



Representation of Toxic Masculinity in Extra Joss Advertisements: A Multimodal Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how toxic masculinity is represented in Extra Joss advertisements on Instagram, particularly those featuring the tagline “Laki Buktikan.” It explores how visual and textual elements construct and reinforce harmful masculine ideals in Indonesian media. Using Terry A. Kupers’ (2005) framework, the analysis focuses on traits such as homophobia, greed, and violent domination. Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) visual grammar framework is also applied to assess meaning-making through representational, interactive, and compositional metafunctions. Employing a qualitative approach with Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), the study analyses twelve selected Instagram advertisements. The findings reveal that Extra Joss ads frequently promote toxic masculine traits through aggressive postures, stoic

expressions, and action-oriented slogans. These elements normalize emotional suppression, dominance, and relentless performance as desirable male characteristics. The study concludes that the advertisements contribute to the construction and normalization of toxic masculinity by combining verbal and visual strategies to promote a narrow and rigid masculine identity.

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INTRODUCTION

In contemporary media, advertisements function not only as marketing tools but also as platforms for shaping and reinforcing cultural values, including gender identity. In the Indonesian context, representations of masculinity are often framed through

notions of strength, dominance, and emotional restraint traits closely associated with what Terry A. Kupers (2005) identifies as toxic masculinity. One prominent example is the energy drink brand Extra Joss. Whose Instagram campaign “Laki Buktikan” constructs an idealized masculine image rooted in physical power, assertiveness, and emotional silence. These advertisements rely heavily on both visual and textual elements to communicate implicit ideologies of what it means to be a “real man.”

Advertising plays a powerful role in not only reflecting societal values but also shaping them, particularly in digital environments where content circulates rapidly and widely. The portrayal of masculinity in consumer media is rarely neutral; it often reflects dominant ideologies that define and restrict gender roles. Energy drink advertisements, with their emphasis on stamina, performance, and toughness, are particularly fertile ground for reinforcing hypermasculine ideals. In such campaigns, masculinity is equated with physical endurance, emotional suppression, and unrelenting drive qualities that may appeal to target consumers but simultaneously exclude alternative forms of male identity.

This study explores how Extra Joss advertisements construct toxic masculinity through multimodal strategies. It applies Kupers’ (2005) framework of toxic masculinity focusing on traits such as homophobia, violent domination, greed, and misogyny as well as Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) visual grammar to analyze how meaning is built through image, text, and layout. By investigating how these elements work together to represent masculinity, the research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of how gender ideologies are constructed and maintained in Indonesian digital advertising.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) to examine how toxic masculinity is constructed in Extra Joss Instagram advertisements. MCDA allows for a detailed exploration of how visual and verbal elements interact to produce ideological meaning. This approach is well-suited for analyzing complex cultural texts like advertisements, where layers of meaning are often embedded in visual cues, text, and design. The study followed a qualitative case study methodology, which enables a contextual, in-depth investigation of media artifacts within a specific cultural setting (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The methodology

was further supported by Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theory of visual grammar and Kupers' (2005) toxic masculinity framework.

The data consisted of twelve Instagram advertisements posted by @extrajoss_id selected through purposive sampling based on the inclusion of the tagline "Laki Buktikan." These posts featured strong visual associations with masculine ideals, including physical strength, emotional restraint, and performance-driven imagery. Data collection involved screenshotting selected Instagram posts, preserving visual components and captions for in-depth analysis. Five advertisements were examined in detail in the findings section, while the remaining were used to support thematic patterns in the appendix.

The analytical process was structured in five stages: (1) close reading and documentation of visual and textual elements in each post, including layout, gaze, composition, slogans, and hashtags; (2) identification of masculinity markers using Kupers' toxic masculinity traits such as violent domination, homophobia, greed, and emotional repression; (3) multimodal analysis using Kress and van Leeuwen's three metafunctions—representational (depiction of actions, poses, symbols), interactive (viewer engagement, distance, gaze), and compositional (layout, salience, framing); (4) linking visual grammar with ideological content to assess how gender norms are naturalized; and (5) drawing interpretations and conclusions from recurring semiotic patterns.

Each advertisement was examined through an integrated lens, connecting Kupers' framework with visual grammar components. For instance, a muscular male figure shown crushing a can with an intense gaze was analyzed as a multimodal construction of violent domination, combining aggressive posture, central image placement, bold colors, and confrontational gaze. This ensured not only surface-level description but also deeper ideological interpretation.

RESULTS

Toxic Masculinity

A. Greed



Figure 1. Greed Aspect of Toxic Masculinity

The advertisement depicts a young man confidently working at a laptop with a glass of Extra Joss, surrounded by visuals like “Revision List” and “Due Deadline,” under the slogan “Laki Buktikan!” (“Prove it, man!”). The imagery and text construct a high-pressure setting, promoting the idea that being a man means staying productive and unfazed by stress. Interpreted through Kupers’ (2005) lens, this ad reflects the **greed aspect of toxic masculinity**, not in terms of materialism, but as an obsession with performance and constant achievement. The portrayal aligns with the notion that masculinity is defined by emotional suppression and the ability to endure pressure without vulnerability or rest.

B. Violent Domination



Figure 2. Violent Domination Aspect of Toxic Masculinity

The advertisement features a man in tactical gear, smiling confidently with clenched fists and an assertive stance, under the slogan “Energize Your 2025.” This imagery suggests readiness, dominance, and unwavering strength. Viewed through Kupers’ (2005) framework, the ad reflects the **violent domination aspect of toxic masculinity**, where control, physical power, and emotional restraint are portrayed as essential masculine traits. It promotes the idea that starting the year requires force and assertiveness, reinforcing a male ideal rooted in dominance rather than introspection or vulnerability.

C. Homophobia



Figure 3. Homophobia Aspect of Toxic Masculinity

The advertisement, featuring the slogan “Laki Tidak Bercerita, Tapi... Butuh Energy Extra!” (“Men don’t talk, but need extra energy!”), reinforces the **homophobia aspect of toxic masculinity**. Drawing from Kupers’ (2005) theory, the ad promotes emotional suppression as a masculine norm, implying that talking about feelings is unmanly. By discouraging vulnerability and emotional expression, the message upholds a hegemonic ideal where any deviation from stoic, controlled masculinity is stigmatized. This aligns with Kupers’ view that homophobia includes not only fear of homosexuality but also the rigid policing of male emotional behavior.

The findings reveal that Extra Joss advertisements prominently feature recurring traits of toxic masculinity as defined by Terry A. Kupers (2005), particularly homophobia,

violent domination, and greed. Among the twelve advertisements analyzed, homophobia emerged most frequently, identified in five ads, especially through the recurring slogan "Laki Tidak Bercerita" ("Men Don't Talk"). This expression promotes emotional repression and equates masculinity with stoicism and silence, aligning with Kupers' view that such suppression stems from fear of appearing feminine or weak. Violent domination, found in four advertisements, is conveyed through forceful visual imagery such as clenched fists, tactical stances, and rugged settings. These elements reinforce the idea that being a man means being physically powerful and unfazed by adversity. Greed, though less materialistic, appeared in three ads as the relentless drive for achievement and overperformance, promoted through slogans like "Tambah Fokus, Revisi Jalan Terus." These portrayals suggest that masculine worth is tied to productivity and endurance. Interestingly, misogyny another key trait in Kupers' framework was not explicitly observed. The rejection of femininity was more implicit, embedded in emotional suppression rather than overt disparagement of women.

Multimodal Analysis

Data 1



Figure 4. Extra Joss' Ads

1. Representational Metafunction:

- 1) Participants: Young man in outdoor clothing (backpack, walking posture) in the foreground. In the background, paragliders are visible, representing other adventurers. These are all human participants, not just textual.

- 2) Process: The man is walking confidently. This is a narrative actional process, showing movement and adventure.
 - 3) Circumstance: The setting includes rocky mountains and wide open skies, suggesting an outdoor, high-energy environment. The bright yellow background enhances the energy and optimism associated with adventure.
2. Interactive Metafunction
- 1) Contact: The man looks directly at the viewer. This is a demand image, it creates a direct relationship, inviting or challenging the viewer to join the activity or consume the product.
 - 2) Social Distance: Medium long-shot includes his upper body and part of the setting, suggesting a social yet dynamic relationship, not intimate, but inspiring and action-oriented.
 - 3) Modality: The image exhibits high modality vibrant yellow, detailed textures on clothing and background.
3. Compositional Metafunction
- 1) Information Value:
 - Top: Slogan and title text ("Lo Harus Tau ini Akitivitas Para Petualang!") = Ideal (what is promised).
 - Bottom: Call to action ("Laki Buktikan!") = Real (what should be done).
 - Center: The man = central focus, anchoring the message.
 - 2) Salience: The human figure is the most salient due to central position, size, and gaze. Bold text in red and black also draws attention. The yellow backdrop adds to the salience by reducing background distraction.
 - 3) Framing: The image has strong unity participants and background blend smoothly. The bright monochrome color field (yellow) frames and emphasis on all other elements without fragmentation.

The image effectively constructs an image of strength, adventure, and energy by applying the three visual metafunctions. Through a direct gaze (demand), active body posture, and a vibrant, high-modality setting, the image encourages viewers to identify with the adventurous lifestyle promoted by Extra Joss. The central placement of the participant, paired with bold textual elements, visually reinforces the brand's message of

empowerment and action. Visual design is not neutral but “offers resources for representing the world and for producing meaning” (p. 2), shaping how viewers engage with social and cultural ideas (Kress and van Leeuwen’s 2006)

Data 2



Figure 5. Extra Joss' Ads

1. Representational Metafunction

- 1) Participants: The primary representation of participant is a raised fist, symbolizing strength, power, and energy. It acts as a symbolic participant rather than a human figure with identity.
- 2) Process: The image uses a symbolic process the raised fist doesn't indicate action in motion, but stands for abstract qualities like empowerment and readiness. It visually represents the concept of “extra energy”.
- 3) Circumstance: The yellow, cracked background suggests impact or energy burst. The accompanying textual message (“Ga Butuh Motivasi, Butuhnya Extra Energy!”) sets the context as a cultural statement aimed at youths or the working generation.

2. Interactive Metafunction

- 1) Contact: There is no eye gaze as there is no human figure, shown that this is an offer image. It offers the symbolic content (energy) for the viewer to interpret and relate.
- 2) Social Distance: The close-up of the hand implies intimate distance, bringing the

viewer close to the symbol and enhancing emotional impact. It suggests closeness and urgency.

- 3) Modality: This is a high modality image, realistic hand texture, bright yellow, red tones, and strong contrast creates a vivid and impactful representation, common in commercial design for persuasive effect.

3. Compositional Metafunction

1) Information Value:

Top: Textual slogan (“Di Umur Sekarang...”) = Ideal (concept/message).

Center: Fist = Symbolic core (focus of the message).

Bottom: Call to action “Laki Buktikan!” = Real (call for viewer action).

- 2) Salience: The fist and bold red text (“Butuhnya Extra Energy!”) are the most salient elements, emphasized by size, placement, and color contrast.

- 3) Framing: The visual composition is tightly unifying the background color, fist, and typography are integrated to support a single meaning: power through Extra Joss.

This advertisement embodies symbolic power through the raised fist and bold typography. Without using human identity, it conveys a universal call to action asserting that strength, not mere motivation, is needed. Visual grammar allows symbolic elements to “communicate abstract ideas” through composition, placement, and modality (Kress and van Leeuwen’s 2006 p. 79). This image channels that theory to market energy as a necessity, not just an option.

In addition to thematic analysis, this study also applies Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) multimodal framework, focusing on representational, interactive, and compositional meanings. From the representational metafunction, males and symbolic visuals such as clenched fists or mountainous backdrops consistently depict strength, endurance, and ambition. The interactive metafunction reveals most ads using an “offer” image type, with characters not looking directly at viewers, reinforcing the masculine ideal as something to be observed and aspired to. In some cases, “demand” imagery is used through direct gazes, prompting viewers to embody masculine traits. The compositional metafunction shows consistent use of bold color schemes (red, yellow, black), central image positioning, and slogan placements that link ideals of energy, power, and masculinity. These multimodal strategies are not mere decoration they actively

construct and communicate hegemonic masculinity by fusing powerful imagery, color, layout, and text.

Overall, the advertisements work as a cohesive semiotic system, where text and visuals mutually reinforce ideals of toughness, silence, control, and overachievement. This combination normalizes toxic masculinity in subtle yet persuasive ways, showing how consumer media can shape gender norms through everyday visual culture.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated how toxic masculinity is constructed and promoted through Extra Joss advertisements in Indonesia by analyzing multimodal elements using Kupers' (2005) theory and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar. The key findings indicate that traits such as violent domination, homophobia, and greed are consistently represented and framed as ideal masculine values. Slogans like "Laki Tidak Bercerita" and visual cues such as clenched fists, stoic expressions, action poses, and intense color palettes reinforce a narrow masculine identity that values silence, strength, and dominance over vulnerability or emotional expression. Rather than simply reflecting existing societal norms, these advertisements actively participate in shaping and reinforcing them. By repeatedly presenting emotionally repressed, physically assertive, and success-driven male figures, the ads normalize toxic masculinity in everyday contexts. The alignment between text and image is central to this construction, where linguistic slogans are reinforced by matching visual codes to create a persuasive ideological message.

The use of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) metafunctions further illustrates how masculinity is structured multimodally. Representational elements highlight physical power and control, interactive elements distance the viewer to suggest aspiration, and compositional elements center masculine traits as the focal point of meaning. This strategic combination makes toxic ideals appear natural and desirable.

Additionally, when contrasted with contemporary shifts in masculinity in global advertising such as the integration of vulnerability and self-care the Extra Joss campaigns stand out for their rigid, performance-based portrayal. Studies like Kenalemang-Palm (2023) show how Western advertisements have started to challenge traditional masculinity by framing emotional well-being as part of male identity. In contrast, Extra

Joss frames masculinity as tied to endurance, productivity, and stoic silence, reflecting a cultural context where alternative masculinities are underrepresented or marginalized.

This reflects not only cultural specificity but also the role of advertising in reproducing hegemonic norms. By using humor, urgency, and energy as framing strategies, these ads obscure the underlying reinforcement of narrow gender expectations. The lack of overt misogyny does not reduce the ideological weight of the messaging; in fact, the internalization of pressure among men expecting strength, success, and silence shows how toxic masculinity evolves into subtle but pervasive forms. The study reveals those multimodal advertisements function as ideological texts, embedding normalized gender roles into consumer narratives. In promoting products like energy drinks, they also sell lifestyles and identities, often without critical interrogation by the audience. This makes critical discourse analysis essential in unpacking how ordinary images and words contribute to broader societal beliefs.

While this research is limited to a single brand, it opens space for further exploration of how gender is constructed through digital media and advertising in Indonesia. Future work could examine how different social factors such as class, age, or religion influence the reception and negotiation of masculinity in media. This study affirms that masculinity is not static but continually performed and reshaped through cultural products, including seemingly simple advertisements.

CONCLUSION

This study examines twelve Extra Joss advertisements to examine how modern Indonesian media builds and supports toxic masculinity. Using Kupers' (2005) concept of toxic masculinity and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework of multimodal discourse, the analysis showed that these ads always show masculinity through behaviours like being homophobia, being violent domination, and being greed. These attributes are shown not just through words, like "Laki Tidak Bercerita," but also through pictures, such as men with clenched fists, action-oriented figures, competitive analogies, and aggressive colour schemes. These common elements indicate a conscious effort to make a strict and emotionally distant type of masculinity seem normal and cool. The most prevalent feature, homophobia, implies that vulnerability poses a threat to male identity.

Visual methods are essential for getting these ideas across: representational elements show strength and control; interactive elements keep the viewer and subject apart; and compositional elements make masculine icons look like perfect models. These methods operate together to create a restricted masculine identity based on domination, silence, and constant performance. The lack of open misogyny, on the other hand, shows that toxic masculinity has changed from being openly hostile to women to putting more pressure on males themselves.

This study combines toxic masculinity theory with multimodal discourse analysis to show that advertising is not only a way to sell things but also a potent ideological tool. Extra Joss ads do more than sell energy drinks; they also change how people think about what it means to be a male. This study indicates that toxic masculinity is still very much present in Indonesian media, especially in product categories that focus on performance and stamina. In conclusion, the findings add to the growing body of research in gender and media studies by providing a culturally specific example of how harmful masculine stereotypes are created and spread through advertising. This study adds to the body of knowledge by showing how multimodal methods make ideological messages seem normal in everyday media. It also has theoretical value because it uses and builds on Kupers' paradigm in a South-east Asian media setting, which hasn't been studied as much in the past. In the end, this study asks for additional research into how commercial media both reflects and influences ideas about gender, and it also asks for more critical attention to the cultural factors that define and limit what it means to be a man today. This work makes important contributions to the domains of gender studies, media discourse, and multimodal linguistics in terms of academic value.

This study examines how toxic male standards are formed and spread in Indonesian advertising, highlighting the unique cultural aspects involved. The subject matter is a topic that doesn't get much attention in worldwide academic discussions. This study links different ways of thinking and methods to understand gender ideas in visual media by using Kupers' (2005) theory of toxic masculinity and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal framework. Also, it encourages scholars to examine advertising not simply as a way to sell things, but as a place where gender identity is constantly being formed and reproduced.

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