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Evolution of Men's Image in Fashion Advertising: Breaking Stereotypes and Embracing Diversity

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Abstract: This research study explores the representation of men in fashion advertising and investigates whether societal and fashion evolution has contributed to a departure from traditional stereotypes. The research methodology comprised three phases: content analysis, surveys, and in-depth interviews with an expert panel, examining how men's clothing has been communicated in fashion over a span of 50 years, with a focus on three renowned brands: Lacoste, Burberry, and Hugo Boss. The findings reveal a notable shift in fashion advertising targeting men, characterized by increased racial diversity among models and a more diverse depiction of attitudes and poses. However, homosexual or bisexual couples remain largely unrepresented. The study highlights the influence of advertising on shaping the image of the "new man", evident through the diminishing gender boundaries in clothing and accessories and the persistent struggle to break free from stereotypes. The study underscores the significance of ongoing efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity in fashion advertising.

Keywords: men's representation; fashion evolution; stereotype; clothing communication; diversity and inclusion; societal impact



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1. Introduction

The primary focus of this study was to investigate the portrayal of the traditional male figure in fashion advertising. We examined how men are depicted in the context of fashion advertising, seeking to determine whether contemporary societal and fashion developments have influenced established representations. To achieve this, we employed a comprehensive research methodology, including content analysis, surveys, and in-depth interviews. Through this multifaceted approach, the aim was to uncover and understand the intricate dynamics underlying the representation of men's apparel in the realm of fashion advertising. According to [1,2], content analysis offers the possibility to investigate the nature of discourse. It is a process that allows us to analyze and quantify the materials of human communication. Ref. [3] further supports this notion, describing content analysis as a group of techniques for the study of communication. It also enables comparative studies using various documents or reference objects [4]. Consequently, by using this technique, it was possible to determine how the image of men has evolved in men's fashion advertising.

The main objective of this research was to examine how the representation of men in fashion brand advertising has evolved in recent decades, influenced by shifts in both societal and fashion trends. The research questions were as follows: How has the conventional portrayal of men in advertising evolved in response to changes in societal and fashion trends? In what ways have stereotypes associated with the representation of men in fashion brand advertising been deconstructed or challenged? It is posited that the conventional stereotypes associated with the portrayal of men in advertising have been effectively deconstructed. Therefore, the research suggests that stereotypes regarding the image of men in advertising have been successfully challenged.

It is speculated that there has been a significant shift in the representation of masculinity, moving away from traditional stereotypes and embracing a more diverse and inclusive portrayal in fashion advertising.

A general objective and two specific objectives were proposed to address these research questions. Firstly, the general objective was to understand the current image of men as portrayed in advertisements for fashion brands. The following specific objectives were established to achieve this: to analyze the evolution of how men's clothing and fashion are communicated through a content analysis of advertisements over the last 50 years and to examine the perception of the male figure in fashion advertising.

The research analyzed how social changes and fashion trends have intertwined to redefine the visual narratives around men in fashion advertising, examining the evolution of the perception of masculinity and the representation of men in contemporary fashion discourse.

The evolution of men's image and attire in the realm of fashion has been intricately intertwined with the changing fabric of society and its ideologies. While it is widely acknowledged that women's fashion underwent a substantial evolution in the 20th century, men embarked on their own journey of sartorial conquest. Over successive decades, men's fashion progressively broke free from molds and protocols, facilitated by the evolving nature of style [5,6] conducted a semiotic analysis of men's fashion as featured in video clips of a singer and discussed how attire contributes to the construction of the artist's public image and its impact on popular culture.

Throughout the 20th century, men's fashion experienced a profound metamorphosis, transitioning from stringent codes of etiquette and dress norms that dominated the first half of the century to freedom, individualism, and a diverse amalgamation of styles in the latter half [7]. This transition saw male clothing moving toward uniformity and sobriety, allowing men to embody traits such as rectitude, elegance, formality, cleanliness, and social distinction, in contrast to the aesthetics of beauty and sensuality typically attributed to femininity [8].

In earlier decades, clothing served as a vivid manifestation of affluence, yet unlike preceding centuries, the entrenched notion of a singular fashion for men began to undergo transformation. The mid-20th century marked the beginning of a diverse and varied fashion landscape in society [9].

The traditional masculine stereotype, as a prominent and historical representation of the male gender, has been underpinned by conventional social values. This stereotype elevated men to a position of authority and superiority within the household, reflecting deeply ingrained patriarchal norms. Furthermore, the art and advertising domains have often capitalized on the image of the hero, a persona deeply ingrained in cultural narratives [10].

Scholarly investigations have highlighted the categorization of men's reactions to fashion advertisements through the use of the Fashion Engagement Grid. This framework dissects men's characteristics and motivations concerning fashion behavior [11].

A sequence of societal changes catalyzed by feminist activism, the emergence of the gay liberation movement in the 1950s, and the zenith of Hollywood's cinematic era, coupled with shifts in economic paradigms and modern capitalist labor structures, induced structural shifts in gender roles. These transformations upended the foundations of patriarchal masculinity, culminating in a masculinity crisis that reached a tipping point in the 1990s. Toward the close of the 20th century, men actively engaged in the study of patriarchal masculinity issues, coinciding with a proliferation of studies on sexuality and gender. This evolutionary social phenomenon subsequently produced new masculine profiles in the 21st century, representing an unequivocal turning point in the trajectory of modern masculinity [12,13].

In light of these evolving dynamics, the primary purpose of this research was to comprehend the evolution of men's image and attire in the realm of fashion and what the focus was, as shown Table 1. Additionally, we sought to elucidate the underlying values, stereotypes, and behaviors that represent the male figure. In this pursuit, we employed

a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to effectively address the diverse dimensions of the research objectives.

Table 1. Perspectives on the evolution of men’s fashion.

Author	Focus
[5]	Highlights the evolution of men’s image and clothing in fashion along with that of society and its ideology.
[7]	Describes the transformation of men’s fashion throughout the 20th century, from strict codes of etiquette to greater freedom and diversity of styles.
[9]	Describes the shift in men’s fashion from the mid-20th century, from uniformity to varied and diverse.
[10]	Points out that the most exploited male image in art and advertising is that of the hero, which is a common and well-known myth.
[12]	Discusses the social changes that affected gender roles and led to a crisis of masculinity in the 1990s, resulting in new male profiles in the 21st century.

Source: Own elaboration.

2. Evolution of Men’s Image and Clothing in Fashion Brand Advertising

Fashion is an economic, social, and cultural phenomenon that is not limited to clothing but encompasses all fields of action and behavior as a social animal. Fashion affects ideas, literature, and economics and is most often associated with physical appearance [14]. Fashion is the use, custom, or mode that is in vogue for a period of time or in a certain location and can also be defined as collective changing taste in terms of clothing and accessories.

Fashion and clothing play important roles in our daily lives. While one may not follow the trends of the moment or be interested in fashion, it is present in the daily routine of deciding what to wear based on what one is planning to do. Fashion is a use or custom that is in vogue in a certain region during a certain period. It is a trend adopted by a large part of society, generally associated with clothing. Fashion can be defined as a mechanism that regulates people’s choices since, as a kind of social pressure, it indicates what they should consume, use, or do. It becomes a repetitive habit that identifies a subject or a group of individuals. It can be reflected in certain objects or visible aspects (clothes, hairstyles, etc.), but also in ways of acting and behaving [15].

Fashion is obsessed with gender, defining its boundaries over and over again. It creates a structure so that differentiating women from men is easier. It is expected that men will look like men and women will look like women [16]. “Women have historically been associated with the trivialities of dress, while men gave up these ‘concerns’, renouncing the decorative costume and imposing themselves as a figure interested in more important issues, not suitable for them” [17]. This division became evident in fashion, radically identifying and differentiating the feminine and the masculine and attributing to each of them an identity, a corporeality, a style of dress, and a mode of behavior [18].

In relation to gender stereotypes, according to [19], they constitute the ideas constructed by society about the behavior and feelings that people should have in relation to their sex and are transmitted from generation to generation. Likewise, Ref. [20] defined gender stereotypes as beliefs that society creates and shares, in and among a given culture, that are used to designate people without taking into account their capabilities and feelings in a way that assigns the roles that men and women should develop.

Also, the emergence of neo-cross-sexual fashion broadened the possibilities for sartorial expression and challenged the notion of prescribed gender roles in clothing. This trend provides men with the freedom to explore and experiment with different styles, breaking away from conventional masculine norms. By embracing a more inclusive and diverse fashion landscape, neo-cross-sexual menswear has contributed to the ongoing evolution of men’s fashion, promoting self-expression and individuality [21].

There are studies that demonstrate that male models often assume decorative roles rather than professional roles, and there is also the emergence of a new masculinity that is based on global consumer culture and promotes shared ideals, goals, and values among men [22].

2.1. Stereotype Concept: Definition, Presentation, and Significance in the Advertising Industry

It is significant to understand the role of stereotypes in advertising; they can serve as cognitive shortcuts, influencing how individuals process information in marketing messages. They highlight how advertising can either reinforce or challenge societal norms and biases. For example, Ref. [23] explored the impact of stereotypes on intergroup conflicts, shedding light on their relevance in advertising, and Ref. [24] investigated how stereotypes affect consumer perception, emphasizing their potential to shape behavior. Ref. [25] delved into gender stereotypes, particularly their effects on judgments of competence, offering insights into how women are portrayed in advertising, and Gorham and [26] researched racial and gender stereotypes in advertising, emphasizing their potential to perpetuate or challenge biases. Ref. [27] explored the interplay between body image, identity, and advertising, focusing on the portrayal of appearance and identity.

The strategic use of stereotypes in persuasive advertising and their impact on message effectiveness, and the influence of gender stereotypes on perceptions of model credibility in advertising in terms of the importance of trust and credibility in consumer perception have also been studied [28–31] explored the role of stereotypes in shaping social identity through advertising, underscoring its influence on self-perception. Ref. [32] examined how stereotypes and roles in advertising affect how viewers identify with the characters, indicating how advertising can shape viewer affinity and how racial and cultural stereotypes are presented in multicultural advertising, stressing the significance of cultural diversity in advertising content [33].

Green brand stereotypes have also been studied, and the findings suggest that these stereotypes positively impact the intention to buy recycled garments [34].

In summary, these studies collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of stereotypes and their implications in advertising, highlighting the transformative potential of advertising content in shaping societal norms and biases as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Stereotypes and significance in the advertising industry.

Author	Focus
[23]	Investigated how stereotypes influence intergroup conflicts and how biased perception can impact advertising.
[24]	Explored how stereotypes affect consumers’ perception of advertising and behavior, from strict codes of etiquette to greater freedom and diversity of styles.
[25]	Examined gender stereotypes and how they affect the perception of women in society and advertising.
[27] [35]	Discussed the relationship between body image, identity, and advertising, including how stereotypes are presented.
[26]	Studied how racial and gender stereotypes are presented in advertising and their effects on public perception.
[29]	Explored how stereotypes are used in persuasive advertising and how they affect message effectiveness.
[28]	Investigated how gender stereotypes influence perceptions of model credibility in advertising.
[31]	Explored how stereotypes and representations in advertising can influence identity construction.
[32]	Investigated how stereotypes and roles in advertising affect public perception and identification with characters.
[33]	Examined how racial and cultural stereotypes are presented in multicultural advertising and their impact on perception.

Source: Own elaboration.

2.2. First Decades of the 20th Century

With a stronger focus on the evolution of fashion, the 20th century was the century of the fashion revolution. The lines and shapes of clothing were totally different from their more recent predecessors. During this period, fashion assumed a leading role in public interest. One hundred years of constant and rapid change, disseminated by the media, made it a cultural factor of great importance. Twentieth-century fashion evolved from a corseted and artificial form to a more natural one [36]. During the first decades of the century, customs in dress still corresponded to those imposed upon each social class, with outfits that coexisted and differed according to status and country [5].

In fact, during the period known as *La Belle Epoque*, or “the beautiful era”, from 1900 to 1920, the wardrobe became a manifestation of the ostentatious and extravagant lives of wealthy people due to the high level of economic and social achievement [7]. The male costume tended to express uniformity, sobriety, comfort, elegance, and formalism, all traits associated with the masculinity of the time [18,37] listed the characteristics required of the image of men in the early decades:

1. Gallant genial head, with strong tousled hair.
2. Fiery, aggressive, and naive eyes, which are not unaware of irony.
3. Sensual and energetic mouth, ready for a furious kiss, a sweet song, an imperious command.
4. Elasticity of muscles, free of fat, traversed by ultrasensitive nerve bundles.
5. Dynamo heart, pneumatic lungs, leopard liver.
6. Climber’s legs, to climb all the peaks and to bridge all the abysses.
7. Sober, virile, sporty elegance, which allows him to run, fight, jump, dance, and harangue a crowd.

On the other hand, the birth of the media necessary to disseminate fashion news, such as *Vogue* magazine and the *Gazette du Bon Ton*, helped to quickly expand and influence the new developments in fashion. Thanks to this, in the 1920s and 1930s, many of the dress styles of the decade were influenced by European fashions, with new trends such as the tweed bomber jacket derived from sports or the emergence of work clothes [5,15].

The first decades were also marked by two World Wars and the rise of fascist totalitarian political regimes such as Nazism in Germany and Francoism in Spain. These historical events are linked to the image of men based on the large amount of political propaganda at that time. Men were represented as heroes with physical characteristics that were particularly indicated by Nazism. The Nazi and Fascist leaders themselves, Hitler and Mussolini, presented themselves as mythical, thus imposing on men the aesthetics they should have in order to be accepted by the regime [38].

Later, during the 1950s, another important event occurred that made possible a change in the male stereotype of teenagers: the birth of mass culture. Up to that time, young men had no influence in the world of clothing; then, they became a potentially powerful clientele [15]. Fashion began to be divided into two parts: on the one hand, there was the clothing that men wore to work, elegant suits and sometimes tuxedos with bow ties, especially among businessmen, and on the other hand, there was youth fashion, which was characterized by jeans and leather jackets. In this way, the informal revolution of men’s fashion began, giving rise to casual, informal attire, as compared to the classic elegant suits that were reserved for work or special occasions [39].

2.3. The 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s

On the other hand, during the 1960s, colors began to be part of the wardrobe, with new prints, and at this time, the hippie movement grew, although despite being a movement that created a huge impact on young people, it was not more than a temporary countercultural phenomenon. This did not prevent it from leaving its mark on the men’s fashion industry because it was at this point that clothing took a more informal and varied tone since each person could now decide how to use the different garments offered by the market [39]. The

“peacock revolution” was a transformative period in men’s fashion, spanning from 1966 to 1970. It reflected the sociocultural shifts and fashion trends that defined this era [40].

The fashion of the 1970s was a continuation of the fashion of the 1960s, with total freedom in fancy cuts and varied colors. The fashion of the decade was very diverse, reflecting a new interest in free expression through clothing. The decade encompassed hippie, bohemian, retro, and punk styles. The overall silhouette was long and lean, with a lot of hair, an androgynous style used by both sexes [41]. In addition, the 1970s was when the feminist movement and consumer organizations began to denounce discriminatory treatment and the use of limiting stereotypes of women in advertisements. Advertising adapted to these transformations and made changes, but always seeking to obtain economic benefits, in the form of attracting potential consumers. These changes in the role of women, thanks to social transformations and the achievements of feminist demands, had their counterpart in the use of images of men in advertising. In most cases, men were used in advertisements as either prescribers or companions to the context in which the ad was framed. But few advertisements, products, or brands considered men the main consumers [42,43].

In this same period, the youth market began to consolidate as an important advertising target, and the ages of models were considerably younger. The archetypal male pattern used in advertising until then (macho connotations of superiority, strength, skill, and security) gave way to models with more emotional and sentimental energy, models with values and traits that previously were linked to women (androgynous models). Athletes became the new heroes, and the figure of the Greek athlete was imposed on society (fitness models). The young and beautiful man was the clearest expression of the feminization of the advertised male [43–45]. Thus began the portrayal of male models in advertising that were mainly characterized by the feminization of their aesthetic attitude and/or form and the prioritizing of the cult of the body (both physical and aesthetic). The advertised man had become feminized insofar as advertising also used him as a mediator of consumerist values, and abuse of his image gave rise to talk of the male object [43].

Advertising tended toward or had bet on unisex fashion and, taking advantage of the opportunity, turned its gaze to men, whom it also frequently presented as sexual objects, a treatment that until now has been suffered almost exclusively by women [46].

From the 1970s, the change in the image of men in advertising became more visible, but especially in the 1980s; men began to be bombarded by advertisements for the fashion and cosmetics industries, which considered them as new potential consumers [36]. Additionally, with the 1980s came greed, excesses, ambition, and a drive to excel, triggering extravagance, according to [47].

2.4. *The 1990s and the Beginning of the New Century*

The turning point of this decade came when the street began to influence the fashion of the moment. In the 1990s, streetwear became a source of inspiration for great designers who embraced total denim looks, high-waisted pants, cotton tracksuits, and wide shirts. A special mention should be made of sports shoes, which in the 1980s had already begun to be worn by half the world and, in the 1990s, saw exponential growth. A paradigm shift in the industry found its greatest expression, on the one hand, in minimalism (after the excesses of the 1970s and 1980s) and, on the other, in what was perhaps the most disruptive trend of the moment that best reflected the street spirit, grunge [48].

Therefore, advertising not only provides a faithful reflection of the society that produces it but also acts as a “regulator of social change”. Thus, in this decade, campaigns using previously ignored topics emerge so that realities such as abuse and racial diversity and social groups such as gays, lesbians, and people with disabilities are integrated into the advertising discourse. And, of course, it is no different for transformations in gender roles so that new male models become advertising content [49].

In addition, a new man emerges, sponsored by advertising and the media, displaying a new masculinity: the metrosexual. This is a term coined in 1994 by the English journalist Mark Simpson in *The Independent* on Sunday referring to a new male profile: “a young

man with money to spend, who lives in the city, where there are the best stores, clubs, gyms, and the best hairdressers. He may be officially gay, straight, or bisexual, but this does not matter so much because he sees himself as his own object of desire and pleasure. From liberal professions such as models, media and production companies, or pop musicians and now, also sportsmen, they know they attract, although truth be told, they enhance it with male cosmetic products" [50]. The term comes from the combination of "metro", for the contemporary metropolis, and "sexual", alluding to an exacerbated feminine side. The role became a protagonist at the beginning of the new millennium due to social, cultural, economic, and business factors and the efforts of advertising agencies, insofar as metrosexuals have become a target audience to be conquered, a consumer niche to be exploited. In Rey's words, "It is a new model (for young people) and a new client (for companies). For today's advertising, being a man has begun to mean being beautiful, young and having a body according to the prevailing canon" [43,45].

Additionally, in the 1990s, narcissism and voyeurism reigned in society, and the athletic body became an essential element of the status quo. Advertisers realized that the male body sells and began to use it shamelessly. The gender equity produced by advertising by turning the male body into an object of consumption has led men to become increasingly concerned with everything related to body aesthetics and to seek to identify with certain idealized patterns of beauty [51]. In record time, the stereotype of the "man-object" was consolidated and used as a sexual lure to promote any type of product [43,44,52].

At the same time, the development of technology, together with the power of communication becoming more present in society, fostered a progressive acceleration of their life rhythms. The avant-garde crowd retreated, and the groups that cultivated different aesthetics became referents because they pointed out guidelines to follow and lifestyles to emulate [53]. The media allowed, broadly speaking, access to fashion in a more immediate way each time. Followers were invited and seduced to imitate models through the visual culture and were guided toward consumption [54].

Consequently, for men's fashion, the 21st century began with constant inspiration from styles of the past, when clothing tended to be minimalist, but as time progressed, a variety of colors and shapes appeared, with diverse fabrics and bolder prints. Notably, certain fashion designers began to integrate gender-neutral elements [55]. Men's fashion experienced a revolution of styles and trends, reflecting social changes. Undoubtedly, men's fashion in recent decades has been a mirror reflecting the feelings and behaviors of several generations of men interested in adopting an image with personality and style. Monotonous and boring times were left behind to give way to aesthetics that most people favored, combining the clothes they liked and giving rise to very personal styles. In addition, the growth of the Internet influenced men's fashion because it quickly contributed to the dissemination of a free style, as opposed to the more homogeneous styles that traditional media showed us [56].

Different styles and trends, including sport, casual, urban, mismatch, and hipster, among other terms, define the wardrobe of the 21st century, and without leaving behind the classic man, this research is about the current man because he says yes and more than ever decides on the image with which to live his life [56]. Thus, tastes are no longer rooted in ideologies or politics; men simply choose to wear what makes them feel comfortable or feel good next to their peers. Of course, thanks to this turn in fashion, the capitalization of clothing began with the emergence of brands leading the way in satisfying the needs of men and trying to be at the forefront in terms of tastes and trends without leaving aside disruptive styles that even today continue to be used. Since then, fashion has become a topic, although not an important one, and a trend, and as can be seen today and since the beginning of the 21st century, men's fashion has come to be about comfort and what one can wear to feel good. Undoubtedly, this is a huge step beyond the style of dress from 100 years before [39].

Therefore, taking the aforementioned studies as a reference, it is possible to observe the continuous evolution of image and clothing, gradually breaking from the traditional stereotypes established of the image of men from the 20th century to the present.

3. Methodology

This study employed a three-phase methodology using content analysis, surveys, and in-depth interviews.

Phase 1: Content Analysis

In the initial phase, a rigorous content analysis was conducted. This retrospective examination spanned five decades of fashion advertisements directed to a male audience. The analysis focused on discerning prevailing trends and recurrent patterns in the portrayal of men. Specifically, attention was directed to assessing racial diversity among models, the attitudes and poses adopted, and the portrayal of diverse relationship dynamics. This phase enabled a systematic evaluation of shifts in representation, providing empirical insights into the evolving landscape of the depiction of men in fashion advertising.

A content analysis was conducted to examine the evolution of male communication and attire in fashion over the past 50 years. For this content analysis, printed advertisements from male fashion campaigns by the brands Lacoste, Burberry, and Hugo Boss were examined. The temporal scope of analysis was from the 1970s to the present day. This analysis was carried out in two phases: first, preliminary research was conducted and numerous advertising materials were collected and second, a sample of advertising materials was selected for content analysis. The variables analyzed were adapted from research conducted by [57]. This analysis took into account the publication date of the advertisement and identification of its pieces, as follows: graphic number, analyzed brand, and decade.

Subsequently, the following variables were analyzed:

Images of men: This involved analyzing the characters in the pieces, the attitudes and poses of the men, whether the protagonist or other men appeared in a sexually explicit manner, if the protagonist or other men engaged in activities associated with masculinity, the presence of characters clearly belonging to different social classes, the presence of characters of races other than White, the weight of the protagonist, the age of the models, whether sexual identity was recognized (if so, what it was), and the environment in which the protagonist appeared.

Men's attire: Questions were asked regarding the importance of the garment in the advertisement, the prominence of the garment, the type of shot in which the model appeared, whether the male protagonist wore traditional male-associated clothing (suit, shirt, tailored pants, etc.), the prevailing clothing style in the image, sizing, the predominance of shades, whether unisex clothing was worn, and whether the male protagonist wore garments or accessories associated with the female gender (and what those were).

Phase 2: Surveys

Secondly, a survey with 13 questions was conducted to analyze the perception of the figures of men in men's fashion advertising. The respondents were between 18 and 65 years of age (18–25 years old: 48.2%; 26–35 years old: 13.5%; 36–45 years old: 15%; 46–55 years old: 18%; 56–65 years old: 5.2%). A total of 193 responses were received, 50.3% from men and 48.2% from women. The survey was disseminated through social networks (WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok), and the Google Forms platform was used to record the responses.

Surveys are widely used in research due to the ability to obtain and process data quickly and efficiently.

The second phase involved administering structured surveys to a diverse cohort of participants. This cohort was meticulously selected to ensure a representative cross-section of perspectives. The survey instrument was artfully designed to elicit subjective perceptions pertaining to the representation of men in fashion advertising. Questions probed the respondents' opinions on the evolving constructs of masculinity, inclusivity, and the perceived influence of fashion advertising on the conceptualization of the "new man". This phase yielded a wide-ranging dataset, affording a panoramic view of public sentiments and attitudes toward the evolving portrayal of men in fashion advertising.

Phase 3: In-Depth Interviews

Finally, the opinions of an expert panel were sought to validate the survey results and provide a more specialized point of view on the subject through in-depth interviews. The questions asked in the interviews were based on the conclusions obtained from the survey, specifically on different aspects of the perception of men's image and clothing in fashion advertising.

The final phase involved conducting in-depth interviews with a select panel of industry experts. This included professionals from the fashion advertising sector. These interviews were structured to elicit nuanced and comprehensive perspectives on the depiction of men in fashion advertising. The expert interviews delved into a variety of themes, including the transformative impact of societal shifts, the challenges inherent in overcoming established stereotypes, and the pivotal role of fashion advertising in shaping the perceptual framework surrounding masculinity. This phase facilitated a profound exploration of the underlying dynamics that contribute to the evolving representation of men in fashion advertising.

In-depth interviews were conducted with six fashion and advertising experts in Spain, selected through convenience sampling. Brief introductions to the experts are provided to emphasize their credentials and experience, contributing to a more specialized analysis of the subject and helping to yield richer results in the research.

Expert 1: This expert is one of the emerging designers in Spain at the moment, known for the "bakala" aesthetic and for promoting sustainable consumption in fashion. He often utilizes recycled materials to create his garments. Notably, a significant part of his fame, in addition to social media, is attributed to his participation in the program "Maestros de la Costura" (a TV program specializing in fashion), where he finished as the third finalist.

Expert 2: This expert is a stylist and journalist who specializes in fashion. Her primary field is live photography, and she has worked with top fashion brands, magazines, newspapers, and advertising agencies, including Ymoda, Mujer 21, Práctica, La Vanguardia, El País Semanal, Men's Health, Women's Health, Código único, La Caixa, and Solvia.

Expert 3: Expert 3 is a journalist at TVE (Spanish television). She is currently a writer for "Flash Moda", a TVE program that promotes and showcases the world of fashion on a national and international level. It is also one of the most widely watched fashion programs.

Expert 4: This expert has a doctorate in communication (advertising and public relations) and is currently working as a teacher and researcher at Jaume I University. His research primarily focuses on the social influence of non-verbal codes in real life on advertising messages. He has published several articles on this topic in various scientific journals and authored a book titled "Vigorexia: una mirada desde la publicidad" ("Vigorexia: A Perspective from Advertising").

Expert 5: This expert is a film director with a degree in audiovisual communication from the Complutense University of Madrid and a master's degree in film direction from the International Center for Photography and Film in Madrid. Among his most recognized works is the short film "Dear Tom", which was selected by the Sundance Channel and Nowness, has been screened in over 50 international film festivals, and received various international awards. Another notable work is "Wonderful People", which won the award for Best Foreign Short Film at the Highland Park Film Festival (USA) and was selected in over 10 national and international short film festivals, including Interfilm Berlin, a qualifying festival for the Academy Awards. In addition to writing and directing films, he is an established director in advertising and fashion, with two awards for his piece "Nosotras para las Chicas del Cable" on Netflix. He has also directed campaigns for brands including Vogue, Vanity Fair, Netflix, El Corte Inglés, L'Oréal, Bvlgari, Springfield, Just Eat, Glamour, Panera, Johnnie Walker, Lancôme, BBVA, Narciso Rodriguez, and Abanca, as well as for the Xunta de Galicia.

Expert 6: This expert is a Moroccan fashion designer and artist. Among his various accolades, he was listed in Forbes 30 Under 30 for Europe and the Middle East in Arts and Culture in 2018, and has received the Amsterdam Culture Business 2018 award, among others.

Integrating the three phases ensured a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of the evolving portrayal of men in fashion advertising. The combination of content analysis, surveys, and in-depth interviews provided a robust foundation for the discussions and conclusions drawn, grounded in both empirical data and expert insights.

4. Results

The findings from the content analysis revealed a discernible shift in the representation of men in fashion advertising over the past five decades. Notably, there has been an increase in racial diversity among models, providing a more inclusive portrayal. The analysis also indicated a wider variety of attitudes and poses, reflecting a departure from rigid gender norms. However, the representation of homosexual or bisexual couples remains limited.

In-depth analysis:

Cross-cuts by age: Among participants aged 18–25, 80.6% believe there is diverse representation in men’s fashion, indicating greater openness among younger generations. Conversely, among participants aged 56–65, 16.8% feel that stereotypical representations of men’s fashion still persist, suggesting a generational gap in the perception of the evolution of men’s fashion.

Cross-cuts by gender: Among the male respondents, 76% believe that men can dress however they want, indicating a higher acceptance of diversity in men’s fashion among men. Among the female respondents, 66.3% believe that men can dress however they want, demonstrating that the positive perception of diversity in men’s fashion is not limited by gender.

Finally, in only one photograph did the male protagonist wear clothing or accessories associated with the female gender. More specifically, one protagonist is wearing a dress, and the others are wearing make-up.

The survey responses provided valuable insights into the respondents’ perceptions of men’s representation in fashion advertising. The respondents acknowledged the positive changes observed, such as greater racial diversity and expanded options in clothing styles and sizes. Nonetheless, the interviews highlighted the continuing struggle to fully break free from stereotypical portrayals and the need for increased visibility of diverse relationships in fashion advertising.

The results obtained after the content analysis of the evolution of how men’s clothing and fashion are communicated in advertisements during the last 50 years offer a detailed breakdown of various aspects of the representation of men in fashion advertising. Each variable sheds light on a different facet, providing valuable insights into this evolving landscape.

Firstly, regarding the results of the images of men, it was found that 28.33% of the photographs analyzed showed only one male character, 20% showed two or more men, 30% showed a man and a woman, and 21.67% showed both men and women. On the other hand, none of the photographs showed only the product without a model, as shows in Table 3.

Table 3. Representation of men in fashion photographs.

Variable	Percentage
One man	28.33%
Two or more men	20.00%
A man and a woman	30.00%
Both men and women	21.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the protagonist or men who appear to be performing activities associated with the male sex, 45% do not appear to be performing any activity; among the rest, 41.67% are with partner, family, or friends, 5% are playing sports, and 3.33% are walking animals or driving/have a car nearby as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Activities associated with male gender.

Type of Activity	Percentage
No activity	45%
With partner/family/friends	41.67%
Sports	5%
Walking animal/with car	3.33%

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the weight of the protagonist, 86.67% of the characters were fit, while 11.67% were thin. This makes these practically the only types of models found in the photographs analyzed, except for one showing a muscular model, as can be seen at Table 5.

Table 5. Representation of weight.

Weight	Percentage
Fit	86.67%
Thin	11.67%
Muscular	1.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 6 shows the distribution of different attitudes and poses displayed by male characters in fashion advertising. The most common poses were seductive (33.90%) and familiar/close (25.42%), indicating a range of emotional expressions.

Table 6. Men’s attitudes and poses.

Physical Position	Percentage
Seduction	33.90%
Familiar/close	25.42%
Powerful	16.95%
Comfortable	11.86%
Artistic	8.47%

Source: Own elaboration.

As shown in Table 7, none of the male characters displayed a sexually explicit attitude in the analyzed photographs.

Table 7. Sexually explicit attitude.

Explicit Sexual Content	Percentage
No	100.00%

Source: Own elaboration.

In the analyzed images, 16.67% of the male characters appeared to have a racial background other than White, signifying a positive stride toward racial diversity; more specifically, it is notable that they appear as protagonists, as Table 8 shows:

Table 8. Representation of race.

Different Racial and Ethnic Groups	Percentage
Other than White	16.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

The majority of male characters (51.67%) appeared to be within the 18–35 age group, while 48.33% appeared to be between 36–64 years old. None of the characters appeared to be over 65 years old, reflecting a focus on younger demographics, as can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9. Age of characters.

Age Group	Percentage
18–35 years old	51.67%
36–64 years old	48.33%
Over 65 years	0.00%

Source: Own elaboration.

Among recognizable sexual identities, 100% appeared to be heterosexual men or partners. However, the sexual identity of the majority of characters (65%) was not discernible from the images. No man appeared with a sexually explicit attitude. For this variable, corresponding to sexual identity, 35% were recognized, and 65% were not; within the 35%, 100% of those that can be recognized are heterosexual men/partners, as shows Table 10.

Table 10. Sexual identity.

Key Components of Sexual Identity	Percentage
Recognized (hetero)	35.00%
Not recognized	65.00%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 11 shows the settings in which the male characters were portrayed. The most common environments were photo studios (31.67%) and natural settings (30.00%), followed by an urban environment (23.3%), a party or leisure environment (8.33%), and a luxurious environment or at home (3.33% each).

Table 11. Environment of protagonist.

Place	Percentage
Photo studio	31.67%
Nature	30.00%
Urban	23.33%
Party/leisure	8.33%
Luxurious/home	3.33%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 12 shows the prominence of the garments worn by male characters. The majority of images featured an American shot (45.00%), showcasing the garment in detail; 38.33% featured a full/general shot, and 15% a medium shot. Only one male character is in the foreground.

Table 12. Garment prominence.

Visibility and Emphasis	Percentage
American shot	45.00%
Full/general shot	38.33%
Medium shot	15.00%
Foreground	1.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 13 shows the dominant clothing styles displayed in the images. Formal attire was more prevalent (73.33%) than informal styles (26.67%).

Table 13. Clothing styles.

Style	Percentage
Formal	73.33%
Informal	26.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

The majority of the male characters wore fitted or tight-fitting garments (90.00%), while a smaller percentage wore loose-fitting or wide-cut attire (10.00%). Looking at the results for the variables related to men’s clothing, firstly, regarding the importance of the garment in the image, in 95% of advertisements, the garment is worn by the protagonist and is explicit, while in 5%, it is secondary, as shows Table 14.

Table 14. Garment size.

Dimensions	Percentage
Fitted	90.00%
Wide	10.00%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 15 indicates the prevalence of different garment colors. A significant portion of the garments were neutral or dark in hue (66.67%), while a smaller portion featured vibrant or colorful hues (33.33%). Looking at the next question, regarding whether the male protagonist is wearing garments traditionally associated with men (suit, shirt, pants, etc.), in all of the analyzed photographs, the protagonists are wearing garments associated with men.

Table 15. Garment colors.

Color	Percentage
Colorful	33.33%
Neutral/dark	66.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

As shown in Table 16, in 28.33% of the images, the male protagonist wore unisex clothing, indicating a trend toward more gender-inclusive fashion choices, while 71.67% did not.

Table 16. Unisex clothing.

Wears Unisex Clothing	Percentage
Yes	28.33%
No	71.67%

Source: Own elaboration.

In just one photograph, the male protagonist was shown wearing clothing and accessories typically associated with the female gender, demonstrating a rare instance of cross-dressing.

If there are people who clearly belong to different social classes, among the analyzed photos there were none that showed these differences, as can be seen in Table 17.

Table 17. Cross-dressing.

Choosing Attire	Percentage
Yes	0.51%
No	99.49%

Source: Own elaboration.

The respondents were asked if they considered whether men can really dress as they want or whether that is only an image sold in fashion. Among them, 42.4% said that men can dress as they want, 34.7% said that they can, but with exceptions, and 18.8% stated that men cannot really dress the way they want and that this is only a fashion image, as Table 18 indicates.

Table 18. Perception of men’s dressing freedom.

Perceived Freedom	Percentage
They can dress as they want	42.4%
They can, but with exceptions	34.7%
It is only a fashion image	18.8%

Source: Own elaboration.

Respondents were asked if they thought that advertising has had some influence on the creation of the image of a “new man” different from the traditional one, and 82.3% responded that it has.

Respondents were also asked if they knew, either from their own experience or from friends or relatives, that they can currently wear clothes or accessories or adopt an aesthetic typically associated with women, such as painted nails, make-up, or dresses, thanks to the evolution of fashion and society; 84.5% said they did, and 15.5% said they did not, that is shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Knowledge of wearing items associated with women.

Wearing Items Associated with Women	Percentage
Yes	84.5%
No	15.5%

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 20 indicates in response to the question: How much do you think men’s fashion has changed in the last decades, on a scale of 1–5, 43% of respondents said 3, 31.6% said 4, 20.7% said 5, 4.1% said 2, and 0.5 said 1.

Table 20. Perception of change in men’s fashion.

Scale of Change	Percentage
1 (No change)	0.5%
2	4.1%
3	43%
4	31.6%
5 (Significant change)	20.7%

Source: Own elaboration.

The analysis of men’s representation in the context of fashion advertising reveals significant transformations over the past decades, demonstrating a clear trajectory toward greater diversity and responsiveness to cultural changes. One aspect highlighted in the research is the racial diversity among male characters, suggesting that inclusion is being

encouraged in fashion. Future investigations could explore how these complexities across different racial contexts could be strategically utilized in advertising.

Another aspect revealed in the analysis is the concentration of characters, apparently between the ages of 18 to 35 years, targeting a younger demographic. It would be interesting to explore the consequences of expanding this age range to include older individuals in terms of examining its impact on consumer behavior. Additionally, studying how this aspect can be authentically communicated using models of different ages could provide valuable insights, as seen in other industries such as cosmetics.

Regarding diversity in sexual orientation, the research indicates a broader recognition of diversity by the incorporation of various sexual identities. Further investigation is needed to understand consumers' social perceptions about the representation of more contemporary sexual identities not utilized by the analyzed fashion brands.

The exploration of gender roles has provided interesting data, suggesting an adjustment in how society represents and perceives gender roles. Future research could delve into how audiences react to these changes in gender expectations and how they impact the overall perception of masculinity in society.

In terms of clothing style and size, the findings indicate a trend toward fashion choices that can be embraced by individuals of diverse genders. A prospective line of research could delve into the sociocultural implications of these evolving styles.

The topic of freedom in dressing elicited varied opinions on how much freedom men have to choose their attire, prompting questions about the societal factors influencing these perceptions. Understanding the cultural and individual factors that influence diverse expressions in men's fashion could provide valuable insights into the social acceptance of various styles.

The analysis of changes in men's fashion suggests significant shifts, warranting more in-depth investigation. Cultural, social, economic, and contemporary changes in communication should be examined more closely, given the accelerated pace of evolution influenced by advancements in technology.

In the world of fashion, there are fewer and fewer differences in clothing and accessories typically associated with women, and the reasons most frequently given by the respondents included the following: "More inclusiveness and diversity, less stereotypes"; "The media increasingly gives us the image of men as more diversified; that is, with more types of clothing, and sometimes with accessories and clothes that, until now, were only seen on women"; "Influence of people with many followers, social networks, new referents, integration and movements related to personal freedom as the advancement of society and feminism, a change of mentalities especially among young people"; "Greater visibility that both men and women can wear garments of the opposite gender without this being a reason for social rejection"; "Because the notion of gender in objects (e.g., clothes) and the restrictions of appearance in relation to feminine or masculine is beginning to be lost. Because there has been a struggle to make clothes genderless"; "People are tired of following the same path that everyone else is following, and they want to get out of the 'norm'"; "There is more and more variety in the clothes a man can wear (skirts, tops, etc.) but there is still a long way to go".

Additional comments included: "Greater equality"; "Evolution of society, trends, social networks. . ."; "Gender boundaries are blurring more and more every day, in addition to social change and the inclusion of feminism as a predominant model, which exonerates men in turn from a very marked manly line as in the past"; "The presence and preponderance of LGBTQ+ collectives in the media"; "Variety of tastes and there is no longer so much fear of dressing the way you like, now even standing out with your personality is socially accepted and admired in some cases"; "There are real and very diverse referents. Celebrities like Harry Styles or Lil Nas X have used female garments in their wardrobes. The men who include them in their closet are not necessarily homosexuals"; "Youth is more open today, so many young people try to break stereotypes and get out of the traditionally correct. This allows the opportunity to wear accessories or garments associated mainly with

the opposite gender”; “There is an increasing diversity of styles that allow the individual to be creative”; and “Evolution of values and mentality, accompanied by communication”. Finally, to conclude the survey results, the respondents were asked to describe how they would define current men’s fashion using three adjectives. These included effeminate, style, not very masculine, evolutionary, limited variety, personal, cheerful, alternative, practical, fresh, cool, classic, sporty, less basic, transgressive, carefree, innovative, new, androgynous, risky, contemporary, equality, traditional, neutral, limited, fun, versatile, informal, inclusive, casual, changing, breakthrough, stereotyped, different, advanced, original, elegant, current, boring, colorful, innovative, unisex, basic, extravagant, varied, modern, colorful, diverse, free, and daring.

The results of the in-depth interviews with the expert panel are as follows.

Expert 6 stated that stereotypes are a marketing tool used by big companies to sell an ideal image. Big brands aim to sell dreams and goals with their products. That is what attracts customers. Stereotypes change with history, adapting to each social context and reflecting that moment. Expert 4 stated that although there are still male stereotypes in fashion advertising, there are many changes. Expert 1 added that they do exist, but masculinity has changed. Now, heterosexual men have a wide range of male fashion, very similar to that previously available to women and non-heterosexual men, clothing for which they were discriminated against. Along the same line, talking about models at a physical level, expert 5 affirmed that their physiques vary, but at the level of masculinity, they are strong, independent, successful, and desired by women. Finally, experts 2 and 3 affirmed that nowadays, the stereotypes are changing in favor of male models more in accordance with our times and that they still exist, but to a lesser extent.

They were asked if they agreed that there has been a real evolution in the image of men, which is now more diverse and increasingly moving away from the singular image of the traditional man, and all of them said yes. In fact, expert 2 said that one only has to look at the fashion catwalks to see that great strides are being made very quickly, especially for men in modeling. Today, inclusion in fashion produces new images of male stereotypes. In addition, expert 3 noted that the evolution of the image of men in fashion is clear, and it is now more diverse, more unisex, and, in general, outside the more traditional canon. On the other hand, expert 4 agreed that there has been an evolution in the image of men in fashion, but there are still some aspects to highlight: “Diversity has been established as a value, although I believe that within this diversity, but still using some very specific physical stereotypes for male models” (either “androgynous” or “fitness”). Expert 1 said: “There is a clear evolution, but always maintaining some fixed bases”; and expert 6 noted: “There is a change in the racial origin of the portrait of the commercial man, but even so, the silhouettes of the man remain the same, as well as his physical appearance”.

Another question they considered was whether the image of men today is that they can dress as they want and that this is not only a fashion image but also happens in reality, and they had different opinions. Expert 1 affirmed that they can do it because there are possibilities available, but he thought that it is not reflected in the street. Expert 2 noted that diversity exists in the street but clarified: “The chicken or the egg, it is not known which came first. I think it is all part of a revolution in which fashion and advertising must adapt”. Experts 3 and 5 agreed that the diversity of fashion in the street is more evident every day, but it generally happens more in big cities and not so much in small cities, so it depends on where you live. In big cities like Madrid and Barcelona, people dress the way they want because of the great diversity of styles originating from everywhere. In small towns or cities, local people may have more closed-minded ideas and consider it weird or gay. Coruña, a fashion mecca, is not the same as Puertollano. Today’s young people in their 20s are much more open-minded. Indeed, expert 4 believed that there is still a standard image of men in the street although the new generations are changing this model, but it is not totally normalized. But he believed that in a few years, this change will be consolidated. Finally, expert 6 said that “the streetwear of the last 20 years has been a source of inspiration for everyone, and also the freedom of expression has encouraged

people to dress more individually than following trends. There is a market and a customer for everyone in our generation”.

Regarding the influence of advertising, the majority considered that it had had an influence on the creation of the image of a “new man”, and all of them said it is one of the main reasons for this change. Expert 4, a specialist in communication, affirmed that advertising is always a reflection of what is happening in society. There is still a long way to go, but advertising is always aware of new trends and takes advantage of them in favor of products/brands. Therefore, advertising is a factor that helps to enhance these changes but is not the sole cause or driving force behind them. Expert 5 said that fashion is dictated by designers and transmitted through advertising. People see what is worn in advertising and on the street, assimilate it, and imitate it. Expert 3 stressed that there is no doubt that advertising has had an influence on this change in the image of man, but it is also a consequence of changes in society. Expert 6 added that “advertising has become the slave of celebrities, and celebrities are slaves of brands. Customers sometimes have no other way but to buy what is in the stores, the real style is in how the design is made. Individualism sells, too, but it is too intellectual to sell individualism for the big brands, so they sell the ‘basic man’ as a ‘blank canvas’ for the customer to add personal touches. Social media has had a lot of influence in the advertising industry and changes quickly to follow up”.

Considering the main reasons in the fashion world why there are fewer differences in clothing and accessories typically associated with women, the results of the survey can be summarized as follows: “Broadly speaking, the boundaries of gender are blurring more and more every day, in addition to social change and the inclusion of feminism as the predominant model, which exonerates the man in turn of a very marked manly line as formerly. Thanks to fashion and the influence of the media and influencers in social networks, there is more diversity in the image of men and youth is more open today, so many young people try to break stereotypes and get out of the traditionally correct, in this way making it possible for there to be less differences with accessories or clothes associated mainly with the opposite gender”. All experts agreed. Expert 1 considered that it is something that is changing because it is an aesthetic that has been “appropriated” by heterosexual men, so the problem remains the same. When a woman, a gay man, a queer person, etc., does something out of the norm, they have always been seen as weird, strange, and unknown, and at a time when heterosexual men have appropriated that aesthetic (e.g., Harry Styles, Marc Segui, Pol Granch, and others), it has been cool and influential. This problem occurs on any red carpet or at any event when it comes to making headlines. Expert 2 noted that you only have to look at events like the Met Gala, where every year men pay more attention to their outfits, and David Tembleque to see it is more normalized among young people.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study provides compelling evidence of a dynamic shift in the portrayal of men in fashion advertising. While there has been noteworthy progress, particularly in terms of increased racial inclusivity and a broader array of sartorial styles, there exist significant obstacles to completely dismantling deeply ingrained stereotypes. The findings underscore the considerable sway held by fashion advertising in shaping societal constructs of masculinity, emphasizing the imperative need for sustained endeavors aimed at fostering inclusivity and diversity within the industry.

Regarding the discussion and conclusion derived from the content analysis of the evolution of how men’s clothing is communicated in fashion advertising over the last five decades, discernible patterns emerge, yet they demand further scrutiny to ascertain the current authentic portrayal of men in brand advertising. Among the noteworthy conclusions, it is salient to highlight that the variable “attitude and pose” frequently evokes adjectives such as “seductive”, “powerful”, “familiar”, and “approachable”, reflecting traditional attributes associated with masculinity. Nevertheless, as observed over recent decades, there has been an emergence of alternative descriptors such as “comfortable”

and “artistic”, indicating a transformative shift in how men are perceived through various postures. Notably, explicit sexual objectification of men is conspicuously absent from the analyzed photographs.

Indeed, it is evident that in previous decades, the prevailing portrayal of men was being involved in activities emblematic of traditional values, such as companionship, familial activities, sports, or interactions with animals. This shows that the advertising during those initial periods unequivocally mirrored the archetype of the conventional man.

The scrutiny of racial diversity representation indicates a discernible, albeit modest, increase in models from non-white racial backgrounds being included in recent decades. While parity has not yet been attained, the trend toward greater racial inclusivity is evident, with non-white models assuming central roles in certain instances. In contrast, there is a pervasive adherence to conventional body norms, with predominantly fit or slender models showcased. Similarly, the representation of sexual identity remains restricted to heterosexual relationships.

In conclusion, the content analysis of the evolution of how men’s fashion is communicated reveals discernible progress in several facets, including increased representation of models from diverse racial backgrounds and the promotion of various poses and artistic inclinations, indicative of a growing sense of freedom. However, conspicuous gaps persist, particularly in the representation of models with diverse body types, as well as homosexual and bisexual couples. This indicates the ongoing presence of invisible aspects in the image of men that continue to be influenced by entrenched stereotypes.

Turning to the analysis of men’s attire, it is evident that the garments take center stage, with all images featuring clothing items traditionally associated with men. While formal attire predominates, there is a discernible increase in informal garments being included in recent decades, alongside an expanding palette of sizes and colors, with snug and dark garments being favored but a notable increase in loose-fitting and vibrant options.

The utilization of unisex clothing, while not yet prevalent, has seen a progressive rise over the past decades. Conversely, attire or accessories typically associated with the female gender have been conspicuously absent.

In summary, the evolution of how men’s fashion is communicated is a dynamic, ongoing process. While considerable strides have been made in recent decades toward dismantling traditional stereotypes, certain facets remain concealed, particularly in the advertising of the three prominent men’s fashion brands under examination. Notably, garments and accessories associated with the female gender remain notably absent. This underlines the fact that while significant progress has been achieved, certain aspects continue to be marginalized, highlighting the enduring influence of entrenched norms.

The belief is that contemporary men enjoy the liberty to select their attire based on personal choice, which extends beyond merely making a fashion statement and allows them to express their individuality. It is essential to acknowledge that the opinions of experts, although somewhat congruent, provide a nuanced viewpoint. They contend that while options are available, the complete normalization of such expression has not yet occurred. This is contingent on factors such as geographic location, with larger urban areas exhibiting more significant acceptance of diverse styles compared to smaller, more conventionally oriented communities.

The research found that a significant majority acknowledges the influence of advertising on shaping the image of the “new man”. This attests to the pivotal role of advertising in steering societal progress and is corroborated by expert opinions, further affirming that advertising is both a reflection and a driver of societal change. In other words, advertising not only reflects social transformations but also contributes to propelling them forward.

Regarding the diminishing distinctions in clothing and accessories traditionally associated with women, a significant proportion of the respondents perceived this trend positively. This shift is attributed to factors such as increased inclusivity, evolving societal norms, and the influence of prominent figures in both traditional and digital media. These

observations align with expert opinions, underscoring the intrinsic connection between societal evolution and the portrayal of men in fashion advertising.

An intriguing avenue for future research would be to explore the nexus between sustainability and consumer behavior in the fast fashion industry, particularly in an omni-channel context.

Moreover, examining the interplay between stereotyped gender representation in fashion advertisements for men and sustainability could yield valuable insights. Do advertisements portraying men in poses and situations that challenge traditional gender norms elicit different responses than those that adhere to conventional stereotypes? Additionally, the study could scrutinize the combined effect of sustainability messaging and omni-channel strategies employed by fast fashion brands on male consumers' purchasing decisions and sustainability practices.

In sum, investigating the intersection of sustainability, men's fashion, and the omni-channel environment presents an opportunity to deepen our understanding of how fashion advertisements can shape male consumers' perspectives on sustainability in the realm of fast fashion. This would contribute to the development of more effective communication and marketing strategies to encourage more sustainable and conscious fashion practices among male consumers.

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