Chapter 11

Re-Routing the Masculinity Myths in Bangladeshi Fashion Adverts: Identifying a New Wave among the Youths

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to focus on the impacts of some particular fashion adverts which are breaking the prevalent ideas regarding ‘the representation of men’ on Bangladeshi youths of different ages and areas by making a survey on the youths studying at different Bangladeshi universities. The media of the western countries are acquainted with these types of representation of men while the Bangladeshi media has let its viewers know about this lately through different advertisements specially fashion adverts. This new type of representation of men and “masculinity” or the emergence of “Metrosexual men” in the Bangladeshi media has its own impacts on the youths of Bangladesh whether it is about creating a new concept or it is only about dealing with the consumer culture. However, this chapter points to highlight on the fact that to what extent the concepts of the urban Bangladeshi youths (both male and female of different ages and areas) are molded by the emergence of this type of adverts in Bangladeshi media.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is dynamic that evolves with the passage of time. Thus, the definitions, concepts, psychology and the ability of acceptance change too. These days, culture is gradually getting involved with the social media platforms, and newer concepts of networking are coming into being every day. The viral ads have become one of the mediums of publicizing the products. By spreading the advertisements not only the brand names, information and the products are getting the publicity but also the concepts regarding various stuffs are getting different dimensions gradually (Huang et al, 2012). Through the viral ads spread in the social media networks, the ideas regarding fashion, the boundaries regarding gender are changing lately.

Likewise, the ideas of the representations of ‘men’ in the viral ads are re-forming with the identity of stereotyped idea of ‘men’. The definitions, myths and concepts regarding ‘men’ are gradually altering with the ideas regarding ‘fashion’ through the viral ads of different consumer products like clothes and accessories and other commodities (Nixon, S, 1997). However, this paper focuses on the ideas regarding masculinity which is changing these days through the viral ads which are circulated in the social media networks in Bangladesh.

This chapter aims to focus on the impact of some particular fashion adverts on Bangladeshi youths of different ages and areas. It also focuses on the aspect that whether there are new ideas or concepts regarding “masculinity” is creating through the adverts and what the impacts of these adverts are on today’s youths by making a survey on the youths studying at different universities of Bangladesh. It seems that these adverts are breaking the prevalent concepts regarding the representation of men in media. The media of the western countries are acquainted with these types of representation of men while the Bangladeshi media has let its viewers know about this lately. This new type of representation of men and “masculinity” in the Bangladeshi media has its own impact on the youths of Bangladesh whether it is about creating a new concept or it is only about dealing with the consumer culture. However, this chapter points to highlight on the fact that to what extent the concepts of the urban Bangladeshi youths (both male and female of different ages and areas) are molded by the emergence of this type of adverts in Bangladeshi media.

It is an analytical, qualitative field research in the field of Cultural Studies. Therefore, it requires both empirical study and library research. This chapter takes the help of some specific adverts shown in the Bangladeshi media which can create some scopes to re-channel the common notions regarding masculinity in terms of tradition, trends, professional jobs, domestic chores and language. To accomplish the research, a survey is conducted among the Dhaka living youths of different ages and areas of Bangladesh who are studying at different Universities and affluent. This chapter also studies different feminist, Psychoanalytic and other theories apart from the term and use of the concept of the “distinctive new version of men” presented by Sean Nixon (1997) and “the re-gazing of masculinity” (in terms of Bangladesh) presented by Hossain and Hossain (2011).

The aim of the chapter is fourfold. The first section deals with the “Operational Definition and Theoretical Frameworks” which discusses about the different definitions regarding “masculinity” and shows the different faces of masculinity. It also investigates the background and the scenario of Bangladesh. The second section investigates the scenario of Bangladesh regarding the title of the chapter through a survey. The third section analyses the survey and confers about the impacts on both male and female youths of Bangladesh. Finally, it discusses about the scope for further research in the related areas and in conclusion it summarizes the major discussion.

**BACKGROUND: “MYTHS OF MASCULINITY” AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA**

**“The Myths of Masculinity”**

According to Norman Mailer (1966), “Masculinity is not something given to you, but something you gain. And you gain it by winning small battles with honor.” This single sentence is not enough to define masculinity; but it simply represents the main idea that “masculinity” is not the “natural behavior of a