

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Patriarchy has had a huge influence throughout human history. Although it did not have the exact period when and where it emerged, its practical and impact still affected a wide community all around the world. Patriarchy, to make it clear, is an ideology where high social status, wealth, power, and social control are dominated by males rather than females (Hill 2012, 628-629). Patriarchy itself emerged as an idea of what it is called gender. In short, sex and gender have two separate meanings. Sex refers to what a person is naturally born with, the genitals or reproductive potential, while gender is a social construction of the biological condition of one's (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013). Gender also correlates with several personalities, traits, and identities of one within society that has been built during childhood, influenced by parents, families, and the environment where a person grew up (McDermott and Hatemi 2011, 90). Therefore, the idea has brought the community to refer to males as men, and females as women accompanied by the traditional gender roles that will follow one's life throughout a lifetime.

Gender roles refer to each gender's responsibility regarding their identity either as a man or a woman. The roles were differentiated by the mean of femininity and masculinity. Both femininity and masculinity were the given expectations of what men and women supposedly do (Stets and Burke 2000, 1). Women throughout history and culture around the world are believed to be responsible for the family's well-being in terms of health, cleanliness of the house, taking care of children, and

many more – shortly women are expected to put family first above anything else (Ungaretti and Etchezahar 2013, 11). Differ from women, men are expected to be breadwinners of the family, responsible family's family well-being in terms of financial decision-maker, family protector, and many more related to men to their protect protecting family under their power (Ungaretti and Etchezahar 2013, 11). Those gender roles are not far from the fact of sex stereotypes which positions women as weak creature, and men as strong one. The traditional gender roles not only limit men and women's freedom, but also emerge the fact of what is wrong or right for both genders.

Although at a glance patriarchy seems to be more beneficial for men and oppressed women, in particular, it is not. It may be agreed by all levels of society that men almost benefit from the ideology of patriarchy which hinders them to take responsibility of what may seem 'feminine', but in fact, men can be victims of the masculinity concept itself. Masculinity emerged as the opposite of femininity (Itulua-Abumere 2013, 42). Masculinity according to Drummond (2016, 2) is framed by physical appearances of males that is muscular, alongside the fact masculinity also refer to traditional stereotyping where men existence are supposedly as breadwinner and protector of families and women. Following the fact of men's traditional gender roles, there is also gender stereotyping toward men, in particular, means that personality that tied to expressive emotion of men (Stets and Burke 2000, 1), such as men should not cry in public as an expressive emotion, or else they will be seen as weak and less of a man. This, these facts have led to another concept of masculinity that is hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987).

Hegemonic is an idea of Gramsci which means a dominant power of certain social groups over the subordinated ones (Drummond 2016, 2). While for Donaldson (1993, 643) described hegemony as “the ruling class establishes and maintains its domination.” In this case, hegemonic masculinity refers to relation of various subordinated masculinities and also relation to women (Connell 1987, 120). Although hegemonic masculinity is the institution of male dominance and centrally connected to men, not all men practice the hegemony despite the benefits that accompanied it (Donaldson 1993, 644). As stated earlier, in some ways men are oppressed by the term of masculinity and hegemonic masculinity in particular, then in what way it may happen? According to Rosen and Nofziger (2019), hegemonic masculinity underlines the power and authority of one’s, and very few of men can genuinely accomplish it. Thus who do not fit in the standard such as wealth, race and strength, economically stable, and muscular appearance (Rosen and Nofziger 2019), will be considered as subordinated then susceptible to oppression.

Based on these facts, many institutions try to raise awareness of the hegemonic masculinity emerged among societies. The awareness is raised through many ways, be it movies, music videos, or simply advertisement campaigns. Among of many awareness attempted by many institutions or companies, Gillette appeared to raise the awareness as it is men’s world-wide leading grooming products.

Shaving, according to Merriam-Webster for the literal meaning, means an act to remove a thin layer of hair. Shaving is commonly known as the activity done by men. Although the activity seems “natural”, actually the act of shaving is part of

the culture where it is related to what society believes of masculine traits. That stereotype happened for a reason, a man was born with natural facial hair as they grow up (Retallack 1999, 4). So, facial hair is an obvious characteristic of physical differences between men and women in general. As stated in Retallack (1999, 4) facial hair and shaving are identical to men and become a symbol of masculinity since they have the ability to grow the hair naturally. Because of that, he stated, facial hair is equal to manhood or masculinity, power, and strength.

Looking back to the history of shaving among men in North America, it was a relatively an activity done by urban middle-class men since it was considered as a dangerous activity. In the twentieth century, a clean-cheeked male is considered more astonishing. The activity can be proved by concrete evidence in 1903 when Gillette sold a safe razor marking the shifting of shaving that was no longer considered an exclusive activity. At that time, men with facial hair were considered negatively, and those who were clean-shaved were easier to get a job (Retallack 1999, 5). Another finding by Sherlock et al. (2017) masculine faces is defined by certain characteristics of jaw size, brow-bridge thickness, cheekbone height, etc. in their study, they found the participants of their study have considered clean-shave men are less dominant than bearded men. However, they result of their study in 2017 conclude that facial hair is an important characteristic to define a man's masculinity.

Similar to the man's facial hair culture in North America, in India facial hair is a significant symbol for maleness or masculinity. Moustache, specifically, related to man's masculinity for Punjab and Rajsthan—states in India—they even have a

saying, *mucch nahi puchh nahi* that means men who do not have moustache has no standing (Bedi 2022). Simply, facial hair in two countries, United States and India, considered as a part of manliness.

Gillette is a company that sold grooming product such as razors and shaving cream. They sold two different products that focused on two different market, Gillette for men and Gillette Venus for women. However, the use of the product has significant difference. The man's grooming product was sold for men to groom their appearance such as beard and mustache. For women, the use of razor and shaving cream are for body hair such as armpit hair, arm hair, leg hair, and pubic hair. Differ from man's perception of shaving, most women shaved due to the taboo perspective for women to grow body hair (Smelik 2015, 234).

Gillette's existence and dominance in the market of the grooming products plays a significant role of the shaving culture and part of the emergence ideas of facial hair perception as masculine traits for men. The fact that they sold the first safe razor in 1903 is also a mark of their roles into shaping and preserving the culture of shaving as well as its perception to consider facial hair as a manly thing. In 2019, Gillette and Gillette India released advertisements that pointed out of the issue of masculinities. Both advertisements are the objects of the study that latter found the differences and similarities of both objects and the significance of Gillette and Gillette India brought up the issues on the surface.

Gillette is world-wide men's grooming product under P&G (Procter and Gamble) company (Bloomberg n.d.), based in Boston, United States of America. Gillette sell various men's personal care products such as razor, deodorant, after-

shave cream, etc. (Bloomberg n.d.). Just like any other brand, Gillette does advertised their products through YouTube video. On January 14, 2019 they released a campaign ad that pointed specifically on toxic masculinity. The video has been viewed by more than 38 million people around the world. With the title, same as the ads' tagline, "*the best men can be*" Gillette deliver the message for men to negotiate the gender stereotypes and tackle toxic masculinity which leads into crime and any other form of harassment toward men and women. As a multinational company for men's personal care products, we can say that Gillette dare to take a step forward to voice the issue within the society.

Although it may seem brilliant for some, the *Gillette: We Believe: The Best Men Can Be* has led to controversy after the ads being aired in 2019. The line "boys will be boys" appeared in the ads raise a debate within public, especially men. The controversy even result to the company boycotts (McCluskey 2019). One of the controversies said by the audience that they should not be taught by men's grooming products to behave – they simply offended by the ads as it is seem to labeling and stereotyping. Because of the controversy, during the research of this study conducted in 2021, Gillette unlisted (archive) the video, but the reader can still find it with link attached in the reference part.

The *Gillette: We Believe the Best Men Can Be* was released in the United States. The ad shown several stereotypes that occurred within United States' society where sexual assault, domestic violence, and other forms of abuse occurred frequently in the country. The issue brought based on the data where 81% women nationwide has experience of sexual harassment and/or assault throughout their

lifetime (Kearl 2018). Another statistic showing that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men experiencing a severe abuse (e.g beating, burning, strangling) by their intimate partner (Black et al. 2011). The data is the representation the effect of toxic masculinity occurred within society in the United States, specifically. That is why as a leading man's grooming product that has long history and the representation of man's masculinity, Gillette brought up the topic. Not only to raise awareness toward men, but also women.

In the same year, despite of the controversy of the previous ads by Gillette official, Gillette India released similar advertisement that bring the issue of masculinity just like its main company did. The advertisement titled *Gillette: Man Enough – Shaving Stereotypes*. The video released on November 19, 2019 targeted mainly to its Indian customer. Since its initial release the advertisement has received more than 38 million views. Just like previous advertisement, Gillette India represent the tagline “*the best men can be*”. It has different way to deliver the message, however the main idea of the message is the same that men should not be forced by expectations of society regarding to their masculine traits. Differ from the Gillette Official advertisements, Gillette India received a lot of positive feedback from the audience for narrating the ads smoothly and does not offend the audience.

One of the two advertisements was made and released in India. The advertisement *Gillette: Man Enough – Shaving Stereotypes* was released on November 19, 2019, after *Gillette: We Believe the Best Men Can Be* (2019) caused a controversy. The decision to choose India as the next target audience was a bold and smart move by Gillette. India is known as one of the most patriarchal countries

in the world, so discrimination toward women and expectations of men are still widely based on traditional gender roles. The patriarchal belief is rooted in the country that a family is expected to have at least one son (International Center for Research on Women 2014, 51).

The idea of hegemonic masculinity is relatable to the situation in India where men are seen as superior beings. As stated, India to this day still holding on to the patriarchy culture where men considered and expected to be tough and strong. However, one thing that India society does not realize is that men can be victims too. The study took an example of male rape in India which still not considered as a real and urgent case to be solved.

In India laws, the interpretation of rape is limited to the insertion of penis or object in vagina. They have law protection for male children that experiencing sexual assault, but they do not have exact law for the adult male or man. The study conducted by Latala (2020, 436) shown the data of 1500 males as participant that 71% of them were victims of abuse. However, 84% of them stated that they were afraid to tell anyone because of shame, confusion, fear, and guilt. The issue is the result of many correlated conditions within India society, male preference children, expectation of masculine traits within men, as well as the poverty and lack of education there.

Rape is commonly viewed as a problem within the male populous of society. The idea lies in the fact that the perpetrators of reported rape are mostly men, so they are oftentimes tasked with the responsibility to overcome the situation by

educating their own kind on rape prevention (Metz, Myers, and Wallace 2021, 3). The fact that men always been to be tough and strong, those men who were the victims of rape barely believed by society. However, change is a lengthy process, so we cannot expect to see long strides of progress in a short period of time. This process will take years to bring the desired results into fruition, and many institutions are collaborating to stop, fix, and prevent the occurrence of this issue.

An important note we must consider when discussing the topic of rape is that rape is a matter of dominance over the victim, and not necessarily about the intercourse as we had previously contended. The idea of hegemonic masculinity affirms this contention, that most men enact such behavior, as a way to achieve the dominant aspect of hegemony as represented by the men in the second video. This occurs because men are designated the role of the protector in traditional gender roles, which is why a large number of men feel entitled to be dominant over the woman within their circles. To obtain this desired status, violence is oftentimes a tool in which men will use as a means of accomplishing this unnecessary, yet quite pervasive goal (Metz, Myers, and Wallace 2021, 7).

By recognizing the issue of hegemonic masculinity in the family, as the first community where people interact with, it brings awareness to these issues and allows people to recognize that the issue of hegemonic masculinity started by internalized perception toward masculinity. Furthermore, addressing the issue in one of the most patriarchal countries is a great method of battling the issue. Besides, the way Gillette India delivered the message through the ad was not controversial, unlike the ad aired by the Gillette (in Untied States).

The two advertisements analyzed in this is produced by the same brand, Gillette, and parent company P&G (Procter and Gamble). The choice of both objects were based on the market share of the main company and its branch in India. In the United States of America (USA), where Gillette originally and officially marketed. Gillette reach 54% of total sales number throughout the USA on 2019, and Gillette India recognized as the leader of razor sales (Menke 2020). Besides, the most significant reason was the history of Gillette in the development of shaving culture since 1903 (Retallack 1999, 6) that identically refer to men. Based on those facts, we can infer how significant the impact of Gillette can be towards men. Both USA and India have a large population, thus the users of their razors might count as at least millions of the total male citizens. More than that, the platform where the advertisements were publishes is accessible to anyone and anytime, and also reachable for the audience outside those two countries.

The issue brought by the two Gillette's advertisements have intrigue the author to analyze each of the ads, in terms of ideological message in both ads of toxic masculinity and hegemonic masculinity, as well as the depiction of both ads in negotiating with the two terms. It is important that men often times being ignored when it comes the impact of their well-being affected by the emergence of toxic masculinity and/or hegemonic masculinity; men are seen as the perpetrator of patriarchy and masculinity. Society sees that it is almost impossible that men would be the victim of the patriarchy as they are benefits most of it. What society does not realize is hegemonic masculinity appeared as the result of one's who hold greater power than others and create subordinated ones. Society do not realize that men are

prone to be the victims of these fragile masculinity; not all men, even if it's most of them, could perform standardized masculinity. Not only that, society does not realize how many men that harmed by term masculinity itself.

A research conducted by Coles (2009) tried to identify hegemonic masculinity in general and try to grasp the notion of how it is produced and reproduced in hierarchical ways. Pando-Canteli and Rodriguez (2021) shown how advertisement that contains a campaign purposively toward men to negotiate masculinity is refused by most men as they seen the ads as an insult for them. Another research conducted by Javaid (2017) found how hegemonic masculinity impacted society in a way of the emergence of bullying and men raping – it is ignored as the gender stereotype of men remain strong within society to these days.

According the previous studies mentioned, none of it has analyzed specific advertisements as the object of the study to explain the hegemonic masculinity. Whereas, advertisement could be an effective way to promote awareness toward men as toxicity of patriarchal ideology has made them to follow gender stereotypes and roles. Therefore, the author intrigue to analyze the two of Gillette's advertisements stated above. The author analyzed in a way of the message delivered, and how men are represented to negotiate the notion of masculinity that are shown in both advertisements. To embody such analysis, the author used John Fiske's television code as the approach to understand the underlying ideology served in both advertisements, and also used R. W Connell's hegemonic masculinity as the interpretation to support the semiotics analysis.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, hegemonic masculinity is the main problem of both advertisements, therefore the statement of the problem can be concluded as follows: How men in *Gillette: We Believe the Best Men Can Be* and *Gillette India: Man enough – Shaving Stereotypes* negotiate the notion of hegemonic masculinity?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

To understand how men in *Gillette: We Believe the Best Men Can Be* and *Gillette India: Man Enough – Shaving Stereotypes* negotiate with the notion of hegemonic masculinity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The research is about hegemonic masculinity that is emerged unconsciously within the society. Through two advertisements of Gillette and Gillette India, the research focused on how men in both ads tried to negotiate with the issue of masculinity. *Gillette: We Believe the Best Men Can Be* and *Gillette India: Man Enough–Shaving Stereotypes* represented men negotiation against toxic and hegemonic masculinity. Besides, both ads are produced under the same brand and parent company, Gillette and Procter and Gamble (P&G).

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Furthermore, by this research study, the author hopes it will bring awareness towards gender issues that is going on around us. The author hopes that men never be seen as the perpetrator of patriarchy, but possible to be the victims for those unable to practice the masculinity standard. It is important to note that men are prone to any form of harassment and gender stereotyping. Significantly, the practical intention of this research intended to bring out awareness of what hegemonic masculinity is for men and how it supposed to be handled as an improvement for the societies' point of view towards patriarchy. Besides, as the theoretical, the author expects that the research will be useful and valuable source for future research of similar issue, especially for English Department students' of Universitas Airlangga.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Patriarchy Social system in which the father or male elder has absolute authority over the family group (Britannica 2016).

2. Traditional gender roles A set of traits and behavior about the appropriate roles of men and women in the family or society (Ungaretti and Etchezahar 2013).
3. Gender stereotyping Gender roles might to gender stereotyping – an oversimplified understanding of men and women e.g men are not and should not be emotional (Blackstone 2003b).
4. Hegemonic masculinity Hegemonic masculinity for Connell (1987) is in relation with subordinated masculinities, relation towards women and a certain strategy to subordinate women.
5. Television codes A notion of John Fiske to analyze television culture. Television codes divided into three levels that is level one appearance, level two representation, and level three ideology (Fiske 1999).