

## Revealing Masculinity: A Social Semiotic Analysis Of Pakistani Print Media Advertisements

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### Abstract

*This study explores how advertisements in Pakistani print media portray masculinity. Advertisements can be seen as linguistic expressions that reflect social behavior, that involve the diverse ways in which individuals take part in society. This research makes use of a thorough analysis based on Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic Theory of Communication. Using basic random sampling, 50 advertisements from print media have been gathered for this study. Six of these advertisements have been chosen for further examination. The purpose of this study is to look into how these advertisements challenge, redefine or reinforce conventional ideas about masculinity. Using Messerschmidt's (1993) types of masculinities and semiotic analysis, the study looks at how masculinity is portrayed in Pakistani print media. The findings present a detailed portrayal of masculinity, with advertisements that simultaneously challenge established gender norms and reinforce traditional standards. This study illuminates the intricate relationship between how the media portrays gender and how society perceives it, providing valuable understanding of how masculinity is evolving in present-day Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** Advertisements, print advertisements, masculinity, gender norms, social semiotics.

### Introduction

A significant part of how people determine and portray their social roles in today's developed and contemporary society comes from the media (Brooks & Hébert, 2006). The media significantly shapes perceptions of reality and contributes to the development of gender roles. Advertisements are a distinct form of media discourse that strategically use language, visuals, and other semiotic resources to promote products, services, or ideas to a target audience (Williamson, 1978). Any form of media that is printed on paper or other tangible materials is referred to as print media. According to Shabir et al. (2015) for many years, print media has been a dependable and popular source of communication. It enables broad distribution and can connect with a large audience. Print media, encompassing

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periodicals, newspapers, flyers, and brochures, has been a trusted means of communication.

Over time, scholars have increasingly focused on the portrayal of gender in media, especially in Western cultures. Hunold, Vestergaard, and Schröder (1986) conducted studies that emphasize the prevalent misconceptions associated with women. Academics have extensively examined the correlation between gender portrayal and advertisements since the 1970s. Courtney and Whipple (1983) found that advertisements frequently depict men and women in conventional, stereotypical roles. Despite the evolution of gender norms, advertisers persistently rely on these outdated notions. Advertisements can be seen as discursive representations of social practice, which refers to the various ways in which individuals engage within society (Fairclough, 1993).

According to Nasir (2017), gender stereotypes typically depict men as more significant and influential than women. Although there have been numerous studies conducted in Western nations on the marginalization of women, there is a lack of research on the portrayal of gender in Pakistan's print media. Studies conducted in past prioritize the examination of women's marginalization over the exploration of masculinity.

This study, "Revealing Masculinity: A Social Semiotic Analysis of Pakistani Print Media Advertisements," aims to fill a notable gap in the existing body of knowledge by examining masculinity in Pakistani print advertisements. This study investigates the portrayal of men in print media advertisement in Pakistan, using Kress and Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic Theory of Communication as a framework. The analysis is based on a dataset consisting of fifty advertisements that were gathered from print media sources over a two month period (September to October) in 2023. A total of six advertisements has been selected randomly using a simple random sampling technique for in-depth examination.

The notions of masculinity in Pakistani society and culture are always evolving to align with the current realities. This study examines instances in advertisement where traditional masculine roles are altered to show these subtle changes. The findings of this study have two key implications: they enhance one's understanding of the intricate relationship between media representations and societal norms, and they offer insights into the changing dynamics of Pakistani society. Additionally, the study incorporates Messerschmidt's (1993) four categories of masculinity—dominant, subordinated, autonomous, and egalitarian—to examine the various expressions of masculinity in these advertisements.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the depiction of masculinity in Pakistani print media. The research aims to demonstrate the manner in which traditional notions of masculinity are either maintained, challenged, or conserved by closely examining these advertisements. It also demonstrates the type of masculinity showed in these advertisements.

### **Literature Review**

According to Marshall & Morreale (2018), advertisement is a powerful tool that uses many strategies to elicit emotions, appeal to logic, and create compelling narratives in order to engage and persuade its target audience. Advertisements, especially the graphics on the cover page, are used to convey messages and create relationships between the producers, viewers, and the world shown in the advertisements. Singh (2023) also claimed that advertisements use a variety of media, such as words, images, and audio, to persuade consumers and evoke a range of emotional and cognitive reactions.

According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), advertisements exert a significant influence on moulding society viewpoints on race, gender, and body image. The

combination of written and visual elements exerts a substantial influence on both individual behaviors and societal standards.

Print media advertisements utilize signs and symbols to establish and depict social connections. In order to fully grasp the meaning and influence of these advertisements, it is crucial to have a thorough understanding of semiotic aspects such as symbols, signs, and codes. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) argue that advertisements are complex as they can derive inspiration from and influence established cultural references and trends. Advertisements exert significant influence on societal transformation as they serve as both boosters of products and agents for cultural change (Mitchell, 2005). They act as agents of socialization, shaping society's perception and construction of gender while maintaining universal norms for gender representation (Navarro-Beltrá & Llaguno, 2012).

In addition, advertisements often reinforce patriarchal stereotypes by portraying males as having greater authority and assuming dominant roles in relationships (Goffman, 1979). This is achieved by repeatedly depicting men and women in graphics that viewers see as being reflective of the entire population. These representations have an impact on viewers' attitudes, beliefs, and cognitive norms (McCracken, 1986).

Popular media often depicts men as possessing authority, exhibiting independence, and frequently being isolated (Kimmel, 2007). According to the Longman Dictionary (1995), masculinity refers to the characteristics and qualities that are typically linked to men. Whitehead and Barrett (2001) defined masculinity as a set of behaviors, expressions, and traditions that are typically associated with men and are distinct from femininity in cultural norms. Societal norms and expectations, especially media portrayals of gender, shape masculinities and masculine bodies (Goffman, 1979). These images generally promote male dominance, violence, and emotional restraint, according to Connell (1995).

Zafar et al. (2022) concluded that paparazzi magazine covers show Pakistani masculinity as confidence, grooming, support, and cultural validation. These depictions reflect social norms. Kilbourne (1999) claims that numerous advertisements contradict these expectations by depicting masculinity differently. Harti (2019) also argues that the idea of masculinity is evolving and being depicted differently than it has in the past.

Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) research has enabled us to comprehend how semiotic elements such as color, framing, and layout play a role in creating meaning in communication. This method is particularly important when considering the portrayal of men in Pakistani print advertisements. Here are some of the previously mentioned works:

Najafian & Ketabi (2011) conducted research that validates the efficacy of the Social Semiotics method put out by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) for analyzing the language elements of advertisements. The study explores how advertisers use textual and visual cues as social semiotics to communicate persuasive messages based on ideological assumptions, highlighting the importance of semiotics in understanding the relationship between advertisement and ideology, as illustrated by 'Time' magazine. The findings demonstrate that social semiotic references play a vital role in comprehending how advertisements mirror and influence cultural values and attitudes.

Amir & Seddiki (2016) in their study investigated the depiction of women in fragrance advertisements in Algeria and Britain, using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) Social Semiotic framework. The research analyses eight advertisements, four from each country. The study used a qualitative technique to analyze many variables, including gaze, social distance, picture size and location, salience, and framing, in accordance with the principles of the Grammar of Visual Design. This research shows that semiotic analysis is crucial for understanding how advertisements' visual elements convey ideological and cultural meanings.

Dahlal & Fahem (2020) carried out a study that investigates the portrayal of gender roles in Algerian and American billboard advertisements. The study intends to analyze twelve photos, with six derived from each country, obtained from Google. Its objective is to analyze the visual portrayal of men and women and compare these depictions across the two environments. The research adopts a qualitative approach, using Goffman's (1979) Social Semiotic Approach and Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Visual Grammar. The data shows that gender stereotypes are used in both Algerian and American advertisements. Men are usually shown to be strong, active, and in charge, while women are shown to be submissive, appealing, and soft.

In a study undertaken by Sudi (2024), semiotic theory has been employed to categorize advertisements by examining the signals, codes, and meanings they communicate. Semiotics, the discipline that examines signs and symbols, provides a thorough structure for comprehending the conveyed meanings in advertisements. The research methodology entails a comprehensive examination of literature, gathering information from many sources such as books, academic papers, and scholarly publications. The study employs a semiotic approach to analyze the intricate details of advertisements, offering distinctive perspectives on their persuasive and influential functions. The results highlight the critical significance of semiotics in understanding the nuanced features of advertisements.

### **Research Methodology**

Qualitative methodology has been used in this investigation. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2017), qualitative research methods are a collection of inquiry techniques used in the social sciences and other areas. These methods concentrate on dissecting and comprehending the complex structure of human behaviors, experiences, and occurrences. The Social Semiotic Theory of Communication, developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), has been applied for the purpose of semiotic analysis. The data of 50 advertisements has been collected from September 1, 2023, to October 31, 2023, from Pakistani print media sources, including newspapers and magazines. The simple random sampling technique has been used to choose six advertisements for detailed analysis. A simple random sampling approach, as described by Walliman (2017), is used to ensure each member of the population has an equal chance of selection. Then the gathered data has been subsequently examined utilizing the Social Semiotic methodology put forward by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), which has been described next.

The importance of various semiotic resources in the meaning-making and communication processes is emphasized in Gunther Kress's Social Semiotics Theory of Communication (Kress, 2009). This theory, which was put forth by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), focuses on the analysis of signs and the social and cultural connotations they have when it comes to communication. The framework makes it easier to analyze symbolic values and meanings in language, visuals, and gestures, among other forms of communication, in the context of larger social processes (Wang et al., 2021). Scollon & Scollon (2003) state that social semiotics is particularly receptive to the intricate interplay between ideology and power that exists in communication.

Messerschmidt (1993) identified four types of masculinity, which have been analyzed in the present study of advertisements. These types include: Dominant Masculinity, just like Connell's hegemonic masculinity, stresses control, violence, and emotional independence. Men gain power and status from this masculinity. It is also known as toxic masculinity as it enforces gender stereotypes and can cause harm. Subordinated Masculinity defines men who follow gender roles but lack power. Homosexual, working-class, and racial minorities may encounter gender, race, socioeconomic position, and sexual orientation discrimination. Men who observe such masculinity lack social power. Autonomous Masculinity includes independence, emotional openness, and gender rejection.

Autonomous males challenge gender norms, have unconventional families, and work outside of masculinity. They deviate from tradition. And Egalitarian Masculinity shows men who promote gender equality and challenge power structures. They fight discrimination and advance gender equality. Even while individuals benefiting from gender power arrangements object, they promote gender equality and justice.

### **Analysis**

Following is the analysis of these advertisements.

#### **Advertisement 1**



Figure 1: Veet Man

The Veet Man advertisement, featured in Dawn Newspaper, showcases Veet, a popular brand for hair removal products, specifically designed for men. The advertisement's analysis focuses on the construction and representation of masculinity in the context of the Pakistani advertisements, using two theoretical perspectives.

#### **Veet Man: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

The advertisement features a well-groomed male model on the left and the product and "For a long-lasting clean look" on the right. Byrne & Milestone (2023) define "NEW" as a change. Thus, the "NEW" above the product box underlines change in this advertisement. The model's confident attitude and direct stare convey confidence and attractiveness. This composition follows Kress and van Leeuwen's framework, presenting the model as ideal and the product as wanted. Bright, contrasting colors like the orange backdrop and blue and white lettering indicate modernity and cleanliness, while strong lighting spotlights the model and product, making them stand out and credible. According to Peng et al. (2022), advertisements' color choices match their themes. By targeting men with a female-marketed product, the advertisement promotes modern masculinity, including grooming and selfcare. This coherent visual unit conveys the product's promise and meets modern male grooming requirements. The social semiotic analysis also shows that the advertisement employs verbal and visual symbols to create a multidimensional masculinity that violates norms, promoting male hair removal and expanding masculinity. It challenges the male stereotype of hair by portraying a confident man promoting a hair removal product, as Dixon & Rantala (2015) claimed in their study that body and facial hair are male characteristics. It also develops societal views on male aesthetics and selfpresentation, which aligns with the quality of modern man as stated by Byrne & Milestone (2023) in their work. Modern consumers that prioritize self-care and authenticity would like this masculinity strategy's inclusivity and diversity.

#### **Veet Man: Type of Masculinity**

Autonomous Masculinity is shown in the Veet Men advertisement. The advertisement breaks gender norms by showing male hair removal product. This defiance represents Autonomous Masculinity, which promotes independence and rejects gender norms (Scheibling, 2014).

### Advertisement 2



Figure 2: Bold Body Spray

This Bold Body Spray advertisement has been taken from Family Magazine. Bold Body Spray is a brand that offers a range of fragrant body sprays for men. This advertisement has been analyzed on the basis of two perspective given below:

#### **Bold Body Spray: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

Masculinity is shown as confident, smart, and adaptable in this advertisement. According to Schubert (2021), the tagline and visual choices give the advertisement meaning. Bold's advertisement text and visuals symbolize masculinity as change, creativity, and elegance, reflecting a modern perspective of masculinity. According to Pratama & Wenerda (2022), sophisticated masculinity in contemporary society is defined by the presence of rugged facial hair, well-groomed hair, and a discerning overall appearance. This advertisement showcases a similar male model. The slogan "Be bold change the game" promotes masculinity by emphasizing the qualities of boldness and transformation. Yancey et al. (2022) say that the use of imperative structure like "Be bold" inspires courage and confidence. Thus, in this advertisement this imperative structure links masculinity to courage and confidence. Here, high-quality European perfumes and a stylish image are linked to masculinity, showing how global trends affect local masculinity. Harti (2019) indicates that cultural attitudes are adapting to worldwide norms of masculine beauty and self-representation, accepting several masculinities. While the advertisement promotes masculine stereotypes, its message of transition and refinement reveals a new masculinity in today's culture. In addition to power and toughness, it argues that masculinity includes boldness and the desire to change.

Cheong & Kaur (2015) also found that new men are prepared to change.

#### **Bold Body Spray: Type of Masculinity**

The Bold Body Spray advertisement shows strong masculinity centered on control, transformation, power, and status. According to Wojnicka (2021), power and status are considered strong style of masculinity. Therefore, this advertisement fits under Dominant Masculinity.

### Advertisement 3



Figure 3: Servis Tyres

This advertisement has been extracted from The Nation newspaper. Servis Industries Limited is a renowned company in Pakistan that specializes in manufacturing high-quality tires. The advertisement focuses on promoting their tyre (wheel) products. This

advertisement has been examined using two theoretical approaches, which have been described below:

### **Servis Tyres: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

A particular message can be understood by interpreting signs and symbols in an advertisement with the use of the Social Semiotic Theory of Communication. The phrase "Because you cannot afford to fall!" translates to "Kiyu kay tum ghirna afford nahi kar saktay!" It highlights an essential characteristic of masculinity in numerous civilizations, including Pakistani culture. The advertisement depicts the male figure as the main provider for his family, displaying characteristics that Elliott (2016) defines as crucial to masculinity that is reliability and durability. The phrase reinforces traditional gender norms by implying strength and reliability. According to Ali et al. (2022), the emphasis on bravery and conquering challenges is consistent with the social norm that men should be the major breadwinners and heads of their families. The idea that men "cannot afford to fall" emphasizes how much society values men's fortitude, resiliency, and dependability. The advertisement offers a comprehensive picture of a man's duties by depicting male as the family's emotional and financial rock. Traditional gender standards are reinforced by the idea that men must be strong and courageous due to their role as the primary provider and the embodiment of infallibility. The father's foundational role inside the household is further emphasized by his portrayal as the family's pillar, strengthened by his family's reassuring gaze.

### **Servis Tyres: Type of Masculinity**

The advertisement reinforces dominant masculinity by promoting family stability and safety. As family breadwinner, he has resilience and emotional control which is a masculine attribute. Kolsky (2020) has mentioned such qualities to strong masculinity's emotional control and detachment. It emphasizes that males should always be strong and devoted, strengthening their power and provide for their families. This is a core part of strong masculinity, reflecting cultural expectations. Therefore, the advertisement reinforces gender roles, therefore promotes Hegemonic (dominant) Masculinity.

### **Advertisement 4**



Figure 4: Lemon Max

The source of this Lemon Max advertisement is Akhbare Jahan magazine. This product is a dishwashing bar called the Lemon Max Long bar. The following two theoretical viewpoints have been used to examine the advertisement:

### **Lemon Max: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

The advertisement for dishwashing soap, which shows a happy man, defies gender stereotypes by questioning the idea that women should perform all home duties. The man's upbeat attitude shows that he sees household work as shared responsibilities rather than a burden, which is consistent with Safonova's (2023) research showing that modern men find domestic chores enjoyable. This portrayal encourages a new idea of masculinity that incorporates involvement in the home, reflecting changing social dynamics in Pakistan. The advertisement challenges traditional power structures linked with domestic obligations and suggests a shift toward gender equality within the home by showing a man

confidently carrying out household tasks. In line with McGraw et al.'s (2021) definition of modern masculinity, it communicates that there is no stigma associated with men performing home duties, changing power dynamics and fostering a modern masculine identity that is at ease with traditionally feminine tasks. This new identity is approachable, involved in household affairs, and defies the traditional stoic and detached male archetype. Additionally, by proposing that dishwashing is not exclusively a woman's responsibility, as argued by Lasin and Panicker (2021), the advertisement disrupts traditional gender roles. Thus, the Lemon Max dishwashing bar advertisement uses signs and symbols to challenge conventional gender norms, establish new interpretations of masculinity, reflect evolving social and power dynamics, and help shape a modern male identity.

### **Lemon Max: Type of Masculinity**

The advertisement for Lemon Max product featuring a man challenges the gender prejudice that women do all the housework. This is a departure from traditional images and shows a shift in masculinity views. By showing a man doing housework, the advertisement challenges macho stereotypes. Positive and confident attitudes show that masculinity can coexist with home responsibilities and that men may handle household chores without shame; this attitude, therefore, leads to Egalitarian Masculinity. According to Eslen-Ziya et al. (2021), Egalitarian Masculinity fosters gender equality and shared obligations. Pakistani masculinity seems to have evolved from authoritative and controlling to progressive and inclusive.

### **Advertisement 5**



Figure 5: Harpic Bathroom Cleaner

This advertisement for Harpic Bathroom Cleaner has been sourced from the Dawn Newspaper. The advertisement features a product called Harpic, which is a toilet cleaning brand, indicating that the focus of the advertisement is on cleaning bathrooms. This advertisement has been examined using two theoretical perspectives. Each viewpoint has been examined below:

### **Harpic Bathroom Cleaner: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

The Harpic advertisement can be examined using social semiotics in order to understand how it conveys meaning through its use of multiple modes of communication. González (2005) believes that the choice of semiotic resources, including color, layout, and text, in every advertisement is carefully constructed to evoke particular responses from the audience. The phrase "2x better cleaning" in bold, uppercase characters makes an association between the product and its superior cleaning capability. Male representation in a domestic environment contradicts conventional notions about gender roles within the house; including a male model in an advertisement is consistent with Millard's (2009) research on defying cultural norms. According to Alpay Jeong (2022), the way a male figure is positioned in any advertisement talks about his position in society. Hence, the gestures that the male model makes in this advertisement go against traditional gender conventions. This presents him as a powerful figure in a field that is usually dominated by women. This indicates a shift in cultural viewpoints towards a more sophisticated perspective on gender roles. The advertisement challenges the traditional gender stereotypes that are commonly seen in Pakistan, where cleaning tasks are usually assigned



to women, as also pointed out by Iram et al. (2023). The advertisement implies that modern masculinity includes domestic tasks, traditionally associated with women. This portrayal aims to set a new standard in which men are actively involved in household duties, signaling a shift towards contemporary notions of masculinity.

### **Harpic Bathroom Cleaner: Type of Masculinity**

According to Messerschmidt's (1993) Four Masculinities, "Egalitarian Masculinity" is the one most closely linked to this advertisement. It shows the masculine figure promoting a household product, which deviates from the stereotypical roles associated with Dominant Masculinity. Instead of emphasizing control or emotional detachment, the advertisement supports a masculinity that is defined by a willingness to engage in activities that advance a fair distribution of home tasks. Eslen-Ziya et al. (2021), similarly, defined these attributes of Egalitarian Masculinity. This issue highlights a shift in Pakistani society toward the acceptance of egalitarian masculinity by supporting contemporary views on gender roles and participating in the establishment of power structures.

### **Advertisement 6**



Figure 4.4: UBL Digital Bank

This UBL (United Bank Limited) Digital Bank advertisement has been obtained from the Express Newspaper.

### **UBL Digital App: Social Semiotic Theory of Communication**

The advertisement depicts a contemporary, technology-oriented version of masculinity that places importance on simplicity in professional endeavors. In this setting, the perception of masculinity undergoes a transformation, shifting away from the traditional focus on physical exertion and resilience, and instead prioritizing intelligent problem-solving attitude and convenience. This modification is in line with the idea proposed by Roberts et al. (2022) that people nowadays prefer quick and effective solutions. The advertisement has a hierarchical structure, starting at the top with the UBL logo and Urdu lettering, moving down to icons and English text that highlight UBL Digital's characteristics, and finally ending with a man holding a smartphone at the bottom. The utilization of a light blue background can effectively communicate a sense of trust and trustworthiness, qualities that are crucial in the banking industry. The man is portrayed in a casual stance, resting on a sizable smartphone, symbolizing his ease and expertise with contemporary technology. The phrase "Sab asaan hai (Everything is Easy)" says UBL Digital's offerings are straightforward and user-friendly. Though the word does not specifically address masculinity, it suits the concept that contemporary men appreciate simplicity and speed. Historically, physical strength and the capacity to do hard labor were often connected with masculinity, according to Debra & Martin (2021). Modern males are perceived as individuals who are enthusiastic about embracing new technologies and endeavor to achieve a harmonious equilibrium between their professional and personal lives by

employing practical solutions. The concept suggests that contemporary male individuals prioritize cognitive exertion over physical labor, which is indicative of the global trend toward efficiency and convenience.

### **UBL Digital App: Type of Masculinity**

United Bank Limited promotes Autonomous Masculinity, which opposes gender roles. The advertisement shows a person using advanced internet banking services comfortably. Autonomous Masculinity encourages independence and gender disobedience by emphasizing efficiency, and strategy (Elliott et al., 2022). His digital confidence reflects his creative and adaptable manliness. The advertisement represents a new masculinity movement that empowers men to do many things.

### **Discussion**

Based on the analysis conducted in the previous part, in this section the researcher has discussed where masculinity is challenged, redefined, or persisted. The Veet Men advertisement subverts conventional gender norms by integrating grooming and self-care practices, commonly associated with femininity. The advertisement challenges established gender stereotypes by marketing a product historically targeted for women to males, promoting a more inclusive concept of masculinity that values personal hygiene and selfcare.

The Bold Body Spray advertisement redefines masculinity by portraying it as characterized by confidence, intelligence, and flexibility. This advertisement implies that contemporary masculinity encompasses not just strength and toughness, but also sophistication and innovation. It challenges conventional ideas by embracing transformation and cultivation. The Lemon Max advertisement challenges conventional gender norms by portraying a man joyfully participating in domestic tasks. The man's optimistic outlook on the task of dishwashing defies the preconception that household chores are solely the responsibility of women. This depiction promotes a fresh understanding of masculinity that encompasses engagement in domestic chores, reflecting the changing social dynamics in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the Harpic Bathroom Cleaner advertisement defies conventional gender preconceptions by showcasing a man model in a household environment. The advertisement challenges gender norms by featuring a man in a traditionally femaledominated role, suggesting that contemporary masculinity includes household duties. This portrayal reinforces a movement towards modern concepts of masculinity, in which men actively participate in domestic responsibilities, hence changing conventional gender norms. The UBL advertisement redefines masculinity as more flexible. It emphasizes the concept of a modern male who values easy and effective solutions rather than physical labor work.

On the other hand, the Servis Tyres advertisement strengthens conventional notions of masculinity by highlighting attributes such as responsibility and determination. The phrase "Because you cannot afford to fall!" highlights the responsibility of males as the primary breadwinners for their families, which aligns with traditional gender stereotypes. This portrayal upholds conventional masculine norms, highlighting qualities such as toughness and reliability.

In short, Pakistani print media advertisements utilize various strategies to question, subvert, and redefine conventional male roles. These advertisements demonstrate a changing perception of masculinity that is more comprehensive and flexible in response to contemporary social norms, including promoting personal care and grooming and encouraging men to engage in household activities.

Different types of masculinity, including Dominant, Subordinate, Autonomous, and Egalitarian Masculinities have been identified in the analysis. The Bold Body Spray and Service Tyre advertisements showcase a representation of Dominant Masculinity by highlighting elements such as control, transformation, power, and status. The theme of these advertisements conforms to conventional ideals of masculinity that prioritize physical power and dominance.

The Veet Man and UBL advertisements defy traditional gender norms and promote selfreliance as a means to emphasize Autonomous Masculinity. These advertisements challenge the misconception about rough and tough masculinity.

The advertisements for Lemon Max and Harpic Bathroom Cleaner both emphasize Egalitarian Masculinity by portraying men actively engaging in home chores. These depictions advocate for gender equality and the equitable sharing of responsibilities, implying that contemporary masculinity encompasses a balanced division of household chores.

These advertisements do not depict Subordinate Masculinity. Subordinate Masculinity can be depicted when men are portrayed in low-status positions and marginalized based on their race, socioeconomic status, or gender identity.

### Conclusion

In summary, these advertisements reflect a greater cultural trend of redefining masculinity to be more inclusive and diverse. These advertisements enrich the comprehension of viewers/readers on the contemporary definition of masculinity in Pakistani society by questioning conventional norms and advocating for alternative manifestations of male identity. This study highlights the impact of the media in influencing and mirroring society viewpoints on gender, with a specific focus on how advertisements could impact perceptions of masculinity and support gender equality.

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