be very careful what message they send out to the public, as society is a crucial stakeholder. For instance, as discussed previously, the depiction of men in an overly stereotypical traditional form might lead to violence against women and one another, prevention of seeking medical treatment or mental health treatment, and have an influence on the sense of equality or lack thereof in society.

### The influence of advertising on society

During the literature review (Figure 2.1.) it was found that there is a consensus among social scientists that advertising changes consumer culture and sparks a cultural shift, particularly regarding gender and how consumers construct their gender identities. For instance, scholars have long highlighted advertising as both creation of culture and a reflection of culture similarly as social construction theory would suggest. Advertisers have to offer consumers a legitimate version of self – particularly of an identity that is gendered (Zayer et al., 2020, 239); otherwise, consumers will not perceive the ad as reasonable, and it might not resonate with the audience. At the same time, the whole idea of what is legitimate for advertisers to depict comes from the consumers and their ideals of gender identity. It is also stated that advertising serves as a powerful influencing force in how consumers negotiate gender in their daily lives (ibid, 252) and that masculinity in advertising often reiterates gendered expectations (ibid, 239). That means that advertising plays a vital role in giving men clues about how a man should be because "as a vehicle used to communicate cultural meanings, advertising provides both an archival record and a normative guide for the consumer culture" (Branchick 2012: 168). What is more, this phenomenon is witnessed all around the world. Discourses about gender in advertising are embedded in cultural narratives (Zayer et al., 2020, 238). Researchers stress that now more than ever, notions of gender are being contested in everyday life and across media and advertising (ibid). Therefore, one could argue that advertising has a significant influence on the entire society, and society naturally influences advertising since advertisers take cues from society, particularly about gender perceptions, considering that advertisers want the advertisement to resonate with the audience. Thus, the displays of masculinity in advertising are shaping society's social norms and culture while also being influenced by society's social norms and culture, creating a cycle of influence. (Figure 2.5)

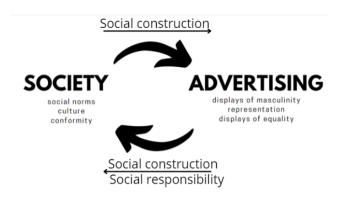


Figure 2.5. A cycle of influence of society and advertising (Author's original work based on social construction theory and stakeholder theory)

Consumers play a vital part in shaping what is legitimate or "desirable, proper or appropriate" when it comes to masculinity (Zayer et al., 2020, 239). Therefore, it is not only how masculinity is presented to consumers by institutions and advertising; it is also how consumers act. For instance, Butler (1999, 278) states that gender is "real only to the extent that it is performed." Individuals perform gender in light of their perceptions about gender role norms and the messages they hear from the marketplace within social interactions and socializing forces (Zayer et al., 2020, 240). Therefore, the author of this Thesis based on stakeholder theory argues that advertisers have a significant social responsibility when it comes to the messages that they put in their advertising because based on social construction theory it shapes how consumers construct who they are as individuals and how they interact with the rest of society.

### The Government

Furthermore, advertisers have to consider the government and its institutions as important stakeholders when executing advertising campaigns that are focused on gender roles. In recent years there have been some advertisements in Sweden, Great Britain, and several other countries that have been banned and discontinued by the governments for being too stereotypical, hence harmful to society. For instance, Latvian advertising law states the following: "The advertisement cannot express discrimination due to person's race, skin color, gender, age, religion, economic situation, and other circumstance" (Latvian Advertising law, likumi.lv). It means that the advertiser, when depicting men and women, has to consider the law and whether the advertisement would not be categorized as sexist, discriminatory, or stereotypical of any gender. A 2018 European Parliament resolution on gender equality in the

media sector underlines "...stereotypes in advertising and other media products have a potential impact on children's socialization, and subsequently, the way they view themselves, their family members and the outside world" (European Parliment, 2018). In addition, gender equality, as a concept mostly associated with the exact opposite ideas of sexism and gender stereotypes, is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all") set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Therefore, advertisers have to consider this higher purpose not just set by the local government but also by the United Nations, which speaks volumes about its importance.

### 2.2.4. Hybrid masculinity in the advertising context

As discussed in Chapter 1.3., hybrid masculinity entails characteristics from both traditional and modern masculinity and, from a theoretical perspective, can be explained by the role theory. Similarly, the concept of hybrid masculinity is evident in advertising with traces of traditional and modern masculinity. For instance, tobacco advertisements, in some cases, portray men not only in a stereotypically traditional way but also simultaneously emphasize modernity. One study by Hirschman (2003) found that in some advertisements, traditional masculine ideals of success, strength, sexual mastery, and rugged individualism blend with more contemporary notions of masculinity. Men's conceptualization of gender ideals in the marketplace, as well as images repeated in advertising, exemplify illustrations both rooted in the more traditional pillars of masculinity (for example, athleticism, strength, and wealth), as well as more modern ideals, such as an emphasis on being an involved father (Zayer et al., 2020, 240). It seems that the hybrid masculinity depiction of men is a transition stage between traditional and modern masculinity. It is responding to a society that is changing its stance on masculinity but is still also clinging to some parts of traditional masculinity. Therefore, researchers argue that hybrid masculinity is very effective due to its broad appeal. As was previously discussed, in the grooming industry (with products such as shaving cream products, razors, etc.), researchers concluded that many ads present older ideals of hard work and newer ideals of nurturance as opposites that can, and in fact, should be combined. A number of studies have concluded that in these examples, when traits of traditional and modern masculinity are combined, masculinity is effectively hybridized (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 233). Nevertheless, as qualitative content analysis later shows, hybrid masculinity is still far less common than strictly traditional or modern masculinity types in advertising.

### 2.2.5. Modern masculinity in the advertising context

It has to be noted that modern masculinity in the advertising context lacks research; hence, the literature review of this concept in advertising is rather limited (compared to traditional masculinity, which seems to have more interest from researchers). However, some researchers do provide an important analysis of modern masculinity being represented in advertising format. What is more, some researchers (Ourahmoune, 2016) argue that not focusing on modern masculinity is a missed opportunity for advertisers. Most brands rely on traditional representations of masculinity in stores, missing opportunities to renew their communication to take advantage of changing masculine values (ibid, 695). However, not all brands and markets are missing this opportunity. For instance, in recent years, luxury brands have increasingly shown interest in the growing male consumer market by moving away from one general idea of masculinity to several types of masculinity, with the possibility in Western societies of being a man in many different ways (ibid, 702). It has been found that there is a shift in the advertising landscape with regard to gender, which can be seen in recent advertising campaigns (Zayer et al., 2020, 254). For instance, the ad campaign "Real Heroes" by Dove Men Care features caring and affectionate fathers showing love and support for their children. In addition, Ariel has made an advertising campaign that focuses on modern/ more inclusive masculinity, asking the audience, are we (as a society) teaching our sons what we have been teaching our daughters? The ad focuses on the fact that doing laundry has somehow become a women's choir and one that mothers teach their daughters but not their sons. Thus, Ariel is shedding light on equality and evoking modern masculinity. Even Axe brand, which is known to illustrate men in a strictly one-dimensional manner, has also recently sought to be more "inclusive" and portray a more diverse sense of masculinity through their global campaign "Is it ok for guys...". Modern masculinity in advertisers is depicted with a variety of themes, such as Equality, Dadvertising, Metrosexuality and Inclusiveness (Table 2.4).

The shift in advertising concerning a nuanced look at masculinity is due to the recognition that there is evidence of changing masculine values. One such changing value is the idea of expressing emotion, which is not considered a traditional masculinity trait because emotion is typically constructed as feminine (Cheng, 1999). One could surmise that such a trait would almost certainly be removed from military advertisements; however, recently, emotion has been particularly associated with patriotism. It is the main feature of a few American military recruit advertisements, showing a more inclusive depiction of masculinity (Jester, 2019). Other researchers have noticed the display of emotions with a new type of fatherhood showing care

and affection (Molander et al., 2019, 433). Even though contemporary illustrations of fathers are still steeped in a traditional form (Ostberg, 2012), where fathers assume a secondary role (to mothers) and engage in fun and play with the children rather than undertaking domestic chores, there still is a new way of showing men as caring fathers, which coincides with the display of modern masculinity (Molander et al., 2019, 434). Being an involved father is a particularly significant example of modern masculinity because it creates a new concept in the world of advertising that focuses on masculinity called "dadvertising." Dadvertising is advertising that uses fathers to represent ideal masculinity cantered on involved parenting and emotional vulnerability (Leader, 2019). One of the brands that focuses on this new concept with a distinct interest is Tide. Tide's ads with dads doing laundry constitute steps toward representational gender equality in the domestic sphere, both through their performance of domestic work and their interaction with children. Fathers in these Tide's ads implicitly support progressive gender politics by performing housework and freeing their daughters from labor (ibid). This Tide advertisement is also later included in the A/B testing.

Table 2.4. Themes and concepts depicted in modern masculinity advertising (Author's original work)

Themes/ Concepts	Description	Authors discussing the theme/ concept
Equality	Displaying change of masculine values such as men helping with the housework and chores (washing dishes, cleaning the house, doing laundry). Researchers argue that displaying equality is a beneficial way for brands to depict men to attract women.	(Bach, 2017) (Reichert et al., 2019) (Molander et al., 2019) (Leader, 2019) (Zayer et al., 2020)
Dadvertising	Advertising that uses fathers to represent ideal masculinity centered on involved parenting and emotional vulnerability by also showing care and affection. Researchers argue that dadvertising largely contributes to a feminist era.	(Leader, 2019) (Molander et al., 2019);
Metrosexuality	This concept involves the representation of the male body as an object. Metrosexuality has a new modern appeal, which emphasizes paying attention to how men look and dress This trend is particularly visible in the grooming product industry, where men are spending much more money on these products and services than ever before.	(Edwards, 2006) (Coad, 2008) (Pompper, 2010) (Ourahmoune, 2016) (Draper et al., 2018) (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019)
Inclusiveness	Portraying men in a more diverse sense of masculinity by celebrating differences and opposing gender conformity which is often emphasized in traditional masculinity advertising.	(Kimmel 1996) (Salzman et al., 2005) (Draper et al., 2018); (Jester, 2019) (Ging, 2019)

Researchers argue that Dadvertising largely contributes to a feminist era (ibid), meaning that this representation of men as involved parents who are caring about their children and help their wives with the housework is appealing to women. Women are important consumers of any brand, even the ones that sell their products primarily to men. Therefore, dadvertising indicates a beneficial way for brands to depict men to attract women.

Scholars (Zayer et al., 2020, 238) argue that one of the reasons why representations of modern masculinity have become more apparent in the media and advertising is because feminine movements such as #metoo and #TimesUp, which have been flooding social media around the world for a few years, particularly in 2017 and 2018. As a response to this movement, one of the world's top grooming brands, Gillette, came up with the advertisement "The Best Men Can Be" in 2019. This ad received a lot of controversy for its message and display of men and what many saw as the war on men, while others saw a more inclusive depiction of men, one that cares for others, treats women in a more respectful way, and promotes accountability. Nevertheless, this ad is an example of how the masculinity message in advertising is a shifting nature of gender discourse at a global level. Therefore, an argument can be made that it is more important now than ever for marketers and advertisers to understand how notions of gender are shaping cultures across the world. The author argues that modern masculinity advertising has had the majority of significant events regarding the evolution of masculinity in advertising (Figure 2.6). Whether it is the Dadvertising concept or Gillette's or Axe's complete turnaround from traditional to modern advertising, or metrosexuality, modern masculinity has a significant impact on today's advertising. The author argues that the reason why modern masculinity has become significant in advertising in recent decades is due to modern masculinity displayed in popular culture (movies, TV shows, magazines), which includes concepts like "bromance" (Chapter 1.4). Modern masculinity in popular culture has created archetypes that advertisers can use, and the audience will recognize and resonate with them.

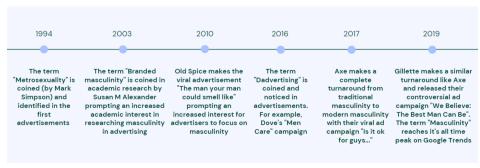


Figure 2.6. Significant events regarding masculinity in advertising (Author's original work)

As discussed in Chapter 1.3., metrosexuality is a concept that is connected to modern masculinity and is also notably visible in the advertising context. It is claimed that the 1990s "metrosexual" coincided with increasing numbers of men's lifestyle magazines. These magazines were then used by marketers to sell more products that were previously off-limits to men, such as beauty and self-care products (Edwards, 2006; Pompper, 2010). Another researcher concurs, saying that men may now consume products that until recently were denied to them because they were considered too feminine (Ourahmoune, 2016, 696). It is also evident that there is a transformation of a man as a producer into a man as a consumer considering the fact that there is now a range of masculine identities (ibid). This trend is particularly visible in the grooming product industry, where men are spending much more money on these products and services than ever before, largely because of the increase in promotion in mass media (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 223). When it comes to metrosexuality illustrated in advertising, researchers suggest that this concept involves the representation of the male body as an object (Ourahmoune, 2016, 697). As opposed to the traditional masculinity perception of a rugged man who does not pay attention to his looks, metrosexuality has a new modern appeal, which emphasizes paying close attention to how men look and dress. Therefore, advertising targeted to the metrosexual appeal often provides specific advice about how to groom-or "manscape"—your body (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 223). These findings reveal that there are a lot of similarities in how metrosexuality and femininity are depicted in advertising.

### The harm of modern masculinity in advertising

Unlike the research on traditional masculinity in advertising, researchers of modern masculinity do not discuss any harm to society caused by advertising more inclusive versions of men. There are many conservative TV pundits, such as Piers Morgan in Great Britain or Tucker Carlson in the United States, who consistently tell their viewers that men have become too soft and are losing their manhood primarily due to liberal politics, media, and advertising, but these opinions cannot be found in the scientific literature. It is unclear whether that points to a bias in the scientific community or is genuinely grounded in the reality that there is only harm from traditional masculinity and none from modern masculinity depictions in advertising. On the one hand, one would argue that there really could not be any harm because modern (inclusive) masculinity is all about accepting whoever a man is, opposing gender stereotypes, and gender conformity. On the other hand, it is difficult to believe that in the vast scientific community, no discoveries would point to results that the ideas of modern masculinity presented in advertising could be potentially harmful to some, as Jordan Peterson often suggests. Finally, when talking

about harm from some social phenomenon, the question has to be asked what is considered harmful and harmful to whom? Since harm can be a somewhat subjective term because conservative TV pundits might suggest that modern masculinity is making men soft, and that is harmful, but others might consider this as men becoming sensitive, and for them, that is progress.

### 2.2.6. The narrative of "crisis in masculinity" in advertising

Another frequent theme that emerged from the literature review process (Figure 2.1.) about masculinity in advertising is the "crisis in masculinity." Even though this narrative is primarily used in traditional masculinity advertisements, recently also, modern masculinity ads are also adopting this approach (for example, Gillette advertisement targeting toxic masculinity). The author has observed that brands often want to create a conflict or drama in their communication with men because conflict and drama are exciting; it gets attention from the audience and keeps them engaged. It also allows advertisers to depict masculinity as an external element that is being taken away from men and an element that men can purchase along with the product. The grooming product industry, for example, shows bodies that are left ungroomed and, therefore, are positioned as inadequate, which helps to generate a "crisis" narrative about the obligation for men to alter, repair, and enhance their bodies (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 229). Most advertisements, often in contradictory terms, suggest men construct hybrid or flexible characters who must carefully negotiate and craft their unique masculine body and identity (ibid). The contradiction in advertising happens when advertisers communicate that men are simultaneously too hard and too soft, too tough and too sensitive. That happens quite often in the same advertisement. Naturally, these representations are undoubtedly complex. As masculinities are defined in more hybridized ways, pinpointing what masculinity means becomes more difficult, but it also presents an opportunity (ibid). The difficulty arises from the fact that it is more and more challenging for advertisers to give men a clear illustration of what masculinity should be like. Opportunity for advertisers arises considering that since masculinity becomes a broader term and becomes more fragmented, brands now have an opportunity to address their target audience in a more specific, personalized, and meaningful way.

A crisis in masculinity is often created by advertisers evoking the threats to traditional masculinity, which are feminism and modern masculinity, and often political correctness. The idea of fear from these threats was on full display during the 2010 Super Bowl event, where marketers were trying to appeal to the anxieties of men. During this particular Super Bowl, the viewers were targeted with images of feminized, aging, and ultimately powerless male bodies,

images that both implicitly and explicitly signaled a much broader crisis where the ingredients of hegemonic masculinity have supposedly been either lost, stolen or otherwise altered (Green et al., 2013, 695). The ads in question are "Take off that skirt!" "Put on the pants!" "Man's last stand!" Man's last stand, in particular, emphasizes the idea that men have lost their sense of masculinity and women are ruling over men. Therefore, men deserve to choose at least the car that they want to drive, which is a Dodge Charger car. The car is known as an American muscle car with a big engine, lots of power, and high fuel consumption. Researchers have created a theme called "Manning Up," which indicates ads that show that men have lost their sense of manliness and must reestablish their power (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019, 229). Since masculinity has been an important concept to include in advertising for the past few decades, and since it is becoming more fragmented, tensions between traditional and more contemporary notions are escalating. Global consumer culture is increasingly commoditizing forms of masculinity (Zayer et al., 2020, 240). Another researcher claims that with increasingly fractured audiences, marketers adopted narrower portrayals of masculinity (Dempsey, 2009). Therefore, the author argues that it is very difficult for consumers to understand from advertising how a man should behave because there are so many conflicting messages out there in the form of advertising, which only fuels the anxieties of men, further causing the crisis in masculinity.

Another factor that "crisis in masculinity" ads often deploy as a tactic is nostalgia. Particularly nostalgia of the time when men were "real men" in control of themselves and others and not challenged by political correctness, feminism, and modern masculinity. This notion is especially used in the grooming product industry, where ads also illustrate what Stern (1992) calls "historical nostalgia," which is the desire to retreat from contemporary life by returning to a time in the distant past viewed as superior to the present.

The advertisements imply that society no longer has adequate space for men to be men, leading some to forget what it means to be a man. "Crisis in masculinity" ads emphasizing nostalgia for traditional masculinity romanticize male autonomy and promote escapism from the modern-day constraints on masculinity (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019). Nevertheless, brands are not simply saying that men should return to the old days and emulate traditional masculinity characteristics. Brands are also providing a solution, which is to consume their products, as that is the right way to go back to traditional masculinity and satisfy that nostalgia for simpler times of being a man. Masculinity is now "branded", which means that it is defined through consuming the "right" brand-name products (ibid). Therefore, brands with effective communication can help men solve the crisis of masculinity that they themselves created by

offering a very simple solution- their product. The author concludes that this is a highly manipulative and socially irresponsible tactic on behalf of brands and advertisers using this practice, one that might have negative consequences and perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes even further. This tactic exploits men's insecurities by suggesting that the sense of masculinity is something external and something that can be purchased.

Chapter 2 focused on masculinity in the context of brand personality and advertising to see how marketers currently use traditional and modern masculinity to communicate to the audiences. The author also analyzed two key theoretical models, such as brand archetypes and brand personality dimensions, that are important for the empirical research. The author concluded that masculinity has a significant role in advertising and in creating brand personality. The author also came to a conclusion that advertisers still mainly focus on traditional masculinity in advertising while modern masculinity is steadily gaining higher popularity among advertisers. The research question (RQ1) is answered and Hypothesis 1 is confirmed. The next Chapter focuses on conducting empirical research into consumer perceptions of masculinity in advertising.

# 3. A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF MASCULINITY IN ADVERTISING DETERMINING ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

This Chapter describes the study's methodological justification and research findings. The empirical research design includes the first subchapter, where mixed method analysis methodological justification is clarified, as well as the findings from it. The empirical research design also includes the second subchapter, which focuses on the survey and A/B testing, and finally, the third subchapter, which describes the focus group process, results, and methodological justification (Figure 3.1).

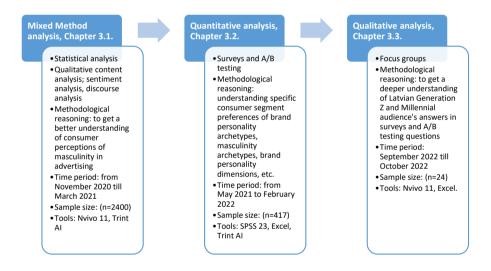


Figure 3.1. The conceptual framework and the methodological reasoning of the empirical research (Author's original work)

The current Chapter describes the methods used in this entire research and its most relevant findings. The methods for empirical research were chosen according to the research questions and hypothesis. It was crucial to understand how masculinity is depicted in brand personality and advertising and what are consumers' perceptions of it. Additionally, the Chapter outlines how the data was collected and analyzed. Finally, the Chapter presents research findings from various studies conducted mainly with the goal of understanding consumer perception of masculinity in advertising.

# 3.1. Qualitative and quantitative analysis: Mixed method analysis of masculinity advertisements

This section explains how advertising effectiveness was determined for the selected advertisements with the available data for the mixed method analysis. Mixed methods involve combining or integrating of qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research study (Creswell, 2018, 51). Regarding the effectiveness of advertising, the author argues that it depends on the goals that the advertisers and brands want to achieve with the campaign or ad. The advertising objectives could be, for example, creating awareness, positioning the product, stimulating the trial of the product, increasing sales, brand building, or correcting misleading perceptions about the brand and other objectives. For a new company, the goal of advertising might be to generate awareness for the product and the brand so that consumers are familiar with it. Whereas, for a company that has already been around in the market for some while, the goal might be creating certain associations about the brand in the minds of consumers. Finally, for a brand that has been somewhat forgotten and has been losing its market share, the goal of advertising might be to increase consumer engagement about the brand by standing up for some social issue.

Naturally, the goal of the advertising campaign would be known to the advertiser internally, not externally, for an academic researcher. Therefore, the task of analyzing advertising effectiveness for a researcher is rather challenging. However, according to the scientific literature, there are common criteria for determining advertising effectiveness regardless of the aim, such as generated awareness, consumer engagement, likeability, and positive feedback from consumers through qualitative content, sentiment, and discourse analysis. Furthermore, advertisers see much more data about their advertisement's performance, such as impressions, reach, website visits, sales numbers, and other data that a researcher may not see. However, there is also data that is available for everyone to analyze, determining the effectiveness of the advertisement. Another important disclaimer is that the mixed method analysis focused on the content of advertising and consumer engagement, not chosen advertising channels and media.

# 3.1.1. Theoretical fundamentals of assessing advertising effectiveness based on consumer perception

Based on the literature review of what makes advertising effective, the author found that advertising effectiveness is mainly determined by how much awareness the advertisement generates, consumer engagement, and the feedback consumers give to the advertisers about

their marketing content. Since the statistics usually would be internal, but consumer comments are accessible to researchers outside the company in question, the author primarily focused on the advertising effectiveness aspects concerning consumer perception.

#### Awareness

An important factor in determining the effectiveness of advertising is assessing the amount of awareness that the particular advertisement has generated (Graves, 2010), for instance, by looking into how many views the advertisement has on YouTube. In addition, assessing the Google Trends on YouTube of an increased amount of searches for the brand and if it coincided with the release of the advertisement can be useful in determining how impactful the advertisement was for the brand. This criterion does not show how consumers perceive the advertisement, except their interest in it, but nevertheless, the author argues that no advertising effectiveness can be imagined without determining the aspect of awareness.

## Consumer engagement

A vital part of this research was analyzing consumer engagement for the selected advertisements. As the experts of advertising in the leading trade publication, Advertising Age, argues, now advertising has the future on the internet with consumer engagement (Quesenberry, 2018, 36). In the article "The ad age is over" the experts argued that "The way the world is heading is voluntary engagement," explaining that advertisers are moving away from push marketing to more interactive consumer engagement marketing (ibid). Therefore, the mixed method analysis mainly focused on consumer engagement.

### Consumer feedback and sentiment

Consumer engagement as an advertising effectiveness metric is quite relative (Graves, 2010, 58) because the engagement can be positive or negative. In other words, the engagement can mainly consist of consumers overwhelmingly criticizing the advertisement, while it can also consist of consumers mainly celebrating it and showing support. Advertisers have considerably less influence over the messages that consumers read, hear, and watch about their brands (Quesenberry, 2018). Therefore, it is the content of the consumer engagement that matters, which means that a researcher must conduct sentiment analysis. In advertising, sentiment is defined as the opinions and attitudes expressed by followers (Levin, 2019, 156). The author argues that sentiment has a direct impact on how consumers will perceive the brand, which ultimately will determine sales. Sentiment shows how much the respondents, audience, and

consumers agree or disagree with the message of the ad and how positively or negatively they speak about the content in question.

#### Discourse

By analyzing the discourses that emerge from consumer engagement about the advertisement in question, the researcher can get a deeper understanding of why the ad is liked or disliked by the audience. Furthermore, considering that masculinity is a construction that emerges in the meeting of a variety of discourses and ideologies (Knudsen, Andersen, 2020, 64), it is crucial to discover what precisely these discourses are all about from a consumer perspective. Discourse is best viewed not as an abstract system but as 'situated' language use in the contexts in which it takes place (Jorgensen et al., 2002, 129). Discourse analysis applied in analyzing consumer comments gives an insight into the broad cultural discourses which link the brand positioning to the evolving culture of consumers (Oswald, 2012). Therefore, discourse analysis is important and helpful in analyzing consumer engagement from a deeper perspective by analyzing the meaning of the interactions between the consumers about the brand. Researchers argue that brand managers must track the impact of increased brand interactions and experiences across consumers, cultures, and countries on customers' brand perceptions, especially those that relate to brand identity and personality, since consumers may not necessarily notice brand personality as intended (Malär et al., 2012; Xara-Brasil et al., 2018). For this reason, discourse analysis is particularly useful for evaluating how distinctive and consistent brand positioning is communicated in marketing communication over time (Oswald, 2012, 104). There are brands that have changed drastically the way they depict masculinity in their branding and advertising, and discourse analysis helps the researcher understand how consumers perceive these stark changes.

### 3.1.2. Method selection for the mixed method analysis

From the literature review of theoretical framework regarding advertising effectiveness, several criteria were determined to help the author choose the appropriate methods for this research (Table 3.1). Criteria emerged from the literature review and analysis of the theory about masculinity as a socially constructed phenomenon that is being presented through advertising and advertising itself with a focus on advertising effectiveness.

Criteria for method selection (Author's original work)

Criteria	Literature source
The chosen method has to analyse the sentiment	(Levin, 2019); (Graves, 2010); (Artun, Levin,
of the content expressed by the consumers, to	2015); (Anisin, 2016)
assess consumer support for the advertisement.	
The method should look for patterns of the	(Tannen et al., 2015); (Jorgensen et al., 2002);
conversations and opinions to discover the	(Fairclough, 2013), (Charmaz, 2006)
meaning.	
The method should be suitable to analyse	(Quesenberry, 2018); (Graves, 2010)
consumer engagement, to determine advertising	
effectivness.	
The method should include the context of the	(Fairclough, 2013); (Berke et al., 2018);
phenomenon, to ensure more accurate analysis.	(Jorgensen et al., 2002); (Kundsen, Andersen,
	2020)

When the criteria for choosing analysis methods were determined, the author found matching methods for the criteria in the scientific literature of advertising effectiveness (Table 3.2). Taking into consideration all of these criteria, there were several methods that were chosen to analyze the data.

Table 3.2

Table 3.1.

# Methods for data analysis

Method	Strengths of the method	The use for this research	
Discourse analysis	Takes the context of the phenomenon into consideration. Analyses patterns in the text (Fairclough, 2013)	For analyzing consumer perception of various types of masculinity in advertising.	
Qualitative content analysis	Identifies themes or patterns. Helps validate or extend a theoretical framework. (Hickey & Kipping, 1996)	For analyzing YouTube comment sections on the selected advertisements using coding and identifying patterns.	
Video content analysis	The method is used to describe, interpret and understand the content. (Scott et al., 1996)	For analyzing advertisements, the visual representations of masculinity and the archetypes in it.	
Sentiment analysis	This method is used to analyze the attitudes, moods, and opinions (Anisin, 2016; Artun, Levin, 2015)	For analyzing the consumer feedback in terms of how positive or negative was their opinion about the advertisement.	

The following subchapter focuses on how the data was collected for the mentioned methods to be applied in the use of determining advertising effectiveness.

## 3.1.3. Data collection for the mixed method analysis

Based on the literature review of possible methods used for the research, the authors decided to use online data collection by extracting YouTube comments as data. The reason for choosing YouTube comments is that it provides a certain level of authenticity (Tolson, 2010). It is argued that user-generated material on the Internet, particularly YouTube has its 'freshness' and 'spontaneity' that offers a new form of 'authenticity' in mediated communication, where users are more open and speak freely by posting text comments (ibid). Many researchers argue for YouTube as the platform where to get an insightful idea about what consumers truly care about and appreciate. YouTube is a key site where the discourses of participatory culture and the emergence of the creative, empowered consumer have been played out (Benson, 2016). Researchers also argue for the academic value of using YouTube comments as data, saying that YouTube has attracted academic interest in emerging literature that tends to view YouTube as a technological, media, or cultural phenomenon (Jones et al., 2015). Furthermore, on YouTube, consumers willingly give their opinions and express their attitudes on specific ads where masculinity is at the core of the advertisement, which can help the researchers to determine the effectiveness of this ad. The data collection was done using a YouTube comments downloader. Using YouTube comments as data also means that there has to be a large number of comments analyzed with the interest of getting an insightful understanding of consumers' perception of masculinity in advertising. There were six advertisements from which YouTube comments were extracted and analyzed. The author took a sample of 400 YouTube comments from each ad, making a total of 2400 comments.

In fairness, it must be noted that the drawback of using YouTube as the data collection site is that the companies can tamper with the comments posted on their advertisements by deleting them, therefore, increasing the average level of positivity. Even so, YouTube still provides a useful platform for researchers where consumer authenticity and honesty about the brands and advertisements can be extracted and analyzed for research purposes. Even more, data gathered from YouTube is more reliable than data from Facebook because while on Facebook, one can purchase likes and use the money to enhance the advertising effectiveness data; on YouTube, companies cannot purchase likes, etc. Also, since the stats have a changing nature, all six advertisements had a fixed date when the data, both statistical (likes, views, dislikes) and qualitative (YouTube comments), was extracted. That date was November 28th, 2020. Since then, a few changes have occurred 1) YouTube changed its policy of displaying the number of dislikes (they no longer do that); 2) Gillette has hidden the "The best man can be" comment

section and 3) National Football League has made the advertisement private (the author has reuploaded to ad (all advertisements' links are in the Bibliography section).

## 3.1.4. Data examination of mixed method analysis

# Video content analysis as a part of mixed method analysis

As a part of this research, the author was extensively looking for advertisements on YouTube depicting masculinity to analyze which of the theoretical masculinity archetypes, brand archetypes, brand personality dimensions, and masculinity types advertisers use to communicate their versions of masculinity to consumers (Figure 3.2). Most of the advertisements were SuperBowl ads from the previous decade (from 2010 to 2020). Super Bowl is an annual event in American football where some of the most expensive advertisements from the biggest brands are shown during the event's half time. In 2023, advertisers were paying an average of seven million U.S. dollars to air a 30-second long commercial during the Super Bowl broadcast. It is widely considered to be the most prestigious advertising event.

To increase the size of the sample, several other advertisements from well-known brands in Europe and the United States were added. These advertisements appeared on YouTube and Google when using the search words "Masculinity" paired with "advertising," "commercial," or "ad." A qualitative video content analysis was conducted by viewing 288 advertisements (163 Super Bowl ads, 113 popular brand ads (from brands such as Dove, Nespresso, and Gillette), and 12 ads that were discovered from reading the research articles. Regarding how frequent masculinity was as the central theme in these advertisements, then out of the 288 advertisements viewed, 92 were categorized as "masculinity ads". It means that these advertisements had a strong emphasis on masculinity as a concept to help the brand resonate with the audience. Of the 92 "masculinity ads," the author selected 50 (25 traditional masculinity and 25 modern masculinity) of them for a closer examination, in other words, qualitative video content analysis (N=50). The author wanted to select an equal amount of advertisements representing the two major types of masculinity ("Ads assessed for the type of masculinity" in the Figure 3.2). Of the 92 advertisements, 58 advertisements were labeled as traditional masculinity ads, and only 27 were labeled as modern masculinity ads. The remaining seven advertisements were hybrid masculinity ads. Hybrid masculinity ads were not selected for further qualitative video analysis due to the difficulty of accurately identifying them and due to the fact that hybrid masculinity is depicted in rare cases.

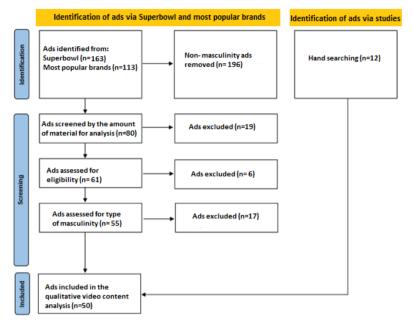


Figure 3.2. Selection process of advertisements emphasizing masculinity for the qualitative video content analysis (Author's original work)

Consistent with the theoretical part, the author kept using traditional and modern masculinity as the key concepts, which is shorthand for each major type of masculinity for explaining what each type of masculinity entails, and the sum of its characteristics (Table 1.2). Important criteria for choosing these fifty advertisements were the amount of material that the ad could provide for qualitative video content analysis. While the advertisement is usually only 30 to 60 seconds long, it had to display the main character long enough to provide him with personality and behavioral characteristics or perhaps statements about men or masculinity ("Ads screened by the amount of material for analysis" in Figure 3.2). In other words, for the advertisement to be selected for the analysis, it had to be revealing of the masculinity narrative or message that the marketers and brand strategists behind the advertisement were trying to convey to the audience. Some of the advertisements analyzed in qualitative video content analysis were also chosen for the consumer surveys, A/B testing, focus groups, and further mixed method analysis. In order to avoid subjectivity of the author, the author used Fsuperbo AI tool. Trint's AI turns audio and video files to text which can then be analyzed using Nvivo 11 program.

## Statistical analysis as a part of mixed method analysis

Statistical analysis was conducted to assess awareness, likeability, and consumer engagement, by evaluating the data provided by YouTube and Google platforms. From the data, the author made the consumer engagement ratio (awareness divided by engagement, in other words, the number of views divided by the number of comments), where the lower the number, the greater the consumer engagement, and thus the more desired outcome for the advertiser. Furthermore, a like/ dislike ratio was created (The number of likes divided by the number of dislikes), where there is the opposite principle- the higher the number, the better. Finally, the author analyzed the awareness that the brand received on YouTube (using the Google Trends tool) to see how significant was the release of the advertisement for the brand itself. In other words, this was significant to compare the awareness and the interest the brand received from the advertisement in the context of the brand's popularity in general. Google Trends depicts these graphs where each data point is divided by the total searches of the geography (which for this search was "Worldwide") and time range.

## Qualitative content analysis as a part of mixed method analysis

Qualitative content analysis was conducted using Nvivo 11 qualitative data analysis software to help with the process of organizing, analyzing, and finding relevant insights in the YouTube comments. Qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The idea of the coding process in qualitative content analysis is to organize large quantities of text into much fewer content categories (Weber, 1990). Content analysis is used as a quantitative research method, with text data coded into explicit categories and then described using statistics. This approach is sometimes referred to as quantitative analysis of qualitative data (Morgan, 1993). The author chose to have a mixed content analysis of conventional and direct content analysis. That means that some codes were defined before the analysis of the data based on the theoretical framework, and some codes were defined during the analysis of data making it a partially open and partially preconceived coding. Content analysis using a directed approach is guided by a more structured process than in a conventional approach (Hickey & Kipping, 1996). However, there was also the process of allowing new categories and codes to emerge from the data as a conventional content analysis with open coding.

The author took a sample of 400 comments (newest/ latest uploaded) from each of the advertisements' YouTube comments (a total of 2400 comments analyzed). The number 400 was

chosen as an optimal amount of data to have a comprehensive understanding of consumer perceptions of the advertisement. In addition, some of the chosen advertisements did not have more than 400 comments. The coding process was significantly influenced by the literature review about masculinity and various types of it (Chapter 1), which helped the author understand masculinity as a concept. After the coding process was done with 198 different codes, the codes were sorted into larger categories based on how they are related and what they reveal. These larger categories were formed into themes that emerged from the YouTube comments. There were themes that were evident in all of the six advertisement's YouTube comment sections, and then there were some themes that were unique to only one of the advertisements. The overall idea behind the direct approach of coding, in this case, was to find out what themes are emerging from the comment section signaling consumer feedback about the advertisement and what they suggest about the effectiveness of the ad.

Many comments consisted of multiple codes that fit different categories. For example, one comment has a code about appreciating the main character, showing support for traditional masculinity, and showing disapproval of the product all in one comment. That is why the percentage of combined themes displayed graphically in the Results Chapter has more than 100%. The challenging part was when some codes overlapped between the categories and could be counted in one or another category. In these instances, the author figured out where the code fit in the most not to compromise the data.

# Sentiment analysis as a part of mixed method analysis

Sentiment analysis was conducted to determine how positive or negative was the consumer engagement expressed in YouTube comments. Sentiment analysis is defined as a computational process to identify opinions expressed by followers within the comments in response to the content, which helps to determine attitudes toward a particular topic or product (Levin, 2019, 156). The positivity or negativity was determined from the perspective of the brand in question. Sentiment analysis helps researchers and advertisers to extract the attitudes, moods, and opinions of individuals and groups from text data and content (Anisin, 2016). Sentiment analysis is most commonly applied to small messages comprised of texts such as Facebook posts or Twitter tweets, or YouTube comments, providing insightful data about advertising effectiveness. By analyzing the sentiment, the researcher or marketer can find out the meaning of what consumers truly think about the advertisement. Sentiment analysis in advertising is nothing new; nevertheless, in modern times, where consumer sentiment is expressed in public

comments on the internet, it is possible to conduct customer sentiment mining as valuable data (Artun, Levin, 2015, 232). The sample for the sentiment analysis was the same 2400 YouTube comments gathered from all the advertisements. Sentiment analysis was done simultaneously with qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis by marking the positive comments in green color, negative ones in red color, and neutral comments in gray color.

## Discourse analysis as a part of mixed method analysis

Discourse analysis was conducted with the intention of getting a deeper understanding of what consumers are experiencing when viewing these ads. Thus researchers wanted to get valuable insights into consumer perception of the masculinity depicted in the particular advertisements. It is proclaimed that discourse analysis helps the researcher to pinpoint the key characteristics, behaviours, opinions, and attitudes of consumers (Tannen et al., 2015). Discourse analysis is the analysis of patterns in the text, but taking into consideration the context of the whole concept of masculinity, the advertisement itself, and even references to popular culture, for example. The main difference between content analysis and discourse analysis is between content and context. In other words, qualitative content analysis is analyzing just the content in question, while discourse analysis is a larger analysis with a focus on a larger context. The sample for the discourse analysis was the same 2400 YouTube comments gathered from all the advertisements.

### 3.1.5. The selected advertisements for mixed method analysis

For the purpose of the methods to be used appropriately, there was a need to select suitable advertisements that would provide content to YouTube commentators to express their approval or disapproval of the advertising tactics when depicting masculinity. The authors selected six advertisements that heavily focus on masculinity in their efforts to get consumer attention. Three of them were ads depicting traditional masculinity, and three were depicting modern masculinity (Table 3.3). The six advertisements were discovered and analyzed during the qualitative video content analysis. The criteria for selecting these advertisements were the following:

- (1) Emphasis on masculinity in the advertisement.
- (2) A large amount of YouTube comments (enough material for qualitative content, sentiment, and discourse analysis).
- (3) Variety of products being advertised, which would mean that a variety of audiences would be analyzed.

- (4) Products that Generation Z and millennials would purchase or consume.
- (5) Variety of brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes, and brand personality dimensions depicted in the advertisement.

Table 3.3.

Selected advertisements for video, statistical, content, sentiment, and discourse analysis

(Author's original work)

Brand	Advertisement	Type of masculinity	Brand archetype	Masculinity archetype	Brand personality dimension
Barbasol	"Shave like a man" (2013)	Traditional	Hero/ Everyman	Warrior	Ruggedness
Old Spice	"The man your man could smell like" (2010)	Traditional	Lover	Lover/ King	Sophistication/ Ruggedness
Dos Equis	"The most interesting man alive" (2014)	Traditional	Outlaw/ Lover/ Hero/ Ruler	King/ Lover	Sophistication/ Ruggedness
Gillette	"The best man can be" (2019)	Modern	Caregiver/ Hero/ Innocent	King	Sincerity/ Competence
National Football League	"Touchdown celebrations" (2018)	Modern	Lover/ Creator	Lover	Excitement/ Sincerity
Axe	"Is it ok for guys" (2017)	Modern	Everyman/ Innocent	Lover/ Magician	Sincerity/ Excitement

The advertisements selected were from six different brands with different masculinity displays (archetypes, brand personality dimensions) and different products, such as shaving products, deodorants, beer, etc., providing the author with different audiences and their unique feedback about the advertisements. The brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes and brand personality dimensions were determined using Trint AI tool for transcribing the text and Nvivo 11 program for analyzing that text based on the respective theories.

# 3.1.6. Results of the qualitative video content analysis

When analyzing the selected masculinity advertisements and the twelve brand archetypes (Mark, Pearson, 2001) that they display (Figure 3.3), it became clear that the most popular brand archetypes for traditional and modern masculinity ads are very different. For instance, while traditional masculinity ads mostly emphasized strong, powerful, stoic, and emotionless brand archetypes such as Ruler, Hero, and Outlaw, modern masculinity ads emphasized Caregiver, Everyman, Jester, and Innocent, which are brand archetypes associated with empathy, sensitivity, care, and sense of equality. The only exception was the Lover archetype

which was the second most common brand archetype in both traditional and modern masculinity samples. However, love as a concept from the Lover brand archetype was displayed in very different ways in traditional and modern masculinity advertisements. While the modern masculinity ads displayed the Lover archetype as someone who is a loving person to the whole society, family, and friends, the traditional masculinity ads, on the other hand, always without exception, showed the Lover brand archetype as a man who is targeting women in an attempt to seduce them.

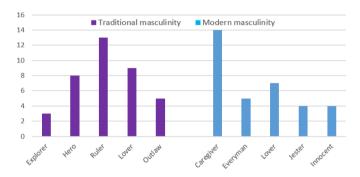


Figure 3.3. The most common brand archetypes in traditional and modern masculinity advertisements (Superbowl 2010-2020, Author's original work)

In many ways, the qualitative video content analysis proved that brand archetypes are quite similar to masculinity archetypes that were created based on Carl Jung's theoretical framework on masculinity by Moore and Gillette (1990), which include King, Lover, Warrior, and the Magician archetypes (Chapter 1.5). The main difference is that the Lover archetype would also include care for the family, such as being a loving father ("Dadvertising" concept). Therefore, in modern masculinity ads (Figure 3.4.), the Lover archetype becomes the dominant one. The traditional masculinity ads, however, display a broader appeal to consumers with a focus on dominance, being aggressive, and fighting for success, which shows in the high number of King and Warrior masculinity archetypes. In addition, traditional masculinity ads often presented strong sexuality and approaching women, as evidenced by the high number of ads displaying the Lover masculinity archetype.

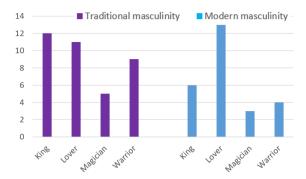


Figure 3.4. Most common masculinity archetypes in traditional and modern masculinity advertisements (Superbowl 2010-2020, Author's original work)

Finally, brand personality dimension analysis (Aaker, 1997) shows perhaps most clearly how different are traditional and modern masculinity advertisements (Figure 3.5). This is most evident in the fact that while the most common brand personality dimension in traditional masculinity advertisements was Ruggedness, it was not evident in modern masculinity ads at all. The same result shows Sincerity, which was the most common brand personality dimension in modern masculinity ads but was not evident at all in traditional masculinity ads. In addition, while modern masculinity ads showed Sincerity as the dominant brand personality dimension, the traditional masculinity ads have a split focus between multiple brand personality dimensions, proving another major difference. All this proves that brand strategists who focus on traditional masculinity in their advertising and brand strategists who focus on modern masculinity in their advertising focus on almost entirely opposite brand personalities.

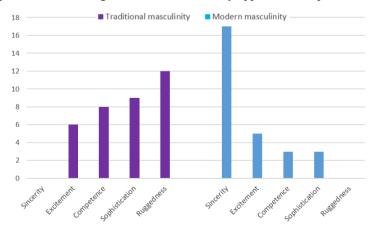


Figure 3.5. Most common brand personality dimensions in traditional and modern masculinity advertisements (Superbowl 2010-2020, Author's original work)

At the end of the qualitative video content analysis, the combined total of brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes, and brand personality dimensions exceeded 25 (which was the sample size of each type of masculinity ad). That is because, in most cases, the ad displayed multiple (usually two) brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes, and brand personality dimensions. Furthermore, many advertisements displayed multiple men with very different behavior and personal characteristics, not only one main character. In addition, some of the main characters in the ads analyzed had a significant transformation from one type of person to another. For example, Axe (also known as Lynx brand) advertisement displayed men who are very shy to speak to girls until they use the product, after which they immediately gain confidence and charm. The author argues that it is an old advertising cliché tactic, but it is still very evident in today's marketing.

The video content analysis shows how different traditional and modern masculinity ads are with the archetypes and personality dimensions. The question, however, remains which of them is more effective for today's consumer with his/her changing beliefs on gender norms. For a deeper analysis, six of the advertisements for video content analysis were also selected for further analysis of their YouTube comments sections.

## Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement's video content analysis

#### Description

The advertisement starts with a combat scene from World War II in France, where an American soldier takes cover from the bullets and speaks directly to the camera. The soldier reveals that he is the grandfather of the viewer- the person listening to him (the audience) in the present day. The soldier explains that he is busy fighting for your (audiences') freedom, while "you are now using this freedom to insult celebrities on Twitter." He then follows with the tagline for this campaign "If you are not going to fight like a man, at least shave like a man!"

#### Analysis

In Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement, the main character displays patriotism and bravery by fighting for freedom, thus performing a man's duty in a stereotypical sense of manhood (Appendix 31- Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). Furthermore, by showing a complete lack of sentimental emotions, the man embodies traditional masculinity. The war in this advertisement is used as a symbol of "real masculinity," the ultimate act of bravery and sacrifice. In contrast, the advertisement also shows the exact opposite of today's struggles of Western men, whereas there is too much focus on the drama of

"cancel culture" on social media. Therefore, the ad is partially humorous and ironizing about how times have changed, and thus masculinity has changed while suggesting that masculinity has not changed for the better. The advertisement clearly implies that men have become soft and do not understand what is truly heroic and brave, which perpetuates the crisis in the masculinity narrative.

Table 3.4. Summary of "Shave like a man" advertisement's analysis (Barbasol, 2013)

Type of masculinity	Masculinity archetype	Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Traditional masculinity	Warrior, magician	Ruggedness	Everyman, Hero	Crisis in masculinity. Trying to shame consumer about not being manly enough, therefore, they can at least buy this product

The brand archetype exhibited in this ad is both Everyman and Hero. Everyman, because the character is realistic, disappointed in today's youth, and presents himself as someone who sees things clearly as they are in reality. The character also displays some Hero archetype attributes, such as courage and taking action, taking a challenge, and showing strength and discipline for a higher cause. From the standpoint of the masculinity archetype, the main character in this advertisement mainly shows signs of a Warrior archetype. The character is fighting a war on behalf of a greater goal and does not show any emotions or feelings. The character also displays a few Magicians characteristics, for instance, educating the men of today about what constitutes real problems and the privilege of freedom. Consistent with brand and masculinity archetypes, the brand personality dimension that is notable in the main character is Ruggedness, particularly the toughness and sense of realism. Finally, when analyzing the "Shave like a man" advertisement, it becomes clear that the main character is looking down on the consumer, trying to shame the consumer about his masculinity. For instance, the statement "If you are not going to fight like a man, at least shave like a man!" is an obvious attempt to shame men into buying the product as an opportunity to also purchase traditional masculinity. The advertising message is not even remotely hidden or subliminal.

# Old Spice's "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's video content analysis Description

The advertisement starts with the actor Isaiah Mustafa speaking directly to women in his bathroom. He is calling on women to look at their men and compare them to Isaiah. The scenery suddenly changes from the bathroom to a boat, where Isaiah explains that he has all the things

that women want, such as "tickets to that thing women love" and diamonds. The thirty-two-second ad finishes with a slogan, "Anything is possible when your man smells like Old Spice and not a lady," while Isaiah Mustafa is suddenly on a white horse.

### Analysis

The advertisement is clearly meant as a humorous exaggeration of traditional masculinity (Appendix 31- Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). However, traditional masculinity is still the main focus of this ad when discussing masculinity in the advertising context, even though it is presented in an ironic way. The advertisement depicts a very assertive man, who is a mixture of a Lover and a King masculinity archetype according to Moore and Gillette (1990) archetype theory, due to certain characteristics that are being displayed. The man in the advertisement shows his ability to be flirtatious and charismatic. He also shows signs of care for the women by offering things and comfort, as the Lover archetype would suggest, while also showing signs of being in control and a significant amount of confidence, therefore, displaying the archetype of a King as well.

Table 3.5. Summary of "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's analysis (Old Spice, 2010)

Type of masculinity	Masculinity archetype	Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Traditional masculinity	Lover, king	Sophistication	Lover	Men have lost their masculinity by feminizing them (unless they use the product). Crisis in masculinity.

Similarly, the brand archetype is classified as Lover due to being romantic, passionate, seductive, and playful. As for the brand personality dimension, the main character shows Sophistication by being charming, smooth, glamourous, and good-looking. Even though the main focus in this advertisement is humor, this particular Old Spice advertisement is also arguing that any other deodorant is not manly, and the only way to be a real man, therefore, smell like a real man is to use Old Spice's product. Thus, the advertisement is an attempt to shame men, who do not use Old Spice, but since it is done in a humorous way, it has helped Old Spice to avoid the controversy of talking down to the consumers and blatantly shaming them, as other advertisements do. Another potential controversy of this advertisement is the stereotypical way it depicts women and their needs. This ad is also focusing on women purchasing Old Spice for their men, but in this attempt, they are depicting women as all of the same kind, who heavily rely on their men to get things for them and as such who only want

materialistic things, for instance, diamonds, concert tickets, and being on a boat. Although, just like talking down to the men as consumers, this potential controversy is also avoided due to the humor that is the main emotional appeal of the advertisement.

The New York Times explored the process behind the scenes of the advertisement and the "masculinity challenge" that many firms and ad agencies had due to changing perceptions of masculinity over the last decade. They write that "When Old Spice was planning a new advertising campaign for shower gel, it faced a challenge: its research suggested women purchase as much as 70 percent of the shower gel for men in their households, but using body wash struck some men as unmanly. Therefore, the challenge was how could they market body wash to female purchasers and yet still cast the product as decidedly masculine to lure men away from bar soap?" (Newman, 2010). The article discusses the decision-making process of the ad agency Wieden & Kennedy, and the challenge that they faced selling the product to women and selling masculinity to men for a product that is not (or at least was not) considered masculine.

# Dos Equis' "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's video content analysis

# **Description**

The advertisement shows many seemingly unrelated sequences of a man performing brave acts and being loved by everyone around him while the narrator speaks about this man. For instance, the narrator says, "He would not be afraid to show his feminine side if he had one," while the man crawls out of the freezing water carrying fish in his hands. Further, the narrator describes the man's life as "If opportunity knocks, and he is not home, opportunity waits" and finally, "If he would mispronounce your name, you would feel compelled to change it," insinuating the incredible flirting skills of this man. After every ad with several exaggerated traditional masculinity descriptions, the narrator finally introduces the man as "the most interesting man alive," usually sitting among beautiful women.

#### Analysis

Dos Equis' "The most interesting man alive" character embodies rebellion, confidence, charm, success, decisiveness, lack of emotion, bravery, and ruggedness (Appendix 31- Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). All these characteristics and more make this character the epitome of traditional masculinity. Thus, the brand archetype is a mixture of Outlaw and Lover, and Ruler. The Outlaw brand archetype is evident in the main character being a rebel and defining his own rules, while the Lover brand archetype is evident in being

playful, seductive, and intimate with women. However, the character also shows courage, power, and being in control, thus exhibiting also Ruler brand archetype.

Table 3.6. Summary of "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's analysis (Dos Equis, 2014)

Type of masculinity	Masculinity archetype	Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Traditional masculinity	King and Lover	Ruggedness and Sophistication	Outlaw, Lover, and	Men who consume this beer are successful with women,
			Ruler	brave and adventurous.

From a masculinity archetype standpoint, this character is a mixture of the King and Lover masculinity archetype. The character shows control of his faith, power, confidence, and admiration from the public, which fit the King's masculinity archetype description, while also showing some of the Lover's key characteristics such as the seduction of women around him and playfulness depicted in the flirty interactions with women. Brand personality dimension is Ruggedness and Sophistication due to glamour, good looks, and toughness in the traditional masculinity sense.

# Gillette's "The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's video content analysis

#### Description

The advertisement talks about toxic masculinity and depicts a series of events where men and boys are acting in bad faith, such as bullying each other, behaving sexually inappropriate towards women, and fighting. The narrator asks, "Is this the best a man can get"? Further, the narrator explains that men do not have to act this way to be a man. Towards the end of the advertisement, there are positive examples of men showing care for those who are being bullied and standing up for what is the right thing to do, such as teaching kids who are fighting that "this is not the way we treat each other."

### Analysis

Gillette's "The best man can be" advertisement takes a stance against toxic masculinity, which according to the literature review process of masculinity as a subject, is a part that is associated with traditional masculinity (Appendix 31- Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). It rejects the notion that men must act in a stereotypical way to be considered as men, for instance, displaying physical strength, dominance, and aggressively pursuing women.

Table 3.7. Summary of "The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's analysis (Gillette, 2019)

Type of masculinity	Masculinity archetype	Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Modern masculinity	King	Sincerity	Innocent, Caregiver, and the Hero	Many men are acting in a harmful way (toxic) to others and themselves. Men can do better than that and lead by example.

The ad recognizes that there is a need for a change in masculinity and that change is already taking place towards a more inclusive and modern idea of what masculinity should be. Gillette's slogan used to be "The best man can get," and now Gillette has changed it to "The best man can be." The advertisement is an example of brand understanding that their advertising message should not only be about selling, but also helpful to the society become more kinder to one another, thus exemplifying social responsibility which is at the core of stakeholder theory as discussed in the theoretical part. Strangely, the advertisement also uses the same brand narrative of crisis in masculinity as many traditional masculinity advertisements. In this instance, instead of arguing that men are becoming too soft or emotional or weak, Gillette is suggesting the exact opposite, that men are becoming too toxic and thus harmful to others and themselves.

The advertisement shows several different characters, but they all can be classified as either the Innocent, Caregiver, or the Hero brand archetype since the ad displays both victims and the people who help those who are bullied or marginalized. Innocent, because there are child-like characters who are pure and humble and Caregiver and Hero, because the ad shows the characters as protecting, caring, and showing compassion, all the typical characteristics of modern masculinity. As for the brand personality dimensions from Aaker (1997), the ad clearly depicts Sincerity with characteristics like friendliness and being sentimental to those in need of help and protection from bullies. Finally, from masculinity archetypes, the ad shows the King's archetype, as someone who is protecting someone and fighting toxic masculinity as well as someone who is caring and compassionate.

# NFL's "Touchdown Celebrations" advertisement's video content analysis

## **Description**

The advertisement shows a practice session of a National Football League team and the unique ways to celebrate so-called "touchdowns" (a successful play) in dance moves while the song "Time of my life" from the movie "Dirty dancing" is playing. The players also recreate the iconic scene from the movie only with entirely men cast.

## Analysis

The National Football League's "Touchdown celebrations" advertisement is a complete reverse of the NFL's previous advertisements promoting this evidently aggressive sport (Appendix 31-Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). It replaces seemingly macho activity embodying traditional masculinity traits with men dancing after "scoring" as something new, creative and unique while displaying emotions such as laughter and carefreeness.

Table 3.8. Summary of "Touchdown Celebrations to Come" advertisement's analysis (NFL, 2018)

Type of masculinity		Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Modern masculinity	Lover	Excitement	, ,	Men can be carefree and show their feminine side.

The level of openness and emotionality undoubtedly points to Lover's masculinity archetype, while the brand archetype is a mix of Jester, Lover, and Creator archetypes. The characters show having fun and joy, which would suggest Jester as the brand archetype. However, the warm and playful behavior, not to mention dancing which is intimate and sensual activity, points to the Lover archetype. In addition, the innovative and artistic act also suggests a Creator brand archetype. Finally, the brand personality dimension best fitted to the main characters is Excitement due to characteristics such as being daring, exciting, unique, and imaginative.

# Axe's "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's video content analysis

#### Description

The advertisement starts with a statement of statistics "72% of guys have been told how a real man should behave" (Axe, 2017). The ad then follows with images from the perspective of men in certain situations, implying insecurities. The narrator asks questions such as: "Is it ok to be skinny?" by showing a very slim man looking in the mirror and being self-cautious. Or asking: "Is it ok for guys not to like sport?" while the man does a very poor football kick. The ad then follows with a series of questions that supposedly guys are asking each day, for example: "Is it ok to be a virgin; is it ok to experiment with other guys; is it ok for guys to wear pink; to be nervous; to have long hair; to like cats; to take a selfie; to be depressed; to be scared? Finally, in the description of the advertisement on YouTube, Axe further explains the ad, saying that "If

thousands of guys have searched the web for answers, a million have thought it. It's time to stop questioning what defines masculinity because there's no one way to be "a man." Just be you. #FindYourMagic."

## Analysis

While Gillette and NFL have made drastic changes from emphasizing traditional masculinity to displaying modern masculinity, it pales in comparison to the changes Axe as a brand has made in terms of masculinity display and the use of different brand archetypes. Axe used to focus entirely on traditional masculinity, including concepts such as sexual objectification and gender conformity. However, with the advertisement "is it ok for guys," Axe, as well as their sub-brand Lynx (in the UK and other countries), have made a radical change to position men in an entirely different way (Appendix 31- Table of visual representations of the selected advertisements). Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that Axe is not saying how men should behave (as Gillette does). They are implying that men should not always have stereotypical traditional masculinity traits, which is something that Axe themselves used to depict in their ads. In a way, it is a clever strategy because if facing backlash from consumers, Axe can now simply respond that they are merely asking questions, challenging the norms of masculinity.

Table 3.9. Summary of "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's analysis (Axe, 2017)

Type of masculinity		Brand personality dimension	Brand archetype	Narrative about masculinity
Modern masculinity	Magician, Lover	Sincerity	Everyman, Explorer	Men should not put so much pressure to themselves and
				conform to gender norms.

The brand archetype mostly emphasized in this ad is the Explorer, although there are also some signs of the Everyman brand archetype. Explorer archetype characteristics are evident in independence (from the gender and social norms), authenticity, and seeking discovery and fulfillment. However, while the characters seem to show signs of independence, they also want to be accepted. They are asking if it is ok to be different from the traditional masculinity norm and yet still be accepted, therefore, displaying characteristics of the Everyman brand archetype by wanting to belong somewhere and fit in. The brand personality dimension is clearly Sincerity because the characters and the whole narrative of the advertisement are about men being down-to-earth, sincere, real, honest, and friendly, which are all characteristics of Sincerity from Jennifer Aaker's (1997) brand personality theory model. The masculinity archetype, thus, exhibits Lover's archetype primarily due to the compassion, openness, sexuality, sincerity, and

emotional accessibility, but in a way also shows signs of the Magician archetype by showing curiosity and suspicion of the social gender norm and opposition to it.

## 3.1.7. Results of statistical analysis

Considering the theoretical aspects of advertising effectiveness, such as awareness, consumer engagement, and likeability, the author conducted a brief comparison of the six selected masculinity advertisements (Table 3.10). The data was gathered from YouTube, where the advertisements have been posted, showing a variety of different degrees of advertising effectiveness. Some of the data is difficult to compare because of important factors, for instance, the time in which the advertisement has been on YouTube. The longer the advertisement has been on YouTube, the more time it has generated more comments, views, and likes. Also, the awareness aspect measured in views cannot be objectively compared, considering that larger brands such as Old Spice have more resources to promote the advertisement and a larger customer base, and they as a brand are present in nearly all parts of the world. In contrast, a brand such as Barbasol is only present in North America and does not have the financial resources to invest in buying ad space for their advertisement in other channels as much as Old Spice or Gillette. On the other hand, YouTube makes the plane field somewhat leveled because the factors that determine search rankings are not designed to favor bigger brands over smaller brands. On YouTube, it is the popularity that matters above all. For instance, the factors that affect a brand's YouTube video count are:

- Personalization (the viewer's history and preferences)
- ➤ Performance (Appeal, engagement, and satisfaction (likeability); in other words, the number of views, amount of comments, and amount of likes versus dislikes)
- External factors (the overall audience or market such as seasonality and topic interest, a topic such as "masculinity," for example) (Carli, 2020).

As mentioned, there are some statistical effectiveness measurements where the presence and the size of the brand would not matter, like consumer engagement (the number of views divided by the number of comments) and the like/dislike ratio (the number of likes divided by the number of dislikes). For consumer engagement, the smaller the number, the better, meaning that the smaller the number it gets, the more comments it has per the same amount of views, which is good for the advertisement to get noticed on YouTube and be higher in the search rankings generating more awareness later on. For the likeability measurement, it is the opposite; the bigger the number, the better for the brand, meaning that the bigger the number, the more

liked the ad is, as the number of likes exceeds the number of dislikes. These are the two objective statistical measurements that can be used to compare how effective are the selected advertisements.

Table 3.10. Statistical analysis of the selected advertisements (Author's original work)

	Views	Comments Consumer		Likes	Dislikes	Likeability
					(Like/ dislike)	
			(Views per comment)			ratio
Barbasol's ad	444 639	1352	<u>3 28 875</u>	18 000	135	<u>133</u>
Old Spice's ad	58 612 819	26 981	2 172 37	230 000	5 400	42,6
Dos Equis' ad	360 921	477	756 648	3 800	102	37,2549
Gillette's ad	32 700 000	453 795	<u>72 059</u>	804 000	1500 000	<u>0,536</u>
NFL's ad	3 486 924	1375	2 535 94	20 000	561	35,6506
Axe's ad	872 859	692	126 136	7 600	562	13,5231

Of the six advertisements selected, the highest level of consumer engagement by far was Gillette's "The best man can be" advertisement, with only 72 views per every comment posted, indicating very high consumer engagement. In comparison, NFL's advertisement "Touchdown celebrations" had the worst performance with 2536 views per every comment posted, therefore, showing low consumer engagement. However, Gillette is proof that there is such thing as bad publicity because, as sentiment analysis will show and as the Likeability ratio shows, people did not like Gillette's advertisement, and the consumer engagement was definitely not positive. For instance, the Likeability ratio for the same Gillette's ad is only 0,5, which means that the ad received twice as many dislikes as likes, which is a rare situation because if people watch the ad, they usually do it out of pleasure, not distaste. In comparison, Barbasol's ad "Shave like a man" received the highest Likeability ratio, 133, meaning that it received 133 times more likes than dislikes (Figure 3.6). In addition, all the other advertisements also received much more likes than dislikes, making Gillette's ad performance a unique anomaly in the most negative sense.

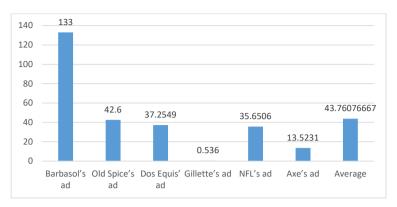


Figure 3.6. Likability ratio for the selected advertisements (Author's original work)

This statistical analysis partially helps answer an old question in advertising: is there a correlation between likeability and consumer engagement? Considering that the most liked (Barbasol) ad and the most hated (Gillette) ad both received first and second place in terms of consumer engagement, it somewhat shows that, indeed, there might be a correlation between the two. As previously stated, comparing awareness for one advertisement to another, in this case, might not be entirely objective. However, there is a possibility to assess how much awareness was generated for the brand itself due to the particular advertisement. By using the Google Trends tool and selecting YouTube, one can see how much the brand's name was searched at any particular time on YouTube, wanting to see the ads of this brand. Therefore, the author assessed how much search activity was generated from the selected advertisement for the brand in question.

## Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement's awareness assessment

When it comes to search activity of Barbasol on YouTube, the brand received its third biggest increase (68 percentage points) of searches when the advertisement "Shave like a man" was released in 2013. That indicates the great significance of the ad for Barbasol's brand in terms of awareness and interest from the consumers (See Figure 3.7). Notably, Barbasol received considerable attention (the second biggest increase in search amount) during the end of January 2019, which coincides with the release of Gillette's controversial ad targeting toxic masculinity, sparking a fierce debate about masculinity in society, media, and in advertising.

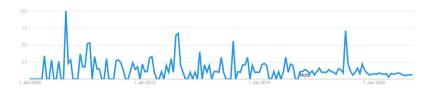


Figure 3.7. Search activity of Barbasol on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

# Old Spice's "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's awareness assessment

The significance of Old Spice's "The man your man could smell like" for the brand could not be overstated (100 percentage points), as evident in Figure 3.8. Old Spice brand received enormous popularity among consumers when the advertisement was released in 2010. It became an internet sensation with consumers sharing it voluntarily on social media, making the advertisement "go viral." After the excitement of the advertisement had gone down, Old Spice's popularity on YouTube was very low, and remakes of the original advertisement with similar traditional masculinity depictions were not able to bring back the interest of the consumers to the brand.

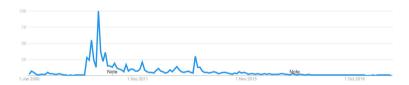


Figure 3.8. Search activity of Old Spice on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

# Dos Equis' "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's awareness assessment

"The most interesting man alive" advertisement is an advertising campaign that was going on for a decade, with the same actor playing the role of the character. Therefore, the campaign's popularity on YouTube is more difficult to assess accurately. Nevertheless, some of the campaign's advertisements received more interest from the consumers than others, and in 2009, the campaign received significant media exposure and the campaign "went viral," also indicating the significance of the advertising campaign for the brand (Figure 3.9).

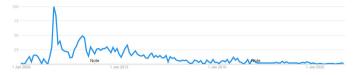


Figure 3.9. Search activity of Dos Equis on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

## Gillette's "The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's awareness assessment

Gillette, while being a very popular brand for a long time, received an enormous (100 percentage points) awareness in January of 2019 with the selected advertisement for this research, "The best man can be" (Figure 3.10.). The awareness that Gillette received with this advertisement is one that would be hard to find a match for in any other advertising campaign because no other brand shows such a stark contrast between the usual awareness and this spike of increase, as the Gillette popularity graph shows.

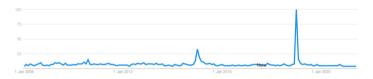


Figure 3.10. Search activity of Gillette on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

## NFL's "Touchdown Celebrations" advertisement's awareness assessment

With National Football League, it would understandably be difficult for any advertisement to make an impact in the number of searches on YouTube; the ad "Touchdown celebrations" is no different (Figure 3.11.). Due to the Super Bowl, this brand, unlike any other in this study, has particular seasonality to it. Towards the end of the season, when the Super Bowl comes (as well as the season-opening), the search is more intense, making any advertisement of the NFL brand hard to stand out in terms of awareness generated for the brand.

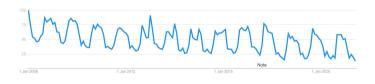


Figure 3.11. Search activity of NFL on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

# Axe's "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's awareness assessment

The advertisement "Is it ok for guys..." generated a slight increase in searches for Axe (36 percentage points) on YouTube back when the ad was released in 2017 (Figure 3.12.). The graph also shows that Axe's popularity has been declining ever since the brand started to focus on modern instead of traditional masculinity in their marketing communication.

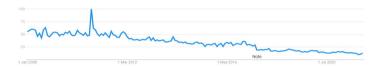


Figure 3.12. Search activity of Axe on YouTube (Google Trends, 2020)

This section has shown that three of the advertisements generated very significant awareness for the brands (Gillette, Old Spice, Dos Equis). One advertisement was moderately consequential for its brand (Barbasol), and two can be classified as having little impact on the awareness generated by the advertisement (NFL, Axe). Therefore, this section has confirmed the findings from literature review, that masculinity is important for brands to get awareness from consumers which according to advertising academics and authors is one of the key fundamentals of advertising effectiveness.

## 3.1.8. Results of qualitative content analysis

# Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

The author found that the most common theme that emerged from "Shave like a man" YouTube comments was ad appreciation (Figure 3.13.), where consumers expressed how much they appreciate the advertisement and provided some reasons for why that is. This theme was evident in 32% of the comments. Most often, the reasons for approving the ad were not given, but other times the reasons were associated with the humorous script and tone of the ad, which was evident in 13% of the comments. Some of the comments (6%) expressed interest in becoming a Barbasol customer, which indicated approval of the ad as well, therefore, could be combined with the other 32% and 13%, making a strong approval rate of 51%.

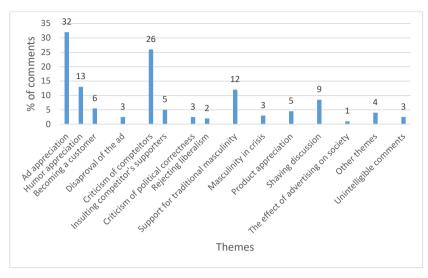


Figure 3.13. Themes from Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement's comment section (Author's original work)

Comments that were negative of the advertisement were only 3%, which is a remarkably good score for any ad to get, particularly on the internet. However, there were many negative comments directed at Barbasol's competitor and the customers and supporters of Barbasol's competitor, Gillette. Criticism of Gillette was evident in 26% of the comments, and an additional 5% were directed toward Gillette's supporters. These themes were related to criticism of political correctness and rejecting liberalism, which got 3% and 2%, respectively. There was also rather a significant amount of debate over masculinity. For instance, 12% of the comments showed strong support for traditional masculinity. Therefore, these comments, in a way, could also be put together with the support of the ad itself. Furthermore, 3% of the comments were about the "crisis in masculinity" theme, where consumers argued that men are becoming soft and not "manly enough" however, that was primarily directed towards Gillette, not Barbasol, which, therefore, is mostly connected to the criticism of competitors. Finally, product appreciation was mentioned in 5% of the comments, and shaving discussion was evident in 9% of the comments, which was related to the product in question.

# Old Spice's "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

The qualitative content analysis (Figure 3.14.) revealed that the most common themes in the Old Spice advertisement's comment section were Ad appreciation, with 31%. These comments

were not providing the authors with many reasons why consumers appreciate the advertisement though, but they should be summed up with Appreciation of the humor theme (15%) and expressing the idea of becoming a customer (2%). That makes the total comments that express consumers' appreciation of the advertisement 48%, which is also a very good score for any advertisement to receive on the internet.

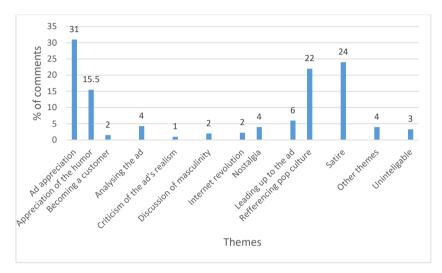


Figure 3.14. Themes from Old Spice "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's comment section (Author's original work)

Furthermore, the comment section did not show any signs of disapproval of the ad from consumers, which makes the results even more significant. The only criticism (1%) was questioning how realistic is the nature of the advertisement. However, it is fair to say that Old Spice was intentionally exaggerating the sequence of the advertisement. A significant amount of comments (24%) were categorized as satire. In these comments, the consumers were trying to extend the humor depicted in the ad with one of their own humorous ways how to make the advertisement even funnier. These comments also show an appreciation of the advertisement, specifically of the humor, in a more subtle way.

Finally, referencing popular culture was evident in 22% of the comments, while discussion of masculinity was only evident in 2% of the comments. In comments about masculinity, consumers talked about the masculine characteristics of the main character.

# Dos Equis' "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

"The most interesting man alive" advertisement's YouTube comment section presented a variety of themes (Figure 3.15.). The most common of them was satire, with 29% of the comments containing this theme. This is the theme where consumers were extending the humor presented in the advertisement with their own unique take on the main character and the traditional masculinity traits.

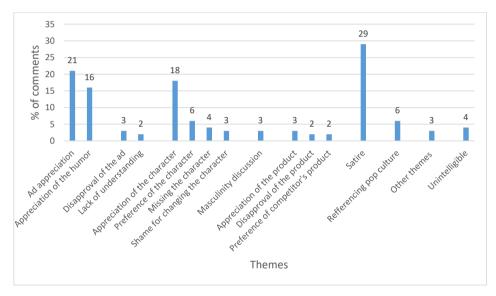


Figure 3.15. Themes from Dos Equis "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's comment section (Author's original work)

Ad appreciation was found in 21% of the comments, with an additional 16% of the comments where consumers were more specific in their praise for the ad and provided humor as the reason for the ad appreciation. In addition, the author argues that ad appreciation comments also consist of appreciation for the main character (18%), who is the central figure of the ad. If these numbers are all summed up together, then the total amount of comments that display consumers' support for the advertisement would be 55%, which is another surprising result of positivity and approval. The advertisement also received some disapproval (3%) among the consumers, mainly about the rationality of the ad and the obvious sales pitch to consumers, while 2% of the comments showed consumers' lack of understanding of the advertisement. Finally, the consumers discussed the product (beer) and showed some support for it (3%), while

some also argued for competitor beer brands (2%) and some plainly called Dos Equis product awful (2%).

# Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

The author found that Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's comment section presented the widest variety of themes from all advertisements analyzed (Figure 3.16.). The comments were analyzed in early 2021, but in the summer of 2021, comments were disabled. With nearly half a million comments, this advertisement helps answer the old question, "is there no such thing as bad publicity?"

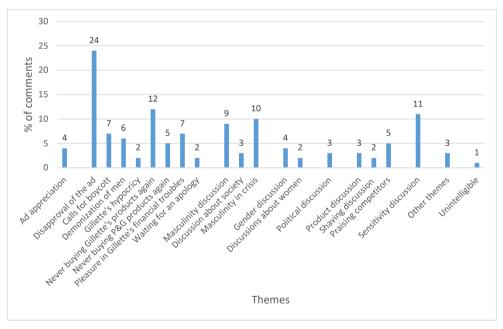


Figure 3.16. Themes from Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's comment section, in % (Author's original work)

The most common theme was disapproval of the ad (24%), where consumers expressed their distaste and sometimes even anger about the advertisement. In addition, some consumers expressed much more than distaste for the advertisement: in 7% of the comments, consumers called for the boycott of Gillette; while 2% were asking for an apology; and consumers promised never to purchase Gillette's and Procter and Gamble's products with 12% and 5% respectively. Furthermore, in some cases, the consumers provided reasons why they disapproved of the advertisement. For instance, in 6% of the comments, consumers were

arguing that this advertisement is demonizing men, and in 2%, consumers saw Gillette's hypocrisy. According to consumers, the hypocritical behavior of Gillette is that the company has major flaws but at the same time is calling for social responsibility from consumers by taking a stance against toxic masculinity. When combined all these themes and their percentages together, it makes an astounding disapproval rate of 65%, which cannot even be compared with the score of other advertisements analyzed in this study, which normally received a 3% or 5% disapproval rate.

To make matters worse for Gillette, the theme of Ad appreciation was evident only in 4% of the comments. In these comments, consumers were defending Gillette and this particular advertisement expressing their positive emotions towards it and expressing confusion about why others see it as demonizing men. "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" comment section provided a lot of discussion about masculinity (9%), where consumers were debating and defending their stance on what it means to be a man. Not surprisingly, there was also a more specific debate happening in the comment section, particularly the theme of "Masculinity in crisis" (10%), where consumers were debating that men are losing their sense of masculinity. The combined percentage of masculinity being involved in the advertisement's comment section is 19% and, therefore, stands out as an essential element for consumers. In addition, consumers were also debating masculinity's role in society (3%), taking the debate even further and arguing about this concept from a broader context.

# NFL's "Touchdown Celebrations to Come" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

The most common theme in the particular National Football League advertisement's comment section was ad appreciation, which was evident in 38% of the comments (Figure 3.17.). As in other cases, ad appreciation was assigned to comments where consumers were vague and did not provide reasons why they appreciated the advertisement. However, an additional 20% were commenting with a theme of humor appreciation, where consumers expressed their approval of the ad due to its humorous content. The comment section also revealed disapproval of the ad (3%), with an additional 2% of homophobic remarks and 3% of consumers arguing that these footballers dancing is very emasculating, in other words, not manly. Therefore, the entire masculinity discussion consisted of negative comments as disapproval of the advertisement.

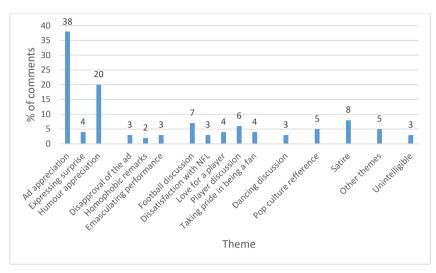


Figure 3.17. Themes from NFL's "Touchdown Celebrations to Come" advertisement's comment section (Author's original work)

A sizeable part of the comment section was around football, which, after all, is the product of this advertisement. The generic football discussion was evident in 7% of the comments, and player discussion was evident in 6% of the comments.

# Axe's "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's YouTube comment section's qualitative content analysis

The most common theme in the "Is it ok for guys?" comment section was Ad appreciation (41%), where consumers expressed their approval for the advertisement and provided some reasons for why they appreciate the ad (Figure 3.18.). An additional 6% of comments showed consumers being positively surprised by the advertisement, which can be characterized as a desirable outcome for the advertiser. In contrast, the disapproval of the ad was evident in 13% of the comments, with an additional 4% of homophobic remarks, where consumers specifically expressed their negative view of the ad with a homophobic comment.

A major part of the "Is it ok for guys?" comment section was related to masculinity, even more than usual in the analysis of these advertisements. A general masculinity discussion was evident in 11% of the comments, with additional disapproval for modern masculinity (4%) and disapproval of traditional masculinity (3%). In these comments, consumers were more specific in what they support or, in this case, what they are against, rather than debating the issue from a more general standpoint. What is more, the crisis in masculinity was evident in 6% of the

comments, and struggles of gender conformity were found in 2%, making the entire masculinity debate evident in 26% of the comments.

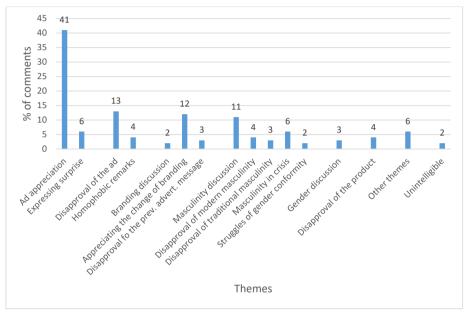


Figure 3.18. Themes from Axe's "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's comment section (Author's original work)

The mention of the product itself was found very rarely in the comment section, as is the case with all these advertisements analyzed where masculinity is the central issue. For this particular advertisement of Axe, the mention of the product was found in just 4% of the comments, and all of it was expressing either stronger or weaker disapproval of the product.

Table 3.11 shows the top 10 most common themes in all of the six advertisements. As evident by the table, the most consistently common themes were Ad appreciation and humor appreciation, while other themes have a highly inconsistent frequency in the YouTube comment sections. The process of achieving qualitative content analysis results is described in Chapter 3.1.4.

Table 3.11. The results of qualitative content analysis (Source: Author's original work)

Theme	Barbasol	Old Spice	Dos Equis	Gillette	NFL	Axe
Ad appreciation	32%	31%	21%	4%	38%	41%
Humour Appreciation	13%	16%	16%	0%	20%	0%
Disapproval	3%	1%	5%	65%	8%	17%
Competitor discourse	31%	0%	2%	5%	0%	1%
Masculinity discourse	15%	2%	3%	19%	3%	26%
Main character discourse	2%	7%	31%	0%	4%	0%
Product discourse	14%	1%	7%	10%	7%	4%
Branding discussion	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	17%
Satire	1%	24%	29%	1%	8%	0%
Popular culture	0%	22%	6%	0%	5%	0%

As is visible (Table 3.11), the advertisements received major approval from the consumers, with a notable exception of Gillette's "We believe: The best man can be" advertisement, where the most common theme was disapproval of the ad (65%), where consumers expressed their distaste and sometimes even anger about the advertisement including calling for a boycott of the brand. The results also showed that masculinity discourse was much more popular than product discourse (Figure 3.19).

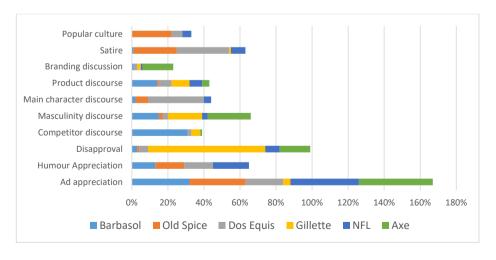


Figure 3.19. The results of qualitative content analysis (Author's original work)

In other words, consumers talked about masculinity in the comments far more than about the product, which shows how distracted consumers are from the product, thus potentially showing a downside of focusing on masculinity in their advertising. Masculinity discourse ranged from 2% to 26% in the comments of the selected advertisements. Consumers were debating problems with masculinity and the roots of these problems as well as what even is masculinity. Consumers were defending their version of masculinity by opposing others' versions, proving the idea expressed in the social construction theory that masculinity, indeed, is being constructed by social interaction.

## 3.1.9. Results of sentiment analysis

The sentiment analysis measured the likeability or how positive, negative, or neutral each advertisement's comment section was (Figure 3.20.). The process of achieving sentiment analysis results is described in Chapter 3.1.4. The analysis showed that of the selected ads, traditional masculinity advertisements' comment sections were, on average, more positive than modern masculinity's, with a 56% positivity rate to 46% positivity rate. This indicates that consumers tend to approve of more traditional forms of masculinity in advertising, as some researchers have found (Orth, Holancova 2003; Putrevu 2004; Brownbill et al., 2018). However, in this particular case, that might be due to the significant discrepancy between Gillette's positivity rate and NFL's and Axe's.

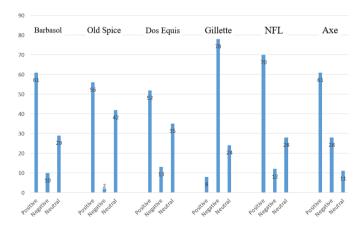


Figure 3.20. Sentiment analysis results of selected advertisements, % (Author's original work)

For instance, only 8% of Gillette's "The best man can be" comments were positive, with 78% being negative. While on the other hand, the rest of the comment sections, especially the NFL's "Touchdown celebrations" (70%), had a high level of positivity rate, despite what people mostly associate internet comment sections with. Due to Gillette's "The best man can be" advertisement's high negativity rate, the average negativity rate of the selected modern masculinity ads (39%) is notably higher than the negativity rate of traditional masculinity ads (8%). The author argues that what is considered a success when it comes to sentiment analysis highly depends on the company itself and its past performances as well as its competitor advertising performances regarding positivity. The success or failure in this regard is relative. Regarding the neutrality of comments, suggesting consumers' lack of emotional involvement, the traditional masculinity ads had much higher neutrality (35%) in their comments than modern masculinity ads (21%). This indicates that consumers are more emotionally expressive and opinionated when viewing modern masculinity advertisements than traditional.

The sentiment analysis findings do correspond to the statistical analysis of the likeability ratio of the selected advertisements. However, the similarities are fewer than the differences. For instance, on the one hand, Barbasol is performing well on both analyses, and Gillette is performing very poorly on both as well. On the other hand, the selected advertisements from Old Spice, Dos Equis, NFL, and Axe performed below the average in statistical analysis, while sentiment analysis showed very positive results for the mentioned brands' advertisements. That proves that an advertising analyst cannot simply rely on the like/dislike ratio but has to conduct a qualitative content analysis and sentiment analysis to understand whether people truly appreciated the advertisement or not.

#### 3.1.10. Results of Discourse Analysis

During the discourse analysis, the author found that consumers focus mainly on masculinity and the advertisement's message, not the product. In other words, the product discourse was very little in the comment sections of the selected advertisements for this study. The following is a brief summary of the most frequent discourses that emerged from the selected advertisements' YouTube comment sections.

# Discourse analysis of Barbasol's "Shave like a man" advertisement's YouTube comment section's discourse analysis

The author found that the most frequent discourse in the "Shave like a man" comment section was supportive of the ideological message in the advertisement; that is, men nowadays spend

their free time fighting over meaningless issues on social media and do not appreciate their freedom. Many consumers also showed their support for the advertisement in comparison to Gillette as well as support based on traditional masculinity depiction and appreciation of the humor. Some of the comments from supportive discourse showed strong interest in becoming a customer of Barbasol due to the advertisement.

The second most frequent discourse in the comment section was the competitor discourse. From analysing the awareness and consumer engagement that Barbasol's ad had received, it seems that "Shave like a man" ad was used as a positive example from insulted Gillette customers. These consumers expressed in their comments frustration for Gillette (for their "We believe: the best man can be" ad) and praised Barbasol for understanding what an ad for shaving products should be like. Criticism of competitors was a theme that was visible in every fifth comment while at the same time showing support for Barbasol. Stev\*\*\*\*\*\*: "This needs a formal Re-Release to confront Gillette's hateful anti-male piece #BoycottGillette !!!!!!" This consumer argues that Barbasol should show "Shave like a man" ad again on television in opposition to Gillette's approach in their advertising. The consumer also calls for a boycott of Gillette and considers it an attack on men. Comments like these targeting Gillette and their customers are often, and this discourse borders on masculinity discourse and supportive discourse. For instance, Marc\*\*\*\*\*\* says: "Gillette is for female men, Barbasol is for men. I been a longtime user of Barbasol and now I know why." This comment shows support for Barbasol, disapproval of Gillette (competitors), and at the same time showing the stance and favor for traditional masculinity and acknowledging brand loyalty for Barbasol all in the same comment.

Finally, the masculinity discourse, which was also popular in the comment section, included various themes that emerged in the YouTube comments, such as masculinity in crisis, masculinity revolution, opposing modern masculinity, and support for traditional masculinity. The most frequent theme that emerged in masculinity discourse was support for traditional masculinity. Roam\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*: "Outstanding! Men should be men. There is nothing wrong with being a man!" Other comments referenced the World War II generation and the sacrifice of men in the past, and the fact that the values of traditional masculinity have been forgotten. Noel\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*: "People have forgotten what the men of this great nation have sacrificed." At the same time, some consumers referred to their testosterone levels, which have dramatically increased after seeing Barbasol's ad.

## Discourse analysis of Old Spice's "The man your man could smell like" advertisement's YouTube comment section

Supportive advertising discourse was the most frequent in the particular Old Spice advertisement's comment section. The discourse was very positive, consisting of praise for a unique advertisement and a great sense of humour. Consumers were often not specific about what exactly they loved about the advertisement, although the common theme in this discourse was certainly humor and creativity. Masculinity discourse in this particular ad's comment section was occurring very little. A few consumers commented on the masculinity displayed by the main character, Slow\*\*\*\*\*\*\*: "That man radiates masculinity." Thus acknowledging that the main character exhibits traditional masculinity characteristics. While others commented on the fragility of masculinity, that one must have to feel insecure about himself to take this advertisement seriously. Finally, a common discourse in the comment section was Pop culture discourse. Pop culture can be a strong influencing factor in consumer perceptions about various concepts, including masculinity. In the case of Old Spice, consumers shared various pop culture references relating to the advertisement, therefore, showing that this ad has also become a pop culture phenomenon.

## Discourse analysis of Dos Equis' "The most interesting man alive" advertisement's YouTube comment section

As the case with Barbasol and Old Spice, in the Dos Equis' advertisement's comment section, the supportive discourse was quite frequent, combining ad appreciation and humor appreciation. The discourse included a lot of praise from the consumers. The praise often was specific about the main character exhibiting traditional masculinity characteristics. Therefore, the Main character discourse often overlapped with supportive discourse and masculinity discourse. The main character discourse also included consumers expressing disapproval for Dos Equis' decision to change the bellowed character for a new "the most interesting man alive." Therefore, proving congruity theory that consumers appreciate when the brand personality is in alignment of consumers' personality or at least the desired one. Whereas when the brand personality does nto match consumers' they reject it. The discourse was a mix of positive, supportive messages and nostalgia for the previous character, and angry comments about the change of characters. Some consumers specifically mention that the entire reason for them being Dos Equis' customers was the previous character, Barb\*\*\*\*\*\*: "Please bring back the old guy. I bought this beer because of him. Now I won't because I hate the new guy."

Nevertheless, the discourse was mostly positive and appreciative of the previous character and, therefore, supportive of the advertisement.

## Discourse analysis of Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement's comment section

The author found that opposing discourse was the most frequent and consisted of a variety of themes, from expressing disapproval to calls for a boycott to interpreting the ad as an attack on masculinity. The discourse was very negative, with some of the comments expressing to Gillette and Procter and Gamble that the consumer will never buy their products again. For instance, some consumers were frustrated about the hypocrisy, Your\*\*\*\*\*:" Let's see, Gillette telling you about toxic masculinity is like a crocodile telling you about vegetarianism. A billion-dollar corporation which actively destroys the environment and uses child labour trying to score social justice points." This comment and others like this indicate that, according to consumers, a corporation should first show an example of social responsibility in action and then only call for customers and society to act responsibly. Furthermore, some comments in the opposing discourse showed consumers' anger that a corporation is trying to teach them something at all, Józs\*\*\*\*\*\*: "You're a razor manufacturer. How are you coming to teach me about masculinity? Make the razor and shut up!" Other consumers were so offended by this advertisement targeting toxic masculinity and promoting inclusive masculinity that they were waiting for an apology from Gillette. Finally, some consumers provided lengthy comments with reasons why their long-lasting loyalty towards Gillette, has now been lost, Derm\*\*\*\*\*: "I had run up nearly 40 years of unbroken support for Gillette before this video uploaded partly due to the great commercials they used to make. Now, I am actively evangelizing against them. They don't care, however; it is part of their long-term strategy anyway to trade us for Millenials." The consumer is arguing that Gillette has made this advertisement as a strategy to become relevant for the millennials, implying that inclusive masculinity might be favourable among younger generations. To confirm this hypothesis, there is a need for quantitative research surveying millennials.

The masculinity discourse was a fierce debate among the consumers in the comment section of a variety of topics, such as masculinity in society, the changing notions of masculinity, and masculinity in crisis. Consumers were putting the blame on various directly or indirectly involved parties such as media, popular culture, and advertisers. The discourse was largely hostile and defensive, with each side trying to defend their stance and convince others. Some consumers felt that this advertisement is an attack on men, saying that Fion\*\*\*\*\*\*\*: "An

attack on masculinity is an attack on civilization." While other consumers were debating the root of the problem with this advertisement and indeed the whole concept of modern masculinity that the advertisement is promoting, "Masculinity is not the problem. Lack of masculinity is." Finally, some consumers provided their root of the problem, which according to them, is feminism, bringing into light a different discourse- gender discourse. Regardless, the discourse proved hypothesis suggested in the theoretical part of this research from social construction theory, that masculinity is not created individually but rather collectively from society as a culturally and socially constructed phenomenon.

## Discourse analysis of National Football League's "Touchdown celebrations" advertisement's YouTube comment section

The supportive discourse was the most frequent in the comment section of this advertisement. However, it did not reveal major insights into consumer appreciation of the advertisement, except for the fact that a substantial amount of consumers found the advertisement funny and surprising. Consumers were not expecting football players to dance in an NFL advertisement. Many consumers expressed that this might be the best advertisement, showing great appreciation. The opposing discourse was rare in the comment section, which is an excellent sign for any advertiser. Nevertheless, the little opposing discourse that was evident mainly consisted of consumers showing their confusion about why these football players are dancing and a few making homophobic remarks, thus expressing their disapproval of the content in this advertisement. Masculinity discourse, as rare as it was in this comment section, was difficult to separate from the opposing discourse. The entire masculinity discussion consisted of the idea that the men in this advertisement were acting "not manly" and being emasculated.

## Discourse analysis of Axe's "Is it ok for guys?" advertisement's YouTube comment section

The supportive discourse provided a deeper understanding of why consumers appreciate Axe's advertisement. For example, many consumers emphasized the messaging, saying it was important and well presented. Other consumers were positively overwhelmed by the message saying that it is powerful. Some consumers felt better about themselves after watching the advertisement, Dele\*\*\*\*: "hey, I feel better about myself now. Nice job". Other consumers were extra supportive considering the context of the usual Axe's advertisements, saying that Paul\*\*\*\*\*\*: "It makes me happy to see that the stereotypes are being challenged in the advertisement. But even more, so that company as AXE changes their sexist ad style into a good psychological and sociological piece of art". This comment shows that the consumer is

against the use of masculine stereotypes in the typical advertisement and appreciates the change; therefore, the comment also is related to masculinity discourse and branding discourse. It also shows that consumers appreciate that brands switch their tactics to more socially responsible advertising message which is at the core of stakeholder theory as discussed in theoretical part. Brands have to understand that their advertising message affects the society. However, despite the positive consumer feedback, there was still rather considerable negativity towards the ad, with consumers expressing their disapproval of the advertisement, which can be summed up in the opposing discourse. For instance, some consumers found this new type of advertising message damaging to men due to its uncertainty, Your\*\*\*\*\*\*: "Instead of selling confidence (not arrogance), now they sell the smell of uncertainty." The consumer is expressing his view that the previous message was giving men confidence, but now it makes men uncertain about their masculinity. Other consumers saw feminist propaganda in this advertisement. They were appalled about the idea that a brand is being involved in the issue of masculinity, Freg\*\*\*\*\*: "Just advertise your putrid body spray and save the feminist propaganda for some nickle and dime women's studies course." Finally, some consumers were making homophobic remarks about this advertisement and depiction of men in this way, even though the entire advertisement is asking questions, not stating what is and what is not masculine.

To sum up, mixed method analysis proved that an advertising analyst cannot simply rely on the like/dislike ratio or other simple statistical metrics because results sometimes are very different. One needs to conduct multiple analyses, such as qualitative content analysis, sentiment analysis, and discourse analysis, to fully comprehend the effectiveness of the advertisement based on consumer perception. Qualitative content analysis, as well as discourse analysis, showed how little consumers discuss the product when masculinity is the emphasis of the ad, indicating a lower level of effectiveness from one perspective, considering that advertisers want people to focus on the product. The findings from Chapter 1 about traditional and modern masculinity characteristics seem to be consistent with qualitative video content analysis, as well as the higher frequency of traditional masculinity advertisements. Due to the findings from Chapter 2, the author was also able to identify brand personality dimensions and brand archetypes in advertising to conduct a comprehensive video content analysis. The mixed method analysis of consumer perceptions of masculinity in advertising (particularly, qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis) also helped the author to shape the survey, A/B testing, and Focus group questions to better understand consumers' perceptions of masculine brand personalities and how they are being advertised.

## 3.2. The survey and A/B testing about masculinity in advertising

### 3.2.1. Methodological justification and the structure of the survey and the A/B test

To ensure the validity of the results by diversifying data collection and how the data is being analyzed, the author also focused on quantitative research methods, making it combined or mixed research. Quantitative methods can give precise and testable expression to qualitative ideas. It was determined that quantitative methods that could help analyze the consumer perceptions of masculinity in advertising would be surveys and A/B testing, because surveys provide a quantitative description of attitudes and opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2018, 207). Whereas A/B testing, which is also known as split testing, is a way to compare two versions of a single variable (Kohavi, Longbotham, 2017), and in this case, that was masculinity and the way it is being depicted in advertising. By testing consumers' responses to variant A against variant B, it was possible to understand which masculinity image in advertising resonates the most with consumers. A quantitative method such as A/B testing also gave a chance to make market segmentation by seeing which specific idea of a man in a particular advertisement resonates most with men or women.

Since nowadays companies need to understand how to depict men in their advertising to ensure more positive feedback from the consumers about their brand, the survey and the A/B test aimed to understand these questions:

- > Is there a discrepancy between what consumers think they like in an advertisement focusing on masculinity and what they actually prefer?
- ➤ Which type of masculinity in advertising is more favorable and resonates more with consumers and is there a statistical significance in the differences between men's and women's answers?
- ➤ Which traditional and modern masculinity characteristics and elements in advertising are essential for the men and women?
- ➤ Which brand and masculinity archetypes, as well as brand personality dimensions, are more favorable for consumers in masculinity advertisements?

The process of creating the survey and the A/B test involved several steps based on theory (Marczyk et al., 2005), such as defining the purpose and objectives of the survey; selecting relevant questions using the knowledge gathered from the literature review process; finding fitting advertisements to select as objects in the A/B test. The survey was done in two sections (Table 3.6.). In the first section, the respondents answered eight survey-type questions (multiple

choice). Respondents selected a few aspects of their demographics and then answered general questions about their preferences, opinions, and attitudes. The second section was the A/B test, where respondents watched sixteen advertisements in eight rounds of questions (links to all sixteen advertisements can be found in Bibliography) and selected one out of two options (traditional or modern masculinity in an advertisement based on characteristics analyzed in Chapter 1) and provided reasons why they chose this option.

Table 3.12. The reasoning for the survey questions (Author's original work)

Question sections	Description of the questions	The reasoning for the questions/ sources
The first section (eight survey questions)	Questions about consumer opinions on masculinity in advertising, equality, man's role as a breadwinner, etc.	(Zayer, Otnes, 2012), (Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019), (Zayer et al., 2020) (Cortese, Ling, 2011), (Gopaldas, Molander, 2020), (Branchick, 2012), (De Meulenaer et al., 2018), (Orth, Holancova, 2003), (Putrevu, 2004), (Brownbill et al., 2018).
The second section (eight A/B test questions)	Questions about consumer preferences between traditional and modern masculinity, brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes and brand personality dimensions as well as reasons for the choices.	(Pollack, 2017), (Ging 2019), (Kimmel, 1996), (Zayer et al., 2020), (Smith, 2012), (Lalancette, Cormack, 2018), (Oswald, 2007), (Salzman et al., 2005), (Jaffe, 1990), (Ging, 2013), (Bellizzi, Milner, 1991), (Hupfer, 2002), (De Meulenaer et al., 2018).

The survey was first created in two versions and sent out to a few respondents to see which version gave the most insightful results. The final version, as described above, was created in Google Forms and can be seen in Appendix 1.

### 3.2.2. The process of sampling

The time period of the surveys being filled out was ten months, from May 2021 to February 2022. The process of getting the respondents for the survey and A/B test was long and difficult. The reason for that could have been the fact that it took around 20- 30 minutes to fill out the survey, mainly due to the 16 advertisements that had to be watched to answer the questions (A/B test part). The surveys were first sent out across Europe through various colleagues and acquaintances, but the response rate was very low. Then the focus was solely on Latvian consumers and all age groups, but that also gave a very low response rate. Finally, the author started to focus on students. The author surveyed bachelor's students from the Academy of Culture in Latvia as 1st and 3rd-year students and bachelor's and master's level students from

Riga Technical University. The students studied various programs such as business administration, logistics, quality management, safety engineering, etc. (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year Bachelor students and 1st year Master students). This strategy yielded positive results in terms of the surveys being filled out with a much higher response rate because the author was personally there in the classrooms and auditoriums during the process of students watching the advertisements and filling out the surveys. Students opened the survey on their phones, and in front of them, the author showed all the advertisements so all students could see them and select their favorite advertisements and provide reasons for them on their phones on the Google Forms survey platform. Therefore, the population which was the main focus of the survey became Millennials, who were born between 1977 and 2000 (Palmatier, Sridhar, 2017, 87), and Generation Z, who are born after 2000, although many analysts include people born after 1995 in this group (Kotler, Armstrong, 2018, 99) as one group and the core demographic of this survey.

These groups are interesting to analyze for this particular research because younger audiences have influence from their conservative parents, who are grown up during Soviet Union times, but they also have influence from modern-day American and Western European pop culture (movies, music, TV shows), which depicts different values and gender norms. The younger audience is also interesting for the reason that many scholars now suggest that the millennial generation has promoted a culture that is much more inclusive and cohesive (McCormack, 2012; Thurnell-Reid, 2012; Robinson, 2019). Therefore, it is interesting to see whether this claim by several authors is accurate. In other words, determining whether younger generations in Latvia overwhelmingly select the advertisements depicting modern masculinity where inclusiveness, equality, and rejecting gender stereotypes are the key elements of this masculinity type became one of the goals.

#### The sample size

As established before, the focus of the survey became Latvian youth (age 18-30) as Gen Z and millennials. The Latvian population between the ages of 18 and 30 are approximately 207 000 people (Central bureau of statistics in Latvia, Appendix 30). The necessary sample size was calculated using a sample size formula (Formula 3.1) (Ryan, 2013):

Table 3.13.

Sample size = 
$$\frac{\frac{z^2 \times p (1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + (\frac{z^2 \times p (1-p)}{e^2 N})}$$

Where N is population size;

e is the Margin of error (percentage in decimal form);

p is the standard deviation

z is the z-score (Table 3.13.).

The confidence level, which is the percentage that reveals how confident a researcher can be that the population would select an answer within a certain range, was selected at 95%. While the margin of error, which is the percentage that tells how much one can expect the survey results to reflect the views of the overall population, was selected at 5%. Both chosen values are standard values for sample size calculation.

Z- score values (Ryan, 2013)

Desired confidence level	Z-score
80%	1.28
85%	1.44
90%	1.65
95%	1.96
99%	2.58

According to the formula, the required sample size that would accurately reflect the views and opinions of the selected population was 384 respondents. The total amount of respondents was 483. However, after taking out a few surveys that were filled out by older generations than the ones selected and people from other European countries outside Latvia (because the focus was shifted to only the Latvian population), the number came down to 420 respondents. Since the author wanted to focus on analyzing the differences between men and women and their preferences towards masculinity in advertising, the three surveys where respondents selected "other" as their gender (people who do not identify as either male or female) were excluded. That was done because three respondents were too few to reasonably be able to make

conclusions about the entire subgroup in Latvia. Therefore, the final count of eligible surveys (Latvian youth, age 18-30, men and women) for the analysis resulted in 417 (n=417), with 142 being men and 275 being women.

#### 3.2.3. The analysis of the survey results

The analysis was done using SPSS 23 statistical software program. The survey and A/B test were created in a way that every question had a 100% response rate because, in either of the two sections of questions, respondents could not go on to the next question if the previous one was not answered. However, in the first section, there were some answers that simply did not make sense. For example, to the question "Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?" four respondents answered both "yes" and "no." Therefore, these results were taken out. Although invalid answers were very rare, every question had some answers that had to be taken out from consideration for the analysis.

The analysis of the results started with a cross-examination. The author wanted to see whether respondents had fulfilled the surveys carefully and in good faith. For this reason, a few questions were intentionally similar or revealed similar characteristics in different questions that the respondents could choose. For example, the author selected two questions of the survey in SPSS: "Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?" and "Do you agree with the statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?" By choosing the SPSS's Cross tabulation feature found that of the respondents who selected "breadwinner" as one of the masculinity characteristics displayed in an advertisement that would most resonate with the respondent, 87% of the respondents answered yes to the question of whether a man should be the breadwinner (main provider for the family) (Appendix 2). Due to examples like this, the author determined that respondents have filled out the surveys carefully, comprehended the questions, and filled them out in good faith.

### Statistical significance

Regarding the differences between men's and women's responses the author wanted to analyze whether there is a statistical significance of the data collected from the respondents. For the statistical significance test, there was a need to make a standard hypothesis.

H0: there is no difference between men's and women's response

To accept or reject the hypothesis, there is a need to calculate the p-value. A p-value less than 0.05 (typically  $\leq 0.05$ ) is statistically significant. It indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis, as there is less than a 5% probability the null is correct (and the results are random). Conventions (p value being 0.05) helps having a common language in science.

For the purpose of calculating the p- values of the empirical data, the author followed the necessary steps (McClave, Sincich, 2018):

- ➤ 1st step: take the empirical values of the surveys that were summarized using SPSS 23 program and put them in easy to read table.
- ➤ 2nd step: determine the calculated values by taking the empirical values and following the formula (sum of the row \* sum of the column/ the total). This is done for the every value of the empirical values table.
- ➤ 3rd step: calculate the X2 empirical values following the formula: (empirical value- calculated value)2/ Calculated value

  This is done for every value in the table.
- ➤ 4th step: calculate the sum of X2 values, thus getting Empirical X2 value, which does not have any meaning on its own, but is necessary for further calculations.
- ➤ 5th step: calculate the degree of freedom based on the formula

  Degree of freedom= (amount of rows-1)\*(amount of columns -1)
- ➤ 6th step: use "CHIDIST" function on Excel and adding the two necessary values for this function (first adding the X2 empirical value and then adding the degree of freedom value).
- > 7th step: comparing the value with 0,05 to confirm or reject the hypothesis.

## Results of the survey

One of the main questions of the survey was, "Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?" Table 3.14. provides an overview of the results of how respondents answered this question.

Table 3.14. Consumer satisfaction rates with masculinity's depiction in advertising (Author's original work)

		M	len	W	omen	Ove	rall
Question	Answers	n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	Yes, very much	4	2,88	5	1,89	9	2,23
	Yes	87	62,59	140	53,03	227	56,33
	No	41	29,50	108	40,91	149	36,97
	No, not even a little	7	5,04	11	4,17	18	4,47
	Total	139	100	264	100	403	100

Of the respondents, 41% (35% men and 45% women) do not like how advertisers show masculinity in their advertisements, which means that only 59% (overall) like masculinity's depiction in advertising. Furthermore, only 2% (overall) say that they like very much how advertisers depict masculinity. The author argues that it is a very low number, considering that it is the goal of advertisers to connect with the audiences, to be liked by it and for the character of the advertisement to resonate with the consumers.

Interestingly, when this question is paired (SPSS's Cross tabulation feature) with another critical question of the survey, "Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?" (Appendix 3) then of the people who say that they do not like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising 49,7% say that depictions of masculinity in advertising affect their buying decisions. In addition, of the respondents who strongly dislike the way masculinity is depicted in advertising, 72,3% say that depictions of masculinity in advertising affect their buying decisions. This points to a problem or rather a lost opportunity, meaning that if companies manage to depict masculinity in a more appealing way in their advertisements to the consumers, the consumers might respond favorably to these companies with their purchases.

Regarding the statistical significance of the difference between men's and women's responses, considering that the calculated p-value is 0,155457 (Appendix 32- calculations of statistical significance), the H0 hypothesis cannot be rejected. Therefore, the result does not show statistical significance between men's and women's responses in how different they are from each other.

Based on the literature review, the author found it essential to discover whether consumers see mostly traditional or modern masculinity in advertising (Table 3.15.). To the author's surprise, most of the respondents still see traditional masculinity as a more common occurrence in advertising (55% overall, with 49% men and 59% women).

Table 3.15. Consumer perception of commonality of masculinity in advertising (Author's original work)

		М	en	Wo	men	Ov	erall
Question	Answers	n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you think that advertisers focus	More traditional than modern masculinity	70	49,30	160	58,61	230	55,42
more on traditional masculinity (with stereotypes of what a man	More modern than traditional masculinity	42	29,58	76	27,84	118	28,43
should be like) or modern masculinity (promoting inclusivity)?	It is fairly even						
		30	21,13	37	13,55	67	16,14
	Total	142	100	273	100	415	100

Using SPSS's cross-tabulation feature, the author discovered that of the ones who like how masculinity is depicted in advertising, 47,8% think that advertising mostly shows traditional masculinity, compared to 33% who think it is the modern masculinity mostly depicted in advertising. Therefore, the results can be interpreted that among the young Latvian population, traditional masculinity is favored by 14,8% over modern masculinity. On the other hand, of the respondents who do not like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising, 61% think that advertising mostly shows traditional masculinity (compared to 21% who think that modern masculinity can be seen more often in advertising). This result shows a 40% gap between a dislike for traditional masculinity over modern masculinity. Overall, both groups (who like and do not like masculinity's depiction in advertising) think that traditional masculinity can be viewed more often than modern masculinity, although the results from cross-tabulation of these two questions show a slight preference to modern masculinity (Appendix 4). That confirms the statements of researchers discussed in Chapter 3.2.2., who suggest that Gen Zers and millennials are more inclusive and open-minded, indicating a similar preference regarding masculinity type.

Concerning statistical significance of men's and women's responses considering that the calculated p- value is 0,087171 (Appendix 33- calculations of statistical significance) which is slightly higher than 0,05, H0 hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, we would be wrong 91% of the time if we reject H0 hypothesis. Therefore, the result does not show statistical significance between men's and women's responses in how different they are from each other. The preference for modern masculinity is more significant when considering the results of a question, "Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?" The results (Figure 3.21. and Appendix 5) show an overwhelming preference for key modern masculinity characteristics over the traditional ones, with the natural assumption that what resonates with consumers is what they consequently prefer.

Respondents said that "Showing care for others" would resonate most with them (42% men and 46% women), with "Showing emotion" being the second element most likely to resonate with them (21% men and 27% women). Compared with the results for the key traditional masculinity elements, one could see a rather significant preference for modern masculinity characteristics, especially among women. Furthermore, while the differences between men's and women's responses are not enormous, it still shows that men favor traditional masculinity traits such as "Showing physical strength" and "Being a breadwinner" more than women.

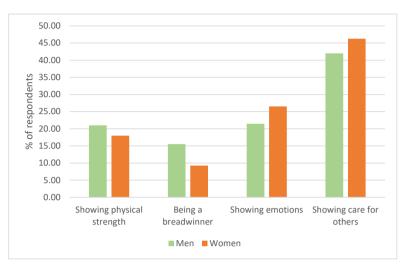


Figure 3.21. Characteristics mostly resonating with consumers (Author's original work)

With respect to the statistical significance of men's and women's responses considering that the calculated p- value is 0,056263 (Appendix 34- calculations of statistical significance) which is slightly higher than 0,05, H0 hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, we would be wrong 94% of the time if we reject H0 hypothesis. Therefore, the result does not show statistical significance between men's and women's responses in how different they are from each other. As shown in Figure 3.22. (and Appendix 6), respondents reported a similar result to the previous question, in their responses to the question, "Do you agree with the statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)? While a slight majority of respondents rejected the statement that a man has to be the main provider for the family, a key traditional masculinity characteristic, the rejection of this idea was not an overwhelming one (37% versus 33% overall).

A slightly more convincing result shows in responses "No, not at all" versus "Yes, strongly" with 20% versus 10% overall. The results are similar and consistent with previous results in another way. That is, women again show less support for the breadwinner role for men than men themselves. However, it has to be noted that the difference between men's and women's responses to this question is rather insignificant.

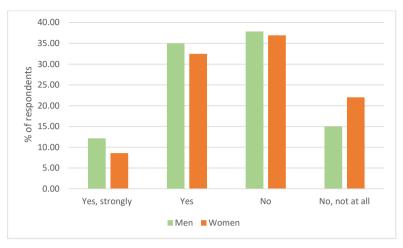


Figure 3.22. Approval rating for men's role as the breadwinner (Author's original work)

As for the statistical significance of men's and women's responses considering that the calculated p- value is 0,296269 (Appendix 35- calculations of statistical significance) which is considerably higher than 0,05, H0 hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, we would be wrong 70% of the time if we reject H0 hypothesis. Therefore, the result does not show statistical significance between men's and women's responses in how different they are from each other. Finally, an essential question that the author found necessary to find answers to was the question, "Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?" Some of the results were already discussed earlier in this Chapter with a different question using SPSS software's cross-tabulation feature, but here are the results on their own (Figure 3.23. and Appendix 7.). As shown in Figure 3.25., men reported higher confirmation of the statement, with 44% saying that masculinity depiction in advertising affects their purchasing decisions and an additional 14% saying that it has a strong effect even. That makes a total of 58%, while women reported 47 % of being affected by masculinity depictions in advertising (6% of them being greatly affected). This finding supports great deal of research (De Meulenaer et al., 2018; Scheibling, Lafrance, 2019; Zayer et al., 2020) arguing for the importance of masculinity depictions in advertising.

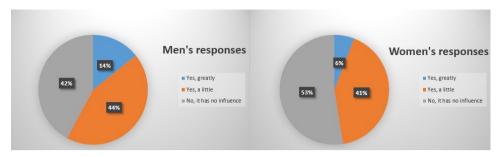


Figure 3.23. The effect of masculinity depictions in advertising on buying decisions (Author's original work)

Regarding the statistical significance of men's and women's responses considering that the calculated p- value is 0,008186 (Appendix 36- calculations of statistical significance) which is lower than 0,05, H0 hypothesis can be rejected. Therefore, the result does show statistical significance between men's and women's responses in how different they are from each other, indicating that there is a significant difference in how masculinity depictions in advertising affect men's and women's purchasing decisions.

Overall the survey part showed the great importance of masculinity depictions in advertising in the eyes of young Latvian consumers, both men, and women. As suspected, men proved to see it as more important than women and were more affected by the way masculinity is presented. Furthermore, the survey showed a consistent preference for modern masculinity over traditional, although, at times, it did not seem to be an overwhelming preference. Finally, men seem to prefer traditional masculinity characteristics more than women, including the man's role of a breadwinner. In the next subchapter, there is a further discussion of how these same respondents answered questions related to specific advertisements depicting traditional and modern masculinity in the A/B test.

#### 3.2.4. The analysis of the A/B test results

The results of the A/B test showed a much more significant difference in how the young men and women in Latvia prefer masculine depictions in advertising. In some cases, the differences between men's and women's responses were stark. After watching the two advertisements in each round of questioning, the respondents were asked a simple question: "Which display of masculinity do you prefer." They did not know which of the two versions in each question is classified as modern masculinity and which is traditional masculinity. However, from the survey part, learning a brief description of what each of the two major masculinity types entails, the respondents certainly had an approximate idea of which could be which. After selecting

their preferred version of masculinity, they had to provide reasons why they liked specifically that advertisement's depiction. The respondents had to select an advertisement and the reason for selecting it to advance to the next question. The respondents could also provide answers about why they liked the other advertisement also (the one they did not select as the most resonating with them). Most chose not to select any reasons in the other advertisement that was not chosen, but some did. Therefore, the total of responses exceeds the number of respondents (n= 417). The summary of the results of each question can be seen in Appendix 8 to 15.

There were eight questions, each containing two advertisements (from 30 seconds to approximately 2 minutes long), that respondents had to watch and then decide their favorite masculinity depiction and provide reasons for their choice. In some questions, respondents had to choose between two advertisements from the same brand (for example, Dove, Axe, NFL, Gillette), one being traditional and the other modern masculinity depiction, and in other questions between two different brands. The Table 3.16. illustrates Men's responses in percentage, meaning how many men chose the traditional masculinity advertisement and how many chose modern.

Table 3.16.

Men's choices in A/B test, % (Author's original work)

Masculinity	Dove	Axe	NFL	Gillette	Dos Equis/	Tide/ Old	Doritos/	Barbasol/	Average
					Bonobos	Spice	Nespresso	Lego	
Traditional	18,31	28,87	62,68	36,62	43,66	61,27	67,61	39,44	44,81
Modern	81,69	71,13	37,32	63,38	56,34	38,73	32,39	60,56	55,19

As evident by Table 3.16., men chose, on average, advertisements depicting modern masculinity 55% of the time, compared to 45% of traditional masculinity. It seems a reasonably balanced result, especially if compared to women's responses in the A/B test. On three of the occasions, men chose traditional masculinity ad over modern, and in five of the questions, modern masculinity was chosen as the favorite one. Interestingly every question (except Dos Equis/Bonobos question) had a significant disparity (over 20%) between the results. Especially Dove and Axe, which had margins of more than 40% (Axe) and even 50% (Dove). That indicates that there could be stark differences between consumers' attitudes to masculinity depictions. Perhaps the most interesting result is the Gillette question, where men chose modern masculinity advertisements over traditional ones. The same Gillette advertisement ("We believe: the best man can be") received overwhelmingly negative comments (78%) on

YouTube, where consumers were calling for a boycott of the Gillette brand because many thought that the ad was an attack on masculinity. In the A/B test, however, 63% of men chose it as the one where masculinity is depicted in a more favorable or more resonating way.

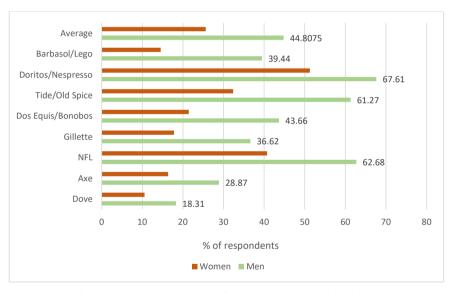
In contrast to men, women chose modern masculinity over traditional masculinity advertisements in far more convincing numbers (Table 3.17.). In some of the questions, the young Latvian women showed their preference for modern masculinity ads over traditional with 80 to 90% margin (Dove; Axe and Barbasol/ Lego questions), with other modern masculinity ads being chosen with 50% to 60% margins (Gillette and Dos Equis/ Bonobos questions). This result (including men's preferences) is somewhat counterintuitive because during the survey part, the respondents, both men, and women, showed only a slightly higher preference for modern depictions of masculinity in advertising rather than traditional ones, while the A/B test results point to a significant preference. That shows that the consumers perhaps don't exactly know what they want until they see specific examples. Furthermore, these results show a problem in advertising, because the video content analysis showed that traditional masculinity depictions are used more frequently by the advertisers, while the A/B test results clearly indicate strong preference of modern masculinity in advertising. Perhaps a deeper problem is that advertisers and brand strategists do not understand the audience (at least the younger audience), but keep focusing on ancient stereotypes about masculinity.

By simply looking at the average score, it is clear that generation Z and millennial Latvian women prefer to see modern depictions of men in advertising over traditional and stereotypical. This finding supports findings of other studies made by researchers, that consumers prefer more modern gender role illustrations in advertising (Magaraggia, Cherubini, 2017; De Meulenaer et al., 2018). While men, as mentioned, chose modern masculinity ads on average 55% of the time in the A/B test, women did that 74% of the time. The mentioned Gillette's "We believe: the best man can be" advertisement that was a particularly interesting subject and received very negative scores during the qualitative content and sentiment analysis received a very good score from the women (as well as men). 82% of women surveyed preferred the mentioned Gillette's modern masculinity ad over Gillette's traditional one. Women chose modern masculinity over traditional in every single question except Doritos/ Nespresso one. However, the margin in the responses to this question was very small (51% versus 49%).

Table 3.17. Women's choices in A/B test, % (Author's original work)

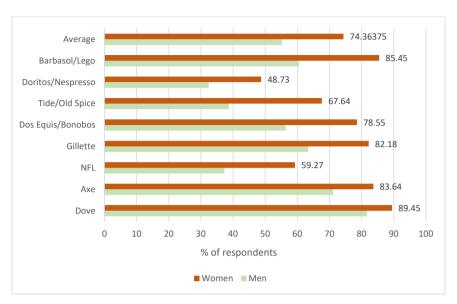
Masculinity	Dove	Axe	NFL	Gillette	Dos Equis/	Tide/ Old	Doritos/	Barbasol/	Average
					Bonobos	Spice	Nespresso	Lego	
Traditional	10,55	16,36	40,73	17,82	21,45	32,36	51,27	14,55	25,64
Modern	89,45	83,64	59,27	82,18	78,55	67,64	48,73	85,45	74,36

The differences between men's and women's responses to the A/B test questions are highlighted in Figure 3.24. and 3.25. As shown in Figure 3.24., the women reported significantly less preference for traditional masculinity than men. In some cases, the margin between men's and women's responses is 20% and even nearly 30% (NFL and Tide Old Spice questions).



3.24. Figure: Preference of traditional masculinity advertisements in the A/B test (Author's original work)

Since it is an A/B test and the values of one choice over the other are inverse, the exact same situation as with the traditional masculinity graph is with respondents' reported preferences for modern masculinity advertisements (Figure 3.25.).



3.25. Figure: Preference of modern masculinity advertisements in the A/B test (Author's original work)

The margins are quite significant between men's and women's responses showing that women and men view masculinity in advertising quite differently, with women preferring modern masculinity over traditional in much greater numbers than men do. For instance, in five of the eight A/B test questions, the margin between women's and men's responses exceeds 20%.

Regarding statistical significance, the p-value was calculated in the same seven step process as in the previous Chapter. The p-value of the empirical data determining statistical significance of men's and women's responses was 0,0000000000000009987, which is almost zero (Appendix 28). That means that the p-value is substantially lower than 0,05 which means there are very significant differences between men's and women's responses in their preferences of traditional or modern masculinity in advertising. The differences were statistically significant (p-value being lower than 0,05) in every round of the A/B test, except in Dove. Only Dove showed that men's and women's responses do not have significant differences (Table 3.18. and Appendix 29).

Statistical significance between men's and women's responses in A/B test questions (Author's original work)

A/B test choice	p-value
Dove	0,118397
Axe	0,034469
NFL	0,001896
Gillette	0,00282
Dos Equis/ Bonobos	0,000804
Tide/ Old Spice	0,0000419
Doritos/ Nespresso	0,018615
Barbasol/ Lego	0,0000735

The result confirms the overall conclusion from the A/B test part about the significant differences between men's and women's responses in their preferences of traditional or modern masculinity in advertising, because in seven out of the eight A/B test rounds the p-value is lower than 0,05, and in some cases even significantly lower.

### **Masculinity characteristics**

An important part of the A/B test was not only to understand which masculinity type is more preferred by men and women and how much but also to understand specific traditional and modern masculinity characteristics (analyzed in Chapter 1) that consumers find appealing in advertising as the reasons for their choices in the test. Table 3.19. shows the most preferable answers among the men surveyed. The total value is the total amount of votes for that characteristic. The frequency is how often the option was present in the questions (how many times it was evident in the advertisements, either traditional or modern, in the A/B test). The average value is the total value divided by the times the characteristic was an option in the test (frequency), and the average percentage of men is the average value divided by the number of men and women surveyed (men= 142; women= 275). Based on the results, the benchmark for significant approval or preference for the masculinity characteristic was set at 20%. That is why the values that exceed 20% in the column "Average % of men/ women" are marked in bold. As previously mentioned, the respondents could select only one reason for choosing the advertisement in the A/B test, and they had the option of selecting a reason why they liked the other advertisement (the one they did not select). The following tables (3.19. to 3.22.) are a total

sum of all the questions and all the reasons and their score; each individual question's answers can be seen in Appendix 8 to 15.

When analyzing the specific traditional masculinity characteristics of men's answers (Table 3.19.), it became clear that men value competitiveness as the most desirable traditional masculine characteristic (42%). It is followed by humorous exaggeration of masculinity as close second (37%), "the ability to do it all" (34%) as the third most popular characteristic, and showing men being in control (26%) as fourth.

Table 3.19.

Most popular reasons for choosing traditional masculinity advertisements among men

(Author's original work)

Reasons	Total	Frequency	Average	Average
	value		value	% of men
<b>Emotional reservation</b>	35	2	17,5	12,3
The ability to "do it all"	48	1	48	33,8
The role of a breadwinner	9	1	9	6,3
It accurately addresses men's insecurities	26	1	26	18,3
I can relate to this advertisement personally	7	1	7	4,9
It exemplifies confident masculinity	136	5	27,2	19,2
Competitiveness	59	1	59	41,5
Aggression and dominance	19	1	19	13,4
Display of physical strength	16	1	16	11,3
It shows men being in control	109	3	36,3	25,6
It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	105	2	52,5	37
Showing toughness	24	1	24	16,9
Showing patriotism and bravery	28	1	28	19,7

While men had four traditional masculinity characteristics that were popular enough to exceed the 20% benchmark, the women surveyed only had one characteristic that received a significant preference (Table 3.20.). That characteristic was competitiveness, which received 24% (compared to men's 41%) approval among the young Latvian women. This result also points to a noteworthy difference between men and women in terms of their preference for masculinity in advertising.

Table 3.20.

Most popular reasons for choosing traditional masculinity advertisements among women

(Author's original work)

Reasons	Total	Frequency	Average	Average % of
	value		value	women
<b>Emotional reservation</b>	42	2	21	7,6
The ability to "do it all"	39	1	39	14,2
The role of a breadwinner	17	1	17	6,2
It accurately addresses men's insecurities	30	1	30	10,9
I can relate to this advertisement	10	1	10	3,6
personally				
It exemplifies confident masculinity	150	5	30	10,9
Competitiveness	65	1	65	23,6
Aggression and dominance	23	1	23	8,4
Display of physical strength	35	1	35	12,7
It shows men being in control	133	3	44,3	16,1
It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous	100	2	50	18,2
way				
Showing toughness	14	1	14	5,1
Showing patriotism and bravery	32	1	32	11,6

When looking at the preferences of modern masculinity characteristics as the reasons for choosing it in the A/B test, it becomes clear once again that modern masculinity is more preferred because the values for modern masculinity characteristics are significantly higher than those of traditional masculinity characteristics. For instance, while there was only four (for men) and one (for women) traditional masculinity characteristic that exceeded the 20% benchmark, there were 7 (for men) and 8 (for women) that exceeded this benchmark for modern masculinity ads. Among the men surveyed, the most popular reason for choosing modern masculinity advertisement was "It tackles a serious problem about masculinity" (43%). In addition, the men also appreciated advertisements that are less stereotypical of men (39%), display love and affection (36%), and depict men being carefree (31%) (Table 3.21.).

Table 3.21.

Most popular reasons for choosing modern masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Reasons	Total	Frequency	Average	Average % of
	value		value	men
It is more inclusive	62	3	20,7	14,6
It is less stereotypical of men	55	1	55	38,7
I can relate to this advertisement personally	58	2	29	20,4
Display of affection and love	101	2	50,5	35,6
Showing reliability	32	2	16	11,3
Showing care	121	3	40,3	28,4
Carefreeness of what other people think	36	1	36	25,4
Opposing gender conformity	75	3	25	17,6
Confidence	21	1	21	14,8
It tackles a serious problem about masculinity	61	1	61	43
It promotes equality	46	2	23	16,2
It shows carefreeness of singing and dancing	44	1	44	31
It shows sensitivity and emotionality	22	1	22	15,5

Women also selected similar reasons for choosing modern masculinity advertisements in the A/B test (Table 3.22.). For instance, "tackling a serious problem about masculinity" was also appreciated by women as the most popular reason (67%). Similarly to men, "display of affection and love" (51%) and depicting masculinity less stereotypically (49%) were also second and third most popular reasons for preferring modern masculinity in advertising for women as it was for men.

Table 3.22. Most popular reasons for choosing modern masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Reasons	Total	Frequency	Average	Average % of
	value		value	women
Display of affection and love	280	2	140	50,9
Showing reliability	62	2	31	11,3
Showing care	275	3	91,7	33,3
It is more inclusive	168	3	56	20,4
It is less stereotypical of men	135	1	135	49,1
I can relate to this advertisement	62	2	31	11,3
personally				
Carefreeness of what other people	79	1	79	28,7
think				
Opposing gender conformity	215	3	71,7	26,1
Confidence	52	1	52	18,9
It tackles a serious problem about	183	1	183	66,5
masculinity				
It promotes equality	109	2	54,5	19,8
It shows carefreeness of singing and	115	1	115	41,8
dancing				
It shows sensitivity and emotionality	40	1	40	14,5

Therefore, on the one hand, women and men prefer similar or, in some cases, the same characteristics of masculinity and the same depictions of masculinity in advertising. On the other hand, the level of how much they prefer these characteristics sometimes differs with margins that exceed 20%, which is a noteworthy difference.

#### Brand archetype, masculinity archetype and brand personality dimensions' prefer ability

Since each advertisement in the A/B test was analyzed with video content analysis and assigned a brand archetype (Mark, Pearson, 2001), masculinity archetype (Moore, Gillette, 1990), and brand personality dimension (Aaker, 1997) based on analysis conducted in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 of these theoretical frameworks, the author also analyzed prefer ability of these archetypes and brand personality dimensions. Of the twelve brand archetypes, the most preferable brand archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements were Ruler, Lover,

Magician, and Outlaw (Figure 3.26.) which partially corresponds to the video content analysis conclusion that the most commonly used brand archetypes in traditional masculinity ads are Ruler, Lover, Hero. Therefore, two out of three most common brand archetypes correspond with consumer preferences. The finding from theoretical perspective indicate that consumers appreciate characters that are rebellious rule breakers who are influential and stubborn, but also a visionary, who are seductive and playful.

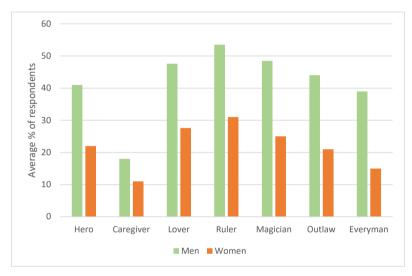


Figure 3.26. Most preferable brand archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements (Author's original work)

Among the modern masculinity advertisements, the most preferable brand archetypes were Hero, Caregiver, Everyman, Innocent, and Sage (Figure 3.27.). These results (Appendix 16 to 19) indicate to advertisers which brand archetype the main character in an advertisement should be modeled after which also partially correspond to the findings from the video content analysis, most common brand archetypes being Caregiver, Lover and Everyman. From theory it shows that the character should be caring, compassionate, generous, romantic, warm and intelligent to name a few characteristics.

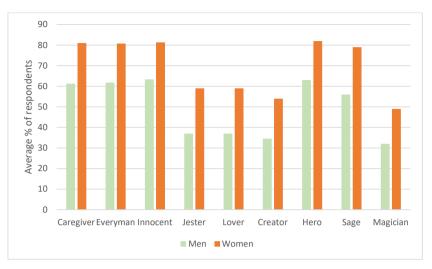


Figure 3.27. Most preferable brand archetypes in modern masculinity advertisements (Author's original work)

There was consistency regarding differences in results between men's and women's responses. Women reported higher preferences for modern masculinity archetypes than men, usually around 20% consistently. An explanation for that is that the basis for brand archetype analysis from the A/B test results is the same data set, and the results of archetype prefer ability were divided between traditional and modern masculinity. Therefore, it is no surprise that the results point to a similar pattern as evident before, which is that women prefer archetypes in modern masculinity advertisements more than men and vice versa.

Regarding masculinity archetypes (Appendix 20 to 23), the most preferable ones among men and women in traditional masculinity advertisements were Warrior and Lover, with an average of 40% for men and 25% of women choosing advertisements with these archetypes. In modern masculinity advertisements, the most preferable masculinity archetypes were King, Lover, and Magician, with a result of 53 to 65% average of men and 73 to 82% of women choosing the advertisements with these archetypes. In contrast, the video content analysis showed King as the most commonly used masculinity archetype in traditional masculinity advertisements, which shows a disconnect in what consumers prefer and what advertisers offer. With regards to modern masculinity advertisements, there is a partial alignment with video content analysis findings, because Lover as the most commonly used masculinity archetype is one of the top three most favored by the consumers.

Finally, with respect to brand personality dimensions (Table 3.23 and Appendix 24 to 27), among traditional masculinity advertisements, the men reported the highest preference on average for Sophistication (48%) and Ruggedness (42%), while women reported lower preference on average for the same brand personality dimensions (28% for Ruggedness and 27,6% for Sophistication). This finding corresponds to video content analysis in terms of popularity of these brand personality dimensions being used in traditional masculinity ads.

Table 3.23.

Most preferable brand personality dimensions (Author's original work)

	Traditional ma	sculinity ads	Modern ma	asculinity ads	
Brand personality dimension	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Sincerity	not evident	not evident	58,4		78
Excitement	not evident	not evident	49		67,8
Competence	40,5	26	63		82
Sophistication	47,8	27,6	not evident	not evident	
Ruggedness	42,3	28	not evident	not evident	

Among modern masculinity advertisements, the most preferred ones were Competence (82% women, 63% men) and Sincerity (78% women, 58% men). This finding is in partial alignment with the video content analysis since there the most common brand personality dimension was Sincerity, while consumers preferences put it in the second position. Nevertheless, the results from the A/B test combined with theory Aaker (1997) show that consumers appreciate family orientated, honest, sentimental, friendly and sincere brand personality. These qualities are in alignment with findings from analyzing the characteristics of consumers' preferences, which showed ads being less stereotypical of men and ads that tackle serious problem about masculinity (as described and suggested in modern masculinity's theoretical Chapter) and ads where men display affection and love.

The objectives of the survey and A/B test were achieved. The author found that there is a discrepancy between what consumers think they like and what they actually prefer. For instance, consumers were not providing convincing answers displaying their preference for modern masculinity in the survey questions. However, the A/B test with specific examples overwhelmingly showed a preference for modern masculinity in advertising over traditional, especially among women. The author discovered the reasons behind the preference for modern masculinity by understanding the key characteristics popular among consumers and the most

preferred brand and masculinity archetypes in advertising, as well as brand personality dimensions. Finally, the author was able to confirm the claim by some researchers that younger generations, such as millennials and generation Z, are more inclusive and thus would prefer modern masculinity depiction in advertising more than traditional. In the next sub-chapter, the author analyses focus group interviews where the author examined deeper reasons for consumer preferences of masculinity depictions in advertising.

## 3.3. The analysis of focus group interviews

#### 3.3.1. Methodological justification for Focus group interviews

To get a better understanding of the survey and A/B test findings and to get deeper insights into consumer preferences when it comes to masculinity in advertising, the author conducted three focus groups with the same demographic, Latvian Generation Z. Focus groups are formally organized, structured groups of individuals brought together to discuss a topic or series of topics (Marczyk et al., 2005, 154). The reason for choosing a focus group as a method is because, in contrast to other unilateral methods of obtaining qualitative data, focus groups allow for interactions between the researcher and the participants and among the participants themselves (ibid). Conducting a focus group is also one of the key research methods that advertising agencies use to see consumer opinions and attitudes toward their advertising campaign before it is released to the public. The purpose of conducting the focus groups was to find answers to these relevant questions:

- What is the current consumer perception of masculinity in advertising, and what are the deeper reasons for the survey and A/B test responses?
- Do characteristics of traditional and modern masculinity in Table 1.2 and Figure 1.3 made from the literature review process are considered legitimate for the respective types of masculinity according to respondents (triangulation method)?
- What do consumers appreciate when it comes to masculinity being depicted in advertising? In other words, how should advertisers portray masculinity in advertising?
- And lastly, what do consumers not appreciate when it comes to masculinity being depicted in advertising? In other words, how should advertisers not portray masculinity in advertising?

The focus group consisted of three vital parts (Table 3.24), which were introductory or open questions, transition or exploration questions, and a ranking exercise.

Table 3.24. Structure and the reason for focus group interview questions (Author's original work)

Types of questions	Methodological reason for these type of	Application of these
	questions	questions for the study
1st part:	Introductory questions introduce the topic	Introductory questions were
Introductory	of discussion and get people to start	asked to get the respondents to
questions (Open	thinking about their connection with the	open up for a discussion and
questions)	topic. The introductory questions are	feel comfortable. The
	designed to be easy to answer (Krueger,	questions were also asked to
	2015, 116).	get the raw opinions and first
		impressions when respondents
		think of the topic of
		masculinity in advertising.
2 <sup>nd</sup> part:	Transition questions move the conversation	Transition questions included
Transition	to the key questions that drive the study.	questions that were more
questions	(Krueger, 2015, 117). The questions are	specific about the topic and
(Exploration	open-ended with the goal of getting	about four advertisements
questions)	respondents to provide lengthy responses in	shown and discussed among
	great detail (Marczyk et al., 2005)	the respondents.
3 <sup>rd</sup> part: Ranking	The ranking is a question-response format	Respondents ranked the four
exercise	used when a researcher is interested in	advertisements on how much
	establishing some type of priority among a	they liked them by giving
	set of objects (Khan, 2006)	them points.

The length of the focus groups varied from 58 minutes to one hour and 15 minutes. The focus groups were conducted in September of 2022 and were held at Riga Technical University Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management. Each focus group contained eight participants who signed up for the focus group voluntarily (Table 3.25). It was important for the focus group participants to sign up voluntarily so that they were more motivated to express their views. The participants were students of either Riga Technical University or Latvian

Academy of Culture in the age group of 19 to 24. They gave the author consent of using their first names, but not their last names.

Table 3.25.

Participants of the three focus groups

Focus group 1 (Men)	Focus group 2 (Women)	Focus group 3 (Mixed)
Denijs	Laura	Varis
Rihards J	Elizabete	Izabela
Rihards K	Kristīne	Beāte
Ivo	Santa	Anna
Edgars	Krista	Elza
Dāvis	Patrīcija	Ingmārs
Daniels	Līva	Dagnis
Ivars	Aurēlija	Daniels

Qualitative content analysis of the focus group interview transcripts was conducted using Nvivo 11 qualitative data analysis software to help with the process of organizing, analyzing, and finding relevant insights in the text. The coding process was done in a similar way as for the YouTube comment qualitative content analysis (Chapter 3.1.4.). The codes were given in the text concerning how masculinity should be depicted in masculinity (68 codes), how it should not (76 codes), and how masculinity is currently depicted (81 codes). The author chose to have a mixed content analysis of conventional and direct content analysis. That means that some codes were defined before the analysis of the data based on the theoretical framework, and some codes were defined during the analysis of data making it a partially open and partially preconceived coding. The preconceived codes were related to the theory about masculinity-related concepts, and open codes revealed themselves concerning how advertisers should depict masculinity in advertising and how they should not. Some of the codes that were too similar were combined with others into larger categories that are visually represented in the graphs (Figures 3.28 to 3.30).

### 3.3.2. Results of the focus group interviews

Respondents were very engaged in the discussions, indicating that this topic is a topic of interest and something that they have thought about and discussed earlier, therefore, showing the relevance of masculinity in advertising.

#### Consumer perception of masculinity in advertising

The first questions of the focus groups were aimed at understanding the current consumer perception of masculinity in advertising, to see whether the scientific literature is correct suggesting that traditional masculinity is still dominant in advertising. Consumers answered a variety of questions showing their opinions and attitudes on how advertisers and brand strategists currently depict masculinity.

Consumers first provided the brand names that first come to mind when they think about the topic "masculinity in advertising." This showed brand awareness when masculinity is thought about among young Latvians. These brand names were mostly Old Spice and Marlboro. It is a typical response, perhaps, but not when one considers that the Marlboro man was long gone before these respondents were even born (the last Marlboro man ad was in 1999). The Old Spice famous advertisements with a man on a white horse were shown worldwide in 2010 when the respondents were just 8- 12 years old. This makes this finding surprising because it shows how strong these masculine images can be in advertising due to the fact that young consumers who were not even born or were very young know about them, and those are the images that first come to mind to the majority of Generation Z consumers in Latvia. Other brands that were mentioned, although with far lesser frequency, were Gillette, Hugo Boss, John Deer, and Ford. More importantly, the respondents revealed the characteristics (aggression, competence, strength) that first come to mind when they think of masculinity in advertising; the physical features (muscles, beard); and the concepts (toxic masculinity), as well as the fact that this traditional masculinity depiction of men in their opinion is putting pressure on men to conform and be a certain way. The most common answer of respondents to this question was "Sports," meaning that men are depicted in advertising doing sports and exercising (Figure 3.28). Other popular answers included that the image of men in advertising is giving motivation to men, while others said that it also puts pressure on men; some see masculinity in advertising in an exaggerated way; and others see it in a humorous and funny way. The threshold of being included in the popular answers was two; in other words, if the characteristic or the physical attribute was mentioned twice, then it was included. Other answers that did not get over the threshold were competing for power, typical masculinity, violence, financial stability, being lucky, financial stability, and friendship.

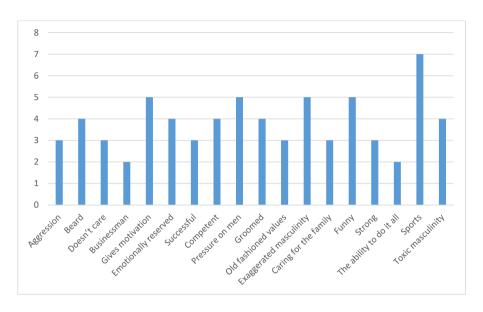


Figure 3.28. Consumer perception of masculinity in advertising according to focus group participants (Author's original work)

The results of these questions, together with theoretical aspects of masculinity and literature review, clearly show that consumers see traditional masculinity in advertising more frequently. Therefore, the masculinity archetypes most likely would be King and Warrior, while brand archetypes would be Outlaw, Hero, and Ruler. Concerning brand personality dimensions, the focus group analysis indicates that consumers see Ruggedness and Competence most frequently in advertising.

From describing the most commonly seen profile of a man that respondents see in advertising, there were very few characteristics that could be classified as modern masculinity, confirming the survey results and the qualitative video content analysis results, that traditional masculinity is still the predominantly used type of masculinity in advertising. It also indicates a problem with masculinity in advertising, because survey results and especially the A/B test results show a strong preference for modern masculinity. Many respondents showed their disapproval of the way advertisers depict masculinity, therefore, indicating that it is not effective way in convincing consumers and getting their approval and their interest in the brand.

Denijs: "It depends on how masculinity is presented. Usually, companies depict masculinity with aggression, competence, and muscles. I think that masculinity should be presented from

multiple angles. I personally think that it is ok for me to show their emotions, but we do not see that image of men in advertising."

#### Other respondents concur.

Rihards J: "I do not like how men are being portrayed in advertising with old fashioned values, which our society should move past them. Whereas women in the last ten years are being depicted in a more diverse way, moving away from traditional gender roles, men are still shown as violent, aggressive, and strong."

However, some respondents did not mind the traditional masculinity depiction.

Edgars: "I do not mind these (traditional masculinity) advertisements because I think that the biggest problem for men today is the crisis in masculinity. And I think that these advertisements show the ideal man. Why would we not want to strive to achieve that and develop ourselves. I think we should always try to improve ourselves."

Despite the fact that there were some who looked upon favorably to traditional masculinity in advertising, saying that it gave motivation and inspired them to improve and strive for growth, the majority of respondents revealed that this traditional image of a man, which is the most frequent in advertising does put pressure on men to conform. Even women admitted that.

Aurēlija: "I think it (traditional masculinity) puts pressure on men because they start comparing themselves to that man in an advertisement, and it negatively affects their self-confidence."

Furthermore, the respondents were asked about the use of masculine stereotypes in advertising. Laura: "I do not like when masculinity is exaggerated because it is not realistic. You can never really see men like that. I think it is very wrong to show men in such a way."

With the exception of irony and humorous advertisements (such as Old Spice advertisements), respondents answered that they do not appreciate traditional masculinity stereotypes because it shows masculinity in an unrealistic way, which makes it harder for the ad to resonate with consumers.

Some respondents did acknowledge that despite traditional masculinity still being the dominant one in advertising tactics, more brands are shifting to modern masculinity, confirming the results of literature review about the trends when it comes to masculinity in advertising.

Beāte: "I think that nowadays, more ads are also showing men who are at home taking care of family and helping around the house."

An example of these ads are Dove and Ariel, who indeed depict men in a more modern way in recent years and also get praise from the media and society about these efforts to distance

themselves from traditional gender roles and depict equality as a concept in their masculinity

The respondents also provided factors that they, as consumers and members of society, think influence the perception of masculinity for themselves and for others. The most common factors mentioned were family and upbringing, school and friends, sports, social media, popular culture, such as movies, TV shows, and music and advertising. Furthermore, the respondents characterized how they perceive traditional and modern masculinity; in other words, which characteristics would they ascribe to these two major masculinity types. The responses of respondents were in alignment with the analysis of the literature review about masculinity types presented in Chapter 1.

## How should masculinity not be depicted in advertising, according to focus group respondents

Throughout the three focus groups, the author wanted to see how advertisers and brand strategists should not portray men in advertising, meaning what would be the ineffective ways of communicating with consumers when depicting masculinity. The author asked various questions to the focus group participants that were aimed at answering this vital question. After the coding process and analyzing the data, it became clear that focus group participants consider using stereotypes as the absolute worst thing that advertisers can do when depicting masculinity in their marketing communication (Figure 3.29). A close second to the use of stereotypes was exaggerated masculinity which obviously is closely linked to stereotypes, but since focus group participants use different terminology to express themselves, these suggestions were counted separately. Other popular answers were using muscular bodies to portray men and gender conformity, which, from the theoretical part of this research, was already established as a concept where media or marketers or society it self is trying to achieve that men conform to a single standard. In the case of masculinity, that would be one ideal type of man. Some of the answers that did not exceed the threshold were depicting men in unrealistic way, only perfect looking men and showing men as typical businessmen.

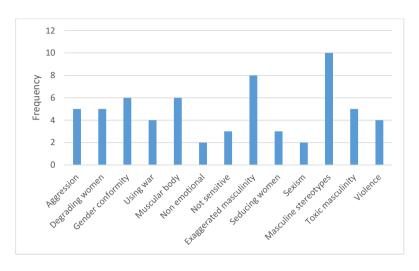


Figure 3.29. Worst ways to depict masculinity in advertising according to focus group participants (Author's original work)

One of the fiercest debates when it comes to advertisers' tactics of depicting masculinity in advertising was the use of traditional masculine stereotypes. As mentioned earlier, there were some participants like Edgars and Ivo who looked favorably to traditional masculinity and stereotypes in advertising because they thought that it was a motivation for men to grow and develop themselves. However, more often, the view of the respondents was very negative of this advertisers' tactic of deploying old-fashioned stereotypes when depicting men.

Varis: "I try to skip advertisements with stereotypes. These ads do not have any value in my eyes."

Other focus group participants concur. This quote was made after watching the Barbasol "Shave like a man" ad.

Izabela: "In my view, this advertisement shows toxic masculinity, where the man has to go to a war to prove his masculinity and being emotional or achieving results through a debate is not considered masculine."

The focus group participants were mainly positive about the Old Spice advertisement even though it is full of masculine stereotypes, but some participants see it as an intentional way to make fun of traditional masculinity and other advertisements that use stereotypes in a serious way.

Anna: "I think Old Spice ads work better than the serious masculine ones because it ironizes the other serious brands."

It shows that consumers might look upon stereotypes favorably as long as they are clearly presented as jokes in humorous content; otherwise, consumers seem to be against them.

Another key insight that revealed itself in the focus groups and one that was surprising to the author was the fact that some participants did not like when the ad did not include the product at all. Some respondents considered Gillette and Axe advertisements as confusing and something that they would not consider an ad. However, other respondents disagreed with them. Līva: "I would like to disagree with the idea that the ad has to show the product. Nowadays, advertising plays on emotions, and each ad creates an aura and shows you who you can be. I think it is much more effective to tell the story through emotions instead of promoting the product."

Another focus group participant in a separate focus group agrees, saying that the advertisement has to show the human side more than the product. That corresponds to some of the authors quoted in the literature review part that agrees with this premise of emotions and the human side over the product in advertising. Furthermore, depicting masculinity seems to get a lot of emotions which is proved in both the focus group interviews and literature review analysis.

### How should masculinity be depicted in advertising, according to focus group respondents

The most important question to find answers to was, "How should masculinity be depicted in advertising to get consumer approval." The author noticed that the focus group participants had an easier time telling how masculinity should not be depicted in advertising than how it should. The students were taking longer time to think and had more difficulty expressing themselves and what they meant when answering these questions and also providing their opinions in different related questions aimed at understanding consumer preferences. Perhaps it indicates that consumers do not always know what they want but are more sure about what they do not want.

While there were a few opinions that traditional masculinity could inspire men to reach their potential and become the ideal man-physically strong, muscular, competent, and powerful, the vast majority of focus group participants rejected traditional masculinity and argued for the more sensitive, inclusive depiction of men in advertising. In other words, the respondents expressed their approval of advertisers and brand strategists using modern masculinity in advertising to portray men. The most popular answers that the respondents provided were that masculinity and the issues related to it is an important topic for society, and the advertisement focusing on it is a positive aspect and one that the consumers approve (Figure 3.30). A close second in popularity among the focus group participants was diversity, in other words, showing

men in diverse ways as women have been shown in advertising for over a decade now (opinion expressed in the men's focus group). Other popular answers were self-acceptance, emotionality, and inclusivity as important elements to use when depicting men in advertising. Interestingly, while humor seemed to be an important factor in qualitative content analysis of YouTube comments, the focus group participants did not emphasize it as essential when depicting men. The answers were focused on quite serious factors that advertisers should consider when portraying men, such as inclusivity, diversity, a crisis in masculinity, the relevance of the topic in society, and so on. Some of the answers that did not exceed the threshold to be included in the graph were authenticity, being well-dressed, focusing on mental health, and making fun of toxic masculinity as ways of how masculinity should be depicted in advertising.

From the theoretical perspective concerning brand and masculinity archetypes, the respondents indicate that consumers would prefer modern masculinity archetypes such as Lover, Caregiver, Creator, and Innocent brand archetypes and Lover as masculinity archetype. From Aaker's (1997) brand personality dimensions standpoint, the consumers seem to value Sincerity and Excitement.

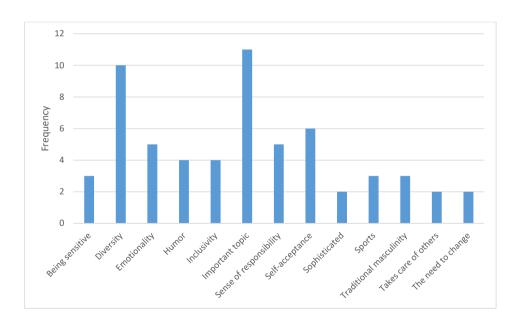


Figure 3.30. Best ways to depict masculinity in advertising according to focus group participants (Author's original work)

The reasons that respondents provided for their most popular answers concerning the importance of the topic of masculinity in advertising were that there is gender conformity going on in society, particularly concerning men. Focus group participants thought that men are instructed and even pressured to act a certain way to be masculine to be accepted by their peers. Rihards K (spoken about Axe's "Is it ok for guys..." advertisement): "I think that a good advertisement is about an important topic in society. They ask if it is ok that men are not stereotypically masculine. They bring up issues that men are too scared to talk about openly." Even participants like Edgars and Ivo, who approve of traditional masculinity in advertising, agreed that there is a crisis in masculinity, although their view was that men are being overly criticized for both being too traditional and being called toxic and also for being emotional, which in their view is also not valid criticism and puts unnecessary pressure on men to always be stoic.

Some of the participants, particularly men, opened up about personal issues, especially Rihards J. He shared how he was raised and the issues that it has caused him, and how important he thinks Axe' "Is it ok for guys" advertisement is.

Rihards J: "I think it is good to take away the stigma of men showing their emotions. I was taught that men should never do that because it is a sign of weakness. I was raised that way. And then you ask yourself later, is it ok to be the way I am?"

Many participants agreed that Gillette's and Axe's advertisements (two of the four that were shown in all three focus groups) were a good example of how masculinity in advertising should be depicted. Their arguments mainly were centered around the idea that these ads take the pressure off men to always be the same and always be stereotypical men. Even women agreed that taking pressure off men is an important thing because when men are insecure and pressured, it negatively affects women. This opinion is echoed by social scientists and corresponds to the findings from the literature review about the harm of emphasizing traditional masculinity in advertising.

Focus group interviews were also an important research method to get clarity about some of the advertisements that received wildly inconsistent results between qualitative content analysis of YouTbe comments and the A/B test results. The already mentioned Gillette and Axe advertisements received positive feedback, where respondents saw advertisers focusing on good values such as responsibility, self-acceptance, diversity, and inclusivity.

Dāvis (spoken about Gillette's "We believe: the best man can be" advertisement): "I really like this ad, it calls for responsibility from men to do what is right, like defending others against bullies. It helps get the message also to the kids."

Gillette's advertisement got overwhelmingly positive reviews, and it was also one of the ads that respondents answered as the one they would be most likely to share on their social media profiles, which according to researchers, is very important for an advertisement to get awareness and achieve advertising effectiveness.

Izabela: "I have shared the Gillette advertisement on my social media profiles because I think it sheds light on important problems about masculinity that society need to move on from. I would also consider sharing the Axe ad because it is about a similar topic as Gillette one."

Gillette's ad in question, which was one of the six subject ads in the mixed method analysis part, received very negative consumer feedback, as proven by the discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis (4% ad appreciation comments and an astounding disapproval rate of 65% of the comments), sentiment analysis (78% negativity), and statistical analysis (Likeability ratio of only 0,54). However, in the A/B test results, Gillette's advertisement was convincingly selected as the favorite one over their own traditional masculinity ad (63% of men and 82% of women). Therefore, it was difficult to assess the particular Gillette ad's consumer perception and determine how effective it is. This next positive consumer feedback in the focus groups does provide a deeper perspective of why there could possibly be so much negativity directed at Gillette in the YouTube comments.

Izabella: "Maybe the ad triggered some men who teach their kids to be aggressive and to fight and who use the phrase "boys will be boys" (as it is used in the ad); thus, they see that the ad is a direct attack on them and how they were raised and how they raise their children."

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that focus group participants also expressed the idea that it is admirable for Gillette and Axe to stand up for inclusivity and diversity and self-acceptance of men, but what are they doing when it comes to real action, not just an advertising message?

Patrīcija: "I want to see what they are doing in reality to fight the problem, or are these just words?"

The famous Old Spice advertisement was another interesting case for the author to use as a subject for discussion in the focus groups. The Old Spice ad had the opposite situation from Gillette, namely that the YouTube comments were very positive (56% positivity in sentiment analysis and likeability ratio of 42,6) but struggled to get a positive result in the A/B test results (61% of men and 32% of women chose it over the modern masculinity ad). Here the focus

group participants, while appreciating the humor to some extent and saying that it piques their interest in trying the product, mainly criticized the ad as one that does not add value and is pressuring men into conforming to one smell that men would have and degrading women. Therefore, creativity and humor proved to be not such an important factor after all. However, the gender conformity, specifically about the one standardized smell that all men must have seem to irritate the focus group participants.

Beāte: "This ad makes you wonder about that one smell that men have to smell like. I think it is illogical that all men have to smell the same way."

The second criticism of the Old Spice advertisement was that it is insulting to women, suggesting that all women want the same material things, which are old-fashioned ways to view women's needs. However, some admitted that they did not think about it before, only now when the issue was raised by one of the focus group participants.

Unlike Old Spice and Gillette, Axe's "Is it ok for guys" did not have a vast disparity between mixed method analysis (for example, the likeability ratio was only 13,52) and the A/B test results (men chose this ad at 71% while women chose it 84%), but nevertheless the disparity was significant enough to be included in the focus group testing. The overall findings indicate that consumers overwhelmingly favor this ad; some of them put it higher than Gillette because it does not judge anyone but is simply asking questions if it is ok not to be stereotypically masculine.

Ingmārs: "This ad shows masculinity in a modern way, it shows diversity. I think it is the right way to portray masculinity."

Others say Axe advertisement is one that takes the pressure off men and advocates for self-acceptance from men, which turned out to be an important element for an effective masculinity advertisement to get consumer approval.

Rihards K: "This type of advertising does not tell the men how to be or how they cannot be. It shows that you can be who you are. I like this advertisement because it allows men to express emotions, cry and be more feminine or to have more feminine characteristics."

The worst feedback in the focus groups was towards the Barbasol ad, which had a very positive discourse and full of praise from the consumers in the YouTube comment section and a likeability ratio of 133. However, the respondents thought that the ad was making fun of the soldiers of World War II and the main character displaying traits of toxic masculinity.

#### Results of the ranking exercise

Finally, since there were significant differences between men's and women's answers in the A/B test results, the author wanted to see whether ranking the advertisements that were subjects for discussion would also yield similar results showing significant differences between men's and women's opinions. At the end of the focus group interview, the respondents ranked the advertisements that they had seen in the focus group. They were instructed to give the one that they preferred the most 40 points, 30 points for their second preference, 20 for their third, and 10 points for their fourth preference (Table 3.25).

Table 3.25.

Rankings of the most preferred advertisements among focus group participants (Author's original work)

Advertisement	Men's focus group (average points)	Women's focus group (average points)	Mixed focus group (average points)
Gillette's "We	36,25	27,5	32,5
believe: The best men can be"			
Old Spice's "The man your man	22,5	26,25	22,5
could smell like"			
Barbasol's "Shave like a man"	12,5	12,5	13,75
Axe's "Is it ok for guys"	28,75	33,75	31,25

The results show a rather similar pattern in the answers among the three focus groups. For instance, the fact that in all three focus groups, the most preferred and liked advertisement was either Gillette's ad or Axe's ad. In all three focus groups, Old Spice's ad was the third preferred one, and Barbasol was by far the most disliked one, even though it had the highest Likeability rating among all of them in the statistical analysis based on the YouTube data. There are, however, a few differences that stand out more from the results. For instance, while men ranked Gillette's ad as the one they preferred the most, women chose Axe's. The difference between the average points between men's focus group and women's is 24% when it comes to choosing Gillette's ad and 15% when it comes to Axe's ad. Interestingly, the mixed focus group results were right in the middle of men's and women's focus group results (Gillette and Axe's ad preferences), showing consistency in how men and women think about these advertisements.

The findings of focus groups prove that masculinity in advertising is an issue that evokes emotions in consumers, especially men, and it makes people think and talk about the advertisement. It also shows that the issue of masculinity and rejecting gender stereotypes are important for society and that advertisers, as suggested by the stakeholder theory, have a social responsibility to talk about what is important for their stakeholders, especially society. Furthermore, it shows that it could be beneficial for the brand itself to show that they care about issues concerning society since consumers approve of such advertising, known as social marketing, where companies create added value with their marketing, not just focus on selling their product. The focus group participants called the regular cliché attempts of selling products "an old-fashioned way to do advertising". Finally, the author concluded from focus group interviews that Latvia's Generation Z prefer modern masculinity depictions in advertising over traditional ones, which supports the findings from A/B testing.

Chapter 3 focused on empirical research conducted in analyzing consumer perceptions of masculinity in advertising as well as analyzing how masculinity is currently depicted in brand personality and advertising. The author concluded that advertisers still mainly focus on traditional masculinity in their advertising efforts, with the most frequent brand archetypes being Ruler, Hero, and Lover in traditional and Caregiver, Lover, and Everyman in modern masculinity advertisements. The most frequent brand personality dimensions are Ruggedness and Sophistication in traditional and Sincerity in modern masculinity advertisements. The author also came to a conclusion that Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers mainly prefer modern masculinity in advertising with brand archetypes such as Hero, Caregiver, Everyman, Innocent, and Sage which are brand archetypes associated with fairness, empathy, sensitivity, care, and sense of equality. Research questions (RQ2 and RQ3) are answered, and Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are confirmed. Chapter 4 details the methodology for brands to create a new masculine brand personality.

# 4. THE METHODOLOGY OF CREATING A MASCULINE BRAND PERSONALITY

Quantitative research and secondary data sources confirm the significance of understanding masculinity and focusing on it as a concept in the process of creating a brand personality and finding the right advertising message to communicate that masculine brand personality to the audience. However, while researchers and branding professionals agree that masculinity is important in building brand personality, there currently is no methodology or theoretical model of brand personality that includes this vital concept. The most common theoretical frameworks when it comes to brand personality are brand personality dimensions (Aaker, 1997) and brand archetypes (Mark, Pearson, 2001), both of these models the author has analyzed earlier in this thesis.

Several authors have modified these brand personality frameworks, for instance, dividing the twelve brand archetypes into segments of how social or independent the brand archetype is as well as how much the brand archetype exhibits love for freedom or order (Bechter et al., 2016), which can help the branding and advertising professionals better understand the use of this theory in creating the brand personality. Other researchers have also modified the existing brand personality model of brand archetypes into four segments "belonging and enjoyment," "independence and fulfillment," "stability and control," and "risk and mystery" (Mark and Pearson, 2001; Xara-Brasil et al., 2018).

Since such a methodology of brand personality that includes the concept of masculinity does not exist, and since branding and advertising professionals have expressed to the author that it is confusing for them to understand how to depict men in their advertisements in a way that would resonate with the audience, the author of this doctoral thesis decided to create a methodology of creating a masculine brand personality.

## 4.1. The methodology of creating a masculine brand personality considering contemporary consumer perceptions of masculinity

The methodology includes crucial activities that the brand strategists must make, such as analyzing the brand, analyzing the audience, analyzing the competition, etc. The methodology consists of **seven steps** (Figure 4.1). Each step requires reviewing the previous steps, especially in step 5, when the new masculine brand personality is created, and in step 7, when the brand

strategist analyzes the effectiveness and consumer perception of the new masculine brand personality.



Figure 4.1. Methodology of creating masculine brand personality (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

In Step 1 (Brand personality audit), the branding and advertising professionals should closely examine the current brand personality because to set goals for the potential rebranding or creating a new brand entirely, the brand strategist must first understand where the brand is currently and with closer attention to the brand personality and the display of masculinity in it. Furthermore, brand strategists must examine not just brand personality but the entire brand and all of its elements, such as brand promise, brand values, brand drivers, brand identity (logo, slogan, colors being used, tone of voice, etc.), brand experience, brand role, brand communication (advertising, social media, direct marketing, public relations, product placement, communication channels, etc.), and more. In addition, there is also a need to examine the product, its quality, design, and functionality, as well as the packaging, since all of that has to be consistent with the brand elements.

Table 4.1.

Broader questions of brand audit for brand strategists (Author's original work)

Brand elements	Brand audit questions (Step 1 of the proposed methodology)
Brand promise, brand values, brand drivers	Is there a consistency between brand promise, brand values and brand drivers? What are the rational and emotional benefits that the customers gets from the brand?
Product and the brand	Does the product satisfy customers' needs and accurately represents brand drivers?
Brand identity	Does the brand identity (logo, slogan, tone of voice, etc.) reflect brand values and the brand promise?
Brand DNA	Is there consistency between brand DNA elements such as business culture, consumer culture, social image and self-image)? (Ellwood, 2002)
Brand experience	What experience is the customer getting? Is the experience consistent between the product, advertising, packaging, customer service, etc.
Brand relationship with	What is the brand relationship with audience? What culture is
audience	the brand creating around it self? Is there a brand community?
	How customers perceive themselves when they are being a part
	of that brand culture? (Kapferer, 1987)
Brand personality	See Table 4.2.
Brand communication	Does the brand communication reflect the brand strategy? Are the current communication channels effective? How is the effectiveness being measured and how often?

Any brand strategist must first have a clear understanding of these elements before going to the next steps in creating a masculine brand personality. According to the brand DNA theory, there also has to be clarity about what is the current consumer culture, what drives this culture, and what consumers appreciate. Next, the analyst must conduct a thorough analysis of the business culture, which means assessing employee motivation, which can drive brand alignment. The theory also argues for an assessment of the 'self-image' and the social image. When it comes to the self-image, authors state that brands are an extension of consumers' personalities, and consumers look for brands that are in alignment with who they are and express themselves through consumption: "Brands should protect your identity, to make you feel comfortable about who you are" (Ellwood, 2002, 127). Whereas when it comes to social image, as discussed in Chapter 2.2., society and advertising go hand in hand because advertising serves as a powerful influencing force in how consumers negotiate gender in their daily lives) and masculinity in advertising often repeats gendered expectations (Zayer et al., 2020).

Another useful tool in the assessment of the brand's current state is the Brand Identity Prism developed by Jean-Noel Kapferer, a professor of marketing strategy. In Brand Identity Prism, brand personality plays a vital role in the analysis of the brand. In this theoretical model, brand

strategists analyze the physical attributes of the brand (colors, forms, design elements); brand personality; the relationship between the brand and the audience; culture and its values; reflection (how does the brand reflect its audience and the culture); and the self-image (how do the consumers see themselves when they consume the product).

### Brand personality and masculinity

The main focus of this methodology is brand personality and masculinity. Regarding the masculinity type, brand strategists need to comprehensively analyze the current and previous depictions of masculinity in brand communication (Table 4.2.). All of that needs to be analyzed to understand whether the men depicted in brand communication have been expressed to the audience as men with traditional, hybrid, or modern masculinity traits (Table 1.2 in Chapter 1.3).

Table 4.2. Brand personality audit questions (Author's original work)

Brand personality elements	Brand personality audit questions (Step 1 of the proposed methodology)	
Characteristics	What physical and emotional characteristics did the man have (being tough, sensitive, muscular, emotional)?	
Appearance	How does the man look? How is he dressed (formal or casual)?	
Behaviour	What profession did the man in the advertisements possess (a construction worker, lawyer, stay-at-home dad, etc.)? How has he talked (in a formal way or casually)? How has his behavior been towards women, children, friends, and others?	
Type of	Are the men depicted in brand communication have been expressed	
masculinity	to the audience as men with traditional, hybrid, or modern masculinity traits	
Brand personality	Based on Aaker's (1997) theory analyze which brand personality	
dimension	dimension most accurately describes the brand personality (Sincerity,	
	Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, Ruggedness)	
Brand archetype	Based on Mark, Pearson, (2001) theory analyze which brand archetype best describes the brand personality.	
Masculinity archetype	Based on Moore, Gillette (1990) theory analyze which masculinity archetype best describes the brand personality.	

Regarding brand personality, as mentioned earlier, the most commonly used theoretical models when it comes to brand personality are brand personality dimensions (Aaker, 1997) and brand archetypes (Mark, Pearson, 2001). The author theorizes that branding and advertising professionals could benefit from a combination of these two theoretical models, and when it comes to also analyzing masculinity, a combination of these models with types of masculinity

and masculinity archetypes could be highly beneficial. The author argues that it is possible to use all of the fundamental theories for this entire research on brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes, and brand personality dimensions combined with the extensive literature review of what is traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity. After analyzing the fundamental theories of this research, conducting video content analysis and after conducting an empirical research (A/B test, focus group interviews) the author classified the elements of them into three main groups of masculinity types (traditional, hybrid, and modern), as discussed earlier in this doctoral thesis (Table 4.3). This table can help branding and advertising professionals get a better understanding of which brand archetypes, masculinity archetypes, and brand personality dimensions usually go together in which masculinity types to make a cohesive brand personality.

Table 4.3.

Classification of brand archetypes, brand personality dimensions and masculinity archetypes

(Author's original work, Novelty of this research)

Theories	Traditional	Hybrid masculinity	Modern masculinity
	masculinity		
Brand archetypes	Outlaw, Hero,	Jester, Magician,	Lover, Caregiver,
	Explorer, Ruler	Everyman, Sage	Creator, Innocent
Brand personality dimensions	Ruggedness,	Sophistication	Sincerity, Excitement
	Competence		
Masculinity archetypes	King, Warrior	Magician	Lover

There were some very straightforward cases, such as putting the warrior masculinity archetype in the traditional masculinity column or putting the caregiver brand archetype in the modern masculinity column. Still, there were also more challenging tasks, such as figuring out where the sage brand archetype should be classified into. On the one hand, seeking truth and knowledge are the foundation of ambition and success, which are traditional masculinity traits. However, it also goes hand in hand with having an open mind and progressive thinking, which are associated with modern masculinity. Nevertheless, by analyzing the theories and matching the similarities of the theory elements and researchers' views of traditional, hybrid, and modern masculinity, it was possible to make this classification. This classification would help branding and advertising professionals understand each other better in the process of creating a brand personality or the main character in an advertisement and thus ease the process of creating a

masculine brand personality and creating a strong and well-thought-out brand personality in general.

It is vital to understand any inconsistencies within the brand, particularly in brand personality, brand archetypes, and the current depictions of masculinity within the brand and advertising efforts. For the purpose of moving on to the next steps, the brand strategists must have thoroughly analyzed the mentioned aspects of a brand personality as well as the entirety of the brand in a larger context.

Finally, the author recommends conducting a brand audit every six to twelve months. It is vital to analyze the brand on a fairly consistent basis to spot some irregularities in the brand that can be offsetting for customers and potential customers.

In Step 2 (Analyzing the current and potential audience), the brand strategist must conduct an analysis of the brand image, which is how the current audience perceives the brand as well as how the potential audience perceives the brand. This is a crucial step because to be able to set goals and vision in Step 3, one must first understand what kind of masculinity is appreciated and preferred by the current and potential audience. Therefore, in Step 2, the brand strategist must conduct market segmentation. Which is dividing the market into smaller groups or segments based on the needs of the customers and their behavior in the market as well as other factors (demographic factors, socio-economic factors, geographic factors, etc.) Therefore, segmentation offers marketers and brand strategists possibilities and benefits. For instance, marketers can better differentiate their marketing communication efforts, and segmentation is a natural step to set the target audience. The author has modified the classical segmentation table to add relevant segmentation aspects regarding the topic of this doctoral thesis (Table 4.4) which includes analyzing perception and beliefs, lifestyle, evaluation of national archetypes and others. National archetype evaluation is important since certain nationality consumers might recognize patterns of archetype personalities very differently and brand strategist must understand the most common national archetypes to ease the process of connecting the character of the advertisement with the respective audience. Each consumer segment has to be considered in relation to the criteria as well as the size of this segment (size of the particular audience).

Table 4.4. Criteria for segmentation process (Adapted from Kotler, Armstrong, 2018)

Criteria	Description of criteria
Behavioral criteria group:	
Benefits sought	Are the consumers functionality seekers, pleasure seekers, image seekers? How large are each of these audiences?
Purchase occasion	Could the purchase be planned or spontaneous?
Purchase behavior	What is the loyalty toward the brand (whether consumers stay with the brand after a price increase)?
Usage	What is the volume and occasion of using the product or the service?
Perceptions and beliefs	What are the perceptions of consumers, for instance about masculinity, what do they believe is the "proper" way for a man to behave? What image of a man resonates with the audience?
Psychographic criteria group:	
Lifestyle	What are the activities, interests, and opinions of this consumer segment?
Personality	What kind of personality traits are in common between this consumer segment? What archetypes are popular with the consumer segment (if some A/B tests or surveys of customers have been made)?
Archetypes	Which are the national masculine archetypes that are common for this consumer segment? There is a need to conduct an evaluation of national archetypes.
Profile criteria group:	
Demographic	What is the age, gender, life cycle, etc., of this particular consumer segment.
Socio-economic	What is the income and the profession of the consumer segment?
Geographic	Where are the consumers located (cities, country side)?

As will be discussed in the next step, the brand might be looking for a rebranding or making a new brand. Furthermore, the brand might be looking for a new consumer segment to market its product to and, therefore, communicate its masculine brand personality to or focus entirely on the current customer base. Whether it is a new consumer segment (potential audience) or the current customer audience, branding experts and authors argue that bonding with the audience as a vital step in making a strong brand. Authors argue that a simple awareness (presence) is

not enough to achieve a strong brand that leads to a high likelihood of purchase from consumers. However, bonding is a crucial step in achieving this response from consumers.

Branding experts discuss how important it is for the brand to be present (in other words, to have awareness); to be relevant, to perform as it is being advertised, and to have a competitive advantage, but what is being emphasized more and more in the scientific literature is the bonding between the brand and the audience and brand personality plays a major role in that (Hollis, 2008). As discussed earlier in this thesis, consumers have an easier time connecting with the brand if the brand personality is in alignment with them; that is also what congruity theory states (Chapter 2.1.1).

Regarding audiences and brands, some brands in the last few decades have undergone brand democratization, which means that the audience is very connected with the brand and is helping them to further create and develop a meaningful brand. This could be a benefit or a drawback because while brands that are democratized have a very loyal customer base because they feel a major part of the brand, it could also lead to brand strategists letting go of what the brand truly stands for and losing control of it. Nevertheless, when it comes to brands and their audiences, one must consider this relevant aspect in modern branding.

Finally, as argued previously in this thesis, the most critical aspect derived from analyzing masculinity definitions was the concept of social construction (Social construction theory in Chapter 1.2). It means that the idea of masculinity is not created individually but rather collectively by society as a culturally and socially constructed phenomenon. That gives a significant relevance to social construction theory which should be considered when analyzing the audiences and their perception of masculinity. For instance, the brands should monitor audiences' perceptions by conducting sentiment analysis, qualitative content analysis, or discourse analysis of social media comments or YouTube comments, as the author conducted in Mixed method analysis. That would give the brand strategist a much better understanding of how consumers discuss masculinity with one another and, therefore, observe how consumers influence each other's perception of masculinity. Brand strategists should also consider the influencing factors on consumer perception about masculinity (Table 1.3. in Chapter 1.4). The author recommends conducting the analysis of the current and potential audience at least once every six to twelve months.

In Step 3 (Setting goals and vision for the masculine brand personality), the brand strategist uses the analysis from Step 1 and Step 2, and by having a clear understanding of where the

company is at this moment and creates a clearer brand personality strategy starting with setting a goal and a vision. This step should be revisited every few months to ensure clarity of the goal and, therefore, the effectiveness of the entire branding process. In the process of setting goals, one must consider the following pillars: product, customer, and brand (Figure 4.2). There also needs to be a consideration of how the masculine brand personality will be integrated into the brand and the product to have consistency with the advertising, branding, and product.



Figure 4.2. Pillars of creating goals of masculine brand personality (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Firstly, the product has to be in mind when setting the goals of brand personality because the product will always determine the brand and the kind of customer that the brand will attract. For instance, perhaps a company that is focused on innovation and thus creates products that are technologically advanced and perceived as innovative would miss an opportunity to position its brand as such if it creates an old-fashioned masculine brand personality using stereotypes. If Apple started to focus on old-fashioned traditional masculinity stereotypes in their branding and communicate this type of masculine brand personality through advertising, perhaps the majority of Apple's customers would be disappointed and confused about why Apple would use such a brand personality in their marketing communication.

Secondly, when considering the goals and the vision of a masculine brand personality, the entirety of the brand has to be included in the process. Based on the analysis in the first and the second steps, one must understand if there is a need for a rebranding which would mean

understanding what brand attributes the new brand will keep and what will be erased from the brand strategy or perhaps the company is launching a completely new brand which would require different goals and vision. The brand strategist must consider the foundation of the current brand, such as brand promise, brand values, brand drivers, brand personality, and overall competitive advantage when it comes to the brand and what is essential to keep it as it is and what needs to be changed during the rebranding process.

Thirdly, when setting the goals of the new masculine brand personality, the brand strategists must consider not only the brand and current or potential customers (Step 2) but all stakeholders, as argued previously in this thesis by the stakeholder theory (Chapter 2.2.3). An important finding from the literature review process that emerged was that masculinity's depiction in advertising has great importance on the well-being of society.

Furthermore, it was found that advertising significantly influences the way how society perceives masculinity. A 2018 European Parliament resolution on gender equality in the media sector underlines "..stereotypes in advertising and other media products have a potential impact on children's socialization, and subsequently, the way they view themselves, their family members and the outside world" (European Parliment, 2018). As argued before, it is also in the interests of the companies and brands themselves because people value social marketing, which is the practice of adding value to society with marketing and, at the very least, not causing harm. Moreover, in recent years there have been some advertisements in Sweden, Great Britain, and several other countries that have been banned and discontinued by the governments for being too stereotypical, hence harmful to society. Therefore, government, society, and non-profit groups are key stakeholders to consider when setting the goals of the new masculine brand personality strategy.

For the purpose of planning the steps to meet the long-term goals, the author suggests using the SMART acronym (Jobber, Ellis- Chadwich, 2013), which means that the goals have to be:

- Specific (clear and well-defined)
- Measurable (With specific criteria)
- Achievable (Attainable and not impossible to achieve)
- Realistic (Within reach and relevant)
- Timely (With a clearly defined timeline)

The goal of the new masculine brand personality might be very different depending on the company and how long it operates in the market. It could be, for example, to achieve greater awareness for the brand if little such awareness exists. That could be especially important if the

brand is entirely new on the market. The specific goal could also be to reposition the brand differently in the minds of consumers, who perhaps have the wrong idea about the brand and what it represents. The brand might want to show the type of a man (consumer) who would buy such a product and be affiliated with this brand, hoping that the consumer will appreciate this brand personality and want to be more like him. Therefore, thirdly, the brand strategist must consider the customer and the analysis of the current and potential audience, which was done in Step 2 of this methodology.

The completion of the goal can be measured by various criteria, for instance, conducting sentiment analysis, discourse analysis, statistical analysis, and qualitative content analysis. The goal should be achievable and realistic. There is no need to set a goal that will be irrelevant and impossible to achieve; therefore, the efforts of the marketing team might be diminished as the team could be demotivated to come up with the perfect masculine brand personality that will achieve instant success for the brand and quadruple the sales in just a few months, for example. Finally, the goal should have some time limit, at which point the success will be evaluated, and perhaps some necessary adjustments in the goal and the entire plan will occur. The author also recommends assessing the goals every six to twelve months and evaluating them based on the effectiveness of achieving these goals (combined with Step 7).

In Step 4 (Analyzing the competition), the brand strategists must analyze the competitor's brand personality (brand archetype and brand personality dimension) and display of masculinity (masculinity archetype and type of masculinity) to differentiate themselves from their competitors and make effective marketing positioning. Market positioning refers to the process of occupying a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers (Kotler, Armstrong, 2018). It is the process of distinguishing the product or the brand or, in this case, the image of masculinity and brand personality from competitor images.

First, the brand strategist must analyze the communication (advertising, product placement, public relations activities, direct marketing, etc.) of their competitors based on the previously mentioned criteria by assigning a number. For example, to evaluate the masculinity displayed in each competitor's marketing communication by assigning how traditional or modern it is from 1 to 10 (1 for excessively traditional and 10 for excessively modern). The same needs to be done with brand personality dimensions from 1 to 5 (1- Sincerity, 2- Excitement, 3-

Competence 4- Sophistication 5- Ruggedness). These numbers need to be put in the table (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5.

Analysis of competitor marketing communication regarding masculinity and brand personality (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Competitor	Analysis of marketing communication	Brand archetype	Masculinity type	Brand personality dimension
Competitor A	Emotionally reserved men, acting rebellious in their advertising	Outlaw	3- traditional	Sophistication
Competitor B	Strong and muscular men, athletes from Real Madrid football club. Emotionless, fearless and stoic	Ruler	1- very traditional	Ruggedness

Second, the brand strategist can use a brand positioning map, a helpful tool for analyzing the competition, which is a two-dimensional chart in brand positioning. It positions the major competing brands on the map according to critical attributes or criteria. In this case, the author chose masculinity (on a scale from traditional to modern) and brand personality dimensions (on a scale from Sincerity to Ruggedness (Aaker, 1997)). The author recommends conducting an analysis of competitor markeitng communication every six to twelve months.

In Step 5 (Creating the new masculine brand personality), the brand strategist must summarize the results of all the previous four steps to create the most appropriate masculine brand personality (Figure 4.3). By following the previous steps, the brand strategist must have a clear understanding of how should the new masculine brand personality be created, based on the brand analysis in the first step, analysis of the audience in the second, goal setting in the third step, and analysis of the competition and their version of masculinity and brand personality display in the fourth step. One must create a masculine brand personality that will be in alignment with the brand promise and values, be different from the competition and resonate with the audience as argued previously in this thesis by congruity theory which states that people value illustrations that are in alignment with their existing social model (De Meulenaer et al., 2018). In other words, congruity theory suggests that consumers seek to buy brands that they perceive to be compatible with their self-concept. Thus, the brand personality has to match the desired personality of consumers. Similarly, with masculinity, consumers appreciate

advertisements that depict masculinity in the form that fits the consumer's view of masculinity, which was confirmed time and time again by the author's conducted survey, A/B testing, and focus group analysis.

As stated before, the specific masculinity type will highly depend on the specific brand, its values, competition, and it's audiences perception of masculinity. Therefore, there is no such thing as one specific formula to implement for all the brands out there. Similarly, brand personality dimension (Aaker, 1997), brand archetype (Mark, Pearson, 2001), and masculinity archetype (Moore, Gillette, 1990) will also depend on these different aspects (audience, competition, values, etc.) and also have to be chosen in this step of the methodology. Nevertheless, by following the previous four steps of this methodology, the brand in question should have a clear understanding of how the man should behave, look and act in their advertising and other forms of marketing communication and by reading author's analysis of the three previously mentioned theories (Table 2.1. Brand archetypes, Table 1.4. Masculinity archetypes, and Figure 2.2. Brand personality dimensions), the masculine brand personality should be created.

When creating the new masculine brand personality, consideration of multiple stakeholders and caution is advised. Since, as discussed earlier in this Thesis, traditional masculinity stereotypes can have a negative impact on society, advertisers and brand strategists should restrain themselves from using them. Furthermore, as focus group interview analysis proved, Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers do not even appreciate stereotypes, and practicing caution in this regard might position the brand as ethical and socially responsible.

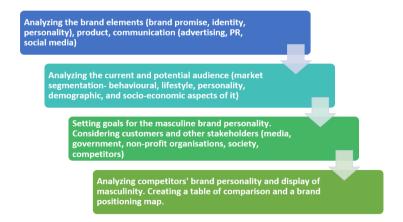


Figure 4.3. The set of activities before creating a masculine brand personality (Author's original work, Novelty of the research)

During the process of creating the masculine brand personality, which will later be used in the advertising and other forms of marketing communication of the brand, the brand strategists and advertisers should conduct A/B testing similar to the one made by the author of this doctoral thesis. Furthermore, one must also conduct 2-3 focus groups to see the reaction of the audience to their potential masculine brand personality. During the focus group, the brand strategists can learn a lot of insights into what consumers truly appreciate and better understand their perception of masculinity, which, as argued before, is very important. The focus group interviews and A/B testing could also be done in Step 2 of analyzing the audience. However, Step 5 is also an appropriate time to apply these research methods. The creation of a new masculine brand personality should not be frequent and should only done when there is a strong necessity due to the failure of the current strategy. There is no time limit for this step because it highly depends on the effectiveness (Step 7) of the overall masculine brand strategy.

**Step 6** (Communicating the new masculine brand personality) is the planning and the process of communicating the new masculine brand personality to the audience. Marketing communication, such as advertising, is expressing the brand and brand personality and positioning it in the minds of consumers. Marketing communication has many components, such as direct marketing, social media, public relations, product placement, sales promotion, advertising, etc. This thesis is focused on advertising, particularly video advertising, because that is where masculinity is on full display; the audience can see how the man looks, talks, behaves, and treats others. This is the crucial marketing communication aspect that is under a lot of scrutiny in some instances. Whether it is Gillette, Axe, Old Spice, or many other brands whose advertisements have gotten a lot of consumer interest and, therefore, have been analyzed in Chapter 3 of this thesis, video advertisements are the ones that fully display masculinity and the brand personality, and that has the biggest chance to resonate with the audience.

The brand strategist has to figure out the most appropriate media channel by taking into consideration a number of factors. For instance, one must consider resource availability and the cost of promotion because television ads naturally have high costs; however, they can reach a broad audience. Social media would require fewer financial resources but most likely would not reach such a wide audience. Although, Gillette, Axe, and Old Spice examples (analyzed in Chapter 3) would prove otherwise. A counterargument is that social media is more effective because it allows the brand strategist to reach a specific audience, for instance, men at the exact age and with the exact interests that the brand strategist has analyzed in the market segmentation

stage (Step 3 of this methodology). One must also consider the market size and concertation, product characteristics, and other relevant aspects of communication, but those are perhaps not so specifically relevant to the concept of masculinity and brand personality.

When planning the communication phase of the brand strategy, one must consider the relevant questions of why, who, what, where, and how (Table 4.6). The descriptions of these questions have been adapted to fit the main theme of this methodology.

Table 4.6.
Relevant questions of communication strategy (Adapted from Kotler, Armstrong, 2018)

Questions	Description
Why are you communicating?	Need to understand the goal of the communication (for example, create a new image for the brand, or perhaps new associations with the brand)
Who are you communicating to?	Need to understand the audience, both the current and potential and understand the target audience for this particular advertisement
What are you communicating?	Need to understand the main message of the ad (communicate a new masculine brand personality)
Where are you communicating?	Need to understand the most appropriate media channels that will help to reach the target audience of this advertising message
How are you communicating?	Need to understand the creative way to communicate the main message effectively so the ad gets attention and is memorable and worth discussing among consumers and the media.

The emphasis of the advertisement can be on many different aspects. For instance, it could be on the product, price, important topic in society (Gillette's We Believe: The Best Man Can Be advertisement is a good example of toxic masculinity), the consumer (what type of consumer would be using the product) and the life or convenience that consumer will get when consuming the product. Finally, before the advertisement is finalized and released across the communication channels, the advertisers should conduct one final focus group to make sure that the advertisements will be received positively and will not create any significant backlash to the brand. It is important because while in the "bubble" of advertising professionals the ad communicating the new masculine brand personality might seem perfect, the regular consumer and a member of the brand's target audience might think otherwise. The frequency of the communication of the new masculine brand personality depends on the marketing budget of the

company. However, the communication should be relatively frequent to reinforce the new brand personality in the minds of the audience.

In Step 7 (Measuring the effectiveness), there is a need to measure the effectiveness and consumer perception of the new masculine brand personality. Effectiveness is about producing the desired result, which depends on the goal/ objective (Frøkjær et al., 2000). From an advertising perspective, the effectiveness would be, for example, how much consumer engagement there has been achieved or how much likeability the advertisement generates. By consulting with advertising industry experts, the author finds that advertising agencies mainly look at statistical data such as reach and impressions. Reach is the total number of people who see the content, while impressions are the number of times the content has been displayed, no matter if it was clicked or not. There is also engagement that advertising agencies consider when analyzing the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. However, considering the different kinds of research the author has conducted during this doctoral thesis, the author would suggest adding certain other methods for analyzing the effectiveness of the masculine brand personality expressed in advertising (Table 4.7). These methods are mainly centered around consumer perception.

Table 4.7.

Methods for analyzing advertising effectiveness of the new masculine brand personality

(Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Type of methods	Methods	Metrics	Methodological justification	Activity
Quantitative	Statistical	Reach, engagement data	(Quesenberry,	Assess the amount of
methods	analysis of	(likes, shares, comments,	2018);	awareness, assess
	online activity of	followers), like/ dislike ratio,	(Thongkham,	consumer
	the brand	content impressions, views.	Srivarapongse,	engagement and
	communication	Google trends (measuring	2019); (Ho et al.,	media exposure
	and sales	the current popularity of the	2020); (York,	generated by the
	volume increase	brand). Share of voice.	2020)	advertisement.
Qualitative	Qualitative	Social media data mining	(Tannen et al.,	Identify the attitude
methods	content analysis,	(comments on YouTube,	2015); (Artun,	expressed by the
	discourse	Facebook, Instagram).	Levin, 2015)	consumers within the
	analysis,	Interviews with employees	(Levin, 2019);	comments. Look for
	sentiment	of the company about their	(Jorgensen et al.,	deeper meaning in
	analysis	interactions with customers.	2002); (Kundsen,	what consumers
			Andersen, 2020)	think.

In addition to the mentioned aspects of conducting a statistical analysis to measure the effectiveness of the campaign, the brand strategists should use the Google Trends tool (and select YouTube) to see how much the brand's name was searched at any particular time on

YouTube wanting to see the ads of this brand. There is also a need to analyze the earned media value, which essentially is online word of mouth for the brand. The brand strategists might be looking into how many followers the brand has gained, how many mentions there have been in referencing the brand and specific hashtags, how many blogs and vlogs have been made, etc. A similar story is share of voice metrics that also can help marketers determine the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. Share of voice is the brand's social media mentions divided by total competitive brand social media mentions (Quesenberry, 2018, 338). However, it can also be measured by dividing a brand's traditional media (TV, radio, print press) mentions to total competitive brand traditional media mentions.

Qualitative content analysis can help the brand strategists, and advertisers understand how much the consumers were focused on the new masculine brand personality (if that was the main goal of the advertisement) or any other specific theme that advertisers wanted the consumers to focus on. If consumers do not seem to pay attention in their comments to the main message of the ad campaign, then it could not be called an effective advertising campaign. Similarly, with sentiment analysis, the brands can set their own benchmark for success, meaning a positivity rate that will be considered an effective campaign with the new masculine brand personality. The author's research (Chapter 2.6.4.) of the selected ads showed that traditional masculinity advertisements' comment section was, on average, more positive than modern masculinity's, with a 56% positivity rate to 46% positivity rate.

Finally, discourse analysis will help the brand strategists and advertisers to determine attitudes toward the ad campaign in a broader context than qualitative content analysis or sentiment analysis. If the opposing discourse is considerably larger and more frequent than the supportive discourse, then naturally, it is difficult to call the campaign a success. However, the main purpose of discourse analysis lies in the details, as the comments need to be thoroughly analyzed to truly understand consumer opinions and attitudes toward the new masculine brand personality expressed in the advertisement.

The statistical analysis should be conducted within the first few days of the advertisement being released to the public, while qualitative content analysis, sentiment analysis, and discourse analysis should be conducted when there is a sufficient amount of consumer feedback. The results need to be monitored monthly, if not weekly, and based on the results of effectiveness, the campaign needs to be readjusted to match consumer needs. In the worst case, the campaign with the new masculine brand personality needs to be discontinued if all the effectiveness analysis clearly shows a very disapproving audience of the advertising message.

Finally, the proposed methodology of creating a masculine brand personality is elastic and can be adapted based on the company's needs. Based on different results, the brand strategists might want to go back to previous steps and change certain aspects of the application of the methodology to ensure higher effectiveness. The modern brand is very much alive and changes due to indecisive consumers with different and ever-changing perceptions and needs; therefore, every useful methodology should entail a certain level of elasticity.

## 4.2. Approbation of the methodology of creating a masculine brand personality considering contemporary consumer perceptions of masculinity

To evaluate the developed methodology, the findings and proposed methodology were presented, analyzed, and applied to three companies:

- Latvian cosmetics company Madara Cosmetics (Part 4.2.1);
- ➤ Virši-A gas station chain (Part 4.2.2);
- > communication and media agency Dentsu Latvia (Part 4.2.3).

These companies were chosen for various reasons, as they are explained at the beginning of each subchapter, where the presentation of the research findings with each respected company is discussed. Additionally, the research findings, results, and application of this methodology were discussed with the advertising agency WKND whose clients are Madara Cosmetics and Virši-A.

### 4.2.1. Presentation and discussion of the research findings and methodology at Madara Cosmetics

The research results and methodology presented and applied to the cosmetics brand of Latvia: Madara Cosmetics. The author discovered the necessity of Madara Cosmetics for a new masculine brand personality from his acquaintance Edgars Pētersons, who is a co-founder, partner, and marketing strategist at one of the largest advertising agencies in Latvia, the ad agency WKND. Madara Cosmetics is one of their largest clients, and currently, they are in the process of making their first product line specifically for men. However, they are confused about creating their masculine brand personality and communicating it effectively to the audience (men and women who would potentially purchase these products). That made Madara Cosmetics the perfect company to use the methodology created by the author.

Madara Cosmetics is still primarily owned by its Latvian founders. The company was founded in 2006 and sells cosmetics and skin care products around the world. Their main markets are the Baltic countries, Germany, France, Netherlands, etc.

Approximately two weeks after sending the methodology to Madara Cosmetics, the author organized a focus group to discuss the findings of the research and the approbation process of the methodology. The focus group took place at the Madara Cosmetics office in Baložu Street 20a, Riga (on August 3rd) and was attended by all the main Madara Cosmetics marketing personal:

- ➤ Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications
- ➤ Liene, Creative Director and Co-Founder
- ➤ Elīna, Copywriter/ Communication manager
- ➤ Katrīna, Junior Communications Manager
- > Raitis, Head of Social Media
- Edgars, strategic consultant, board member.

The research results in the approbation interview were structured as follows. Firstly, the focus group participants were presented with research objectives, issues, challenges, and the results from the empirical research (surveys, A/B testing, and focus groups). Then the author asked discussion questions to understand how the findings from the scientific literature and empirical research correspond to what marketing experts in the cosmetics industry have noticed in their daily work. Then the experts addressed how they used methodology to create their new masculine brand personality for the upcoming campaign, which is planned to be tested in late Autumn 2023 with a trial campaign and scheduled for a full marketing campaign with video ads in the Spring of 2024.

#### The discussion of the research findings

During the discussion, the author wanted to hear Madara Cosmetics marketing staff's views on some of the controversial masculinity advertisements that went viral and were a subject of backlash, praise, and overall broad discussion around the world. Such advertisement was Gillette's 2019 against toxic masculinity, which has been discussed throughout the thesis. While the experts acknowledged the advertisement as a brilliant marketing move on behalf of Gillette, they were sceptical about whether this tactic would work again in the future because it is already done, and perhaps people started to get tired of social issues.

Raitis, Head of Social Media: "I wonder at which point people will be exhausted of living "on the edge" about everything. You have to understand every social issue and be mindful of everyone and about every societal and political issue all the time."

His colleague agrees, saying that social issues have a tendency to appear and disappear.

Elīna, Copywriter/ Communication manager: "I think some of these issues (regarding the stance against toxic masculinity) come in waves, then the interest about this issue is gone, and a new social issue comes up again."

The author also wanted to discuss the traditional masculinity stereotypes that are deemed in scientific literature as harmful and thus urging advertisers to consider stakeholders such as society and restrain themselves from using masculine stereotypes in advertising. The focus group interview findings also clearly showed that the Gen Z audience in Latvia highly dislikes masculine stereotypes in advertising. Therefore, it also suggests a direct benefit for advertisers themselves to avoid using masculine stereotypes.

Liene, Creative Director and Co-Founder: "Stereotypes are harmful in any case (men or women), but it is difficult to show men who take care of themselves, go to the gym, and are emotionally mature without looking as if we are also perpetuating the stereotypes. It is a difficult task…"

Finally, the author wanted to discuss the previous experience of Madara Cosmetics' advertising to men or including masculinity in their marketing communication. The author already had looked through Madara Cosmetics YouTube account and did not find a lot of communication where men have been targeted; thus, the answer that Madara Cosmetics, up until now, has not focused on men particularly much was not surprising. So far, there have been a few attempts to speak to men, and one of those rare occasions received some negative feedback from Latvian consumers. For instance, in 2021, Madara Cosmetics made a Valentine's Day campaign where they featured an androgynous man, which received some backlash in Latvia on social media. An androgynous man is one who has both masculine and feminine characteristics. Androgyny refers to sex-role flexibility and adaptability.

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "Our goal with this campaign was to show that love is diverse, but of course, the Latvian media and people on social media focused on this man, and we had to explain ourselves." (Appendix 37- the screenshot of this advertisement)

Turns out there have been other instances where the audience has asked questions and posted negative comments about Madara Cosmetics' depiction of masculinity in their advertising.

Elīna, Copywriter/ Communication manager: "We had a campaign where men were putting on makeup and using lipstick which was shocking for our audience and where we received comments along the lines of "What is this nonsense" and "what are you doing with this?""

However, some of these shocking advertisements depicting masculinity had the most interest from Madara Cosmetics followers.

Raitis, Head of Social Media: "On our social media channels in the last two to three years, the most watched videos are the ones where I am putting on makeup. Although all of them have comments such as "What are you doing?""

The experts agree that it is due to the fact that it is shocking, scandalous, and perhaps even triggering for some people that a man is putting on makeup. However, Madara Cosmetics' audience on social media is very international, not only the Latvian audience, which perhaps holds more traditional views on masculinity.

### Creating a new masculine brand personality

As the **Step 1** of methodology proposes, Madara Cosmetics conducted a brand audit during which the marketing staff discussed Madara Cosmetics' core values, mission, vision, promise, and all the other essential brand elements (Table 4.8).

Madara Cosmetics brand audit, Step 1 of the methodology (Focus group with Madara Cosmetics)

Table 4.8.

Brand elements	Madara Cosmetics brand audit
Brand mission	We drive the future of natural beauty
Brand position	Where MÁDARA goes others will follow
Brand promise	Truly natural & it works
Brand values	Human, passion, Earth (sustainability), wisdom (excellence)
Brand vision	By questioning norms, boundaries and industry standards, we help people free themselves and start seeing their beauty in their own and others' eyes.
Brand tagline	(1) In your nature (2) Deeper than skin
Brand core	Every human is a natural wonder, along with all living things. We are here to recall these simple truths and unleash the primordial powers that lie within nature's ingredients and every human being

Brand	We never stop exploring and aim to rediscover the potential of nature,
competencies	creating skincare and makeup that works whilst being truly respectful
	towards the skin and the environment
Brand	Our take on beauty implies a combination of things- from aesthetics and
expression	attitude to never- ending quest for new discoveries. We manifest nature
	through aromas, textures, colours and sounds
Brand	Curious, thought- provoking, authentic, decisive, frank. Being curious
personality	and observant dreamer, this pathfinder uses his/her freedom and walks
	his/her own way, raising new, often uncomfortable questions that lead to
	new thoughts and discoveries. Brand personality dimension: Competence
	and Sincerity
Brand	Sage, explorer, creator
archetypes	

After the brand audit, **Step 2** of the methodology proposes analysing the audience (current and potential). Since the current audience has been women, but the potential audience is men for the upcoming campaign, the focus primarily in the discussions was on men (Table 4.9). When it comes to women, Madara Cosmetics mainly communicates to women between the ages of 20-40; however, with men, the situation is a bit different.

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "...with men, we are aiming 30+ because men only start to think about aging around 35, since that is the age when they start to notice wrinkles and start to think about skincare products and makeup"

Table 4.9.

Madara Cosmetics potential audience for the upcoming men's product campaign, Step 2 of the methodology (Focus group with Madara Cosmetics)

Criteria	Madara Cosmetics potential audience
Demographic	Men in the ages of 30-45 (as the age when men start to notice signs of aging)
Socio- Economic	Medium and higher level income
Benefits sought	Functionality seeks (looking for products to help men solve the problem- signs of aging, dry skin, etc.)

Personality	Carefree, sophisticated, decisive, outgoing, authentic, open- minded, social, friendly, curious, environmentally cautious
Perception and beliefs	Men who have modern or hybrid views on masculinity. Who do not see any stigma when it comes to men using make up and taking care of their skin
Lifestyle	Outgoing lifestyle, socially active men who enjoy taking care of their body and going out to meet people.

For a while, Madara Cosmetics did not target men at all, and yet still saw that men were purchasing products on Madara Cosmetics e-shop; thus Madara Cosmetics had internal discussions of whether they needed to focus on men specifically or to be a brand that does not see gender at all (a unisex brand).

Liene, Creative Director and Co-Founder: "It is a challenge for Madara Cosmetics to say that now we finally have products for men because up until now, we have never emphasized that we have only products for women; we just made products for people because everybody has skin." However, Madara Cosmetics has noticed that targeting men specifically helps their business.

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "From a few online trial campaigns, we have realized that we can get higher sales results if we target specifically men. That is why we are planning the ad campaign where the focus will be on men."

Therefore, the goal (Step 3) of the new advertising campaign will be to create a masculine brand personality, depict men in Madara Cosmetics advertising, and naturally target specifically men for their new product line designed for men.

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "One of the biggest challenges is also the name and whether we should clearly label that the products are for men. An advertising agency from the Netherlands suggested that we call it "huMAN", but now we are planning to call the new product line "HIS"" (Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4. Prototype of Madara Cosmetics packaging and name for the new product line for men (Madara Cosmetics internal materials).

As the author found out that Madara Cosmetics indeed had a difficult time figuring out whether to make a separate product line for men since their position is that all human beings have skin that needs to be taken care of, therefore, focus now on specifically men means a type of rebranding and rejecting the previous position. Nevertheless, ultimately the ad campaign results show that it is beneficial to target men specifically, and the other factor is simple biology.

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "I have researched men's and women's skin specifics, and I have found rational arguments of why there has to be a separate product line for men. Just as there are separate supplements for men and women, it comes down to biology."

In Step 4 (analyzing competition) the author analyzed Madara Cosmetics' competitors based on these criteria, evaluated their marketing communication, and assigned a number for each criterion (Table 4.10). There is also visual representation of Madara Cosmetics competitors' marketing communication (Appendix 40).

Analysis of Madara Cosmetics' (men's products) competitor marketing communication

Table 4.10.

regarding masculinity and brand personality (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

Competitor	Analysis of marketing communication	Brand archetype	Masculinity type	Brand personality dimension
Nivea Men	Strong and muscular men, athletes from Real Madrid football club. Emotionless, fearless and stoic	Ruler	1- very traditional	Ruggedness
Neutrogena	A variety of masculinity depicted, mostly carefree men, trying new things and sharing experience	Creator	9- very modern	Excitement
Kiehl's	Very down to earth men sharing their everyday struggles with skin care and how easy is to use the product. Men are smiling and are somewhat emotionally expressive	Everyman	8- modern	Sincerity
Hawthorne	Emotionally reserved men, acting rebellious in their advertising	Outlaw	3- traditional	Sophistication
Hims	Very little focus on masculinity, mostly informative content with blogs and posts about scientific discoveries concerning men's skin health. When men are depicted, it has a broad variation of masculinity	Sage	7- hybrid	Competence
War Paint	Authentic stories about real men and their inspiring journey and overcoming struggles. The marketing content shows men applying men's make up and being positively suppressed by the result of the products	Hero	7- hybrid	Sincerity
Bulldog	A humorous content about men's skin care problems. Men are depicted with traditional masculinity problem but with slight emotional expression as well.	Jester	6- hybrid	Excitement

Second, the brand strategist needs to put all the evaluations of the two criteria on the brand positioning map (Figure 4.5) to see where there is a niche in the market to position the brand and stand out from the competition based on the two criteria of masculinity and brand personality. Such a brand positioning map could be created in, for example, Canva.com, as it was made by the author of the thesis.

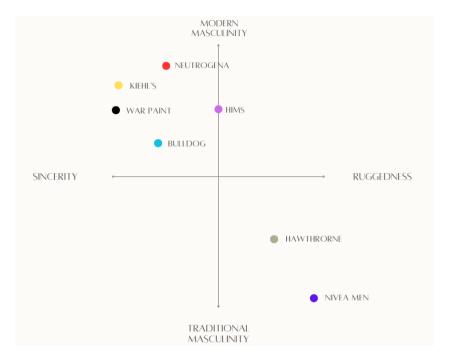


Figure 4.5. Brand positioning map of Madara Cosmetics' (men's products) competitor marketing communication regarding masculinity and brand personality (Author's original work, novelty of this research)

In the case of Madara Cosmetics' competitor analysis, one can see a major concentration in the first quadrant (top left), which shows a saturated modern masculinity market in terms of brand positioning regarding brand personality and masculinity. Competitor saturation in the second quadrant would show a lesser focus on modern masculinity while quadrant three (bottom left) and four (bottom right) would show lesser focus on traditional and major focus on traditional masculinity respectively. Madara Cosmetics' marketing staff agreed with the analysis that the majority of competitors are in the middle area of hybrid masculinity while displaying a variety of brand personality dimensions. That helped Madara Cosmetics to understand how to better stand out for Step 5 of the methodology.

In **Step 5** (creating a new masculine brand personality), Madara Cosmetics' marketing staff seem to be aiming for hybrid displays of masculinity with a focus on information about skincare and makeup used for men to combat the problems of aging and dry skin. They will not display stereotypes or toxic masculinity (as their competitor Nivea) or ultra-modern masculinity and trans people (as their competitor Neutrogena).

Kristiāna, Head of Brand Marketing and Communications: "We have realized that we will not use "shock therapy" but rather focus on "normal men" who have a need for products like these." However, the marketing staff of Madara Cosmetics also agree that brand personality is essential and that people purchase brands as an extension of their own brand personality which is backed up by congruity theory and argued throughout this thesis.

Elīna, Copywriter/ Communication manager: "Yes, brand personality is important for people because it is a chance for them to construct themselves, to be like someone they want, and to create their identity. Therefore, creating an appealing brand personality that resonates with them can attract people to the brand."

The brand personality that Madara Cosmetics will depict in their advertising campaign will be Competence and Sincerity, and the brand archetypes will be Sage, Creator, and Explorer (Table 4.11). Communicating this new masculine brand personality will be the goal of the communication (Step 6). The time of the campaign launch is planned to be late Autumn 2023 (trial campaign to test the audience) and Spring 2024, a more comprehensive advertising campaign.

Table 4.11.

Relevant questions of communication strategy (Focus group with Madara Cosmetics)

Questions	Madara Cosmetics new ad campaign	
Why are you	To communicate the new product line and the new masculine brand	
communicating?	ng? personality of Madara Cosmetics.	
	Brand archetype: Sage, Explorer, Creator.	
	Masculinity archetype: Magician/ Lover	
	Brand personality dimension: Competence and Sincerity	
	Type of masculinity: Hybrid	
Who are you	Medium and high income men from 30 to 45 (Table 4.7)	
communicating to?		

What are you	The message of the advertising campaign will be "Good looks and
communicating?	healthy skin is a proof to a man's wisdom and his "Smart hack" how to
	get success in professional career and social life".
Where are you	The chosen media channel for the new campaign will be social media
communicating?	platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
How are you	The creative way to communicate the main message is still being
communicating?	discussed within Madara Cosmetics and WKND advertising agency.

Finally, measuring the effectiveness of this new advertising campaign (Step 7) is not possible since the campaign is not yet launched. However, as the author found out from the focus group interview that Madara Cosmetics usually analyzes sales numbers, direct visits to madaracosmetics.com and new subscriptions at madaracosmetics.com (conversion rate), brand social media account follower increase, social media comments (qualitative approach) and Madara Cosmetics brand name organic search trend on Google. Step 7 (measuring the effectiveness) will help the author make further research into this subject of advertising effectiveness of new masculine brand personality once the campaign is launched and the effectiveness results are in.

In conclusion, it was found that the proposed methodology is useful for creating a masculine brand personality, and it could be improved by adding certain metrics for analyzing the effectiveness of the campaign. The reference by the Head of Brand Marketing and Communications at Madara Cosmetics, Kristiāna Antonišķe, confirming the research results' relevance and usefulness to the company is provided in Appendix 41 of this Thesis.

### 4.2.2. Presentation and discussion of the research findings and methodology at ad agency WKND for Virši-A company

The research results and methodology were presented and applied to another advertising agency WKND client: Virši-A gas station chain. The author met Edgars Pētersons, who is a co-founder, partner, and marketing strategist at WKND, three times to discuss the topic of this doctoral thesis and methodology application for the WKND clients (Madara Cosmetics and Virši-A). The first meeting was at WKND offices in Pērses Street 2a on June 14th, 2023, before the proposed methodology was even created. The purpose of the first meeting was to hear the struggles of advertising agencies when it comes to masculinity in branding and advertising. The second meeting was the joint focus group with Madara Cosmetics marketing staff, and finally,

the third meeting on August 9th, 2023, was to discuss the application of the methodology and Virši-A's challenges of rebranding their masculine brand personality. Virši-A is a Latvian gas station chain with 72 gas stations and more than 760 employees. It is one of the largest WKND clients for many years.

In **Step 1** of methodology WKND conducted the Virši-A brand personality audit as well as reminded themselves of the core of the brand (Table 4.12).

Virši-A brand audit, Step 1 of the methodology (Interview with Edgars Pētersons)

Table 4.12.

Brand elements	Virši-A brand audit									
Brand values	Human to human, enthusiasm is our energy, our strength is our roots, creating the future today.									
Brand mission	Giving energy to everyone who wants to do more and more									
Brand vision	A diverse source of power that inspires everyone who wants to do more									
Brand slogan	For doers" ("Darītājiem" (in Latvian))									
Brand archetype	Everyman									
Type of masculinity	Traditional masculinity with a slight pivot towards hybrid masculinity									
Brand personality	Ruggedness- showing working class men that display hard work									
dimension	mentality, toughness, emotional stoicism and fearlessness.									

In Step 2, WKND analyzed the audience of Virši- A, which has changed over the years.

Edgars Pētersons: "The first surveys and focus groups that we conducted a few years ago told us that Virši-A is viewed as a small regional gas station chain, and thus the audience used to be a more "blue color" from the rural areas since Virši- A gas stations used to be only in the countryside. However, since Virši-A in the past years has opened more locations in the biggest towns in Latvia as well as a few in Riga, their audience has gradually become more "white color"".

**Step 3** of the methodology meant that Virši-A would set a goal to depict masculinity that also reflects more white color audiences, which meant pivoting more to hybrid masculinity instead

of depicting farmers, construction workers, and foresters (Appendix 38- previous Virši-A advertising with a focus on traditional masculinity).

In **Step 4**, the author, together with Edgars Pētersons, discussed Virši-A competitor analysis, where Virši-A competitors were analyzed on their brand personality dimensions and displays of masculinity in their marketing communication. As previously mentioned, this is important for a brand to understand where are areas of unique brand personality within the industry. Many of Virši-A competitors, such as Viada or Astarte, or other smaller gas station chains, do not advertise enough for their brand personality and masculinity type to be analyzed. However, two of their largest competitors (Circle K and Neste) do. For instance, Cirkle K displays hybrid or even modern masculinity in its marketing communication, with men showing emotions and even singing while sometimes displaying also challenging circumstances that men overcome. The brand personality dimension is difficult to accurately determine since there is a variety of personalities displayed; however, it mostly resembles Sincerity (brand personality dimension) with Caregiver as the brand archetype. Nesle, on the other hand, is easier to analyze due to their main brand ambassador (Kozmens, a well-known Latvian celebrity), who certainly shows Excitement as the brand personality dimension, Magician and masculinity archetype, and Jester as the brand archetype while also mainly displaying modern masculinity characteristics.

In **Step 5**, the advertising agency WKND had to suggest Virši-A, their new masculine brand personality. Based on the gradual shift of the audience, Virši-A will focus on hybrid masculinity as well as start to depict more women in their marketing communication.

Edgars Pētersons: "We will depict men who are caring about others, but not in a typical breadwinner way".

WKND, together with Virši-A, will also avoid using traditional masculinity stereotypes. To the question of advertisers using stereotypes that might be harmful to society and scientific literature suggests as less effective,

Edgars Pētersons answers: "Yes, we will decrease using stereotypes, but it has to be done gradually because, at the end of the day, advertising is about reaching the goals of the business. That is why the clients pay us money. Of course, you have to be ethical and socially responsible, but you have to think about your client and their target audience."

Furthermore, Virši-A plans to show also electric car charging options at their gas stations in the near future, and that means that the brand personality dimensions also should be shifted from Ruggedness (with tough men) to Competence (educating the benefits of electric cars while

promoting Virši-A). Therefore, the ad agency WKND together with Virši-A, concluded that in the upcoming advertising campaigns with more hybrid masculinity displays and focus on Competence instead of Ruggedness, they hope to make an effective rebranding.

Finally, in **Step 6** (communicating the new masculine brand personality), Virši-A will continue to use the same marketing communication channels, such as radio, which is a very popular communications channel for Virši-A; advertising in their gas stations (on their screens and posted ads) and irregularly they make also television ads. It is unclear when the new advertising campaigns with the new masculine brand personality will be made and be running; however, it won't be sooner than 2024. Regarding measuring advertising effectiveness, Edgars Pētersons reveals that they usually rely on brand tracking research which Virši- A do not make as often as global corporations with big budgets, but they do it annually. The brand tracking research includes social media traffic, website traffic, Google searches, etc. Virši- A also look at sales, although that could increase or decrease on a number of different factors, and finally, they interview regional employees about their communications with customers (qualitative approach) to see any changes in their customer profile, behaviour, and attitudes toward the brand. Therefore, they also use qualitative research methods in analyzing their advertising effectiveness.

In conclusion, it was found that the proposed methodology is useful for creating a masculine brand personality, and it could be improved by adding a metric for analyzing the effectiveness of the campaign by adding interviews with employees about their interactions with customers about their views on marketing content. The reference by the partner, and marketing strategist at WKND, Edgars Pētersons, confirming the research results' relevance and usefulness to the company is provided in Appendix 42 of this Thesis.

# 4.2.3. Presentation and discussion of the research findings and methodology at the communication and media agency Dentsu Latvia

Dentsu Latvia is a media and digital marketing communications organization which provides services to over 100 clients. Their services include media data analyses and strategies, media planning and brand communication execution in the media environment, audience and consumer analyses, and social media strategies and executions for various brands' advertising and marketing communications. The author had the privilege to interview the managing director of Denstu Latvia, Linda Saulīte, on August 10th, 2023. During the interview, the author discussed the findings of the research and various aspects of the topic of masculinity in branding

and advertising to see the advertising industry's perspective on some essential issues. Furthermore, the application of the proposed methodology was discussed for one of Denstu Latvia's clients. Unfortunately, the client in question asked Denstu Latvia to stay anonymous, which means that no details of their brand personality audit or their competitor analysis can be discussed since that would clearly indicate the company (the client) and would violate the trust between Denstu Latvia and their client. The client is a food manufacturer retail group, and the methodology was applied to one of their key brands.

#### Discussion of the research findings

Before discussing the application of the methodology, the author wanted to discuss more general issues regarding masculinity in branding and advertising and to compare the findings from scientific literature with industry professionals. First, the author discussed the importance of understanding consumers' perceptions of masculinity and preferred brand personality.

Linda Saulīte: "Absolutely; in our case, we see that consumers are looking for brands to match their personality, and when you (as the advertiser) understand what your audience is and their preferred image, then you can effectively connect with them, and the advertisement resonates with the audience."

Second, the author discussed the use of traditional masculinity stereotypes in advertising, which the scientific literature urges advertisers to pull away from.

Linda Saulīte: "I have noticed that global brands are trying to avoid masculinity stereotypes, they try... and the tendency is to pivot towards modern masculinity. There still are industries that primarily focus on traditional masculinity stereotypes in their advertising, for instance, the car industry. Therefore, it depends on the industry."

This supports both findings from this research and previously discussed scholars' findings that advertisers are diminishing traditional masculinity stereotypes. However, as the author found from qualitative video content analysis, traditional masculinity is still the most frequently used type of masculinity in advertising.

Linda Saulīte is also on the Board of Ethics (a part of the Latvian Advertising Association), and she also argues that brands should be responsible when depicting masculinity in advertising, which, as the author argued, is a significant point of agreement with stakeholder theory. For instance, recently (July of 2023), the Board of Ethics was discussing an advertisement in Latvia by the company Altero that depicted men in a questionable way (Appendix 39). The Board of Ethics advertisement received complaints from multiple stakeholders, such as citizens and non-

profit organizations, and recommended that the advertisement is discontinued. However, it is not just the Board of Ethics (which is involved in more serious cases); it is also the society and their ever-changing views on masculinity, as argued throughout the thesis, that is a challenge for advertisers, as Linda Saulīte explains.

Linda Saulīte: "Advertising agencies are afraid of depicting masculinity "in the wrong way" and constantly asking themselves questions what can we show and what can't we, where is humor and where is insulting to people, where is that fine line?"

This quote confirms statements from other advertising industry professionals of WKND and Madara Cosmetics as well as findings from the scientific literature and the author's empirical research.

#### Creating a new masculine brand personality

Regarding the approbation of the proposed methodology, Dentsu Latvia was given the task of changing the brand's (client's) positioning in terms of how to communicate the brand to the audience, with a focus on brand personality. Brand personality dimension (Step 1) was determined as Excitement because it is trendy and displays youthfulness and energy. Denstu Latvia also analyzed how masculinity is expressed so far, not only in the brand communication and tone of voice but also in the brand identity and visual materials (logo, colors, packaging, etc.). They concluded that the client's brand very clearly displayed modern masculinity characteristics.

Regarding the analysis of the audience (Step 2), Denstu Latvia used the data that they collected once every two years to analyze the audience. Through the data they analyzed, which is the audience that says that "this is a brand for me". According to Linda Saulīte, the audience for this brand (the client) is the younger generation, such as Generation Z and millennials. However, when it comes to gender, it is evenly split between men and women, so no particular focus is put on masculinity in this brand's case. Since the audience from the data (based on consumer engagement in a digital environment) signaled that they prefer a youthful, trendy, and unique type of brand personality, the goal of the campaign (Step 3) was determined to emphasize Excitement. Based on competitor analysis (Step 4), the masculine brand personality was chosen as a continuation of modern masculinity display with an emphasis on Excitement as the brand personality dimension (Step 5). The communication of the brand's new masculine brand personality (Step 6) will be mainly through social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and measuring the effectiveness of the new masculine brand personality (Step 7)

will include short-term key performance indicators such as likes, shares, comments, views, and overall consumer engagement metrics.

Linda Saulīte further explained that the author's methodology was useful for them to find an influencer for this brand and will be continuously used for such purposes for other brands (their clients) as well.

Linda Saulīte: "The methodology is perfect for influencer marketing with the idea that it helps find the right influencer for the brand. By going through the seven steps, it helps structure the thought process of which influencer would be the most appropriate to communicate the brand personality. As up until now, we in the agency did not use such a methodical and structured approach of finding and matching the influencer with a brand, and that is the novelty of it." In conclusion, it was found that the proposed methodology is useful for creating a masculine brand personality, and it could be useful for also influencer marketing. The reference by the managing director of Denstu Latvia, Linda Saulīte, confirming the research results' relevance and usefulness to the company is provided in Appendix 43 of this Thesis.

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

#### Conclusions

- 1. Masculinity is a socially constructed concept that refers to a set of characteristics and behaviors assigned to men. Three major masculinity types are traditional, hybrid, and modern. Traditional masculinity is associated with competitiveness, physical strength, striving to be a hero, emotional stoicism, being a breadwinner, dominance, and aggression. Hybrid masculinity shows displays of both types of masculinity, and modern masculinity is associated with a sense of equality, being emotionally expressive, rejecting gender conformity, being sensitive, metrosexuality, and progressive thinking. Considering the importance of these masculinity concepts, marketing practitioners must consider all three masculinity types.
- 2. Masculinity is not created individually but collectively by society as a culturally and socially constructed concept as suggested by social construction theory, the work of many social studies researchers, and evidenced by the focus group analysis. Therefore, the social construct should be taken into account when analyzing masculinity.
- 3. Among the significant consumers' perceptions of masculinity influencing factors are family and upbringing, school and government policies, culture, social norms, equality and feminism, traditional and social media, advertising, popular culture, and other factors, proving that both environmental and behavioral factors influence people's perceptions.
- 4. Masculinity is essential in creating and expressing a brand personality to consumers through advertising, confirming the hypothesis (H1 accepted). Brand personality is critical in branding, and brand archetypes must be considered in building a successful brand. Advertisers can define their campaign objectives in another deeper dimension by aligning archetypes and brand personalities.
- 5. For consumers, it is valuable when the brand personality and depiction of masculinity align with individuals' preconceived notions of masculinity and their personality. Consumers seek to buy brands they perceive to be compatible with their self-concept; thus, the brand personality has to match the desired personality of consumers.
- 6. Traditional masculinity stereotypes in advertising can harm society due to the pressure it puts on men to conform to a narrow portrayal of who a man must be, suppression of emotions, and embedding the idea of always dominating and never being allowed to fail, leading to behavior known as toxic masculinity. By responsibly depicting

- masculinity in advertising, the brand can position itself as an ethical and socially responsible brand that consumers appreciate.
- 7. Notable brands advertisement examples discovered in the thesis prove that emphasizing masculinity in advertising can start a significant conversation in traditional and social media with society about masculinity as a concept that can lead to free publicity for the brand. Multiple analyses support the hypothesis (H2 accepted) that traditional masculinity is still the most used type in advertising, as confirmed by qualitative video content analysis, literature review, survey results, and focus group interview analysis. Despite traditional masculinity being the most frequently used type in advertising, more brands are shifting to modern masculinity, as confirmed by literature reviews and interviews with advertising industry experts.
- 8. Mixed method analysis confirmed that emphasis on masculinity in advertising gets many emotions from consumers, which drives consumer engagement and thus increases brand awareness and higher rankings on the Google search engine, YouTube, Facebook, and other social media sites. Emphasizing masculinity in advertising is essential for brands to gain awareness, which, according to advertising scholars, is one of the critical fundamentals of advertising effectiveness.
- 9. Latvian Generation Z and millennial audiences are well aware of the world's most popular advertisements concerning masculinity in advertising, proving that when it comes to younger generations, the geographical differences are not significant, and we live in a global information space. Furthermore, the Latvian Generation Z audience is aware of advertising characters made before birth, suggesting that advertising transcends time and geography.
- 10. In traditional masculinity advertisements, the preferred brand archetypes for Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers were Ruler, Lover, Magician, and Outlaw, signaling a preference for dominant, assertive, rebellious, and seductive brand personality. Among the modern masculinity advertisements, the preferable brand archetypes were Hero, Caregiver, Everyman, Innocent, and Sage, indicating a preference for compassionate, knowledgeable, caring, protective, and courageous brand personalities.
- 11. Regarding brand personality dimensions, among traditional masculinity advertisements, the most preferable were Sophistication and Ruggedness, signaling a preference for a rugged and glamorous brand personality. In contrast, among modern masculinity

- advertisements, the preferred ones were Competence and Sincerity, indicating a preference for a hard-working, sincere, wholesome, friendly, and sentimental brand personality.
- 12. Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers tend to approve of modern masculinity in advertising more than traditional ones, confirming the hypothesis (H3 accepted), with women approving of modern masculinity in far more convincing numbers than men. Consumers appreciate competitiveness as a traditional masculine characteristic while heavily preferring the display of affection and love and depicting masculinity less stereotypically in modern masculinity advertisements. There is a statistically significant difference in men's and women's preferences when it comes to depictions of masculinity in advertising.
- 13. The approbation of the methodology confirms its practical utility and effectiveness, particularly in effectively creating a new masculine brand personality for branding.
- 14. The successful approbation of the methodology by Latvian company representatives demonstrates its applicability and effectiveness for creating a new masculine brand personality and its potential for use in various brand development contexts, which means the methodology was successfully approved.
- 15. The developed methodology for creating a new masculine brand personality is suitable for companies looking to launch a product line for men and, therefore, must communicate with male audiences. This methodology can help brands select their brand ambassador, choose an influencer, and develop brand personality, thus creating a consistent brand experience that could resonate with the customer's personality.

#### Recommendations

#### For brand strategists and advertisers:

It is essential to recognize the significant changes in consumers' shifting perceptions of
masculinity and understand that understanding consumer perceptions of masculinity is
a complex task. To get a better comprehension of audiences' preconceived notions of
masculinity, advertisers need to apply a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods
and approaches such as surveys, A/B testing, and focus groups, as well as qualitative
content analysis, discourse analysis, and sentiment analysis of consumer comments to
content that emphasizes masculinity.

- 2. Latvian Generation Z and millennial audiences do not appreciate depictions of traditional masculinity in advertising; therefore, advertisers should focus on more modern and inclusive portrayals of masculinity with displays of affection and love and depict masculinity less stereotypically. It is necessary to update the brand personality to match it with the target customers' preferred personality for the brand to resonate with the audience. Furthermore, brand strategists and advertisers should realize that masculinity could be a vital part of brand personality and pay close attention to various social concepts, such as masculinity and the changes in consumer perceptions.
- 3. When communicating to Latvian Generation Z and millennial consumers, there should be a greater focus on brand archetypes such as Hero, Caregiver, Everyman, and Innocent, which are brand archetypes associated with fairness, empathy, sensitivity, care, and a sense of equality. Furthermore, brand personality dimensions of Competence and Sincerity should also be considered effective ways to form a brand personality.
- 4. Masculinity as a concept in advertising presents an opportunity for advertisers to position themselves as a socially responsible and ethical brand. Since traditional masculinity stereotypes can have harmful consequences on society, brand strategists and advertisers have to restrain themselves from using stereotypes and consider other stakeholders, not just the target audience but also the government, non-profit organizations, and society at large, when depicting masculinity in advertising and other forms of marketing communication. This caution is particularly advised when advertising to younger generations who are still figuring out and establishing what it means to be a man.
- 5. A new masculine brand personality should be designed based on the author's proposed methodology. The methodology can help develop, create, and execute new masculine brand personality tactics to connect with the audience so that the brand personality resonates with them. The methodology could also be adapted to help researchers and marketing professionals research and analyze femininity in branding and advertising.

### For academics, researchers, and scholars in the marketing management field:

 It is crucial to study the concept of masculinity itself and various types of masculinity, social construction theory, masculinity archetypes, and influencing factors of consumer perceptions about masculinity to understand masculinity in brand personality and advertising.

- 7. Due to versatile consumer perceptions about masculinity in brand personality and advertising, it is difficult for researchers to comprehend this complex subject using one method. Many methods, such as surveys, A/B testing, discourse analysis, and qualitative content analysis of consumer comments, should be applied when analyzing this subject.
- 8. Masculinity archetypes are challenging to apply in research about masculinity in brand personality and advertising since there are only four archetypes of this theory. This theory should be developed further to make more archetypes with distinctive characteristics, easing the theory's application process in such research. The diversity of archetypes could be a groundwork for more profound research and help position a brand more accurately. Brand personality theories can be utilized to investigate an entire industry's branding and make a brand positioning map to analyze how brands position themselves in the market regarding brand personality and masculinity. The relation between brand personality aspects and genders should be incorporated and developed in educational materials and courses focusing on brand management.
- 9. Considering that the scientific literature only discusses the harm of traditional masculinity in advertising, without any mention of potential harm from modern masculinity depictions in advertising, it suggests bias in the academic world. It indicates a necessity to conduct research into this subject as well.

#### For advertising policy makers:

- 10. Considering that there is no instance in Latvia when an advertisement has been banned due to stereotypes in advertising, Latvian advertising policymakers should pay closer attention to European Parliament resolutions on gender equality in media, focusing on diversity, inclusion, and equality. The resolutions also outline the harm of gender stereotypes in advertising, with several Western European countries (for example, Sweden and Great Britain) already banning advertisements that excessively promote unhealthy gender stereotypes.
- 11. Considering that the Latvian Advertising Association's Board of Ethics can only advise the advertiser to discontinue the advertisement but has no right to ban the ad, the recommendation for advertising policymakers is to increase the legal capability of the Latvian Advertising Association or embolden Latvian Consumer Protection Bureau to take action in matters regarding harmful stereotypes in advertising.
- 12. Advertising policymakers are advised to promote a more inclusive, diverse society through informative campaigns focusing on equality, rejecting gender conformity, and

breaking gender stereotypes. This action could make society more self-accepting and inclusive, ultimately signaling advertisers to focus on different portrayals of masculinity.

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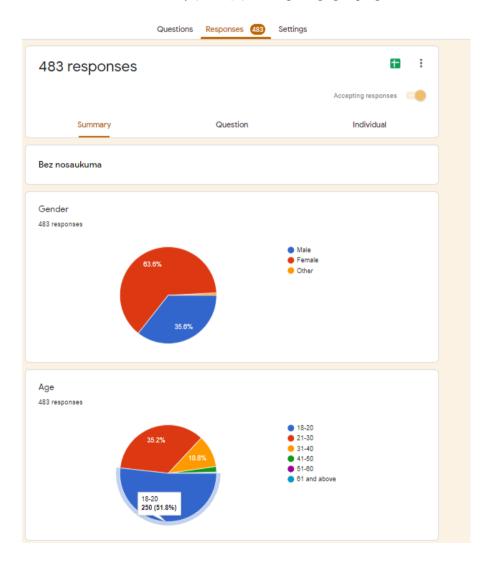
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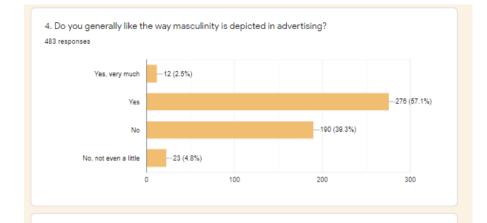
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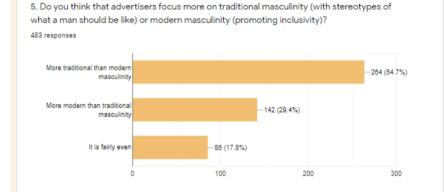
# **Appendix**

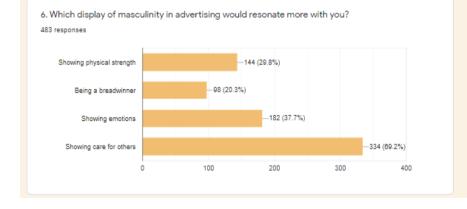
## Appendix 1.

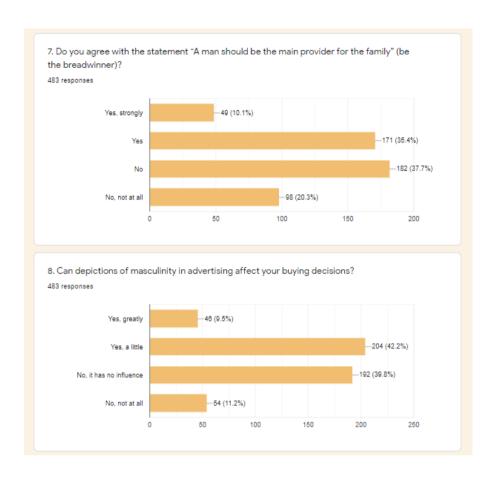
The total results from the survey (n=483) (including all age groups, genders and nationalities)

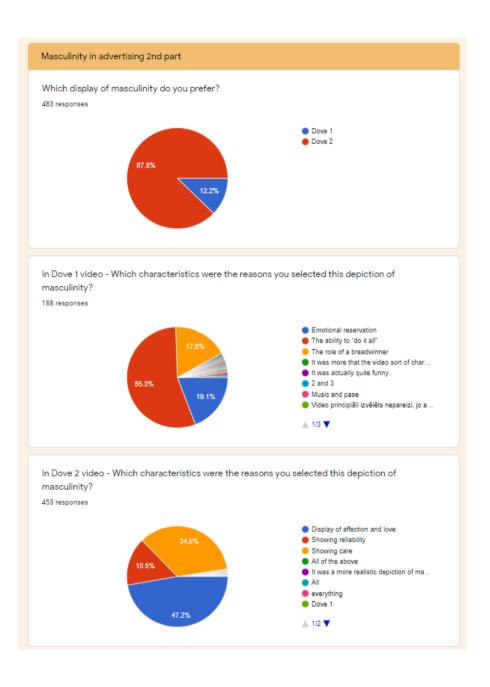


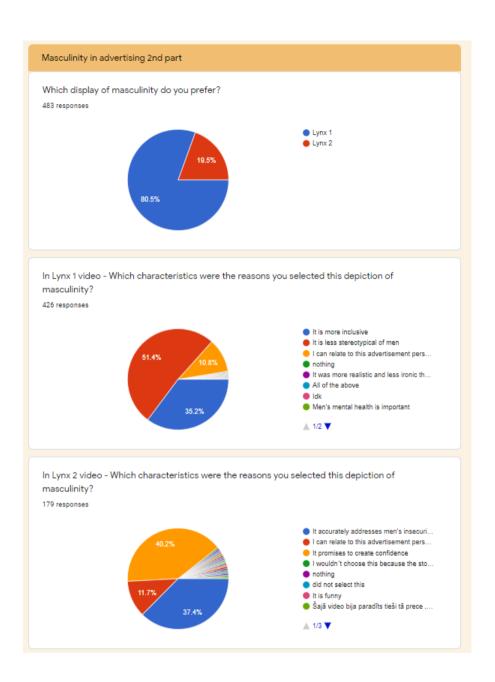


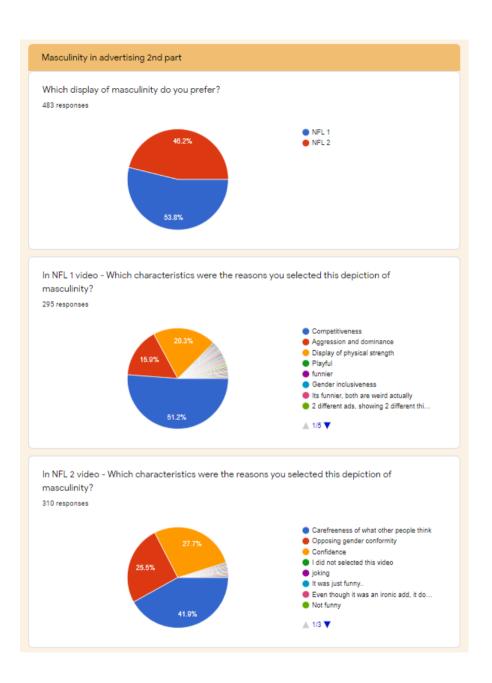


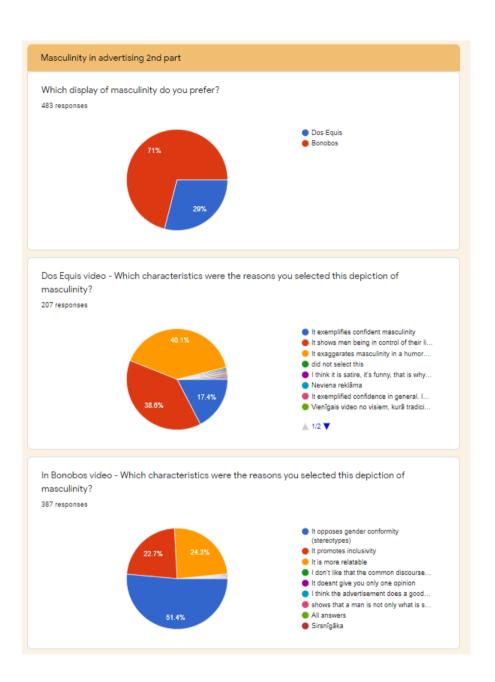


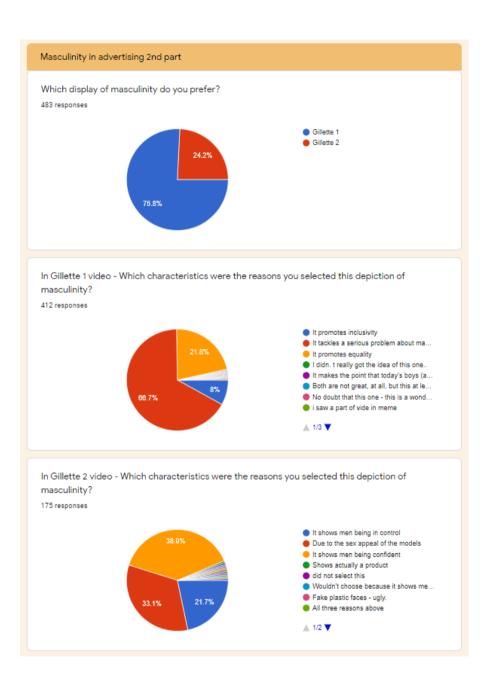


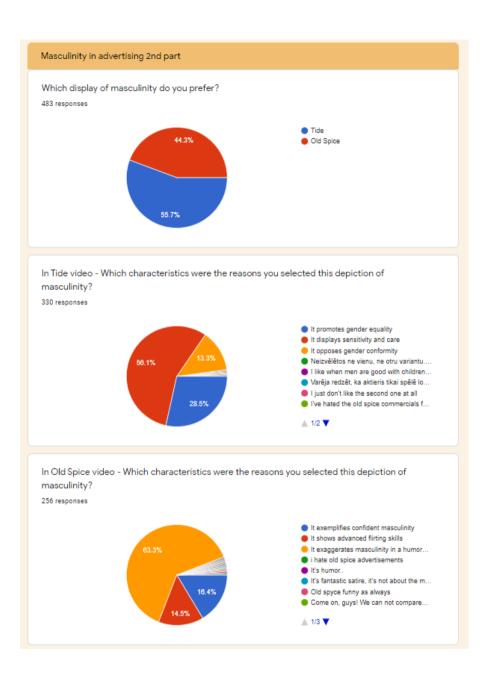


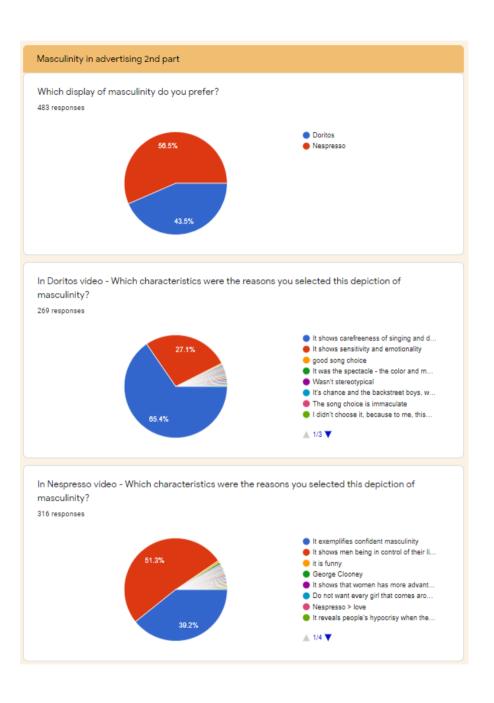


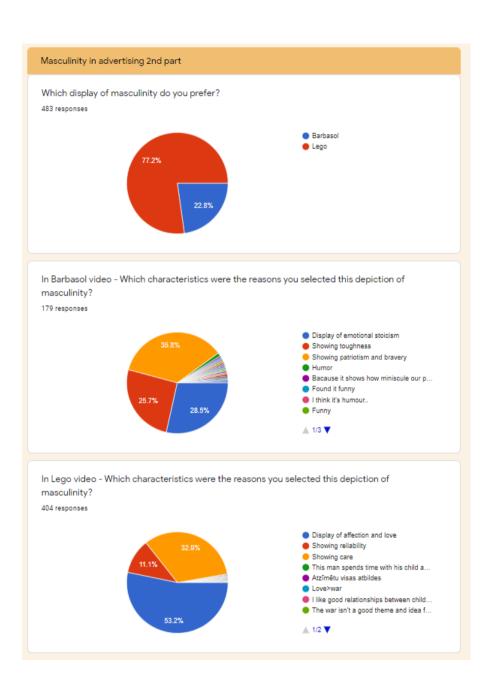












Appendix 2.

Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you? \* Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?

Crosstabulation

			Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?								
			Yes	Yes, No	Yes, No, not at all	Yes,	Yes, strongly, Yes	No	No, No, not at all	No, not at	Total
Which display of	Being a breadwinner	Count	10	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	15
masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?		Expected Count	4,9	,3	,0	1,4	,0	5,2	,3	2,9	15,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	66,7%	6,7%	,0%	20,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	6,7%	100,0%
	Being a breadwinner,	Count	7	1	0	5	0	3	0	0	16
	Showing care for others	Expected Count	5,2	,3	,0	1,5	,0	5,6	,3	3,1	16,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	43,8%	6,3%	,0%	31,3%	,0%	18,8%	,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Being a breadwinner,	Count	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Showing emotions	Expected Count	,7	,0	,0	,2	,0	,7	,0	,4	2,0
-		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	50,0%	,0%	,0%	50,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	100,0%
		Count	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
		Expected Count	1,0	,1	,0	,3	,0	1,0	,1	,6	3,0

	Being a breadwinner, Showing emotions, Showing care for others	of masculinity in	66,7%	,0%	.0%	,0%	,0%	33,3%	.0%	,0%	100,0%
	Showing care for others	Count	34	1	0	4	1	56	1	27	124
		Expected Count	40,4	2,4	,3	11,6	,3	43,1	2,1	23,8	124,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	27,4%	,8%	.0%	3,2%	.8%	45,2%	.8%	21,8%	100,0%
	Showing emotions	Count	12	1	0	3	0	12	1	11	40
		Expected Count	13,0	,8	,1	3,7	,1	13,9	,7	7,7	40,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	30,0%	2,5%	.0%	7,5%	,0%	30,0%	2,5%	27,5%	100,0%
	Showing emotions,	Count	13	2	0	2	0	40	3	25	85
	Showing care for others	Expected Count	27,7	1,6	,2	7,9	,2	29,6	1,4	16,3	85,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	15,3%	2,4%	,0%	2,4%	,0%	47,1%	3,5%	29,4%	100,0%
	Showing physical	Count	20	0	0	6	0	16	0	4	46
	strength	Expected Count	15,0	,9	,1	4,3	,1	16,0	,8	8,8	46,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	43,5%	,0%	,0%	13,0%	,0%	34,8%	,0%	8,7%	100,0%
		Count	11	1	1	1	0	3	1	2	20

Showing physical strength, Being a breadwinner	Expected Count % within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with	6,5 55,0%	,4 5,0%	,0 5.0%	1,9	,0	7,0 15,0%	,3 5,0%	3,8	20,0
Showing physical strength, Being a breadwinner, Showing care for others	Expected Count % within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with	3 2,3 42,9%	,1 ,0%	.0,	.7 28,6%	.0,0%	2,4	,1,0%	1,3 1,3%	7 7,0 100,0%
Showing physical strength, Being a breadwinner, Showing emotions	you?  Count  Expected Count  % within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	,7	,0	.0	.2	.0	.77	.0	.0%	2,0
Showing physical strength, Being a breadwinner, Showing emotions, Showing care for others	Count  Expected Count  % within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	4,9 26,7%	.3 %0,	.00	6 1,4 40,0%	.0	5,2 20,0%	.3	2,9	15,0 15,0
Showing physical strength, Showing care for others	Count  Expected Count  % within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	14 8,8 51,9%	,5 3,7%	.1 .0%	2,5	. ,1 ,0%	9,4	,5	6 5,2 22,2%	27 27,0 100,0%

		-									
	Showing physical	Count	3	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	6
	strength, Showing emotions	Expected Count	2,0	,1	,0	,6	,0	2,1	,1	1,2	6,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in	50,0%	,0%	,0%	16,7%	,0%	16,7%	16,7%	,0%	100,0%
		advertising would									
		resonate more with you?									
	Showing physical	Count	2	0	0	1	0	5	0	1	9
	strength, Showing emotions, Showing care	Expected Count	2,9	,2	,0	,8	,0	3,1	,2	1,7	9,0
	for others	% within Which display	22,2%	,0%	,0%	11,1%	,0%	55,6%	,0%	11,1%	100,0%
		of masculinity in advertising would									
		resonate more with you?									
Total		Count	136	8	1	39	1	145	7	80	417
		Expected Count	136,0	8,0	1,0	39,0	1,0	145,0	7,0	80,0	417,0
		% within Which display	32,6%	1,9%	,2%	9,4%	,2%	34,8%	1,7%	19,2%	100,0%
		of masculinity in advertising would									
		resonate more with you?									
		•									

Appendix 3.

Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising? \* Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions? Crosstabulation

				Can depicti	ions of masculi	inity in advertising	g affect your buyin	ng decisions?		
			Yes, a	Yes, a little, No, it has no influence	Yes, greatly	Yes, greatly, Yes, a little	No, it has no influence	No, it has no influence, No, not at all	No, not at	Total
Do you generally like the	Yes	Count	99	3	11	3	82	4	24	226
way masculinity is depicted in advertising?		Expected Count	94,3	2,7	17,9	1,6	84,5	2,7	22,2	226,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	43,8%	1,3%	4,9%	1,3%	36,3%	1,8%	10,6%	100,0%
	Yes, No	Count	3	1	0	0	8	0	2	14
		Expected Count	5,8	,2	1,1	,1	5,2	,2	1,4	14,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	21,4%	7,1%	,0%	,0%	57,1%	,0%	14,3%	100,0%
	Yes, very much	Count	3	0	4	0	2	0	0	9
		Expected Count	3,8	,1	,7	,1	3,4	,1	,9	9,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	33,3%	,0%	44,4%	,0%	22,2%	,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Yes, very much,	Count	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Yes	Expected Count	,4	,0	,1	,0	,4	,0	,1	1,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	No	Count	66	1	8	0	61	1	12	149
		Expected Count	62,2	1,8	11,8	1,1	55,7	1,8	14,6	149,0

		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	44,3%	,7%	5,4%	,0%	40,9%	,7%	8,1%	100,0%
	No, not even a little	Count	3	0	10	0	3	0	2	18
		Expected Count	7,5	,2	1,4	,1	6,7	,2	1,8	18,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	16,7%	,0%	55,6%	,0%	16,7%	,0%	11,1%	100,0%
Total		Count	174	5	33	3	156	5	41	417
		Expected Count	174,0	5,0	33,0	3,0	156,0	5,0	41,0	417,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	41,7%	1,2%	7,9%	,7%	37,4%	1,2%	9,8%	100,0%

Appendix 4.

Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising? \* Do you think that advertisers focus more on traditional masculinity (with stereotypes of what a man should be like) or modern masculinity (promoting inclusivity)? Crosstabulation

							sculinity (with s		
			It is fairly even	More modern than traditional masculinity	More modern than traditional masculinity, It is fairly even	More traditional than modern masculinity	More traditional than modern masculinity, It is fairly even	than modern masculinity, More modern than traditional masculinity	Total
Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in	Yes	Count  Expected Count	40 36,3	75 62,3	3 1,6	108 123,6	0	0	226 226,0
advertising?		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	17,7%	33,2%	1,3%	47,8%	,0%	,0%	100,0 %
	Yes, No	Count	3	0	0	11	0	0	14
		Expected Count  % within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	2,2 21,4%	3,9	,0%	7,7 78,6%	,0%	,0%	14,0 100,0 %
	Yes, very much	Count	0	3	0	6	0	0	9
		Expected Count  % within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	.0%	2,5 33,3%	,0%	4,9 66,7%	,0%	.0%	9,0
		Count	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

	Yes, very much, Yes	Expected Count  % within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	,2 100,0%	.0%	,0,	,5%	,0%	,0%	1,0 100,0 %
	No	Count	22	32	0	91	2	2	149
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	23,9 14,8%	41,1 21,5%	,0%	81,5 61,1%	,7 1,3%	,7 1,3%	149,0
	No, not even a	Count	1	5	0	12	0	0	18
	little	Expected Count	2,9	5,0	,1	9,8	,1	,1	18,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	5,6%	27,8%	,0%	66,7%	,0%	,0%	100,0
Total		Count	67	115	3	228	2	2	417
		Expected Count	67,0	115,0	3,0	228,0	2,0	2,0	417,0
		% within Do you generally like the way masculinity is depicted in advertising?	16,1%	27,6%	,7%	54,7%	,5%	,5%	100,0

Appendix 5.

Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you? \* Gender Crosstabulation

			dzim	ums	
			Female	Male	Total
	Being a breadwinner	Count	6	9	15
masculinity in advertising would resonate more		Expected Count	9,9	5,1	15,0
with you?		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	40,0%	60,0%	100,0%
	Being a breadwinner,	Count	9	7	16
	Showing care for others	Expected Count	10,6	5,4	16,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	56,3%	43,8%	100,0%
	Being a breadwinner,	Count	2	0	2
	Showing emotions	Expected Count	1,3	,7	2,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	100,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Being a breadwinner,	Count	1	2	3
	Showing emotions, Showing care for others	Expected Count	2,0	1,0	3,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%
	Showing care for others	Count	84	40	124
		Expected Count	81,8	42,2	124,0

	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	67,7%	32,3%	100,0%
Showing emotions	Count	28	12	40
	Expected Count	26,4	13,6	40,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	70,0%	30,0%	100,0%
Showing emotions,	Count	61	24	85
Showing care for others	Expected Count	56,1	28,9	85,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	71,8%	28,2%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	29	17	46
strength	Expected Count	30,3	15,7	46,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	63,0%	37,0%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	13	7	20
strength, Being a breadwinner	Expected Count	13,2	6,8	20,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	65,0%	35,0%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	6	1	7
strength, Being a	Expected Count	4,6	2,4	7,0

breadwinner, Showing care for others	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	85,7%	14,3%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	0	2	2
strength, Being a breadwinner, Showing	Expected Count	1,3	,7	2,0
emotions	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	,0%	100,0%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	7	8	15
strength, Being a breadwinner, Showing	Expected Count	9,9	5,1	15,0
emotions, Showing care for others	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	46,7%	53,3%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	15	12	27
strength, Showing care for others	Expected Count	17,8	9,2	27,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	55,6%	44,4%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	5	1	6
strength, Showing emotions	Expected Count	4,0	2,0	6,0
	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	83,3%	16,7%	100,0%
Showing physical	Count	9	0	9
strength, Showing	Expected Count	5,9	3,1	9,0

	emotions, Showing care for others	% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	100,0%	,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	275	142	417
		Expected Count	275,0	142,0	417,0
		% within Which display of masculinity in advertising would resonate more with you?	65,9%	34,1%	100,0%

Appendix 6.

Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?

\* Gender Crosstabulation

			dzim	iums	
			Female	Male	Total
Do you agree with	Yes	Count	87	49	136
statement "A man should be the main provider for		Expected Count	89,7	46,3	136,0
the family" (be the breadwinner)?		% within Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?	64,0%	36,0%	100,0%
	Yes, No	Count	7	1	8
		Expected Count	5,3	2,7	8,0
		% within Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?	87,5%	12,5%	100,0%
	Yes, No, not at all	Count	0	1	1
		Expected Count	,7	,3	1,0
		% within Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?	,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	Yes, strongly	Count	23	16	39
		Expected Count	25,7	13,3	39,0
		% within Do you agree with statement "A man should be the main provider for the family" (be the breadwinner)?	59,0%	41,0%	100,0%

	_				
	Yes, strongly, Yes	Count	0	1	1
		Expected Count	,7	,3	1,0
		% within Do you agree with statement "A man should	,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		be the main provider for			
		the family" (be the			
		breadwinner)?			
	No	Count	94	51	145
		Expected Count	95,6	49,4	145,0
		% within Do you agree with	64,8%	35,2%	100,0%
		statement "A man should			
		be the main provider for			
		the family" (be the			
		breadwinner)?			
	No, No, not at all	Count	5	2	7
		Expected Count	4,6	2,4	7,0
		% within Do you agree with	71,4%	28,6%	100,0%
		statement "A man should			
		be the main provider for			
		the family" (be the			
		breadwinner)?			
	No, not at all	Count	59	21	80
		Expected Count	52,8	27,2	80,0
		% within Do you agree with	73,8%	26,3%	100,0%
		statement "A man should			
		be the main provider for			
		the family" (be the			
		breadwinner)?			
Total		Count	275	142	417
		Expected Count	275,0	142,0	417,0

65,9%	34,1%	100,0%
	65,9%	

 ${\bf Appendix} \ 7.$  Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions? \* Gender Crosstabulation

			dzim	ums	
			Female	Male	Total
•	Yes, a little	Count	113	61	174
masculinity in advertising affect your buying		Expected Count	114,7	59,3	174,0
decisions?		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	64,9%	35,1%	100,0%
	Yes, a little, No, it has no	Count	3	2	5
	influence	Expected Count	3,3	1,7	5,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	60,0%	40,0%	100,0%
	Yes, greatly	Count	14	19	33
		Expected Count	21,8	11,2	33,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	42,4%	57,6%	100,0%
	Yes, greatly, Yes, a little	Count	2	1	3
		Expected Count	2,0	1,0	3,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	66,7%	33,3%	100,0%
	No, it has no influence	Count	109	47	156
		Expected Count	102,9	53,1	156,0

		_			
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	69,9%	30,1%	100,0%
	No, it has no influence,	Count	4	1	5
	No, not at all	Expected Count	3,3	1,7	5,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	80,0%	20,0%	100,0%
	,	Count	30	11	41
		Expected Count	27,0	14,0	41,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	73,2%	26,8%	100,0%
Total		Count	275	142	417
		Expected Count	275,0	142,0	417,0
		% within Can depictions of masculinity in advertising affect your buying decisions?	65,9%	34,1%	100,0%

**Appendix 8.**A/ B test results- Dove question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Emotional reservation	8	5,63
				The ability to "do it all"	48	33,80
Dove 1	Men	26	18,31	The role of a breadwinner	9	6,34
Type of masculinity: Traditional Brand personality dimension:				Emotional reservation	23	8,36
Ruggedness/ Competence				The ability to "do it all"	39	14,18
Brand archetype: Hero/ Caregiver Masculinity archetype: Warrior/	Women	29	10,55	The role of a breadwinner	17	6,18
Lover/ King				Emotional reservation	31	7,43
				The ability to "do it all"	87	20,86
	Overall	55	13,19	The role of a breadwinner	26	6,24

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Display of affection and love	45	31,69
Dove 2				Showing reliability	21	14,79
Type of masculinity: Modern	Men	116	81,69	Showing care	53	37,32
Brand personality dimension:				Display of affection and love	142	51,64
Sincerity Brand archetype: Caregiver/				Showing reliability	40	14,55
Everyman	Women	246	89,45	Showing care	80	29,09
Masculinity archetype: Lover/				Display of affection and love	187	44,84
King				Showing reliability	61	14,63
	Overall	362	86,81	Showing care	133	31,89

**Appendix 9.**A/ B test results- Axe question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It is more inclusive	32	22,54
				It is less stereotypical of men	55	38,73
Axe 1	Men	101	71,13	I can relate to this advertisement personally	26	18,31
Type of masculinity: Modern Brand personality dimension: Sincerity/				It is more inclusive	100	36,36
Excitement				It is less stereotypical of men	135	49,09
Brand archetype: Everyman/ Innocent	Women	230	83,64	I can relate to this advertisement personally	16	5,82
Masculinity archetype: Lover/ Magician				It is more inclusive	132	31,65
wascaming arenetype. Lovery Magician				It is less stereotypical of men	190	45,56
	Overall	331	79,38	I can relate to this advertisement personally	42	10,07

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It accurately addresses men's insecurities	26	18,31
				I can relate to this advertisement personally	7	4,93
Axe 2	Men	41	28,87	It promises to create confidence	26	18,31
Type of masculinity: Traditional				It accurately addresses men's insecurities	30	10,91
Brand personality dimension: Sophistication/ Ruggedness				I can relate to this advertisement personally	10	3,64
Brand archetype: Lover	Women	45	16,36	It promises to create confidence	30	10,91
Masculinity archetype: Lover				It accurately addresses men's insecurities	56	13,43
Masculinity archetype: Lover				I can relate to this advertisement personally	17	4,08
	Overall	86	20,62	It promises to create confidence	56	13,43

Appendix 10.

A/ B test results- NFL question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Competitiveness	59	41,55
NFL 1  Type of masculinity: Traditional  Brand personality dimension: Ruggedness/				Aggression and dominance	19	13,38
	Men	89	62,68	Display of physical strength	16	11,27
				Competitiveness	65	23,64
Competence				Aggression and dominance	23	8,36
Brand archetype: Hero/ Ruler	Women	112	40,73	Display of physical strength	35	12,73
Masculinity archetype: Warrior				Competitiveness	124	29,74
Wascamity arenetype. Warrior				Aggression and dominance	42	10,07
	Overall	201	48,20	Display of physical strength	51	12,23

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Carefreeness of what other people		
				think	36	25,35
				Opposing gender conformity	18	12,68
NFL 2	Men	53	37,32	Confidence	21	14,79
Type of masculinity: Modern				Carefreeness of what other people		
Brand personality dimension: Excitement/				think	79	28,73
Sincerity				Opposing gender conformity	51	18,55
Brand archetype: Jester/ Lover/ Creator	Women	163	59,27	Confidence	52	18,91
Masculinity archetype: Lover				Carefreeness of what other people		
				think	115	27,58
				Opposing gender conformity	70	16,79
	Overall	216	51,80	Confidence	73	17,51

**Appendix 11.**A/ B test results- Gillette question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It promotes inclusivity	11	7,75
				It tackles a serious problem about		
				masculinity	61	42,96
Gillette 1	Men	90	63,38	It promotes equality	29	20,42
Type of masculinity: Modern				It promotes inclusivity	17	6,18
Brand personality dimension: Sincerity/				It tackles a serious problem about		
Competence				masculinity	183	66,55
Brand archetype: Caregiver/ Hero/ Innocent	Women	226	82,18	It promotes equality	45	16,36
Masculinity archetype: King/ Lover				It promotes inclusivity	28	6,71
				It tackles a serious problem about		
				masculinity	244	58,51
	Overall	316	75,78	It promotes equality	74	17,75

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It shows men being in control	16	11,27
				Due to the sex appeal of the models	18	12,68
Gillette 2	Men	52	36,62	It shows men being confident	35	24,65
Type of masculinity: Traditional				It shows men being in control	17	6,18
Brand personality dimension: Sophistication				Due to the sex appeal of the models	31	11,27
Brand archetype: Lover/ Magician	Women	49	17,82	It shows men being confident	22	8
Masculinity archetype: King				It shows men being in control	33	7,91
				Due to the sex appeal of the models	49	11,75
	Overall	101	24,22	It shows men being confident	57	13,67

**Appendix 12.**A/B test results- Dos Equis/ Bonobos question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It exemplifies confident masculinity	14	9,86
Dos Equis  Type of masculinity: Traditional  Brand personality dimension: Sophistication/				It shows men being in control of their lives	38	26,76
	Men	62	43,66	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	31	21,83
				It exemplifies confident masculinity	17	6,18
				It shows men being in control of their lives	31	11,27
Ruggedness Brand archetype: Outlaw/ Lover/ Hero/ Ruler	Women	59	21,45	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	34	12,36
Masculinity archetype: King/ Lover				It exemplifies confident masculinity	31	7,43
iviascullility archietype. Kilig/ Lovel				It shows men being in control of their lives	69	16,55
	Overall	121	29,02	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	65	15,59

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It opposes gender conformity (stereotypes)	43	30,28
				It promotes inclusivity	19	13,38
Bonobos	Men	80	56,34	It is more relatable	32	22,54
Type of masculinity: Modern				It opposes gender conformity (stereotypes)	140	50,91
Brand personality dimension: Sincerity/ Excitement				It promotes inclusivity	51	18,55
Brand archetype: Innocent/ Everyman/ Sage	Women	216	78,55	It is more relatable	46	16,73
Masculinity archetype: Magician/ Lover				It opposes gender conformity (stereotypes)	183	43,88
Wascamity arenetype: Wasician, Edver				It promotes inclusivity	70	16,79
	Overall	296	70,98	It is more relatable	78	18,71

**Appendix 13.**A/ B test results- Tide/ Old Spice question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It promotes gender equality	17	11,97
				It displays sensitivity and care	41	28,87
Tide	Men	55	38,73	It opposes gender conformity	14	9,86
Type of masculinity: Modern				It promotes gender equality	64	23,27
Brand personality dimension: Sincerity				It displays sensitivity and care	115	41,82
Brand archetype: Caregiver/ Everyman	Women	186	67,64	It opposes gender conformity	24	8,73
Masculinity archetype: Lover/ King				It promotes gender equality	81	19,42
				It displays sensitivity and care	156	37,41
	Overall	241	57,79	It opposes gender conformity	38	9,11

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It exemplifies confident masculinity	18	12,68
				It shows advanced flirting skills	10	7,04
Old Spice	Men	87	61,27	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	74	52,11
Type of masculinity: Traditional				It exemplifies confident masculinity	22	8
Brand personality dimension: Sophistication/ Ruggedness				It shows advanced flirting skills	23	8,36
Brand archetype: Lover	Women	89	32,36	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	66	24
Masculinity archetype: Lover/ King				It exemplifies confident masculinity	40	9,59
Widsediffity dieffetype. Lovely King				It shows advanced flirting skills	33	7,91
	Overall	176	42,21	It exaggerates masculinity in a humorous way	140	33,57

**Appendix 14.**A/ B test results- Doritos/ Nespresso question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It shows carefreeness of singing and dancing	44	30,98592
				It shows sensitivity and emotionality	22	15,49296
Doritos	Men	46	32,3943662			
Type of masculinity: Modern				It shows carefreeness of singing and dancing	115	41,81818
Brand personality dimension: Excitement				It shows sensitivity and emotionality	40	14,54545
Brand archetype: Creator/ Magician	Women	134	48,72727273			
Masculinity archetype: Lover/ Magician				It shows carefreeness of singing and dancing	159	38,1295
				It shows sensitivity and emotionality	62	14,86811
	Overall	180	43,16546763			

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				It exemplifies confident masculinity	43	30,28169
				It shows men being in control of their lives	55	38,73239
Nespresso	Men	96	67,6056338			
Type of masculinity: Traditional				It exemplifies confident masculinity	59	21,45455
Brand personality dimension: Sophistication				It shows men being in control of their lives	85	30,90909
Brand archetype: Lover	Women	141	51,27272727			
Masculinity archetype: Lover				It exemplifies confident masculinity	102	24,46043
				It shows men being in control of their lives	140	33,57314
	Overall	237	56,83453237			

**Appendix 15.**A/B test results- Barbasol, Lego question

Advertisement (A)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Display of emotional stoicism	27	19,01
				Showing toughness	24	16,90
Barbasol	Men	56	39,44	Showing patriotism and bravery	28	19,72
Type of masculinity: Traditional				Display of emotional stoicism	19	6,91
Brand personality dimension: Ruggedness				Showing toughness	14	5,09
Brand archetype: Hero/ Everyman	Women	40	14,55	Showing patriotism and bravery	32	11,64
Masculinity archetype: Warrior				Display of emotional stoicism	46	11,03
				Showing toughness	38	9,11
	Overall	96	23,02	Showing patriotism and bravery	60	14,39

Advertisement (B)	Gender	n	%	Reasons for choosing this ad	n	%
				Display of affection and love	56	39,44
				Showing reliability	11	7,75
Lego	Men	86	60,56	Showing care	27	19,01
Type of masculinity: Modern				Display of affection and love	138	50,18
Brand personality dimension: Sincerity				Showing reliability	22	8
Brand archetype: Everyman/ Caregiver	Women	235	85,45	Showing care	80	29,09
Masculinity archetype: King/ Lover				Display of affection and love	194	46,52
				Showing reliability	33	7,91
	Overall	321	76,98	Showing care	107	25,66

Appendix 16.

Most preferable brand archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Brand archetypes	Total	value	Frequency	Average %
	<b>%</b>			
Hero		164	4	41
Caregiver		18	1	18
Lover		238	5	47,6
Ruler		107	2	53,5
Magician		97	2	48,5
Outlaw		44	1	44
Everyman		39	1	39

Appendix 17.

Most preferable brand archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Brand archetypes	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
Hero	88	4	22
Caregiver	11	1	11
Lover	138	5	27,6
Ruler	62	2	31
Magician	50	2	25
Outlaw	21	1	21
Everyman	15	1	15

Appendix 18.

Most preferable brand archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Brand archetypes	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
Caregiver	245	4	61,25
Everyman	309	5	61,8
Innocent	190	3	63,33
Jester	37	1	37
Lover	37	1	37
Creator	69	2	34,5
Hero	63	1	63
Sage	56	1	56
Magician	32	1	32

Appendix 19.

Most preferable brand archetypes in modern masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Brand	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
archetypes			
Caregiver	324	4	81
Everyman	404	5	80,8
Innocent	244	3	81,33
Jester	59	1	59
Lover	59	1	59
Creator	108	2	54
Hero	82	1	82
Sage	79	1	79
Magician	49	1	49

Appendix 20.

Most preferable masculinity archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Masculinity	Total value	Frequency	Average %
archetypes	%		
King	99	3	33
Magician	0	0	0
Lover	159	4	39,8
Warrior	120	3	40

Appendix 21.

Most preferable masculinity archetypes in traditional masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Masculinity	Total value	Frequency	Average %
archetypes	%		
King	50	3	16,7
Magician	0	0	0,0
Lover	99	4	24,8
Warrior	74	3	24,7

Appendix 22.

Most preferable masculinity archetypes in modern masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Masculinity	Total	value	Frequency	Average %
archetypes	<b>%</b>			
King		253	4	63,3
Magician		159	3	53
Lover		370	7	52,9
Warrior		0	0	0

Appendix 23.

Most preferable masculinity archetypes in modern masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Masculinity archetypes	Total value %	Frequency	Average
			<b>%</b>
King	326	4	81,5
Magician	212	3	70,7
Lover	511	7	73
Warrior	0	0	0

Appendix 24.

Most preferable brand personality dimensions in traditional masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Brand personality dimension	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
Sincerity	0	0	0
Excitement	0	0	0
Competence	81	2	40,5
Sophistication	239	5	47,8
Ruggedness	254	6	42,3

Appendix 25.

Most preferable brand personality dimensions in traditional masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

Brand personality dimension	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
Sincerity	0	0	0
Excitement	0	0	0
Competence	52	2	26
Sophistication	138	5	27,6
Ruggedness	168	6	28

Appendix 26.

Most preferable brand personality dimensions in modern masculinity advertisements among men (Author's original work)

Brand personality	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
dimension			
Sincerity	409	7	58,4
Excitement	196	4	49
Competence	63	1	63
Sophistication	0	0	0
Ruggedness	0	0	0

Appendix 27.

Most preferable brand personality dimensions in modern masculinity advertisements among women (Author's original work)

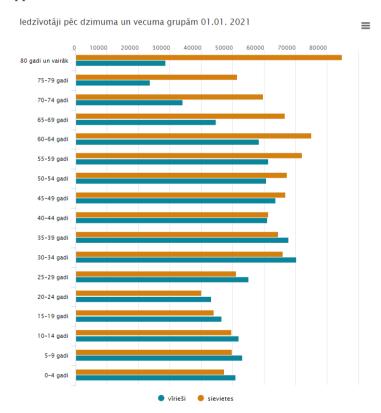
Brand personality dimension	Total value %	Frequency	Average %
Sincerity	546	7	78
Excitement	271	4	67,8
Competence	82	1	82
Sophistication	0	0	0
Ruggedness	0	0	0

A	В	С	D	E	F	G	H	1	J	K	L
men	Dove	Axe	NFL	Gillette	Dos Equis	Tide/Old	Doritos/N	Barbasol/	Total	Average	median
Traditional	18,31	28,87	62,68	36,62	43,66	61,27	67,61	39,44	358,46	44,8075	41,55
Modern	81,69	71,13	37,32	63,38	56,34	38,73	32,39	60,56	441,54	55,1925	58,45
women	Dove	Axe	NFL	Gillette	Dos Equis	Tide/Old :	Doritos/N	Barbasol/	Total	Average	median
Traditional	10,55	16,36	40,73	17,82	21,45	32,36	51,27	14,55			19,635
Modern	89,45	83,64	59,27	82,18	78,55	67,64	48,73	85,45	594,91	74.36375	80,365

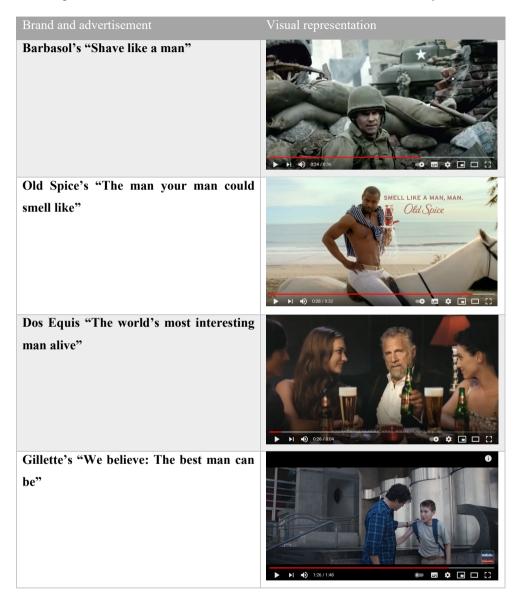
	men	,	women	Tot	tal
Traditional	358,4	16	205,09		563,55
Modern	441,5	4	594,91		1036,45
	80	00	800		1600
	281,77	75	281,775		
	518,22	518,225			
20,8698	20,8698	4	1,739609	14	
11,34756	11,34756	2	2,695119	78	
		6	4,434729	22	3,841459

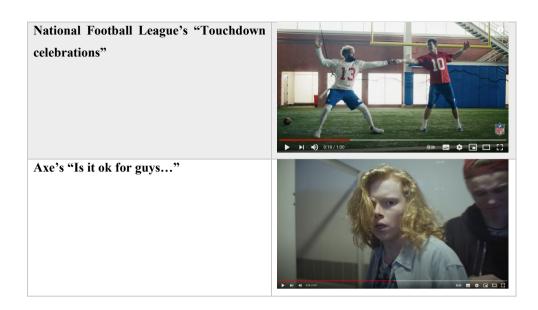
		Dove			Axe			NFL			Gillette			D/B			T/O			D/N			B/L
1,043271	1,043271	2,086542	1,730048	1,730048	3,460095	2,329574	2,329574026	4,659148	3,246143	3,246143	6,492285	3,788082	3,788082	7,576165	4,463249	4,463249	8,926499	1,122963	1,122963	2,245925	5,737286	5,737286	11,47457
0,175931	0,175931	0,351862	0,505589	0,505589	1,011179	2,49406	2,494059944	4,98812	1,21407	1,21407	2,42814	1,828468	1,828468	3,656936	3,928683	3,928683	7,857367	1,645683	1,645683	3,291366	2,121471	2,121471	4,242943
		2,438404			4,471274			9,647268			8,920425			11,2331			16,78387			5,537291			15,71751
	p-value	0,118397		p-value	0,034469		p-value	0,001896		p-value	0,00282		p-value	0,000804		p-value	4,19E-05		p-value	0,018615		p-value	7,35E-05

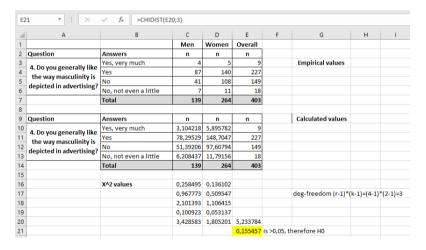
## Appendix 30



Visual representations of the selected advertisements for the Mixed method analysis.





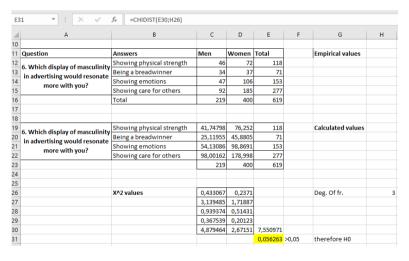


Statistical significance between men's and women's responses on the survey's 4<sup>th</sup> question (Author's original work)

E2	5 ▼ : × ✓ f <sub>x</sub> =	CHIDIST(E24;G21)					
4	А	В	С	D	E	F	G
8							
9	Question	Answers	Men	Women	Total		Empirical values
10	5. Do you think that advertisers focus	More traditional than modern masculinity	70	160	230		
11	more on traditional masculinity (with	More modern than traditional masculinity	42	76	118		
12	stereotypes of what a man should be	It is fairly even	30	37	67		
	like) or modern masculinity (promoting	Total					
13	inclusivity)?	Total	142	273	415		
14							
15							
16	5. Do you think that advertisers focus	More traditional than modern masculinity	78,6988	151,3012	230		Calculated values
17	more on traditional masculinity (with	More modern than traditional masculinity	40,3759	77,6241	118		
18	stereotypes of what a man should be	It is fairly even	22,9253	44,0747	67		
	like) or modern masculinity (promoting	Total					
19	inclusivity)?	Total	142	273	415		
20							
21		x^2 values	0,961502	0,500122		Deg. Of fr	2
22			0,065328	0,03398			
23			2,183237	1,135603			
24			3,210067	1,669705	4,879772		
25					0,087171	> 0,05	therefore H0

Statistical significance between men's and women's responses on the survey's 5<sup>th</sup> question (Author's original work)

## Appendix 34

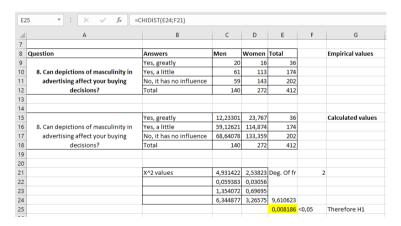


Statistical significance between men's and women's responses on the survey's  $6^{th}$  question (Author's original work)

E2	9 ▼ : × ✓ f <sub>x</sub> =0	HIDIST(E28;G26)						
4	A	В	С	D	Е	F	G	
9								
10	Question	Answers	Men	Women	Total		Empirica values	
11	7. Do you agree with the statement "A	Yes, strongly	17	23	40			
12	man should be the main provider for	Yes	49	87	136			
13	the family" (be the breadwinner)?	No	53	99	152			
14	the failing (be the breatwinner):	No, not at all	21	59	80			
15		Total	140	268	408			
16								
17			Men	Women	Total		Calculated value	ò
18	7. Do you agree with the statement "A	Yes, strongly	13,72549	26,27451	40			
19	man should be the main provider for	Yes	46,66667	89,33333	136			
20	the family" (be the breadwinner)?	No	52,15686	99,84314	152			
21	the family (see the breadwhile).	No, not at all	27,45098	52,54902	80			
22			140	268	408			
23								
24		X^2 values	0,781204	0,408092				
25			0,116667	0,060945				
			0.01363	0,00712		Deg. Of fr		3
26			0,01303	0,00712				-
26 27			1,51598	0,79193				Ĭ
				0,79193	3,695568			

Statistical significance between men's and women's responses on the survey's 7<sup>th</sup> question (Author's original work)

### Appendix 36



Statistical significance between men's and women's responses on the survey's 8<sup>th</sup> question (Author's original work)



Madara Cosmetics advertisement "Love is beautiful" (2021)

# Appendix 38



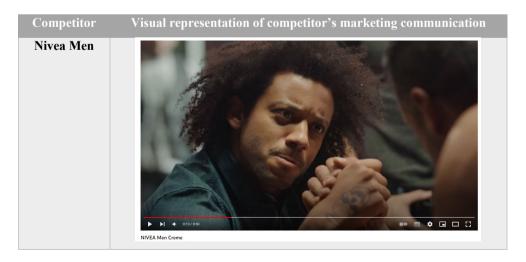
Virši-A advertisement "Darītājiem" (2017)

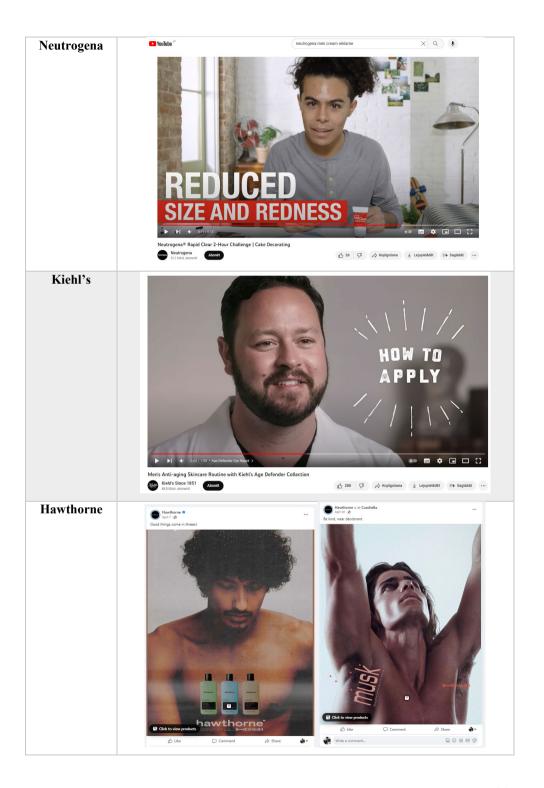


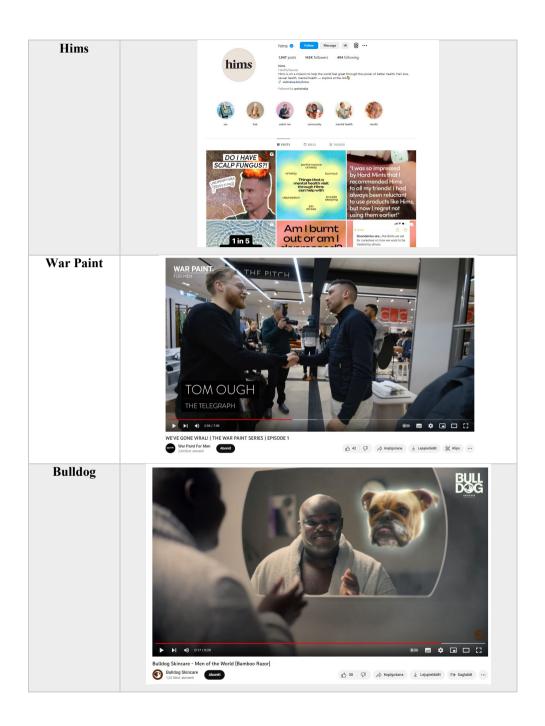
Altero advertisement "Loyalty for the bank does not pay off" (Latvian Advertising Asociation, Board of Ethics, Ira.lv, 2023)

### Appendix 40

Visual representation of Madara Cosmetics competitors' marketing communication







Rīga, 2023. gada 5.septembris

Atsauksme par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un uzņēmumu zīmolvedības kontekstā:

# The Concept of Masculinity in Brand Personality and It's Impact on Advertising Effectiveness Based on Consumer Perception

Toms Kreicbergs

Rīgas Tehniskā Universitāte, Inženierekonomikas un vadības fakultāte, Uzņēmējdarbības inženierijas un vadības institūts

Atsauksme sastāv no divām dalām:

- 1. daļa: Informācijas lapa par pētniecisko procesu un promocijas darba rezultātu aprobāciju un prezentāciju
- 2. daļa: Atsauksmes apliecinājums ar parakstiem

#### 1. daļa: Informācijas lapa

Informācija par doktorantu un pētniecisko procesu:

Promocijas pētījuma **mērkis:** 

Izprast vīrišķības nozīmi zīmola personībā un reklāmā, izanalizēt auditorijas (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīrišķību reklāmā un radīt metodiku vīrišķīgas zīmola personības izveidē.

#### Promocijas pētījuma metodes:

- literatūras par zīmola personības dimensiju un zīmola arhetipu teorētiskā analīze
- literatūras par vīrišķības tipu un vīrišķības nozīmes reklāmā teorētiskā analīze
- kvantitatīvo datu aptauja un A/B tests analizējot patērētāju (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīriškību reklāmā
- fokuss grupas interviju analīze analizējot patērētāju (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīrišķību reklāmā
- Iegūto rezultātu analīze un teorētiskā interpretācija

Promocijas pētījuma prezentācijas un nodošana aprobācijai uzņēmumam Madara Cosmetics:

Tikšanās un prezentācijas ilgums: aptuveni pus otra stunda stunda, laiks: 03.08.2023 pulksten 15:00

Informācija un konfidencialitāte: Iegūtā informācija tiks izmantota promocijas darba rezultātu analīzes procesā, atsaucoties uz saskaņotajiem informācijas avotiem

**2. daļa . Atsauksme** par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un lietderību zīmolvedības kontekstā

Madara Cosmetics vārdā apliecinu Toma Kreicberga promocijas darba rezultātu aprobāciju un izmantošanu zīmolu stratēģiju izstrādē.

Toma Kreicberga promocijas darba izstrāde notika vienlaikus ar MÁDARA zīmola jaunās produktu līnijas ''HIS'' vīriešiem izstrādi, līdz ar to autora darba rezultāti bija praktiski integrējami arī uzņēmuma inovāciju un mārketinga darbu procesā. Tā kā MÁDARA zīmola stratēģijas izstrādē jau ir izmantota zīmola personības arhetipa teorija, tad jo īpaši saistoši uzņēmuma zīmola mārketinga un komunikācijas komandai bija iepazīties ar darba autora izstrādāto zīmola personības arhetipu metodoloģiju, kas iekļauj tieši maskulinitātes konceptu un uzņēmuma praktiskā darbā arī pielietot piedāvātos 7 soļus vīrišķīga zīmola izstrādē un integrēšanā. Promocijas darbā aprakstītā MÁDARA zīmola vīriešu līnijas konkurentu analīze ir sniegusi būtisku informāciju plānotās produktu līnijas ''HIS'' pozicionējumam un mārketinga komunikācijai. MÁDARA jaunās vīriešu līnijas ''HIS'' mārketinga komunikācijas galvenie izmantojamie komponenti ir plānoti tiešais mārketings un reklāma sociālos medijos kā Instagram un Facebook. Uzņēmuma mārketinga un e-komercijas departaments ir pielietojis promocijas darbā piedāvātās metodes (statistikas analīze, sentimenta analīze) jaunā vīriešu zīmola reklāmas efektivitātes un patērētāju uztveres izvērtēšanai.

Ar cieņu,

Kristiāna Antonišķe

Madara Cosmetics mārketinga vadītāja

Rīga, 2023. gada 31.augusts

Atsauksme par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un uzņēmumu zīmolvedības kontekstā:

# The Concept of Masculinity in Brand Personality and It's Impact on Advertising Effectiveness Based on Consumer Perception

Toms Kreicbergs

Rīgas Tehniskā Universitāte, Inženierekonomikas un vadības fakultāte, Uzņēmējdarbības inženierijas un vadības institūts

Atsauksme sastāv no divām dalām:

- 1. daļa: Informācijas lapa par pētniecisko procesu un promocijas darba rezultātu aprobāciju un prezentāciju
- 2. daļa: Atsauksmes apliecinājums ar parakstiem

#### 1. daļa: Informācijas lapa

Informācija par doktorantu un pētniecisko procesu:

Promocijas pētījuma **mērkis:** 

Izprast vīrišķības nozīmi zīmola personībā un reklāmā, izanalizēt auditorijas (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīrišķību reklāmā un radīt metodiku vīrišķīgas zīmola personības izveidē.

#### Promocijas pētījuma metodes:

- literatūras par zīmola personības dimensiju un zīmola arhetipu teorētiskā analīze
- literatūras par vīrišķības tipu un vīrišķības nozīmes reklāmā teorētiskā analīze
- kvantitatīvo datu aptauja un A/B tests analizējot patērētāju (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīriškību reklāmā
- fokuss grupas interviju analīze analizējot patērētāju (vecumā no 18 līdz 30) uzskatus par vīrišķību reklāmā
- Iegūto rezultātu analīze un teorētiskā interpretācija

Promocijas pētījuma prezentācijas un nodošana aprobācijai komunikācijas un mediju aģentūrai

WKND:

Tikšanās un prezentācijas ilgums: aptuveni viena stunda, laiks: 09.08.2023 pulksten 14:00

Informācija un konfidencialitāte: Iegūtā informācija tiks izmantota promocijas darba rezultātu

analīzes procesā, atsaucoties uz saskaņotajiem informācijas avotiem

2. dala . Atsauksme par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un lietderību

zīmolvedības kontekstā

Reklāmas un stratēģiskās aģentūras WKND vārdā apliecinu Toma Kreicberga promocijas darba

rezultātu aprobāciju un izmantošanu zīmolu stratēģiju izstrādē.

Promocijas darbs sniedz lielisku ieskatu vīrišķības uztverē un izpratnē, kas ir īpaši svarīgi

mūsdienu informācijas telpas un patērētāju aktīvisma kontekstā. Metode apstiprināja un deva

pārliecību par mūsu stratēģisko vīziju Virši zīmola stratēģijas atjaunošanā. Virši pēdējo gadu

laikā ir mainījis gan mērkauditorijas, gan produkta sortimentu, gan seko aktuālajām patērētāju

tendencēm, promocijas darba metodika atkārtoti apstiprināja nepieciešamās izmainas zīmola

stratēģijā. Iepriekš izteikti klasiskas vīriškības virziens tika mainīts uz hibrīda vīriškību, lai

veiksmīgāk uzrunātu mērķauditoriju, apgūtu jaunus tirgus segmentus, kā arī veiksmīgāk

veidotu uzņēmuma reputāciju. Īpaši aktuāla šī darba metodika ir ilgtspējas (ESG) kontekstā,

kas ir kļuvusi par svarīgu uzņēmumu reputācijas un biznesa komponenti. Dzimumu lomas

atveidošana zīmola un reklāmas materiālos arī ir daļa no sociālās atbildības jautājumiem.

Manuprāt, šī darba metodika uzņēmumiem ļauj labāk saprast kā atainot vīrišķību, nepārkāpjot

mūsdienu sociāli ētiskās normas.

Ar cieņu,

Edgars Pētersons

WKND partneris un stratēģis

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Rīga, 2023. gada 20.augusts

Atsauksme par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un uzņēmumu zīmolvedības kontekstā:

# The Concept of Masculinity in Brand Personality and It's Impact on Advertising Effectiveness Based on Consumer Perception

Toms Kreicbergs

Rīgas Tehniskā Universitāte, Inženierekonomikas un vadības fakultāte, Uzņēmējdarbības inženierijas un vadības institūts

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- Iegūto rezultātu analīze un teorētiskā interpretācija

Promocijas pētījuma prezentācijas un nodošana aprobācijai komunikācijas un mediju aģentūrai

Dentsu Latvia:

Tikšanās un prezentācijas ilgums: aptuveni viena stunda, laiks: 10.08.2023 pulksten 15:00

Informācija un konfidencialitāte: Iegūtā informācija tiks izmantota promocijas darba rezultātu

analīzes procesā, atsaucoties uz saskaņotajiem informācijas avotiem

2. dala . Atsauksme par promocijas pētījuma rezultātu praktisko novitāti un lietderību

zīmolvedības kontekstā

Dentsu Latvia vārdā apliecinu Toma Kreicberga promocijas darba rezultātu aprobāciju un

praktisko novitāti, integrējot to zīmolvedības stratēģijās.

Promocijas darbā iegūtie rezultāti ir pārnesami un efektīvi pielietojami dažādu zīmolu

zīmolvedības stratēģijās satura vadībai dažādās sociālo un citu mediju platformās. Promocijas

darba praktiskā novitāte ir metodika zīmola veidošanā vīrišķības kontekstā, izšķirot zīmola

personības analīzi, mērkauditorijas izpēti un novērtējumu. Izstrādātā metodika pielietota un

efektīvi nodrošina sekojošus zīmola komunikācijas rezultātus: auditorijas sasniedzamību,

iesaiste, kā arī zīmola komunikācijas atpazīstamību. Metodikas izstrādātais ietvars ļauj

operatīvi piemērot katru metodikas soli un novērtēt efektivitāti. Promocijas darba rezultātu

aprobācija apliecina rezultātu piemērojamību dažādu zīmolu komunikācijas stratēģiju izstrādē.

Kā īpašu metodikas praktisko novitāti var minēt efektīvu metodikas pielietošanu, izstrādājot

un īstenojot digitālā satura veidotāju jeb ietekmētāju stratēģijas zīmolu komunikācijā.

Detalizēta zīmola personības un auditorijas izpēte ļauj efektīvi izvēlēties atbilstošāko un

auditorijai rezonējošu digitālā satura veidotāju zīmola veicināšanā dažādās mediju vidēs.

Izstrādātās metodikas soļi ļauj to piemērot dažādu industriju pārstāvētu zīmolu veidošanai un

vadīšanai.

Ar cieņu,

Linda Saulite

Dentsu Latvia valdes locekle

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Toms Kreicbergs was born in 1990 in Dobele. He obtained a Bachelor's degree in Business administration (2017) and a Masters's degree in Brand Management and Marketing Communication (in 2019) from the University of Southern Denmark. He was a marketing manager in Danish companies Standout Web (2013) and Syd Dynamics (2017). Since 2019, he has been a lecturer and researcher at the Riga Technical University. His academic interests are marketing, branding, social responsibility, and business ethics.