EXPLORING THE COMPLEX NARRATIVES OF TOXIC MASCULINITY ON THE INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT @*Thegentlemanrising*

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research delves into the intricate narratives surrounding toxic masculinity through a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of content on the Instagram account *Thegentlemanrising*. The study investigates how ideas of toxic masculinity are represented in both visual and textual elements, specifically in photos and expressions shared on the platform. *Thegentlemanrising* actively communicates messages aimed at encouraging the younger generation to embrace masculinity, emphasizing positive attributes while avoiding toxic traits. The content consists of motivational quotes fostering a healthy masculine identity, often accompanied by images of individuals embodying positive masculine characteristics. This study positions *Thegentlemanrising* as an initiative to balance and juxtapose the concept of masculinity, promoting positive ideals and steering clear of toxic behaviors. The findings contribute to our understanding of how social media platforms can play a role in shaping discussions around masculinity and influencing perceptions among the audience, particularly the younger generation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Masculinity and what is considered masculine have undergone changes throughout history. However, presently, what is viewed as modern masculinity or traditional masculinity can be seen as virtues that should be embraced by men. Often, masculinity is associated with stereotypes regarding different gender roles (Beynon, 2022). Men are frequently perceived as strong, independent, and powerful. These attributes can be considered virtues that are part of traditional masculinity. Traditional masculinity has faced criticism for functioning within a hierarchy that places men above women, but also for its negative impact on men (Muhamad, (2022). This prompts the question of whether these gender roles are still esteemed by our society. Nonetheless, if these gender roles are gradually fading away, what media is still making an effort to uphold these roles (Hermawan & Hidayah, 2023). This can be seen as a symptom of the ongoing debate, as hashtags and Instagram accounts discussing masculinity in men often engage in conversations about gender roles that align with stereotypes regarding the roles of men and women (Yudhistira, 2017). It's important to note that Instagram is not necessarily an

ideal masculine figure currently, but rather Instagram can be seen as an influencer who may be trying to perpetuate these stereotypes and notions of masculinity (Jufanny et al., 2022). Modern masculinity is said to have emerged around the 1800s and 1900s and is somewhat consistent with historical perceptions of masculinity. Virtue and strength are considered important aspects of masculinity, alongside physical characteristics of the male body. The idea that a strong male body also represents strong masculine virtues and thoughts is prevalent. The feminist movement has attempted to encourage more progressive roles for men compared to traditional ones, while other profiles and influencers seek to reproduce stereotypes of masculinity (Novalinda et al., 2021).

With the proliferation of social media, various social media accounts are also considered influential on this platform. Influencers initially gained prominence as they promoted different brands and organizations. In the field of marketing, media influence is something central. In recent years, the use of influencers has been leveraged when advertising products to a larger audience than ever before (Linggosiswojo, 2016). However, this is not a new concept, as celebrity endorsements were something widely used in the past and continue to be utilized. Companies recognize the value of influencers and what they can generate in terms of sales and brand-related publicity (Wijayanti et al., 2022). Furthermore, brands also recognize the value of what influencers can contribute in terms of ideology and public information. Influencers are viewed as a crucial part of the meaning-making process when participants engage in interpretation. This means that specific influencers may be selected based on certain values connoted with them. Moreover, influencers wield power in how they convey ideas and messages, as well as in how the audience interprets them (Stephanie et al., 2022).

The current younger generation is growing up in a constant presence of social media, leading to the characterization of their lives as "online," merging the online and offline worlds into a single term to emphasize our interconnectedness. With the lives of the youth so heavily dominated by digital media, it is crucial to examine the discourses and ideas that influencers may be reproducing online. Therefore, we are interested in the phenomenon of discourses perpetuated and communicated by various influencers, specifically how masculinity can be reconstructed and represented by influencers. In today's society, the media we consume has become intricately linked to our daily lives. Media in this context includes personal media, interactive media, print media, digital media, national media, and more (Rohmah et al., 2023). One perceives the world through the media they consume. For instance, when looking at someone's Instagram photos from another part of the world, media has constructed a reality where that person exists in your world. Without digital media, you might never be aware of that individual's existence. In this regard, media connects us with others and makes us aware of their presence. Furthermore, media constructs the world it presents (Eriyanto, 2018). The terms social media are used to refer to World Wide Web platforms that support the development of communities, content, and collaborative information production However, these terms

emphasize new things and overlook various forms of sociality, such as cognition, communication, and cooperation. On the other hand, it is a fact that these platforms have not become dominant but are more critical on the World Wide.

Previous research by Parkin & Parkin (2021) stated that Social Media has become a primary socializer by shaping the identity and perspectives of its users. Gender socialization is the process in which people learn and internalize norms and behaviours associated with their respective gender (Parkin & Parkin, 2021). Online interactions especially in social media are a potential fertile ground for the proliferation of toxic masculinity. Many online environments are anonymous, with user names taking the place of actual names and users themselves being generally unidentifiable (Santana, 2014). For example, in previous studies by Parent et al. (2018) "*Social Media Behavior, Toxic Masculinity, and Depression*", stated that Social Media environment serves as a fertile breeding ground for the proliferation of toxic masculinity. Whether through anonymity, disinhibition in asynchronous communication, or the easy accessibility of opposing opinions, individuals find themselves more prone to engage in negative interactions that reinforce toxic masculine attitudes. Unlike in face-to-face interactions where one must actively seek out opposing viewpoints, Social Media as online platforms readily provide opportunities for confrontation and trolling. Moreover, toxic masculinity's emphasis on dominance may further fuel engagement with such negative interactions (Parent et al., 2018).

Toxic masculinity happens rather often on social media these days, as already found by Pizarro-Sirera (2020) in the online political debate when analyzing Tweets by Donald Trump. Daddow & Hertner (2021) also found that politics in general seem to be a place of toxic masculinity, but this is something not necessarily related to social media. Ringrose et al. (2021), however, analyzed the normalization of sending unsolicited dick pics via social media and found that this seems to be a great part of youth digital culture. The way these pictures are handled by men and boys can be seen as toxic. This is mostly because they often try to prove their masculinity by sending them out, and thereby possibly harming the women who are receiving them, as this can already be seen as sexual harassment online. A study by Knudsen & Andersen (2020) went to analyze campaigns by Gillette and Lynx on social media, that were used to start making men aware of toxic masculinity and activate them to fight against it. These managed to bring toxic masculinity to a new level of societal attention, so they made it a topic that is discussed and known amongst people. This means people are aware that toxic masculinity exists and can point it out in comments of other users.

Toxic masculinity is one such form of expression of masculinity, and focuses on a drive to win, homophobia, and misogyny. Adherence to this constellation of masculine norms may increase the frequency or intensity of maladaptive or hostile behaviors, and ultimately men's experiences of depression (Brunson, 2021). Edwards (2021) adds that masculinity also becomes toxic when men act based on these stereotypical, hegemonic norms in a negatively impacting way. He also states that toxic masculinity is an overemphasis of these stereotypical

aspects, like aggression, the need to dominate, toughness, and an opposition to anything considered feminine that harms not only the other people in these men's lives, but also themselves.

Because social media, has already become apparent in these studies, this research will be similar, as it focuses on analyzing toxic masculinity represented in photos, and expressions in the Instagram Account *Thegentlemanrising*. The most important input from the other studies is that Social Media seems to be a place where any controversial topic, is heavily discussed. Also, gender stereotypes and roles often play a big part in these conversations, therefore a lot of diverse content can be taken from the platform for analysis. This research aims solely to analyze semiotic representations in a way that can be beneficial to the broader field of social media and masculinity research. In conclusion, this research is related to the online representation of masculinity. To analyze the photos, and expressions on social media accounts discussing masculinity in men have been selected for content analysis to attempt and analyze this phenomenon. Based on the background above, the researchers conducted the study by formulating the problems: How are ideas of toxic masculinity represented in photos, and expressions in the Instagram Account *Thegentlemanrising* discussing toxic masculinity in men?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is devoted to the substantial literature resources that have significantly informed and enriched the research. The foundational knowledge and insights extracted from these scholarly works serve as the backbone of the study, providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The review encompasses a diverse range of academic contributions, spanning relevant theories, empirical studies, and critical analyses that have shaped the conceptual framework and methodology of the research. By synthesizing and critically examining these literature resources, the study aims to build upon the existing body of knowledge and contribute novel perspectives to the discourse surrounding the chosen topic. The thorough exploration of these literature sources establishes a robust theoretical foundation, guiding the research process and enhancing the overall depth and credibility of the investigation.

2.1 Toxic Masculinity

Toxic masculinity, rooted in patriarchal societies, encompasses the notion that a man's masculinity is intertwined with behaviors characterized by repression (Wikstrom, 2019). This social concept emerges as a consequence of systemic injustices against men, subjecting them to constraints that discourage the open expression of emotions like sadness or tears. At its core, this concept embodies a misguided belief prescribing rigid behavioral norms for men, circumscribing their emotional expression and portraying masculinity primarily through physical strength and courage (Oktaviana et al., 2023). The societal pressure on men to stifle emotions and exhibit unwavering strength fosters a limited understanding of emotional expression. This constraint often manifests in the redirection of negative emotions, such as aggression, as a perceived outlet for maintaining the image of societal expectations surrounding

masculinity (Anisa et al., 2022). Consequently, the repercussions of toxic masculinity not only impede men's emotional well-being but also contribute to the perpetuation of harmful social norms and behaviors (Waling, 2019). Addressing and dismantling toxic masculinity necessitates a reevaluation of societal expectations, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of masculinity that accommodates the full spectrum of human emotions and expressions (Muhamad, 2022).

2.2 Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA)

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) employs a theoretical lens known as social semiotics, as underscored by the significance attributed to individual choices in shaping language and communication dynamics. This research draws on a set of analytical tools from MCDA by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in addressing our research objectives. This is a form of critical linguistic analysis that encompasses visual representations and design, using a specific set of concepts first introduced by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006). Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) started to look at the way that language, image and other semiotic modes integrate to convey meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) propose a concept of the 'semiotic landscape' that indicates the importance of the context in explaining the visual mode. This has specific features, a history, boundaries and landmarks. They declare that the place of visual communication in a given society cannot be understood without being in the context of the range of public communication forms or modes available in that society, as well as their uses and evaluations. Within this framework, the selection of visual elements and words is recognized as a deliberate act that imparts specific connotations to expressions (Hilarius et al., 2023). MCDA invites a deeper examination of how language and visuals work together to not only express but also actively shape social narratives and perceptions (Sunarto et al., 2019).

The data gathered from Instagram accounts will manifest in the form of a diverse array of photos and expressions. To systematically analyze this material, it will be segmented based on emerging themes encapsulated in both the visuals and accompanying text. These segments will be meticulously categorized, and the ensuing data will be organized into a table that delineates denotations and connotations associated with each segment over a specific timeframe (Diyan et al., 2018*)*. This systematic organization aims to provide a structured framework for comprehensive analysis. The analytical process involves individual scrutiny of the photos and expressions by the researchers, with a keen focus on discerning connotations aligned with predetermined analytical categories. The researchers will actively engage in noting the nuanced meanings conveyed within each segment, considering both explicit denotations and subtle connotations (Ulati, 2021). In parallel, specific attention will be directed towards identifying prevalent stereotypes and other thematic elements embedded within these segments. The subsequent step involves amalgamating the denotations and connotations discerned from each photo during the analysis phase. This synthesis of findings is crucial in constructing a nuanced understanding of the material. The obtained insights will then be juxtaposed with existing

literature, aligning with the Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) framework. This synthesis serves the overarching goal of unraveling the embedded meanings and values within the collected material. A key objective of this approach is to discern whether connotations related to stereotypes and/or masculinity are prevalent in the analyzed content. By employing MCDA, the study aims to go beyond surface-level interpretations, delving into the intricate layers of meaning and societal values conveyed through the visual and textual elements of the Instagram content.

3. METHODOLOGY

In crafting this article, a deliberate choice was made to adopt a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods have evolved as a distinctive complement to quantitative methods, initially emerging as a response to and critique of the limitations associated with quantitative research. However, contemporary perspectives advocate for understanding qualitative methods not as a critique but rather as a valuable companion to quantitative approaches. The selection of the most appropriate method hinges on the specific research goals and the nature of the data collection process, Sugiyono (2017). In this context, the research goal involves the interpretation of a relatively small dataset, which aligns seamlessly with the nuanced and in-depth exploration that qualitative methods afford. The decision to opt for a qualitative approach is, therefore, a strategic one, tailored to the nature of the study. Moreover, within the realm of qualitative research, a qualitative text analysis methodology was specifically chosen. This choice was motivated by the intention to investigate diverse media forms comprehensively. Qualitative text analysis provides a robust framework for delving into the complexities of various textual and visual elements, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the subject matter. By leveraging this approach, the research aims to extract meaningful insights and interpretations from the diverse media sources under scrutiny, contributing to a more comprehensive and contextualized exploration of the research questions at hand.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Results of this chapter will comprehensively present the rresult and discussion obtained from selected photos, and captions on Instagram that discuss masculinity in men. The analysis will be consistently conducted based on predefined categories, incorporating relevant theoretical frameworks as needed. The theoretical discussion of the results will be interwoven into this section, utilizing presented theories to gain a deeper understanding of the findings. This chapter aims to provide an in-depth examination of the portrayal of masculinity, exploring how such representations manifest across various types of media on Instagram. By employing a consistent analytical approach and leveraging relevant theories, this discussion seeks to uncover diverse dimensions of the representation of masculinity. This integrative approach not only grounds the analysis in empirical observations but also enriches interpretations by connecting the findings to broader theoretical concepts, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the core issues.

Picture 1. Thegentlemanrising Social Media (Instagram) Account

This Instagram account carries a mission to empower men to channel their energy towards self-improvement through fitness, career development, and leadership enhancement. With a strong message that the account owner leads this trend because they believe the world needs strength and positive influence from men, the account offers inspirational content with photos that may encompass moments of fitness, career achievements, and positive leadership actions. Thoughtful captions provide insights into the importance of living a balanced lifestyle and building positive strength that can have a positive impact on oneself and society. With a consistent brand identity and positive messages, this account aims to be a source of inspiration that guides men on a journey of empowerment and personal growth.

4.1 Analiysis Ideas of Toxic Masculinity Represented in Photos, and Expressions in Instagram Account *Thegentlemanrising* Discussing Toxic Masculinity in Men

Picture 2. Thegentlemanrising Instagram Feed

The description of the photo of an old man with characteristics such as a beard, sturdy body, wearing glasses and a black suit can reflect various aspects of toxicmasculinity. It is important to remember that masculinity is complex and varied, and interpretations may vary depending on cultural and individual context. The following are some elements of masculinity that can be seen from this description: Bearded and Strong Body: Beards and strong bodies are often associated with images of strength and physical maturity. A well-built body can convey fitness, strength, and endurance, while a beard can be associated with traditional characteristics of masculinity. Glasses and a Black Suit: Wearing glasses and a black suit can add an element of elegance and professionalism to the man's image. A black suit is often associated with formality, power and class, while glasses can add an intellectual or wise feel. Aging: The presence of signs of aging in these men, such as gray hair or wrinkles, can add another dimension to the concept of masculinity. It can demonstrate life experience, wisdom, and resilience in the face of change. Self-Expression: Wearing a beard, black suit, and glasses can also be considered a form of self-expression that reflects personal preferences and lifestyle. This shows that masculinity can be expressed through an individual's fashion and grooming choices. Stereotypes and Variations: It is important to remember that this image reflects only one form of masculinity and may be associated with certain stereotypes.

> "You stop explaining yourself when you realize people only understand from their level of perception "Jim Carrey." (@thegentlemanrising; 2023)

The context of the sentences above reflects the complexity and duality within an individual's personality, and how people's perceptions of them can vary significantly. Personality Duality: The statement *"Not everyone gets the same version of me"* emphasizes that there are various facets to the speaker's personality. This reflects an understanding that one does not always reveal the same side to everyone, a duality that can be influenced by various factors such as situations or interpersonal relationships. Subjectivity of Perception: The sentence introduces two contrasting perspectives on the person's character. Some see them as an individual with an extraordinary and beautiful soul, while others perceive them as cold and harsh. The statement *"Believe them both"* underscores that both perspectives could be true, highlighting the subjectivity in judgments and how people's perceptions of an individual can vary significantly. Acceptance of Duality: The expression *"Believe them both"* also signifies an acceptance of this duality. The person may not attempt to conceal or refute the differing views about themselves. This may reflect a degree of openness to human complexity and an acknowledgment that individuals may have different sides depending on the perspective considered. Concept of Treating People Accordingly: The statement *"I don't treat people badly. I treat them accordingly "* emphasizes the speaker's view of themselves in interpersonal relationships. Despite potential duality in perceptions of themselves, they assert that they do not mistreat people in general. Instead, they state that their treatment of others is based on how those individuals behave or respond. By combining these elements, this sentence creates a portrayal of human complexity, subjectivity in judgment, and an acceptance of duality in an individual's personality. Additionally, the statement about how people are treated reflects the speaker's views on interpersonal ethics and an emphasis on responsibility in treating others.

Picture 3. Thegentlemanrising Instagram Feed

The description of John Wick's character in the photo reflects attributes of masculinity commonly associated with the image of a tough and powerful man. Formal and Black Attire: The use of a black suit, black tie, and black shirt creates a formal and elegant impression. The color black is often linked to strength, elegance, and power. Wearing formal attire like this can reflect John Wick's character as someone with status, class, and capability. Beard and Neat Hair: The presence of a beard adds a rough and mature masculinity to the character. Neat hair creates an impression of orderliness and self-care, indicating that the character pays attention to his appearance. Statement About Provocation and Response: The written statement reflects a dynamic in which the character may often be tested or provoked, but he still maintains control over his *"bad" side.* This statement can be interpreted as a strong attitude and resilience to outside influences. Dark Side and Response: The sentence also highlights that there is a *"bad side"* that can emerge from the character, but at the same time, it may also depict a character with moral or ethical boundaries in responding to provocations. This can bring out nuances of complexity in his character. Determined Character: John Wick is known as a determined, strong character who holds onto his principles. The statement about responding with the *"bad side"* may reflect bold decision-making and a determination to defend oneself.

"People will provoke you until they bring out your ugly side, then play victim when you go there. (@thegentlemanrising; 2023)

This sentence describes a situation related to the concept of toxic masculinity, where someone can be provoked or triggered to show their negative side, and then the person who provoked them plays the victim when the response is negative. Provoke and Ugly Side: The expression *"People will provoke you until they bring out your ugly side"* reflects the idea that there is an attempt to bait or provoke someone into creating a negative reaction or undesirable behavior. In the context of toxic masculinity, there is pressure or challenge to patience, emotional control, or the masculine image perceived as *"strong"* and *"invulnerable."* Playing the Victim: The statement *"then play victim when you go there"* indicates a dynamic where the person who provokes then takes on the role of the victim when someone responds in an undesirable way. This may reflect a manipulative behavior pattern where someone tries to avoid responsibility for their contribution to triggering a negative reaction. Power and Control Dynamics: This sentence reflects power dynamics that may occur in relationships, where efforts to provoke and then play the victim role can be used as a tool to maintain control or shift responsibility. Toxic Patterns: This expression depicts toxic patterns where individuals may seek ways to expose someone's negative or vulnerable side, and then use the negative reaction as justification to assume the role of the victim. It is important to remember that not all conflicts or provocative situations are related to toxic masculinity, and the tendency to behave toxically can occur in various contexts. This sentence describes a situation related to the concept of toxic masculinity, where someone can be provoked or triggered to show their negative side, and then

the person who provoked them plays the victim when the response is negative. Provoke and Ugly Side: The expression *"People will provoke you until they bring out your ugly side"* reflects the idea that there is an attempt to bait or provoke someone into creating a negative reaction or undesirable behavior. In the context of toxic masculinity, there is pressure or challenge to patience, emotional control, or the masculine image perceived as *"strong"* and *"invulnerable."* Playing the Victim: The statement *"then play victim when you go there"* indicates a dynamic where the person who provokes then takes on the role of the victim when someone responds in an undesirable way. This may reflect a manipulative behavior pattern where someone tries to avoid responsibility for their contribution to triggering a negative reaction. Power and Control Dynamics: This sentence reflects power dynamics that may occur in relationships, where efforts to provoke and then play the victim role can be used as a tool to maintain control or shift responsibility. Toxic Patterns: This expression depicts toxic patterns where individuals may seek ways to expose someone's negative or vulnerable side, and then use the negative reaction as justification to assume the role of the victim. It is important to remember that not all conflicts or provocative situations are related to toxic masculinity, and the tendency to behave toxically can occur in various contexts.

Picture 4. Thegentlemanrising Instagram Feed

The visual depiction of a man adorned in classic English attire against a black-and-white backdrop presents a portrayal of traditional masculinity exuding strength and elegance. The incorporation of classic English clothing, including a black suit, white shirt, tie, and a round hat, establishes a formal and refined impression, invoking a sense of traditional masculinity often associated with dominance and conservatism. The black-and-white setting and vintage aesthetic contribute nostalgic elements, suggesting a timeless and classic masculine archetype. The accompanying phrase, *"When life gets hard, don't wish it to be easier, decide to be*

stronger," injects an emotional and psychological depth into the image, encouraging resilience in the face of adversity. Despite the physically robust and formal appearance, the sentence introduces a softer perspective on navigating life's challenges with a positive mindset. While advocating for independence and self-reliance, the narrative may inadvertently downplay the importance of collaboration and support from others in overcoming hardships. Additionally, there is a potential undercurrent suggesting a pursuit of external elegance in response to life's difficulties, raising awareness of nuanced aspects related to toxic masculinity.

> "When life gets hard don't wish it to be easier it to be easier, decide to be stronger"
> (@thegentlemanrising; 2023)

This sentence reflects a generally positive perspective, encouraging individuals to confront life's challenges with inner strength and resilience. Within the context of toxic masculinity, it underscores the societal pressures to embody traditional ideals of robustness while suggesting a reluctance to reveal vulnerability or emotional struggles. The phrase emphasizes the importance of self-discipline and purposeful decision-making, traits valued in certain traditional masculine ideals. While promoting a proactive stance towards life's difficulties, it also hints at a perspective that prioritizes self-sufficiency and resilience, potentially downplaying the value of seeking support or acknowledging one's struggles. Overall, the statement highlights the complex interplay between societal expectations, the promotion of masculine traits, and the potential impact on individuals' responses to adversity.
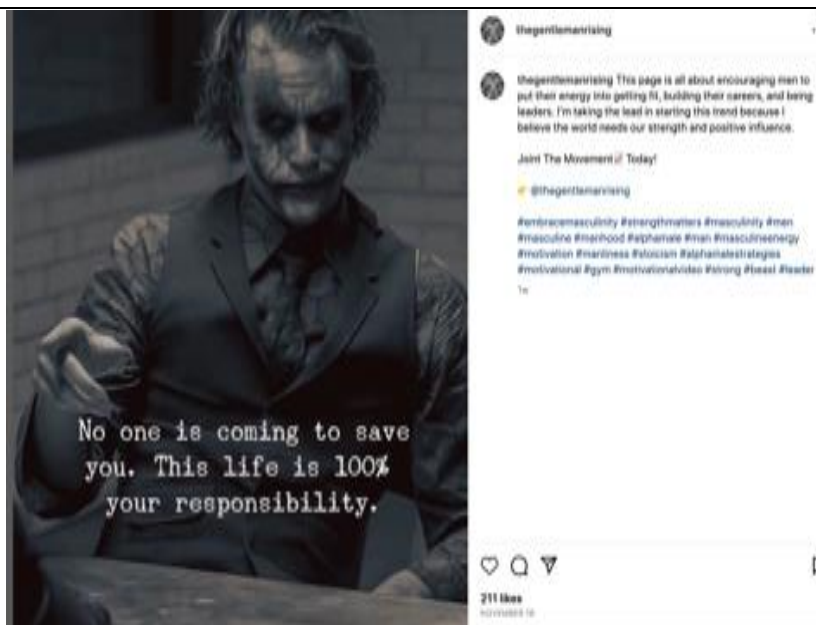
Picture 5. Thegentlemanrising Instagram Feed

The photo of the Joker character in the Batman film, especially with the sentence "No one is coming to save you. This life is 100% responsibility," can create a strong and complex image of toxic masculinity. Extreme Clothing and Makeup: The Joker character's formal style of clothing and extreme makeup can create a striking and sometimes intimidating image of masculinity. Wearing formal clothing that contrasts with dramatic makeup can demonstrate resistance to traditional norms of masculinity. Encouraging Sentences for Independence: The statement *"No one is coming to save you. This life is 100% responsibility"* creates an encouragement for independence and an emphasis on full individual responsibility. Even though the values of responsibility are positive, the use of this sentence, especially in the context of the Joker character, can create a feeling of alienation and dissatisfaction with the world. Rejection of Social Conventions: The character of the Joker, with his distinctive appearance and assertion of independence, can be interpreted as a rejection of social norms and traditional masculinity. This can create a picture of how the character expresses dissatisfaction with existing social conventions and norms. Complex Psychological Aspects: Toxic masculinity can appear in the form of a tendency to display power, dominance, and vulnerability. In the case of the Joker character, the complex and sometimes dark psychological aspects can create complex interpretations of how toxic masculinity manifests in the form of mental disorders and inner conflicts. Potential Use of Force for One's Own Power: The Joker character, especially in some film adaptations, can display a tendency to use force and violence as a means to achieve personal goals, which can be associated with a destructive and destructive form of toxic masculinity.

"No one is coming to say to save you. This life is 100% responsibility" (@thegentlemanrising; 2023)

This sentence reflects a view that emphasizes the individual's full responsibility for his own life and can be linked to the concept of toxic masculinity in several aspects: Independence and Resilience: The statement *"No one is coming to save you"* emphasizes the concepts of independence and resilience. In the context of toxic masculinity, there is pressure on men to demonstrate strength, independence, and toughness without asking for help or support from others. No Room for Weakness or Dependency: The statement can be interpreted as rejecting the idea of dependency or revealing weakness. In some concepts of toxic masculinity, there is a pressure to hide or deny weak or vulnerable sides. Emphasis on Full Acceptance of Responsibility: The phrase *"This life is 100% responsibility"* emphasizes that individuals are completely responsible for their own lives. Although responsibility is a positive value, an overemphasis on 100% responsibility may draw on norms associated with toxic masculinity, where expressions of weakness or asking for help are considered a sign of failure. Potential for Belittling or Blaming: Such statements can give the impression that when someone experiences difficulties or failures, it is entirely their responsibility. While this can motivate taking control of life, it can also create an atmosphere where people feel guilty or ashamed if they experience difficulties, and this can underestimate the impact of external or environmental factors on a person's life. Toxic Patterns: While there is merit in promoting independence and responsibility, these statements can also trigger toxic patterns in which individuals feel isolated or feel like there is no room for the expression of softer or more vulnerable emotions.

Picture 6. Thegentlemanrising Instagram Feed

John Wick character description with the sentence *"Not Everyone gets the same version of me. One person might tell you I have an amazing beautiful soul Another Might tell you I'm a cold-hearted asshole. Believe them both. I don't treat people badly. I treated them accordingly"* creates an image of masculinity that can be related to toxic masculinity, especially in the context of all-black formal wear, weapons, and statements. Formal Clothing and Weapons: Wearing black formal clothing and carrying a weapon, in this case a gun, creates an image of serious, strong and assertive masculinity. This combination can describe a character who is ready to face conflict and use physical force or violence if necessary. Duality in Identity: The statement *"Not Everyone gets the same version of me"* shows the duality in the identity or personality of the character John Wick. This creates an image of complexity and mystery, but can also be associated with inconsistent or difficult to predict behavioral patterns, an aspect that can be related to toxic masculinity. Subjective Perspective of Others: The statement *"One person might tell you I have an amazingly beautiful soul Another might tell you I'm a cold-hearted asshole. Believe them both"* shows John Wick's understanding of other people's subjective perceptions of him. While this could be interpreted as acceptance, it also creates the impression that he doesn't really care about how others perceive him, which could be a sign of indifference or egocentric tendencies associated with toxic masculinity. Justification of Treatment: The statement *"I don't treat people badly. I treat them accordingly"* creates a claim that John Wick's treatment of other people is based on their responses or behavior. Although he stated that he did not treat people badly, the nuance of this statement could be interpreted as justifying harsh or even violent treatment in response to other people's actions or behavior. Shades of Control and Power: This statement creates a sense of control and power in interpersonal relationships. John Wick may show a tendency to determine how he treats others based on power and control in certain situations, which could be related to the toxic aspect of masculinity. Views on Emotions and Emotional Involvement: The characterization of John Wick with this phrase may reflect an attitude that rejects deep emotional involvement or displays emotional weakness. Such statements can emphasize a coldness or unresponsiveness towards emotional aspects of interpersonal relationships, something that is sometimes associated with toxic masculinity.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research on *"Exploring the Complex Narratives of Toxic Masculinity: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of the Instagram Account of Thegentlemanrising"* reveals that the Instagram account conveys a nuanced narrative surrounding toxic masculinity. The study employs Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate how ideas of toxic masculinity are portrayed in photos and expressions on *Thegentlemanrising's* Instagram account. The findings indicate that the account actively communicates messages encouraging the younger generation to uphold the concept of toxic masculinity, albeit in a manner that promotes positive aspects and avoids toxic traits. The content presented consists of motivational

quotes that support positive ideals of masculinity, often accompanied by images of individuals or figures embodying healthy toxic masculine characteristics. Thus, *Thegentlemanrising's* Instagram account can be regarded as an effort to juxtapose and balance the concept of masculinity by emphasizing positive aspects and supporting the development of a healthy identity for the younger generation. While still embracing masculine traits, the account seeks to steer clear of promoting toxic masculinity behaviors and attitudes.

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