



**A MESSAGE
THAT WE
ALL SHARE**



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK



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TITLE SHEET

A message that we all share

A research of the campaign 'All that we share' released in 2017 by TV 2 Denmark. In addition, an understanding of the Danish viewers' interaction with the message hereof and a view of the campaign in an international context.

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CHARACTERS: 281,574

PREFACE

The thesis is made from an interest concerning a Danish TV networks' decision to use the message of connectedness and diversity as part of their brand identity. We find it interesting to research why TV 2 decided to do this and further, how they did it. In addition to this, we want to see how the Danish consumers interact with this message and, given the large international response to the campaign and its message, we also want to investigate the international viewers' perception of the campaign.

We want to give a special thanks to the 12 respondents and to Vicky Wassman Dahi who participated in our data collection and contributed with interesting and essential meanings and insights to our research.

Further, we want to thank our supervisor, Birthe, for her perspectives and constructive feedback.

We hope you enjoy the reading.

Abstract

Today companies employ increasingly more complex branding strategies as they try to keep up with the competition and with the evolving needs and behaviours of consumers. Brand managers are turning to using cultural or ideological principles as the core of their branding efforts. This research study aims to shed light on that strategy, dubbed as cultural branding, by conducting a case study of a branding campaign by TV 2. The campaign 'All that we share', from 2017, sends an intercultural message of diversity and connectedness in an ever more interconnected, yet increasingly divisive world. The meaning of the campaign is analysed using an approach that takes into account the sender's perspective, the receivers' perspective and the context that shapes both perspectives. The receivers' perspective is further composed of both Danish and international recipients. For these we devise an interpretative analysis that looks at data collected through a focus group, an expert and several semi-structured interviews, as well as data from secondary sources such as social media and online news articles. We conclude that viewers engage with, and positively receive, the message of connectedness, despite social tensions regarding the increasing heterogeneity of cultures. This can be linked with the 'soft' approach of the commercial and the pre-existent perception of TV 2. Furthermore, we can observe that the credibility of the message is considered outside of the credibility of the commercials themselves. The viewers display a critical attitude towards the campaign and its elements, confirming the idea of a post-modernist sceptical consumer. The observed congruence between the brand identity portrayed by TV 2 and the brand image created by the viewers is evidence of TV 2's success at creating an effective communication campaign and shows the potential of creating a brand identity using authentic cultural claims. Moreover, the influence that cultural context has on the way viewers perceive meaning is underlined by the slight differences observed in the perspectives of the Danish and international viewers. Finally, we have noticed a perception that the campaign also functions as an advertising for the Danish way of life, which shows that commercials can take on a broader meaning than initially intended, whether the company behind meant it to do so or not.

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Reading guide

1

Introduction functions as the first chapter of the thesis. Here, you will also find the research questions and an operationalization.

2

Chapter two will introduce TV 2 Danmark and the commercials in the campaign. Furthermore, it will briefly show the background behind why we chose this topic as well as reveal a bit of relevant context.

3

In the third chapter we will conduct a literature review and justify for already published literature that we have found relevant for the thesis.

4

Chapter four is the methodology section. Here you will find, amongst others, our different approaches, the research design of the thesis and our data information on our data collection.

5

In chapter five you will find the analysis. Here we will find analyses of TV 2's, the Danish and an International perspective. Part conclusions will be presented throughout.

6

The sixth chapter of the thesis will show a discussion of some of the most interesting findings we have made in our analysis.

7

The thesis will be concluded in chapter seven. Here you can find the answers to our research question.

INTRODUCTION



1. Introduction

Branding has become an important part of the way companies market their products and an equally important part of the way consumers interact with products. Over time, this has given rise to more complex branding strategies on the side of the companies, as they attempt to compete in increasingly competitive markets. While originally brands were focused on attributes of the product, nowadays companies are making a shift towards centring brand identities on cultural, political and ideological issues. This is a move prompted by the fact that consumers are looking to use brands as cultural resources in their quest of creating authentic self-identities.

During the early half of 2017, TV 2 Danmark, the government-owned Danish TV network, started a re-branding campaign entitled 'All that we share' by releasing a commercial with the same name. The commercial, and subsequently the campaign, centres on portraying an intercultural message of connectedness despite perceived diversity. This comes at a time where social and political divisions are growing, cultural differences are being emphasized and a constant 'us vs them' narrative is taking place. We argue that the campaign is an instance of cultural branding, as TV 2 takes a stand in a discussion taking place in the socio-cultural context of the time and therefore use it as a source of meaning in their branding efforts.

The goal of this thesis is to investigate the meaning of the campaign and explore the use of the concepts of diversity and connectedness for the creation and communication of TV 2's brand. Our approach draws in from the evolving paradigms in branding research. We attempt to shed light on the meaning of the campaign by examining the perspective of TV 2 as the sender of the message, and the perspective of the viewers as the receivers of the message, all while accounting for the cultural context that shapes both perspectives. The perspective of TV 2 will be drawn out from an expert interview with the network's Branding Manager and public statements made by the TV network. For the perspective of the viewers, data comes from interviews conducted with Danes. Here we have conducted one focus group interview and six semi-structured interviews. Data on the international perspective will be collected from online newspaper articles and social media comments. All of the considerations above will help us answer the following research question:

1.1. Research question

*“What is TV 2 trying to convey with their campaign ‘All that we share’ and how do the Danish receivers interact with the message of the campaign?
How is the message of ‘All that we share’ perceived in an international context?”*

1.2. Operationalisation

During this section, we are going to specify the intention behind the research and expand on the different parts of the research question.

Our research is going to investigate the branding campaign ‘All that we share’. The campaign takes on the idea of diversity and points out the hidden connections that different people share. We argue that this is an intercultural message, and therefore its use by a TV network with a large audience is intriguing. We find it intriguing because the topic of culture is a sensitive point of discussion in today’s society. Our approach to researching the campaign is focused on understanding the meaning of the campaign from three different perspectives.

The first part of our research question attempts to look at the campaign from TV 2’s perspective. This will help us understand why TV 2 have used this specific topic in this campaign. Specifically, we want to see what TV 2 were aiming for with this campaign and why they made it.

The second part focuses on the Danish viewers’ perspective. It attempts to give an account of the campaign by exploring the way Danish viewers perceive and understand the commercials and the overall message of the campaign in relation to their understanding of TV 2.

The third part seeks to investigate the campaign from an international perspective, in light of the massive response it has received there as well. This will add to the overall understanding of the campaign by showing the ways international viewers perceived the campaign.

BACKGROUND & RESEARCH CONTEXT



2. Background and research context

In this chapter, we are going to describe the commercials as well as introduce TV 2 Danmark. In addition, we will show what has led us to this topic for our research. Furthermore, at the end of the chapter, we will present the areas that the research was chosen not to address.

Introduction to TV 2 Danmark

TV 2 Danmark A/S is a subscription-based television network owned by the Danish state. Today, the company's range of channels counts six channels of different content e.g. news, youth TV, sports, etc. and further, a relatively new on-demand streaming service online.

The main channel, TV 2, aired for the first time on October 1, 1988, and three years later the channel had become the largest TV channel in Denmark, outcompeting Danmarks Radio (DR), which was the first supplier of TV content in Denmark. While originally TV 2 was available as an over-the-air broadcaster, their business model changed over the years and in 2012 the TV network added a subscription fee in order to access their channels. Today, TV 2's main channel is available for 78.5% of the Danish households (TV 2, 2020).

'All that we share' is a campaign released by TV 2, which currently contains two commercials and a series of shorter TV-breakers.

First commercial

The first commercial was released in 2017 and took Denmark and the world by storm, receiving much attention and winning numerous awards (Ingemann, 2019; TV 2, 2017). The central points of the commercial, which will be described further in our thesis, have also been used in other areas of the channel's broadcasting, suggesting that it is a central part of TV 2's branding. The commercial was made with the help of the creative agency &Co. The commercial is an illustration of their philosophy: There is more that brings Danes together than there is setting them apart. The goal of the commercial is to show that in a world that is increasingly more divided, people should try to focus on the things they have in common.



Figure 1, Source: TV 2

The first commercial shows several groups entering a room with boxes marked on the floor. It is clear for the viewers which groups are together either because of the clothes they are wearing or other visual cues. The fact that the different groups are put together in boxes conveys the meaning that they are separate from each other. After they are all in their places, a speaker starts asking a series of questions, some more personal than others, and those that relate to the question are invited to take a step forward and join in for a group picture after which they can return to their initial box. As the speaker goes through different questions, it becomes apparent that different people from different groups can have things in common. The reactions of the participants show that they are surprised by the things they have in common with others from visually different groups. The commercial ends with the message that behind the groups we normally divide ourselves into, there are a lot of things that we have in common with others. The commercial concludes with all the groups stepping forward for the group picture under the commonness of 'We who just love Denmark'.

Second commercial

In 2019, TV 2 released a sequel to the commercial, featuring a similar message but with a different set-up. For this commercial, TV 2 used its in-house creative agency TV 2 Marketing. According to their website TV 2's goal was to provide Danes with relevant experiences that Danes would like to share with others (TV 2 Danmark, 2019).



Figure 2, Source: TV 2

The new commercial takes a group of people that seemingly have nothing in common and reveals the connections that the people share. This is done by putting two or more of the participants face to face and describing the stories they have in common. The participants' reactions show the surprise of finding out hidden connections and the powerful effect it has on people. As can be seen throughout the commercial, the participants are positively surprised when they find out how their paths have crossed before, e.g. by introducing a girl, who is now all grown up, to the midwife that helped deliver her - and this creates a bond between them.

Besides the two commercials mentioned above, the campaign features other elements as well. Shorter commercial breakers are played in between shows on most of the network's channels. These short breakers are composed of images of 2 seemingly different personas (the personas are purposefully made to look like a stereotype of various social groups such as farmers etc.) along with a caption mentioning what they have in common e.g. "We who sing in the shower".



Figure 3, Source: TV 2

The work on the first commercial started in August 2016 and ended in January 2017. Although it is a commercial-film, they did not hire actors to participate in the commercial. They wanted the reactions shown on camera to be the reactions of 'real' people. That is why they have cast 'regular' people to appear in the film. Research was made on the things that the participants had in common and the things that would be the most appropriate for the aim of the commercial. The shooting took place in one day and the reactions that are seen in the film are the reactions that happened on the spot as they first learned the things they have in common. It was also important that the different groups of people were both visually different and that they were easily recognisable.

The process was similar for the second commercial. TV 2's research team went through a list of people that had submitted their stories to TV 2 and looked into the connections they could find. Out of all of the people that submitted their stories, TV 2 chose the participants that were the most relevant for their message. The reactions seen on screen were again the real reactions given by people when they heard about the hidden connections they have.

The message of the commercials has also been used for other campaigns. For example, the campaign used to promote one of TV 2's programmes 'Vild med dans', was created in such a way as to illustrate that Danes all over the country share one thing: they are in love with dancing. The message being used in several campaigns across TV 2's branding makes the case

that the value of bringing people together sits at the core of the channel's current branding strategy.



Figure 4, Source: TV 2

International attention

As mentioned, the first commercial was originally released in January 2017. Soon after its release, the commercial sparked a lot of interest also outside the country, so a week after the release date, TV 2 released an English version. The two versions have been viewed over 284 million times across all social media channels and they have been shared over 8 million times (We Love Ad, 2017). The success of the commercial also came in the form of critical acclaim. It has received numerous gold, silver and bronze medals at awards such as Cannes Lions, Clio Awards, The Lovie Awards and Eyes & Ears Awards (TV 2, 2017).

For the second commercial, TV 2 seemed to have anticipated international interest and an English version was released only a day after the release of the Danish version. This anticipation seemed to be accurate, as TV 2 has received several inquiries from foreign media companies that wanted to spread the message of the second commercial. The commercial was also well received by the public, gathering over 56 million views. Just as with the first one,

the second commercial also won several medals at awards such as Clio Entertainment Awards (Ingemann, 2019).

Given the success of the two commercials, TV 2 is already working on a third commercial to continue the journey of their branding campaign and its message.

Originally, the campaign was only aimed at Danish consumers. However, as the reception and interest for the commercials outside of Denmark were so high, the commercial was translated into 30 languages (We Love Ad, 2017). This is an indication that the message of the campaign resonates with people across many different countries. In an interview about the reception of the commercials, when asked if they might have lost focus on their target audience due to the success that the commercial enjoyed outside of Denmark, TV 2 replied that their focus has always been on the Danish viewers. They are glad that the commercials resonate with people outside of Denmark and they are proud of it, but the most important for them is that the reception has been positive in Denmark (TV 2, 2017).

This 'accidental' international success might not be the whole picture, however. The media agency that helped TV 2 with creating the first commercial had a different aim for the commercial (We Love Ad, 2017). According to them (&Co.), commercials that get media attention outside of Denmark become even more popular amongst Danes, as the Danes like when stories about their country are spread internationally. Each time that some new country seemed to discover the commercial, it was a talking point in Danish media, which helped keep the spotlight on the campaign. Therefore, this was in fact taken into consideration while putting the idea into reality. Another thing that the agency was concerned about was that the commercial should be worthy of being shared across social media. This is something that many campaigns aim for, as being shared online increases the reach of the campaign. Furthermore, the agency &Co confirms that the message featured in the commercial will shape the future programming of the network.

The commercial enjoyed international popularity across several media channels. Newspapers were one of the media channels, specifically the online version of them. Having coverage in newspapers showed the popularity it was enjoying and helped promote the commercial even further. The articles we have found were online. Only appearing online could be because of the way that newspapers function today. People like to hear about news continuously and

the online medium gives newspapers the opportunity to write about even the smallest topics that would normally not get a full page in the printed version. Despite the articles being online, they are still featured by established newspapers that have a printed version of their newspapers. The majority of the articles featured the commercial in a positive light. The international media find the commercial very inspiring and connect it to the 'us vs them' narrative, which seems to be prevailing all over the world in current times. The newspapers, in large, praised the commercial's message and thought of it as something every country should learn from.

The commercial was also popular and talked about on social media. It captured the attention of not only regular people but also of influential celebrities, including Richard Branson, Justin Trudeau and Ellen DeGeneres. Furthermore, there were also cases where people have been inspired by the commercial and they have decided to have their own take on it. Penn State, a university from the US, and Bristol City Council have both taken the idea of the commercial and adapted it for their own campaigns (Bristol City Council, 2019; Mooney, 2018).

As mentioned above, the release date of the commercial does not appear to be linked with anything outside of Denmark. However, when it featured in news articles across the world, several of the articles linked the release date of the commercial with the travel ban imposed by the President of the United States of America. This gives us an insight into the way that the message of the commercial has been perceived and specifically about the fact that the commercial is seen as a response to the people that are nowadays trying to create divisions in the world.

Research goal

When the first commercial came out, it captured our attention as we found it to be a good commercial. It made an impression on us, proven by the fact that we still remember it more than three years after its release. The commercial first made us think that brands nowadays seem to have an opinion on specific subjects and, secondly, of the message of diversity and connectedness being spread.

As can be seen from the paragraphs above, the commercial has been widely considered a success for TV 2. The continued focus that TV 2 has on the message of the campaign seems to suggest that the TV network also considers the campaign to be successful and want to

continue with it as their brand identity. Furthermore, the commercials have sparked a considerable response across the borders. This proves interesting for us and is worthy of investigating.

This thesis is going to look at the way that viewers perceive the campaign released by TV 2. It is interesting to see that TV 2 takes on a topic that tackles diversity. The message is intercultural because it invites people to relate to differences across the different parts of society. We will, therefore, analyse the way Danish and international viewers, and TV 2 engage with an intercultural narrative. We argue that intercultural narratives will be used more and more often as countries become increasingly heterogeneous, which is why it is important to see how people understand the intercultural message of the campaign.

In sum, these are the main factors that contributed to our decision to investigate the TV 2 commercials in our master thesis. We find it very interesting that the biggest provider of Danish television has chosen to use this intercultural message of connectedness and diversity as their brand identity. Therefore, we want to research the way Danish viewers understand the campaign and furthermore, as a relevant part of our education, we also want to see how the international viewers understand the campaign.

2.1. Delimitation

As with most studies, we have found some areas of the research where we have limited our investigations. While our research question consists of three parts, we are not going to allocate an even amount of space in the project on each part. The main focus of our research is examining the way the Danish viewers understand the commercial and therefore the majority of the project will be devoted to this part. We argue that the perspective of the Danish viewers is the most relevant for understanding the message, given that they are the intended recipients of the message. Although the question concerning TV 2 and the question concerning the Danish viewers of the research are of equal importance to understanding the message, the aim of the latter is much broader than the aim of the former. The part concerning the international viewers aims to complete the picture by adding a bit of extra context to the perception of the commercial, due to the international success of the campaign, and thus we have decided to assign it a smaller role in the thesis.

As mentioned, our research attempts to understand the campaign 'All that we share'.

For the Danish perspective of the analysis, we wanted to collect our data through a series of focus groups and semi-structured interviews. However, given the current COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions, this appeared impossible, thus limiting us to have only one focus group and a series of semi-structured interviews, which were conducted online. The effects of this on our research will be discussed further in our Methodology section (chapter 3).

For the third part of the research question and the analysis, we are investigating the international response to the campaign. This will be done through secondary sources from international online newspapers and social media. This affects the thesis in the manner that we are not getting the opinions straight from the source, in the same way as we are with the Danish viewers. However, we limited ourselves to this, as we both financially and realistically did not find a basis for a primary data collection of the international perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW



3. Literature review

The following section will present a critical review of the extant literature in the field of study of our research. As outlined above, our thesis aims to investigate the campaign of TV 2 'All that we share' and it specifically focuses on the ways consumers interact with the intercultural message of the campaign. We argue that 'All that we share' is a branding campaign and we will, therefore, discuss the relevant concepts of the branding literature: different branding paradigms, brand identity, brand image and brand meaning.

3.1. Branding paradigms

While initially a brand was only the mark that farmers would burn onto the skin of their livestock to symbolise ownership, the concept has evolved through the years to become one of the most important parts of a company's management (Hales, 2011). Today, branding refers to the act of associating certain elements and characteristics with a product or service in order to create identification, differentiation and value. Companies are aware of the powerful effect that a brand can have on a product's success and this has made it a popular topic of research.

Another adjacent topic of research is that of consumer culture. Consumer culture refers specifically to "a social arrangement in which the relation between lived culture and social resources, between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, is mediated through markets" (Slater, 2006, p. 8). This stems from the growing levels of consumption in the world, combined with an increasing desire from individuals to create self-identities (Gabriel & Lang, 2006, pp. 78-85).

Holt (2002) argues that there is a dialectical relationship between branding and consumer culture. In his article "Why Do Brands Cause Trouble", he discusses the different paradigms that took centre stage in consumer culture and branding. He suggests that there is an interplay between the paradigms in the two areas so that changes in consumer culture lead to adjustments in branding and vice versa. Moreover, there are developments inside the areas themselves that further push the shifting of the paradigm. As branding practices become more wide-spread and over-used, marketers take the practices to the extremes, which in turn fosters new innovative branding practices. On the other side, consumers become more knowledgeable of the influence of marketing and as they become more

accustomed to the extant consumer culture, they look for new innovative ways to enact culture. This pushes consumers towards a reflexive defiance of the accepted patterns.

While trying to provide proof for his suggestion, Holt talks about the Cultural Authority Model as having been the predominant narrative during modern consumer culture and branding paradigm. This entailed that marketers were able to control the feelings and actions of consumers through cultural engineering. The idea presumes that marketers could create a “system of commodified meanings embedded in brands” (Holt, 2002, p. 71) that the consumers had no choice but to participate in. The consumers, deprived of other identity building blocks due to the changing society (Gabriel & Lang, 2006), relied on commodities to create their social identities. Over time, consumers became aware of the methods used by brand managers to control consumption patterns and they created a response against the cultural engineering principles, dethroning the marketers from their self-imposed authority role. The focus was shifted from listening to what the market dictated towards taking sovereign choices (Holt, 2002, p. 82). Consumers still use branded goods to create identities, but they would do so by choosing the values that are desirable themselves. This change in consumer culture gave rise to a change in the branding paradigm, as brand managers tried to adapt. To go along with the idea of personal sovereignty, marketers had to give up the approach of creating brands as cultural ideals but instead as cultural resources for consumers to use of their own accord.

3.2. Conventional branding models

Holt (2004) argues that the three conventional branding models that dominate the business world are: mind-share branding, emotional branding, and viral branding. He further argues that by using only these strategies, one will not achieve the status of an iconic brand.

Mind-share branding refers to the roots of a unique selling point. Each product has to communicate its distinctive benefit to its customers. The authors of this strategy, Al Ries and Jack Trout argued that: “For a brand to succeed in a society whose volume of mass communication far exceeds what consumers can manage, the brand must own a simple, focused position in the prospect’s mind, usually a benefit associated with the product category” (as cited in Holt, 2004, p. 15). Since the 1970's this has been the most influential

idea of branding and a generation of marketers were taught that brands will work according to these principles.

Emotional branding takes the idea of mind-share branding a step further and focuses on the way the essence of the brand should be communicated. In order for the message to effectively reach the customers, brands should create emotional appeals that should be used “to spur emotionally charged relationships with core customers” (Holt, 2004, p. 21). When using emotional branding, the organizations must continuously look inwards to understand their identity and then express this in everything they do. “Some managers even argue that organizations must work to get both employees and customers to treat the brand as a religion” (Holt, 2004, p. 22) – it is argued that, if doing this, the brand and its customers will form a deep bond.

Viral branding is a more recent form of branding strategy. The idea is that “viral branding focuses on the paths of public influence” (Holt, 2004, p. 28). With viral branding, the emphasis is on the non-company actors that influence customers to value the brand. Here it is assumed that the consumers and not the organizations have the most influence on the brand. This strategy is highly accelerated by means and rise of the internet, where consumers everyday exchange experiences with brands, products and several other things.

3.3. Cultural branding

Holt further argues that a new strategy is starting to take shape in today’s markets and calls it Cultural Branding. This strategy generates identity value through the art of myth creation. Holt claims that in order for “a myth to generate identity value, it must directly engage the challenging social issues of the day” (Holt, 2004, p. 37). Holt continues: “The [iconic] brand is a historical entity whose desirability comes from myths that address the most important social tensions of the nation” (Holt, 2004, p. 38).

Since the start of time, people have looked to someone or something to reflect their identity in. In the pre-modern time, most looked at things such as religion, profession or groups to achieve this (Gabriel & Lang, 2006). However, over time and with the rise of the media of mass communication, the traditional elements have been overtaken by other things that consumers look to in order to create identity. One of the new elements that consumers turn to is cultural icons. A cultural icon is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as ‘a person or a

thing regarded as a representative symbol, especially of a culture or a movement; a person or an institute considered worthy of admiration or respect' (as cited in Holt, 2004, p. 1).

In the culture industries, these icons have come to represent a story – or an identity myth, which consumers use to reflect their desired identity in. Furthermore, it is seen that today, in a populist¹ world, people are who they want to be out of their own volition not because other factors push them to. Therefore, Holt (2004) argues that consumers 'run' to brands that embody the ideals that they admire, in order to help them express who they desire to be.

In order to achieve this status of iconic, cultural brands should consider their cultural branding. Questions such as the timing of the branding, message, desired brand image, keeping relevant etc. are very important when wanting to become and to remain an iconic brand that creates value to its consumers. Likewise, a brand's identity myth depends entirely on how well it fits into the historical context of its time.

3.4. Two sides of branding

Research in branding takes into account the perspective of both the brand manager and the consumer. For consumers, brands are what provides a visible representation of the differences between products. This is especially helpful to consumers as they navigate between products and services in an increasingly competitive world where mass communication and mass consumption is part of everyday life.

For companies, brands are, when successful, what enables them (the companies) to maintain a high level of consumer acceptance. One of the prevalent philosophies in branding focuses on brand identity (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 1994). This philosophy states that the collection of all brand elements and actions of the company are used to create the brand's unique strategic vision and brand associations. For a while, this was the dominant approach to branding and researchers would try to establish the meaning of a brand only by investigating the identity portrayed by the company.

A different approach to branding focuses on the receiver's side of branding (Keller, 1993). This states that consumers relate to a brand through the image that they have of it. Thus, the

¹ Autonomous places where people's actions are perceived to be guided by intrinsic values, not by money or power (Holt, 2004, p. 11).

concept of brand image (from the consumers' point of view) arises, which is somewhat independent of brand identity (from the companies' point of view).

Brand identity	Brand image
Source/company focused	Receiver/target audience focused
Created by managerial activities	Created by perceptions of the consumer
Encoded by 'brand originator'	Decoded by 'brand receiver'
Identity is sent	Image is received/perceived

Figure 5, Source: Nandan, 2005

Nandan (2005) describes:

An organization can, through its branding strategies and advertising messages, seek to convey a certain image for the brand. Consumers may, however, evaluate the company's message through the prism of their own subjectivity. People will use their own interpretations and will respond differently to brands. This subjective evaluation results in the formation of brand image in the mind of the consumer. It is therefore important that the brand message is conveyed clearly. According to the communications model, the company (source) encodes and sends a message to the consumer (receiver), who decodes the message based on his or her frame of reference. A communication gap can exist if there is a discrepancy between the encoding and decoding process. (p. 265)

Therefore, Nandan (2005) continues to argue that a company should aim to minimise the communication gap, as a close connection between brand identity and brand image would create brand loyalty. The current time of mass communication poses a further challenge to the communication of brand identity and therefore it is very important for the companies to keep consistent with their brand identity in everything that they do, not only for the core brand but also for brand extensions. Further, this has to be kept in sync with their consumers' brand image, otherwise, consumers are likely to move on (Nandan, 2005). A company may have a superior product, and a good and well-thought self-perception, strong management and distribution of their brand-messages, however, it is always crucial to understand and

acknowledge that the receivers of the message may not understand this the intended way. If the brand is not able to convey its beliefs to its consumers, the favour of its target audience may ultimately end up failing.

The communication gap that can appear between the transmitting and receiving sides of branding can also give birth to a reciprocal relationship between brand identity and image (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011, p. 467). Instead of a one-way communication model in which the receiver takes on the burden of assuring that the brand identity is communicated efficiently, the company can try to understand the brand image of the consumers and let that influence the brand identity. This emphasizes the active role that consumers play in branding.

3.5. Brand meaning

The emergence of the concept of Brand Image made way into branding research for studies that attempted to understand the meaning of brands by investigating the image created in the minds of the consumers. One proponent of the active role that consumers play in branding is Batey (2008). He emphasizes that companies work to create brand identities, but it is the consumers that create brand meaning (Batey, 2008, p. xiii). This is done through the act of actively engaging with the messages being communicated through branding efforts. Just like Holt (2002), Batey (2008) agrees with the idea of a change in the relationship between brands and consumers. While previously marketers could dictate the values of their brands and consumers would choose those that fit best, Batey is arguing that the relationship is changing towards a situation in which consumers themselves confer values to the brands. In this new relationship, there are two stages to the development of meaning. Firstly, brand managers carefully craft and select the essence and value of a brand during the development and communication stage. Secondly, consumers validate, reject or change these elements as they receive the messages and make choices regarding the consumption of the brand.

Drawing from neuropsychology, Batey (2008) describes how a brand exists in the consumers' minds. According to this, the brand is a collection of associations, perceptions and expectations that consumers have in their minds. Every time the consumer interacts with a brand through an advertisement, consumption or other forms, the associations are modified, reinforced or weakened, similar to how neural networks work inside the brain. Different encounters over time contribute to the changing state of these associations, and what is left

after each encounter defines the idea of the brand for the consumer. As this process takes place in the consumers' minds, it emphasizes that when consumers have an encounter with the brand, they react to their perception of reality and not to reality itself. For this reason, Batey (2008) argues that a brand is "the consumer perception and interpretation of a cluster of associated attributes, benefits and values" (p. 6) and not just a collection of attributes and values determined by the brand manager.

While the inclusion of the consumers' perspective to the study of branding contributes to a more complete picture, there is still more to be considered. Some researchers advocate for an approach to branding research that includes the cultural processes that shape both the companies' and consumers' perspectives of brands (Schroeder & Salzer-Mörling, 2006). This is based on the argument that brands "exist as cultural, ideological, and political objects" and therefore researchers should consider the culture, politics and ideology that surround a certain brand in order to fully grasp the way brand meaning is arrived at.

3.6. Conclusion

Branding started as a practice of marking one's possessions but evolved over time to become a central part of the way people consume and interact with products. As the needs and wants of consumers evolved with time, so did the strategies employed by brand managers in an attempt to stand out in an increasingly competitive market. One of the most recent strategies to branding is arguably the use of cultural resources in the creation of a brand.

The increase in complexity of branding strategies brought with it an evolution of the approaches used to study the meaning of brands. While initially only the brand identity created by the companies was taken into consideration, researchers have started investigating the image consumers create as well as the cultural context surrounding a brand.

We argue that the use of the topic of diversity and connectedness by TV 2 in their campaign 'All that we share' is an example of cultural branding and we will attempt to investigate the meaning of the campaign by employing an approach that takes into consideration both the message portrayed by the campaign, the understanding perceived by the viewers and the context surrounding the campaign.

3.7. Criticism

Even though the literature described above gives valuable arguments in favour of the idea that the consumer world is moving towards the online medium, we would argue that there are still instances where this is not applicable. There are still consumers that are not present online and products for which online mass communication does not affect the branding strategy. In many ways, it can be agreed that the arguments are the future but it can also be argued that it is not here yet.

Furthermore, while some companies are looking for increasingly complex strategies of branding, there are some products for which mind-share branding and focus on product attributes is the most suitable way of branding.

METHODOLOGY



4. Methodology

The following section will outline the thoughts behind and arguments for the approach taken in order to answer the research question mentioned previously. In addition, we will be presenting a critical discussion of the choices we have taken for performing our research.

4.1. Philosophical considerations

We will now lay out the philosophical considerations that form the foundation of our approach to this research. These considerations have been inspired by the research question mentioned above (chapter 1.1) and the aim of the research. It is important that this discussion is presented upfront as, according to Porta and Keatting (2008), “some reflection on the foundations of knowledge is necessary as a preliminary to all research” (p. 20). The goal of a researcher is to accurately represent reality and this section will provide insight on the assumptions we make in order to conduct our research in a way that will present findings that are accurate to the object of our study. This is especially important as “different research philosophies articulate different validities” (Saukko, 2017, p. 469).

We will first discuss ontology, which deals with questions regarding the nature of social entities. Our ontological considerations are greatly influenced by constructivism and its emphasis on the active role that individuals have in the creation of social reality. We, therefore, assume that social reality exists outside of individuals, yet it is through human interaction that it is created. In this way, there is a social reality, with all its categories, rules, roles and culture, that exists prior to any given moment and which serves as a starting point, but it is not an objective entity lying outside of the reach of individuals. Instead, individuals are interacting on a daily basis with the meaning and cultures around them, and in this way, these meanings and cultures get reaffirmed, changed or disputed. Drawing in from the legacy of cultural studies, we would like to further argue that “experiences are shaped by social discourses and context” (Saukko, 2017, p. 467). These assumptions underline the subjective role that reality plays for each individual and the fact that “the social order is in a constant state of change” (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). This has an influence on our research in the sense that the concepts we are going to be talking about are also a product of the social interactions between individuals. Thus, the meanings used in the creation of the commercial and the

meanings inferred by the consumers are not inherent notions that are evenly understood by the actors involved. Instead, each interaction adds its own take on these notions.

Given the subjective nature of social reality, as described above, we have to account for this when considering how to answer our research question in order to gain appropriate knowledge about our object of study. Our epistemological considerations take a starting point in the interpretivist stance on epistemology. The interpretivist approach is based on the idea that human beings are meaningful actors and that their actions are motivated by meaning. Therefore, getting to understand the world requires that one understands the meaning behind their actions (Bryman, 2012, p. 30; Porta & Keating, 2008, p. 24; Schwandt, Thomas A., 2003, p. 296). For the scope of our research, this entails that in order to understand how the different actors (brand managers, consumers) interact with the campaign, we have to gain access to the inner-workings behind the process of meaning-making associated with the campaign. This is based on Weber's argument that researchers should "attempt the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects" (as cited in Bryman, 2012, p. 29). We acknowledge as well that, as Gadamer (as cited in Schwandt, Thomas A., 2003, p. 301) says, the act of understanding itself is an interpretation of the meanings involved. This means that we, as researchers, are to a certain degree actively involved in understanding our object of study. This is based on the assumption that researchers cannot just 'flip a switch' and turn off all their pre-existing notions and concepts. The act of making sense of the data observed involves the interpretation of the reality using the notions and concepts present in a researcher's mind. Therefore, achieving an understanding of the findings that is accurate to the data does not involve ridding oneself of bias as much as it involves understanding and accounting for the way one's previous knowledge and experiences influences the interpretation of the data to be tackled. Much like the approach of philosophical hermeneutics described by Schwandt (2003, p. 302), we further argue that researchers arrive at an understanding of the social phenomena studied, in a dialogical process of negotiating meaning. Therefore, the findings of our research are a product of the particularities of the specific context observed and the methods employed for this study.

4.2. Research strategy

Taking into consideration the philosophical considerations mentioned above combined with the aim of our research questions, we find it appropriate to choose a qualitative research strategy for this study. Our choice is based on the fact that qualitative research “emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2012, p. 36). This will enable us to access the subjective viewpoint of our participants, which plays an important role in the experience of social reality, as mentioned above. Therefore, we have selected data collection methods that are capable of generating rich, complex answers about the participants’ point of view. The approach to the analysis has also focused on understanding the different facets of the campaign. Furthermore, the research will be using an inductive approach. Through our analysis of the data collected, we aim to answer our research questions and generate theoretical inferences. The rest of the methodology section will describe the specifics of our research strategy in more detail.

Some of the points that make a qualitative strategy appropriate for our study sit at the centre of the critique of qualitative research. The rather unstructured approach and focus on subjective interpretation lead to critique of the difficulty of replicating or generalising results, or lack of transparency of the process (Bryman, 2012, p. 405). While we consider that the benefit of using a qualitative strategy for performing this study is higher than the drawbacks that are associated with it, we try to mediate the critique points by providing an extensive description of our research process. Through this description, we account for the choices we have taken and provide an explanation of the process.

4.3. Quality of research

As with other pieces of research, our thesis sets out to create reliable knowledge that can adequately and positively contribute to the body of academic social research. For this reason, we have taken certain considerations during the processes of designing and conducting our thesis in order to achieve a high quality of research. Traditionally, reliability and validity have been used as criteria for assessing the goodness of research (Flick, 2007, p. 65). However, the different approaches that can be employed in social sciences have raised some questions regarding the relevance of using such criteria for judging research, especially when applied to qualitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 390). Given the qualitative research design we have chosen to work with as well as the methodological stances we have taken, we agree with

Guba and Lincoln's (1998, p. 213) argument that these criteria would not be good indicators of the quality of our research. Reliability and validity impose a certain degree of rigour in removing the researcher from the research, but this negates the active role that the researcher plays in understanding the object of study. Furthermore, the inherent objective aim of the criteria is not compatible with the subjective nature of our approach. We have therefore chosen to look at the measures of trustworthiness developed by Guba and Lincoln (1985) during the processes of designing and conducting our research. The four criteria it consists of have helped us reflect on the effects that every choice has on the quality of our research. These reflections will be presented in the following sections of our methodology section in an attempt to provide a transparent presentation of our research, which can help explain how we arrive at the outcome of this study.

We will also present the four criteria of Trustworthiness in order to display the overall effect these have had on our research. The first of the four criteria is that of Credibility, which assesses the extent to which the aspects of social reality portrayed in our research is credible. In order to make sure that we derive an accurate account of social reality, we have followed what Bryman calls "canons of good practice" (2012, p. 390). This entails using methods and approaches for our study that have been widely used and accepted by other researchers in the field. Transferability refers to the extent to which the research's findings can be applied in other scenarios. Our strategy for achieving a high level of transferability is attempting to create a thick description of the concepts we are investigating. The detailed description of the context surrounding the conduction of our research will provide an insight into how the context influenced the findings and furthermore serve as a basis for comparison with other contexts. Dependability refers to the research's ability to produce findings that are justified. Just as with the previous criterion, the strategy for ensuring the dependability of our research is to create a detailed description of the research process, which will provide sufficient information about how the research findings were achieved. Furthermore, during our supervision meetings, we were engaged in an audit-like process with our supervisor, where our supervisor could signal inconsistencies in our research process. Lastly, Confirmability looks at the extent to which the findings of a study are unbiased. We attempt to enhance the confirmability of our research by accounting for how findings are arrived at from the data during our analysis.

4.4. Case study

After having selected a research strategy, we will move on to our research design. The choice of research design has a big impact on the results of the study. As Bryman (2012) states, research design is a “structure that guides the execution of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data” (p. 45). This structure sets the tone for the project and affects which types of observation will come under the spotlight of us as researchers and which get less attention. Therefore, the choices in this matter have to be tuned to the purpose and aim of the study. The qualitative strategy of this project already guides us towards some of the designs that are better suited for collecting and working with qualitative data. Furthermore, as can be observed from our research question, the form of the question hints towards an explorative aim. Specifically, the research question relates to what the message conveyed by TV 2 is and how it is being interpreted by different viewers. The purpose is to identify the way that viewers create meaning, especially the way that context affects the meaning identified. The exploration will be considered successful if we can contribute to the understanding of how consumers make sense of branding campaigns, especially in the case of cultural branding, and how they participate in the creation of brand meaning.

While several research designs, such as surveys and experiments (Yin, 2018, p. 40), lend themselves to answering exploratory questions, we find that a case study would provide the appropriate structure for answering our research question. Our choice is based on our aim of exploring a social phenomenon – creation of brand meaning, as it naturally occurs in its ordinary context. This is in line with Yin’s (2018) definition: “A case study is an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 45). What distinguishes this type of design from others is its focus on the complexity and context of one particular case, which gives birth to a very detailed and intensive analysis of the case (Bryman, 2012, p. 66). This is appealing to us, since answering our research questions, we argue, requires exploring the multitude of facets of brand meaning and understanding its complex nature. Furthermore, case studies are also well suited for a variety of data sources (Yin, 2018, p. 43) and we aim to come to a deeper understanding of the case at hand by using a combination of data sources. This will be detailed in the following section of our methodology (chapter 4.5.). A case study design is also

particularly appropriate for researchers adopting an interpretative stance as the act of doing an in-depth investigation of a case allows access to the categories, presuppositions and classifications as they are understood by the actors taking part in the case (Schwandt, Thomas & Gates, 2017, p. 604).

In order to achieve a clear-cut structure for the project, it is important to define the case at hand and distinguish between the case and unit of analysis, since an unclear or fuzzy definition of the case is a common faux-pas amongst researchers that use case study designs (Bryman, 2012, p. 68; Yin, 2018, p. 62). For our project, the case is the campaign 'All that we share' by TV 2 Denmark. This is an example of a communication campaign used to create a brand identity for TV 2. According to Yin (2018), the case we have chosen falls under the characterisation of a 'common case' (p. 85). This is because the case of the campaign and the context surrounding it serves as a typical scenario of a brand manager using cultural branding and consumers interacting with it. Specifically, the case we are looking at takes the following shape: the TV channel created several communication elements (commercials, TV breakers) in order to communicate a message that would represent their brand identity. The communication elements have been distributed towards the consumers that then interacted with these messages.

As the case is our focus of interest, we are going to investigate the complexity of the processes that go on inside the case. This will be done by having a look at three different perspectives to the case: TV 2, Danish viewers and international perception. The case study will show how a message travels from brand manager to receivers and how consumers interpret communication campaigns to create brand meaning. However, the case we have is not a sample that can provide us with a representation of all instances of branding. This is, instead, just one example of a branding campaign that can give some insight into the particularities of how commercials are being interpreted and how meaning gets attached to a brand. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the understanding of brand meaning and cultural branding, by shedding light on the intricate ways consumers engage with and take part in creating brand meaning. Thus, the research sets out to advance the theoretical concepts described in the literature review, since the examination of a typical situation can "provide lessons about the social processes related to some theoretical interest" (Yin, 2018, p. 86).

4.5 Data collection

The data collection of the thesis will consist of a multitude of methods. This is done both in order to ensure the suitability of the data for the different perspectives and to secure a rich dataset on which to base our analysis. Furthermore, different data collection methods and sources are part of the triangulation process in qualitative research, which aims to increase the validity of the research by achieving a broader dataset (Arksey & Knight, 1999). As mentioned previously, this thesis will attempt to understand the meaning of the campaign by examining the different perspectives that contribute to the creation of meaning. This section will be divided into two subsections that represent the two perspectives of the communication campaign.

4.5.1. Sender's perspective

In order to uncover the brand identity that TV 2 is trying to create with the campaign, we have decided to gather data coming from the TV network, as this would enable us to get an idea of the company's thoughts behind the campaign. For this reason, we have conducted an expert interview with TV 2's Branding Manager, Vicky Wassmann Dahi. Our selection of which person inside the company to interview was the result of a consideration of the relevance of the different positions that they were employed as. Thus, we aimed to get the person that would have overseen the creation of the campaign. Vicky Dahi is the only employee of TV 2 we have contacted, as she agreed to the interview from our first inquiry. Conducting the interview ourselves allowed us to ask the questions that would be most relevant to the scope of the research. However, given the qualitative nature of our research strategy, the questions asked have been kept open and the interview was set-up as a discussion that allowed the interviewee to talk at length about the campaign. A copy of the questions we have prepared for Vicky Dahi is available under Appendix 11. While interviewing the Branding Manager of TV 2 can give us an insight into the perspective of TV 2, we must also take into consideration that the answers provided by Vicky Dahi might not be entirely unbiased, given her affiliation with TV 2. However, the answers will be representative of the image they are trying to create for TV 2 and therefore would still contribute to revealing the meaning that TV 2 intended for the campaign. The interview was conducted over the phone. We have offered the option to conduct the interview over the phone as this would increase our chances that an employee from TV 2 would agree to participate. The interview was recorded, as a way of getting an

accurate record of the answers given by the respondent. A copy of the transcript can be found in Appendix 8.

In an attempt to get a more complete picture of the campaign, we have also collected TV 2's statements regarding the campaign from various news and online articles. This could reveal extra dimensions that did not come up during the interview, as well as provide a check on the consistency of TV 2's intentions over time. The articles were gathered through an online search for articles reporting on either commercial that was part of the campaign. Any article containing statements by a TV 2 employee was included in our data collection. Furthermore, statements released by TV 2 or the advertising agency &Co. themselves were also included. Overall, a total amount of seven articles were included, all of which were used in the analysis.

4.5.2. Receivers' perspective

The second perspective to be investigated in order to understand the meaning of the campaign is that of the receivers. As outlined in our research question, the receivers' perspective is further divided into Danish and international viewers. We have used different methods of data collection for the two parts in order to ensure the suitability of the data. Given that the project's research strategy is qualitative, we argue that this perspective's data collection also has to be flexible and sensitive to social context as we are searching for meaning and interpretations. This has led us to choose methods that would allow us to collect rich datasets. Thus, we have decided to conduct interviews to ask the Danes about their thoughts and feelings about the TV 2 campaign 'All that we share'. Furthermore, we have used two different forms of interviews: focus group and semi-structured individual interviews. The two different approaches to interviewing will allow us to capture different dimensions of the receivers' perspective, which in turn will contribute to a richer description of the meaning of the campaign. For the purpose of understanding the image and meanings perceived by international viewers, we have used the method of netnography.

4.5.2.1. Focus group

One of the two interview methods for our thesis is the focus group. When using focus groups, the key concept is to ask questions on a specific topic and then let the group of participants discuss and interact with the questions asked by the moderator. This allows for the observation of joint constructions of meaning (Bryman, 2016, p. 501). This method suits our

research question well as it can reveal the way the meaning of the campaign is constructed by viewers in a collective manner through discussion. Furthermore, the discussion format of this type of interviews allows for less interference by the researchers. Our initial plan was to conduct a series of focus group interviews. However, the world's current state caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, unfortunately, made this impractical for us, as it was not allowed to gather in groups due to health concerns. An alternative would have been conducting focus groups interviews online through applications such as Skype. After considering this possibility, we decided not to go forward with this as we feared that we would lose the dynamic that one such group interview can create. In the end, this meant that we only had the possibility of conducting one focus group interview, which conveniently was planned before the ban of gathering in groups. The size of the group was six participants. This was to ensure that there were enough participants that could contribute their opinions and keep the discussion going but not make it so big as to make it intimidating for any interviewer to voice their opinion.

For selecting the participants for the focus group, we found that the use of convenience sampling would fit the research purpose. While the ban on gatherings had not been implemented at the time, there were indications that this would arrive. After considering our options, we decided to take advantage of a family gathering that was pre-planned and conduct a focus group with them. While this still ran the risk of transmitting the disease, the family gathering would have taken place regardless of the focus group and, furthermore, the members of the family were a part of the same spreading chain. Therefore, we argue that conducting the focus group interview did not pose a threat to public health. Conducting an interview with members of the same family does however have an influence on the data collected. Given the familial connections, it is likely that the opinions voiced during the interview are going to be similar. However, this is mitigated to some extent by the different contexts surrounding each individual family member. Groups of participants are aged between 23 and 60 and live in different parts of the country (Hanstholm, Thisted, Copenhagen). The familiar setting would have also contributed to the participants feeling more comfortable with speaking their mind during the interview. Overall, we argue that while the selection of the participants would have been different outside of the global pandemic, it still allowed for gathering data that provides relevant dimensions to the topic of research.

An interview guide was prepared ahead of time. As the aim of the interview is to facilitate a discussion between the participants in order to observe the collective creation of meaning, the questions were prepared as a way to guide the conversation, but the participants were allowed to take over the flow of the discussion. A copy of the interview guide is found in Appendix 9. In order to help with collecting the data, the interviews were recorded. This allowed for producing an accurate record of what was being discussed while at the same time ensuring that the researcher was engaged in following the conversation. While recording the interview might have the effect of making the participants more reluctant to share their opinion, the topics of discussion are not of a sensitive nature and therefore we argue that the effect of recording the interview is low. Furthermore, the participants have been told that the interview is completely anonymous and no identifying information will be disclosed. The participants were also briefed of the thesis-writing process so that they could make a clear idea of the ramifications of their participation in the interview. The participants were informed of their possibility of withdrawing their participation at any point during or after the interview. Although this could have impacted the findings of the thesis, by providing us with data that would be rendered unusable, we consider that the participants are entitled to the right of retracting their participation. No participant expressed their interest in withdrawing their participation. As the participants are Danish, the interview was conducted in Danish. This was done in order to allow the respondents to freely express themselves. The audio recording of the interview was transcribed and then translated into English for the analysis. The transcription and subsequent translation were made in such a way as to reproduce the spoken speech of the respondents. While this will decrease legibility in written form, we argue that it will better represent the responses given by our participants. The transcript is available in Appendix 1.

4.5.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

The second method of interviewing we have used is semi-structured individual interviews. This method allows a deeper look at the opinion and perspective of one participant. We have chosen to use a second type of interviewing in order to observe how the meaning of the campaign is created and perceived from the context of a single individual. This will add another dimension to our observations. The semi-structured approach was selected in order to collect a rich dataset that reveals the participants' perspectives. As is the procedure for

semi-structured interviews, the moderator had an interview guide prepared for the interview, stating the questions for the interviewee (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). However, it was possible for the moderator to rephrase, or go a bit beyond the prepared questions during the interview when this was needed. Furthermore, the participants were informed that it was okay for them to likewise go a bit beyond the questions asked and talk more freely about their thoughts and meanings, whilst the moderator had the responsibility of keeping the flow of the discussion relevant to the topic (Bryman, 2016, p. 201). The questions for the interviews were formulated in an open way in order to allow the interviewees to talk at length about their perceptions. The interview guide prepared can be found in Appendix 10.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected the conduction of the individual interviews. Although the interviews could have been held without reaching the limit of people that could gather, we still considered it safer to conduct the interviews online. For selecting the participants, we used a snowball sampling strategy. We have started the process of selecting participants by searching amongst our social groups for Danish respondents that would be willing to participate in an interview. After the interview, we inquired into the possibility of someone from the interviewee's social group agreeing to an interview. This method of choosing participants was selected as the main goal of data collection was to capture different perceptions of the commercials and therefore, more purposive selection of participants was not necessary. A total of six individual interviews were held.

The conditions for conducting the interview were similar to the conditions for conducting the focus group interview. The interviews were recorded, and the respondents were informed of the purpose of recording and that they were allowed to withdraw their participation at any time. No participant expressed their interest in withdrawing their participation. The participants were allowed to choose if the interview would be conducted in Danish or English. In the end, three of the interviews were conducted in Danish and three in English. Given that the participants that chose to conduct the interview in English have daily interactions in English, we did not find the language to be a limiting factor for expressing themselves. Copies of the transcripts can be found in Appendix 2-7.

4.5.2.3. Netnography

To answer the project's questions regarding the international perspective, we decided to turn our attention to the internet. The reason for this was that the first commercial found much online response on different platforms, and therefore there was a large collection of data that could be easily accessed.

With an increasingly growing online world, where it is becoming easier to talk and share opinions about products and everything else with others, on a larger scale, consumers go on the internet to find groups, chat forums and other pages to communicate or share their opinions on different matters with fellow consumers. Besides this, almost all social media platforms have these 'communicative-functions' built-in all of their platforms, where consumers can comment on the content at hand, which often leads to discussions between the users.

This latter example was the case when TV 2 uploaded their first commercial in English on the platform YouTube. Today, the commercial has more than 2.200 comments. Thus, we decided that we could take advantage of the data available online through the use of the netnography method. As we are looking to understand the way the international viewers understand the campaign, we argue that the online communications surrounding the commercials can reveal the underlying meanings of the comments, and therefore, the way the campaign is understood. As Kozinets (2002) describes it, netnography is a method that involves the observation and subsequent collection of data from already present discussions in online communities. Online communication is different from verbal conversation and some would argue that these online debates are less 'real' (Jones, 1995). However, as Kozinets argues, "these social groups have a 'real' existence for their participants" (Kozinets, 2002, p. 61) thus making it possible to interpret the conversations as such in order to uncover the way the commenters understand the campaign. The obvious low-cost of the netnography method further contributed to the choice of netnography as suitable for the data collection of the international viewers' perspective.

For selecting the source from where we could collect the comments, we have looked at several social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube). The criteria for selecting a source were a large number of comments and the possibility of commenters to reply to

other's comments. Having a large number of comments would ensure that there is a variety of opinions expressed and would increase the likelihood that we could observe interesting findings. The possibility of commenters to reply to other's comments would allow us to observe the discussion revolving a particular topic. The social media platform that best fit those criteria was YouTube. All of the comments from the videos of the two commercials were collected.

4.5.2.4. Online articles

Further data for answering the international perspective of the research question was collected from online articles. Given the coverage of the campaign in international media, we argue that the articles will provide us with hints of the way the message of the campaign is understood outside of Denmark. This was done in order to add another dimension to the data, by contributing with the image that was presented in the media. This is interesting to analyse, as media is read by, and therefore shapes the opinion of, many people.

The procedure for gathering the articles started with an online search on two platforms, Google and LexisNexis. The search criterion was the featuring of either one of the two commercials released by TV 2 in the campaign 'All that we share'. Out of all the results, the credibility of the publishing website was assessed, in an attempt to increase the validity of the collected data. Assessment of the credibility was based on the credibility of other articles posted on the website, the website's mission and contact info, years of existence, and prominence. In the end, a total of seven articles were collected

4.5.3. Criticism

The data comes from different sources and has been collected using different methods. This leads to a difference in the type of data collected. We have to be wary of this when we go through our analysis, as the differences might make the data incompatible. However, our aim is not to do a comparison between the different perspectives, but to collect the different meanings in order to create an overall picture of the understanding of the campaign. Therefore, the differences in the data do not pose a threat to the validity of our findings. Furthermore, while conducting the analysis we will be taking into consideration the source of the data.

4.6. Thematic analysis

The following sub-section will talk about the approach we have chosen for analysing the dataset we have gathered, as mentioned above. As outlined by the research question, our aim with this thesis is to understand how the message transmitted by the commercial comes across to and is understood by the viewers, as well as how the context and different elements surrounding the commercial interact with each other in the viewer's perception to create brand meaning. Typical to qualitative analyses, our aim is to "gain a deeper understanding of the data that have been gathered" and "look 'beneath the surface' of the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 204). For this reason, we wanted an approach to our analysis that would give the data a central role. The epistemological considerations we have mentioned previously pushed us towards an interpretive approach that would allow us to engage with the data. Furthermore, given the fact that we are using diverse data sources, we wanted a method of analysing that would have a certain degree of flexibility in order to fit across the different types of data. While there are many different methods of analysis for qualitative research, we found that thematic analysis meets the aforementioned criteria. Specifically, we chose to work with Braun and Clarke's approach to thematic analysis (2013), which they call 'reflexive thematic analysis'. Their approach involves delving into the data in search of 'patterns of shared meaning'. This approach emphasizes the researcher's active role as it entails considering the context of the data to understand emerging themes.

We will now lay out the process that we have gone through as part of our analysis. The process followed six steps, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013). While the different stages of analysis are divided here for the sake of displaying the process, our analysis used a more fluid flow between the different parts of the analysis process. The lack of rigidity is also one of the attributes of this specific approach to thematic analysis. The first step in analysing our data has been that of 'Familiarisation', in which we got accustomed to the data. This part consists of having a general look at the entirety of the data and trying to take it in. This serves as the shift from collecting data towards analysing it, where the first ideas about potential connections are made. While not too much emphasis was on generating anything concrete from this stage, we did take notes of particular elements of the data that we found interesting. These served as starting points and points of reflection for the following stages. The second part of our analysis was focused on 'Generating Codes'.

The process of the previous stage is taken one step further, as during this stage we have read through the data while at the same time identifying meaning and adequately labelling elements of the data with 'codes'. This involved "detailed and systematic engagement with the data" (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019, p. 853). For this second stage, we have chosen to use an inductive orientation for the coding process, which involves identifying patterns of meaning that appear from the data. In our process of identifying codes, we have looked at both the semantic, explicit meaning of the data and at the more latent, implicit meaning that we could infer from the data. As a way of ensuring that we get a variety of codes to work with, each of us started the coding process individually. This was done on the basis of the idea that a larger set of candidate codes would generate discussions that would lead to noticing certain interesting patterns that would otherwise be missed when the two researchers are coding together and aim for consensus from the start. Once we were done with generating codes individually, the process was done again with the two of us working together to generate further codes.

The third stage started the process of 'Constructing Themes' and continued the work done during the previous stage. The codes identified beforehand were reflected upon and seen in the context of the data itself, the research questions and the researchers' interpretation. Out of this analytic process, themes emerged that told "a coherent, insightful story about the data in relation to the research question" (Braun et al., 2019, p. 854). Thus, the emphasis has been not only on identifying interesting particularities of the data but on interesting particularities that can tell us more about the campaign of TV 2 and the way its message is being understood. During this stage, emphasis was put on the collaboration between the two of us. Potential themes were discussed and argued for during our meetings.

After having an initial set of potential themes, we moved on to 'Revising Themes'. This process involved reviewing the data under each theme and the way that it relates to the research questions and the scope of this thesis. The aim of this stage was not only to approve or reject potential themes but also to look for further connections between the themes, in order to see if there are any relations to be investigated. While moving between the different stages of the analysis has been a fluid process, it is particularly this stage and that of 'Defining Themes' that were almost blended together. That is because the process of reviewing the data for a theme involves the process of defining the core and boundaries of a theme and vice

versa. At the end of the two stages, we were left with themes that “clearly, comprehensively and concisely capture what is meaningful about the data” (Braun et al., 2019, p. 857). These themes were then used in the process of ‘Writing up the Analysis’, which consisted of writing the analysis, which will show how the themes connect to and explain the data.

4.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis adopted a constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology, which led to choosing a qualitative research strategy. In order to contribute to the understanding of brand meaning and cultural branding, the case of TV 2’s campaign ‘All that we share’ was chosen as the subject of a case study. Different methods of collecting data were chosen so a rich dataset could be gathered. The methods employed were a focus group-, an expert-, and several semi-structured interviews, as well as collecting data from online articles and social media. The data collected were analysed using a thematic analysis that helped parse through the data in search of patterns of shared meaning that could explain the data in a meaningful way. We will now move on to the analysis.

ANALYSIS



5. Analysis

Introduction

In the following, the analysis of the thesis will follow. The analysis will be separated into three parts: 5.1. TV 2's perspective, 5.2. the Danish perspective and 5.3. will be the international perspective.

The structure of the analysis will be that we first discuss our observations and then we support our claims with an excerpt from the transcriptions of our data. To keep the analysis cohesive and to be consistent we will begin each theme with a short introduction and end it with a short conclusion.

5.1. TV 2's perspective

The following themes display the most important facets that we have identified amongst the information we could gather from the expert interview with TV 2's Branding Manager Vicky Wassman Dahi and from TV 2's statements on their campaign in other media. During the analysis, we will be complementing our explanation of the data with quotes from the interview with Vicky Dahi as well as from the statements made by TV 2. When quoting the interview with TV 2's Branding Manager, there will be a 'V' to symbolise that Vicky Dahi is talking.

5.1.1. Intention

Introduction

In the following theme, we will touch upon the intentions that TV 2 had for the campaign. These will refer to the different intentions of each respective commercial, establishing a new brand identity and the role of social media. The theme will end with a short conclusion.

One of the interesting topics that came out from the data we have collected about the campaign is the intention that lies behind it. Knowing exactly what the network intended to do with their commercials can help us understand the message of the campaign. First of all, we can identify that the campaign 'All that we share' is a branding campaign. The TV network intended to create an identity of TV 2 as part of the community in Danish society. Therefore, the campaign has the purpose of communicating the message both to the public at large and to its own employees. Furthermore, while the main target of the commercial is the Danish

viewers, the applicability of the message to other cultures was considered as well. As explained by the advertising agency &Co below, success on the international scene can bring about more success on the national level.

“TV 2 is Denmark’s most watched channel family, and the film was made to launch ‘All That We Share’ as the new channel strategy internally and externally. The target group was everyone in Denmark. We aimed to make people engage internationally. It makes better PR stories in Danish media when people talk in New York, than in any Danish city. (We like it when other countries talk about us – we call it ‘small state mentality’). The approach was to make a piece that not only conveyed the position of ‘All that we share’, but was also worth sharing and thereby proved the position.” (We Love Ad, 2017)

In agreeance with what we mentioned above, we can further observe from the quote below from TV 2’s Branding Manager, Vicky Wassman Dahi, that the intention was to specify TV 2’s position and express their brand to the viewers.

“V: Yes. Well, overall the intention with ‘All that we share’ is to express, what we can call, TV 2 part and intention in the market. So, TV 2 as a Public Service supplier that supplies content to all Danes. (...) [TV 2 is a brand] Which is very focused on community and that, thereby, have chosen to set a course which is expressed in the slogan ‘All that we share’ and which of course talks a lot about that we have a lot in common. So, the intention was to be clear on TV 2’s position. (...) being those who are a very community-focused brand, and who have the opinion that we Danes have more in common than we think.”

(Appendix 8:12-16)

From the quote below we can infer that the commercial is intended to take a stand against some of today’s challenges in order to display the values that lie at the core of the TV network. TV 2 is also facing the same challenges that society is affected by.

“A lot is happening right now in our shared world with changing consumer habits, fake news, new business models and new actors but there is still something which is quite simple: We should be proud of what we do, or

otherwise we should redo it. And we should stay true to our core - the journalistic core - of making a difference.” (Larsen, C. W., 2017)

When conducting our expert interview, our participant, Vicky, justified the intentions of the two commercials as being slightly different from each other, but still with having the same basic message of connectedness. We can see that the first commercial intended to explain the concept of their new brand identity and make it clear for the Danish viewers what the new image of TV 2 is, and to put meaning to their identity. It is argued with this intention that, as Vicky also mentions, a new slogan has to be explained to the recipients for it to give value to the brand.

“V: Well... The first one was the one where we had to establish what ‘All that we share’ means. (...) If you analyse into a slogan such as ‘All that we share’ then you can say... ‘Well, yes. I understand that it is something about what we share’. But in reality, you can’t necessarily understand what it means, before we have put meaning into it.” (Appendix 8:28-30)

The second commercial intended to take the message of the campaign further. Since the meaning of the campaign was already laid out from the first one, the second commercial could be used to go deeper and expand on the message of the campaign, which sits at the centre of their brand identity. This shows us that the different elements that are part of the campaign are used together in order to convey the idea of TV 2 as being a part of the Danish community.

“V: The next film took a different position. Still it wanted to support the main message, but it did so in a different way by saying ‘we are more connected than we think’ we are closer than we think and you can be connected with someone you don’t expect, who is next to you in the bus. So that is to a larger degree something about creating a feeling of ‘those who are right next to me, I also have something in common with’. And in that way is it the same bottom it communicates on, but it does it in another way.” (Appendix 8:34)

As we can see from the quotes below, the commercial has always been intended to be popular on social media and try to achieve viral success. This has had an effect on the production of

the commercials, as the different conditions required for success on the different platforms were considered during the process of creating the commercials.

“We have not used a single dime on marketing. We have released the commercial for free on our own platforms and let it work its way out into the world. We were ready for and agreed that as long as TV 2 was credited, then the film was allowed to be shared both by employees, politicians and companies, briefly said, everyone, if it was a clear aim of disseminating the campaign.”

(Larsen, C. W., 2017)

Furthermore, the effect stretched as far as choosing the release date, in order to give the commercials a better chance at generating attention.

“It aired today, when Danes were very present on Facebook: USA got a new president, the men’s handball team fought in France and the premiere of ‘Badehotellet’ was just around the corner - It talks about Danes resonating with the message so we chose a period where Danes were already engaged on Facebook.” (Larsen, J. M., 2017)

Conclusion to theme

It can be concluded that TV 2 wanted to create a campaign that would crystallize their position as part of the Danish community. This was done in order to communicate their new brand identity both to the public and to its own employees. Furthermore, we have observed that TV 2 did, in fact, intend to make the campaign go viral as this would be beneficial for the promotion of the campaign.

5.1.2. Message

Introduction

The following theme will be focusing on what message TV 2 wanted to portray in their campaign ‘All that we share’. The theme will be dealing with what the message focuses on and who it relates to. The theme ‘Message’ will end with a short conclusion.

We have observed that TV 2 has made a shift from being a strictly commercial TV network to embracing the public service in their DNA. That is why the message of the campaign was made starting from the position of the channel as a public service channel. Therefore, they have

selected a topic of relevance to Danish society as a way of communicating that they are a network that tackles the topics close to the Danes. That is why they took a stand in the ongoing issue of social division by talking about the connections people can have, regardless of how different they are. The specific angle of the commercials, diversity and connectedness, comes from TV 2's assessment that in Denmark the debate about social divisions stems from the perceived lack of cohesiveness in society. This made them centre the message of the commercial around showing that the divisions are bridgeable.

"The campaign is an underlining of our public service-position and our wish to be the TV-channel that takes up the subjects that are important to the Danes. And in a time where there is talk of polarisation, the film - and its reception - reminds us that there is more that connects us as humans, than what separates us."

(TV 2, 2017)

"The strategy, 'All That We Share', is about focusing on the things that unite us in these dividing times. There is a global discourse, that our societies are falling apart. In Denmark, the debate is about cohesiveness, and even in homogeneous Denmark it sounds like the different groups have nothing or very little in common." (We Love Ad, 2017)

The message of the commercials is focused on showing the connections between people that might not be easily noticeable, as well as on communicating the fact that TV 2 makes content that Danes can share with each other.

"The films and TV 2 focus, is on the commonness and general humanity - on the things that connect us Danes instead of what separates us." (Ingemann, 2019)

The content is specifically aimed at being inclusive of everyone in Denmark, as opposed to current trends on other media, such as social media, to divide into small groups.

"A self-fulfilling strategic film about inclusive programming and all the things we have in common, disproving the tendencies of segmentation and social media 'bubbles' and 'echo chambers'." (We Love Ad, 2017)

"The brief was to prove the power of 'All that we share'. A channel strategy for TV 2 Denmark opposing the trend of narrow targeted and segmented content."

(We Love Ad, 2017)

Conclusion to theme

It is concludable from the theme above that TV 2's message in the campaign is about showing that there is more we have in common than what separates us - despite diversity and societal differences. Furthermore, we can see that with this, TV 2 wants to remind its viewers that the network makes content for every Dane and that this is also something they can share with each other.

5.1.3. Public Service

Introduction

The theme of Public Service will deal with TV 2 in relation to them being a government-owned channel with obligations to the public. This theme will contain aspects of a changing world of TV consumption and TV 2's ability to adapt to the rules of the game. 'Public Service' will end with a short conclusion.

We see that TV 2 mentions the concept of Public Service when talking about the commercial. Although they are subscription-based, the network is government-owned and they choose to reinforce their image as a TV network in the service of the public.

"V: We want to fulfil a public service role and ensure to crystallize the fact that we are a huge community in Denmark and we have a lot in common. And within that are also angles of cohesion (...) Which is a part of the Public Service job, you might say." (Appendix 8:20-22)

TV 2 further argues that the message of the commercial was also chosen out of their duty as a public service channel to tackle topics important to the Danes. Furthermore, they see the TV network as a channel for all Danes, without a specific target section.

"TV 2's focus is to give Danes relevant experiences that they would like to share with others and 'All that we share' is the way we see the world. We believe that there is more that brings us together than what sets us apart." (TV 2 Danmark, 2019)

Furthermore, we can see that TV 2 understands the duty of a public service channel as keeping relevant to the ongoing issues that the Danish citizens might be dealing with. This is reflected both in their brand identity but also in their communication campaign. As we can see in the quote below, keeping relevant with the times was even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the situation could vary vastly from day to day. Therefore, TV 2 deemed it necessary to adapt the elements of the campaign in accordance with the latest development of the disease and lockdown.

“V: ‘All that we share’ is our guide in everything that we do. So, we have... eeeh... we have that as our basis. And that is also what we stand on when we say ‘oh, now we have to make our small breakers differently’, because we have to show what it is that we share right now. (...) So let’s try and make something that is ‘right now’. Let’s try and set it up so that it actually shows what happened yesterday because if people are quick to film something and upload it, they can be on-screen tomorrow. It has to be really quick with what we do, really. Normally, you make things with a bit larger production and it takes a longer time etc. Here, we act really fast. Simply, to be close to the Danes, to show what the reality... mirror the reality that we are all in currently. So, it is very important for us, all the time, to use ‘All that we share’ in that way and say, ‘well right now, all that we share is that we are in an unfamiliar situation’.” (Appendix 8:50-52)

We can also observe that TV 2’s communication strategy includes many different elements that are guided by the overall message of the campaign. As we can observe from the quote below, even small elements such as the short messages that introduce the next segment of their programming can be adapted in order to remind of and reinforce the message of the campaign. As we mentioned in the literature review, according to Holt (2004) this is important for consumers and brands when creating a bond.

“V: We have our small breakers. We have our speakers. When they speak... When they speak it is not always random how they say... if they use the word ‘share’ more or less, they know that ‘All that we share’ is our basis sentence. So, they can very well decide to add ‘now we are going to see how the Danes have shared the news today about Denmark closing down’ or something like that.”

(Appendix 8:54)

We can see from the quote below that the respondent mentions a direction change in the world. As social media and other platforms and streaming services are starting to take over from another time where flow-TV was in charge, it is important for TV networks to keep up with times to remain relevant to its customers. Therefore, TV 2 launched their own streaming service called TV 2 PLAY. We can see that this is done from their side, in order to keep servicing their Danish customers.

“Going towards a streaming world and with a heartfelt desire to make a public service transformation with the Danes, we are now trying to brand TV 2 PLAY, starting with what is our core: The Danish. And reminding you that every day, every time you publish that story, you are also writing about yourselves and who you are.” (Larsen, C. W., 2017)

Conclusion to theme

It can be concluded from the theme above that TV 2 acknowledges its public service duty and strives to work accordingly. We can, for instance, see this, from their launch of a streaming service that will allow their customers access to TV 2's content every hour of the day. This helps TV 2 stay relevant and also allow their viewers to share this content with each other. Furthermore, as a public service channel, TV 2 also attempts to stay relevant to the issues that Danish citizens have to deal with on a daily basis, which is used as the basis for their campaign.

5.1.4. International

Introduction

As mentioned in the thesis' introduction, the campaign and its commercials have received a lot of attention internationally. In the following theme, we will be looking at how TV 2 responds to this attention and what it has meant for them. The theme will end in a short conclusion.

We can observe from the below that TV 2 find pride in the international attention their campaign has received. Furthermore, they mention that it is hard to believe their campaign has raised so much attention. This argues for the fact that they perhaps did not intend for their commercials to become as popular outside of Denmark and feel that in a small country,

such as Denmark, it is a big thing to have reached across international borders. It is furthermore clear from the quote that TV 2 feel joyful that their message of connectedness is transferable around the world as it has affected and resonated with millions of viewers worldwide.

“The great response we have had on ‘All that we share’ gives both joy and pride, and it is still a bit unreal, that we have affected so many millions of people around the world with this message.” (TV 2, 2017)

It is seen in the following quote that the international success has meant that TV 2 is being contacted on a weekly basis by foreign media who are interested in repeating the success. We can see from the quote made by TV 2’s Creative Director, Chaga Signe Bruun, that these foreign media find the message of the campaign as recognizable as the Danish audience do. This tells us that the campaign is also valid in other parts of the world. We would argue that this reinforces the message that we are all connected, and that diversity and connectedness is cross-cultural.

“V: It has been a crazy campaign, meaning that it went viral all over the world and actually still is alive. We are still getting a lot of inquiries from people all over the world, who write and think it’s amazing and fits perfectly into their reality as well. And it has had extremely many millions of views, but for us, that is very nice and it has won a lot of different prizes, which is also nice.” (Appendix 8:66)

In an attempt to explain why the campaign was so successful internationally, Vicky Dahi mentions that the values and intentions that stand behind the campaign are some that are universal. Therefore, although the campaign was created to speak to the Danish viewers, the message is understood in a similar way across cultures.

“V: So, the programs that we make rest on the insight that there are things with us that apply generally. Something that all of us as humans have in common. And that is what we live to try and fulfil in our lives. And the search for feeling cohesion and a connection, that is also universal. So that is why it also works in different communities around the world.” (Appendix 8:74)

Conclusion to theme

From the short theme 'International' we can conclude that TV 2 express that they, in fact, did not expect the massive international success that their commercials reached. Furthermore, we see that the team behind feels proud that the message of diversity and connectedness has been understood and shared across borders and that this has, in fact, led them to increasing attention from foreign media.

5.1.5. Creating a true story

Introduction

The following theme will be dealing with the way that TV 2 and their partners have created this campaign to appear credible and authentic. The theme will end with a short conclusion.

In both commercials, TV 2 find it important to stress the fact that these are not made with actors. We can see from the quotes below that preceding the shooting day of the first commercial, TV 2 had prepared the participants on what questions they would be asked, however, this did not mean that they could not change their minds while shooting the commercial. Thus, the reactions and the emotions that we see in the first commercial are argued as being completely true and not as acted out. This reinforces the credibility of the entire campaign and the message that we have more in common than we initially think.

"The participants in the film are not actors and it is their true reactions that we see." (TV 2 Danmark, 2019)

"The film has been done in one shooting day, where 80 Danes from all layers of society showed up to the shooting of the film, which is directed by Asger Leth. They had in advance answered 40 questions about this and hints, but there was no demand that they, on the shooting day, were restricted to their previous answers." (Larsen, J. M., 2017)

From the quote below it is clear that TV 2's marketing director Jacob Weinreich attaches the recognized authenticity of the first commercial to the fact that they shot the commercial with a large group of 'real' Danes and while doing so, they kept the production authentic and real for the 80 participants involved. We can see here that Jacob is arguing that this feeling that

was kept during the shooting of the commercial shines through the finished product, which ultimately reflects the authenticity of the message to the viewers.

"I think the film is recognized for its authenticity in all areas. We have worked with 80 people on a full-day production, without it being or feeling staged."

(Larsen, C. W., 2017)

Furthermore, with the second commercial TV 2 also did research preceding the shooting of the commercial. Here again, it was important for TV 2 to portray that the people in the commercial were not actors and that it was not made-up stories.

"In the casting process we have had a large team of casters, who researched on the many different human stories and from these we have chosen the stories that give a broad and diverse image of what we can be connected with as humans." (TV 2 Danmark, 2019)

We can observe from the quote that TV 2's intention was to find stories that could give a broad image of the ways we are connected and further, that diversity again is part of the intended message of the commercial.

"In the new film of 'All that we share' we get closer on the connections we can have with other people. We put 2 - seemingly - strangers in front of each other and reveal to them that they have something special in common. Their reactions show that mirroring yourself in each other's life and experiences holds a strong positive power." (TV 2 Danmark, 2019)

"The film deals with the fact that shared stories can be found on many levels: in a house where you both have lived; in a social relation built through a video game, or in the big life-changing steps like for example saving another person's life or being a refugee." (TV 2 Danmark, 2019)

We argue that the second commercial is more 'personal' because the stories being told are more specific to the individuals on screen. However, TV 2 still wanted to reach broadly so in order to make the second commercial relatable for the broad Danish segment, they, for instance, found a participant who lives in the same house where another participant had grown up. By showing this, TV 2 attempts to speak to almost every Dane and make the

message of the commercial relatable. Furthermore, to activate the emotions of the viewer TV 2 also found 'big life-changing' stories where they could find people who had commonalities in e.g. being a refugee. By portraying this, TV 2 is no longer reaching broadly but they are instead reaching the viewers on an emotional level.

"We have worked on it for 9 months and the tagline itself 'All that we share' means, at its core, that we have more in common than sets us apart. And it talks about the danger of putting people into boxes. It resonates well with that, which we present every day on TV 2 - there is room for everyone's opinions, so from the teacher of didactics to the craftsman in Middelfart" (Larsen, J. M., 2017)

We can observe from the quote above that TV 2 confirm the campaign's message that, at its core, is about what we have in common and how we are connected, through for instance diversity. The campaign also tries to convey that there should be room for everyone, in Denmark - and on TV 2's channels - and that this is the brand image that TV 2 want to portray and make relatable to their Danish viewers.

Conclusion to theme

From the theme above we can conclude that it was a focal point for TV 2 to keep the authenticity in their commercials. This was done by using 'real Danes' instead of actors for the campaign and by keeping a trustworthy and credible experience for those who participated in the commercial. We can see that TV 2 argues that this has contributed to the overall authenticity of the campaign and made the commercials more relatable to every Dane watching it.

5.1.6. Branding

Introduction

'Branding' will deal with TV 2 and their desire to recreate their brand identity and bring this into their DNA. The theme will end in a short conclusion.

As mentioned in a previous theme, the intention behind the campaign was to create a branding identity for TV 2. We can observe that the message of the campaign plays a central role in all of the communication activities of the TV network, as they link other campaigns to

the message of this one. Furthermore, the brand identity portrayed in the commercial was also used to shape the programming available on TV 2.

“Within the coming weeks we will, for instance, publish a large campaign for the government elections, which is produced by TV 2 marketing - within the ‘All that we share’-universe. As we stood in front of the job of the next ‘All that we share’-campaign, it was natural that this should be produced by the creative team at TV 2 marketing.” (Odde, 2019)

“The film is also made to set the tone for future programming on TV 2’s main channel.” (We Love Ad, 2017)

As they are saying above, the campaign is rooted in the core values of the TV network, which is that people have more in common than what separates them. They further mention that the message transmitted by the commercial had to be a true representation of their identity, otherwise it would not be believed by the viewers. This tells us that TV 2 has considered the authenticity of their claim when shaping the brand image portrayed in the commercial.

“‘All that we share’ is a solid belief that we, as humans, have more in common than what separates us, and that has been our joint core on TV 2. A branding campaign is only really good if it is your true story of who you are. With us that means that you should never feel that you might as well walk in the door somewhere else,” (Larsen, C. W., 2017)

Furthermore, we can observe the way the core values of the TV network have led to the brand identity portrayed in the campaign. As can be seen in the quote below, Vicky Dahi reinforces that the content made by TV 2 is made with the intention of connecting to the Danes, and therefore contributes to the Danish community. Another core value is that of credibility, which meant that the brand identity and subsequently the campaign had to support this value.

“V: Well... overall the core value of TV 2 is still, as it has always been, that it is a giant community. There is no doubt that when TV 2 makes content, we do it to connect the Danes. And in reality, to connect as many as possible. (...) That is why we have these big entertainment formats, which we know a lot of people, at

home in their living room watch, e.g. 'X-Factor' or 'Vild med dans' etc. But besides that, one of our most important values is, because we are a public service house, we are also a huge news-house, then it is, amongst others, credibility. And then it is also that we are courageous. And entertaining."

(Appendix 8:24-26)

Conclusion to theme

We can conclude from the above mentioned that the core values of TV 2 are also seen in the message of the campaign. This was done in an attempt to create an authentic and diverse brand identity, in which the Danish viewers will find something to share with others.

5.2. Danish viewers' perspective

Introduction

Throughout the interviews we have conducted, we can observe a multitude of opinions regarding the campaign 'All that we share'. As we have expected, although the participants have watched the same commercials, their interpretations of what is shown on-screen and the meanings they infer from it are different. This subsection of the analysis will display the eight themes we have identified and diligently examine the responses we have gathered. These themes are all centred on concepts we find as important observations in our data. As we explain our observations, we will feature excerpts from our interviews. As our interviews are anonymous, the quotes will not show the name of the respondent, but only show a 'P' for participant. When we are quoting a conversation between the interviewer and participant, the former will be marked with an 'I'. When quoting from the focus group interview, the different participants will be marked with a number from 1 to 6.

5.2.1. Knowledgeable consumers

Introduction

The first theme will be dealing with the topic of which we have already mentioned in the thesis' literature review - namely that consumers are aware of what is going on behind marketing and its strategies. The theme will look at our respondent's answers on the underlying intentions of the commercial, how they understand the narrative of the campaign, whether or not TV 2 is trying to create a brand image, whether or not there is any underlying

political agenda in the campaign and eventually, who they see as the target group of the campaign. The theme will end with a short conclusion to these.

During the interviews we have conducted, we could observe that the participants displayed quite a critical attitude towards the commercials. During the conversations with them, they would talk about the intentions they see behind the commercials, specifically in regard to the underlying strategies that the company might be having. We find this to be in agreement with the postmodernist paradigm of consumer culture that argues that consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the branding practices employed by managers to persuade consumers (Holt, 2002).

5.2.1.1. Intention

One of the factors that contribute to the participants' critical attitude towards the commercials is that they are aware that commercials are intended to sell a product or service. As the commercials do not feature any reference to TV 2's service, this leads the interviewees to wonder what the intention of the commercial then is. Throughout the responses from our interviewees, we can see the different considerations that they give to the intention behind a commercial. In the quote below, we see that the interviewees are aware that companies employ certain practices in order to attract attention to their brand. One such practice is brought up by one interviewee that mentions the negatively received commercial by the Scandinavian airline company SAS. The interviewee seems to believe that some companies might release a controversial commercial because they know it will spark a lot of attention. Their opinion is that the commercial is a way for the TV network to portray the values that are present in Danish society and that it is a different approach from the 'marketing stunts' that other companies employ just to get attention. This is met with a response from another participant in the focus group that mentions that the commercial is definitely part of a branding strategy, as every material released by a company is part of their branding.

"6: Yes. Completely opposite of what SAS has done with their commercial. So, I don't know if it was... I wouldn't say that it was a marketing stunt in that way, or a branding stunt.

(...)

5: I think that it is. I definitely think it is branding because... whether it's about the same period of when you were starting to pay to have TV 2 or buy it. I think it's branding to give attention to TV 2.” (Appendix 1:178-181)

When reflecting over the TV breakers, the interviewees again see beyond the message and interpret the breakers as a recurring part of the campaign, with the purpose of keeping the idea of the campaign alive in the minds of the viewers, by providing reminders that hint towards the campaign. In the quote below, the interviewee is mentioning that the act of repeating a statement is a very common marketing practice.

“P: Yeah, they do. I think it's a... Yeah, they fit well. They are, as mentioned, small reminders and it's a good way to remind people they are actually watching the TV 2 channel. It's a meaningful way to... first of all brand TV 2. It's a meaningful way to remind their users ‘You're watching TV 2’ if it wasn't enough to see the TV 2 [logo], but we all know exposure means everything. If you repeat something enough times it becomes the truth, I think that's one of the marketing concep... one of the earliest marketing concepts.” (Appendix 7:83)

Another participant talks about how ‘All that we share’ is a way for TV 2 to contribute back to society, in an example of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In this way, the TV channel does not want to necessarily convince more people to watch their channels but try to actively work towards bettering the society of which they are a part of. From the responses, it appears that this intention is seen as a genuine attempt at contributing to society. This will be expanded on during the theme ‘Doing this for society’ (chapter 5.2.6.). Once again, we can observe that the commercial is not seen as having purely commercial intentions.

“Well, I think they are really good at not just saying ‘we want to sell a product’. They are really good at saying... I mean, explaining what their product is, and what it is that they want to sell besides that they do not just want to have money in the bank. There is a lot of CSR about it. And I think they are really good at getting that out.” (Appendix 2:145)

The only part of the campaign that is linked with a commercial intention is the COVID-19 breaker. As the COVID-19 breakers invite people to share their own videos on TV 2’s website in order to appear in the breakers on-screen, one interviewee is reminded of the companies

that try to get people's information in order to be sold for advertising purposes. This is due to the interviewee's experience with participating in online campaigns, where participation requires providing identifying information about oneself. This leads the interviewee to perceive a commercial intention behind the breaker, which is detrimental to the credibility of the message. As we can observe from the quote below, the message of connectedness is seen as an 'innocent' message that is done for benevolent purposes and the mentioning of the platform for contributing with a video prompts the interviewee to reconsider the overall intention of the TV breaker.

"P: With the last one I become a bit 'bummed'. Then it's just about being linked closer to TV 2, right. Then we are back to the commercial thing. (...) Then TV 2 fits well again into my own little box I want to put them into. Great! I'm calm again, then I can fit them into a TV station that just wants me to be hooked. So, overall with the final one they go a bit down in credibility" (Appendix 4:98)

Another way that the interviewees show their knowledge of marketing practices is when describing the TV 2 commercials in relation with other commercials. In the quote below, one of the participants describes the fact that the average commercial is just a nuisance when trying to watch television since it is just trying to passively relay a sales message to the viewers during the commercial breaks in the middle of other programming. The interviewee points out that the first commercial is trying to break out from the typical pattern of commercials and grab the viewer's attention by including questions. This is seen as an attempt to make the commercial more interactive. For the interviewee, the added engagement of the questions is enough to make the commercial stick in their memory and to act as a conversation starter.

"P: I think they do it to make the viewer feel included. Cause I feel like a lot of times when you watch commercials you can kind of zone out because those are the unwanted parts of watching television. So, by asking questions you kind of force the viewers to have opinions and to, uh, reflect upon these questions. And then they might stick even when the movie you actually want to watch starts again. Or after you finished. And it's something you can discuss over dinner. It's like 'Oh, did you see that... uh... commercial' and... because it's very... individual and also something that can make us talk. And yeah... I think it's to include... people." (Appendix 5:16)

5.2.1.1.1. Succes on social media

The first commercial is also seen as having been created with the intention of being successful at propagating on social media. As we can observe from the quote below, one of the participants perceives the commercial as a commercial that can be quite popular on social media. This tells us about the current interplay between advertisement and the different media channels available for transmission. Firstly, we see that the interviewee seems to perceive a difference between the types of commercials that are seen on TV and the types of commercials that are popular on social media.

“P: It's a marketing campaign, for sure. And it has been geared to evolve in social media. I am quite sure from day one they got this idea, they knew this needs to evolve on social media, for sure. That has been their goal, branding themselves even further. I don't think it's because they had a bad branding or something, but they just wanted to do what everyone else did. Go viral, as a marketing strategy. And we see that everywhere today, I think. Viral marketing is a goal for everyone today.” (Appendix 7:40)

Secondly, this also raises the question of whether the message of the commercial was chosen in order to appeal to social media channels or if having the appeal on social media channels is a by-product of the message of the commercial. For the interviewee, it seems to be that the message was chosen in order to fit the social media channel, which is all part of their strategy of getting new customers. This shows the extent to which some viewers go into thinking about the motives behind a commercial.

“P: On their TV channels it would only be shown to their already existing customers. But if they can get it to spread on social media, they get a wider reach to customers... to potential customers, to people who are actually not using their channel. So that might have been... the product they are trying to sell themselves. They are branding themselves outside their user group.” (Appendix 7:36)

5.2.1.1.2. Striking the iron while it's hot

One interesting observation that comes out of the interviews is that the interviewees perceive the second commercial as TV 2 just trying to ride on the first commercial's success. In the

quote below we see that the interviewees discuss the first commercial having been successful and therefore TV 2 chose to take the idea further, which is considered a natural step in a company's strategy:

"2: Well, you have to 'strike while the iron is hot'. And if there is an idea of sales or branding, well then...

3: And the first one must have given an enormously good branding.

5: It must have.

I: So, you think that they actually 'struck while the iron was hot'?

2-3-5: Yes.

I: Is that a good or a bad thing?

3: That's a good thing.

2: You are supposed to.

5: Yes." (Appendix 1:226-333)

Another similar opinion comes from an interviewee that talks about how the success of the first commercial prompted the TV channel to consider taking the same idea and finding ways of going further with it. This interesting point comes from the fact that the participant does not perceive that the campaign would have been thought through since the beginning, but that it was just the success of the first commercial that made the company go along for another try.

"P: It worked the first time and it was well received and then someone thought 'Yeah, now we try this one.' And I don't imagine they had a masterplan. And then they thought 'We can definitely scratch a bit more. We can definitely poke at it a bit more'. So, I'm thinking they thought 'we need to try to get closer to something that is a bit more sensitive'." (Appendix 4:60)

Being seen as following in the steps of the first commercial means that the second commercial gets to be perceived in comparison with the previous instalment of the campaign. In the quote below we see that the success did not transfer to the second commercial, as the interviewee sees the commercial as too similar to the first commercial and not going further enough from the first one.

“P: Well again... I think it’s kind of... kind of in the same direction. I think because they had a lot of success with the first one. They tried to do it again and... I don’t think it succeeded as well the second time. But they’re trying to go down the same path and... like underline how we touch each other’s lives, even though we might not put that much emphasis on it. Uhm... that we don’t notice it’s as much... and a small gesture can kind of change a person’s life.” (Appendix 5:52)

However, this opinion is not shared by all of the interviewees. Another interviewee comes with the opposite interpretation of the commercial. They can also see that the commercial has been trying to continue the success of the first commercial but can notice a distinctive enough difference between the two commercials to perceive that the TV channel would have given some due consideration to their approach on the second commercial in order to not be accused of repeating the same message. This leads the interviewee to believe this is the reason behind the increased emotional angle in the commercial.

“P: I think they have looked upon what they had and said ‘If we had presented something exactly the same in the way of it’s all ‘feel good’, it’s all everyone can relate and stuff like that, it would feel like we’re just trying to do the same thing and milk the cow. We’re just trying to milk the cash cow here. Trying to just get more and more publicity by doing the same thing’ but they are trying to renew themselves in some manner, putting out something new so people keep being interested in this kind of marketing. I think that’s the reason why they’ve stepped up the intensity of the commercial.” (Appendix 7:52)

5.2.1.1.3. TV 2 in charge of the narrative

The interviewees also seem to notice, in both commercials, that TV 2 is in charge of the narrative being told. Even though they agree with the message and find it credible, they are still aware that TV 2 is selecting the stories that are being presented and thus are shaping the thread of the commercial. In the first commercial, this is done through the specific questions that are being asked. As we can see in the quote below, one of the interviewees talks about how they imagine that the group of people present on the day would have been asked several questions and that TV 2 connected and showed those that told the story they wanted to tell.

"P: You quickly catch what this commercial is trying to do. You just watch and see what kind of phrases they come up with. That's what interests me, what they choose to present, because I would assume when they made this, they made maybe fifty questions and we're presented with half of that, at most. [It] could be interesting to know why they chose the order of the questions they show."

(Appendix 7:4)

"P: One thing I also noticed is when they took the one about the bisexual. Only one person. But they suddenly put on top of the whole other population. 'We who admire other people's bravery' which maybe should have been a question instead of putting that that notion on top of the rest of the room, which I found kind of peculiar" (Appendix 7:10)

Although the commercials are presented as a real story, one of the interviewees still talks about TV 2 having a big role in the message that comes out of the finished commercial. Their opinion comes from their experiences with other media. One of the experiences they had is of watching reality TV shows, which are well known for taking large amounts of clips and combining them together in such a way to create the desired story. Another experience is from their real-life when some of their colleagues have been interviewed by the press but end up being shocked by the interview that is broadcasted on the news. The two experiences contribute to them being aware of the way in which the scenes presented on screen might not be real, despite being presented as such. This leads them to hold a critical attitude towards the commercial while watching it.

"P: I think I've said the thing about it [the commercial] surprising me when it came out. That was fun. And I think that was okay. And then... I have tried watching these things, reality TV and people who are different and... You know it has been edited. And you know that someone has put an angle to the story, right. And there I have a bit... I have been told by my kids to just be quiet when we see that. I am not allowed to sit and try and understand it or... Once I saw ... I read somewhere, about someone who had been in 'Paradise Hotel', some girl that they had asked: what did she get out of it? And then she said 'I will never judge anyone on what I see about them on TV because they put these angles'. And you've heard that before. I have also seen co-workers that have been

interviewed about something work-related, and they couldn't recognize what they said afterward etc. So we have been taught in our media training that we should always ask to see the article and we have to ask the journalist 'what is your angle' before, so you are not just too well-willing." (Appendix 4:122)

For the second commercial, there is an even stronger perception that TV 2 is in charge of shaping the narrative of the commercial. This is due to the elaborate connections that are being presented. While in the first commercial, TV 2 had only chosen the question to be asked and everyone who stepped in front did so at their own will, the second commercial features TV 2 selecting, one by one, the participants that will have a connection of theirs revealed. While it is noticed by the interviewees, it does not seem to have a strong effect on the commercial. According to the respondent quoted below, the concept of this commercial requires that the TV channel would have been in charge of the narrative.

"P: Uh, hehe... Again, because I always, when I see stuff, I kind of think 'What's the intention of it?' And... and it's clearly more staged. Of course, it needs to be more staged because now... right here they are trying to intellect... interlink all the people there so... a lot of more research needs to be put into it and stuff. Uh... I see... I see some of the same kind of way of doing it. They are creating a narrative, a good narrative." (Appendix 7:44)

5.2.1.1.4. Creating an image

As we discussed in the previous sub-section of the analysis, TV 2 has tried to create a brand identity using the campaign 'All that we share'. What we can observe from our interviews is that viewers are well aware that some commercials have the purpose of creating a brand identity of companies. In those cases, the commercial is not trying to sell a product or service, but more trying to send a message that consumers will associate with that brand. In the quote below, the participant connects the presumed intention of branding to the commercial by making a reference to another commercial that has a similar message. The 'Call-me' commercial was also trying to send a message of how people should behave, without making any statements about their service. This shows us that consumers are already accustomed to the idea that companies try to brand themselves through commercials since they have experienced it before.

"2: Well, there was also this... was it Call-me that had this 'speak nicely to each other' that doesn't necessarily have anything to do with sales. It's about branding." (Appendix 1:69)

We can see in the quote below that it is argued that TV 2 is always trying to get more customers, but that is not the most obvious intention with this commercial. Just like the other participants, this one agrees that it is more about creating an image for the TV channel. Another interviewee jumps in and echoes what was mentioned before by adding that it is a good commercial and that creating an image that people approve of is beneficial to one's brand. This shows that they are interpreting the message of the commercial as one that is good and that the intention of the campaign is to create an association between the TV station and the values hinted at in the commercials.

"5: Yes, I think that is something they always are doing. But that is not what I immediately think... I also think it is branding.

3: Well you can... as we all agree it is a good commercial, and it speaks to all of us, and by... it is good and calming... and if you are a good and well-reputed company, well then that's also branding." (Appendix 1:73-74)

The participant in the quote below is aware that even though the network is not using the commercial to advertise how good of a service they are providing, it is trying to sell something else, which is a good image for the company, by associating the values in the commercial with the TV network. Once again, we see that the participants think that the intention behind the commercial was to brand themselves. For our participants, branding is the process of associating the network with the values and opinions mentioned in the commercial. This shows that the consumers can see through the facade, and yet do not find it as a bad thing.

"3: They don't have to... they are not trying to sell anything, but in the end, they still are. So... They want to sell a good image." (Appendix 1:76)

The message of the commercial is understood through the context of the time it was released in. In the response, one of the participants connects the commercial to the discussion that took centre-stage in society at the time of the release. Therefore, the message is being interpreted as the TV network taking a stand and saying what had to be said in this discussion. Their choice of talking about the sense of community and the value of inclusiveness is

associated with the concept of being a Dane. Therefore, the commercial is seen as portraying an image of Denmark, that would evoke emotions of pride in the Danish viewers and therefore be beneficial for the image of TV 2.

“6: Well, still... that’s a thing still with the big immigration in all of Europe and in Denmark. And it’s like ‘we only want this and this many in [our country]’. I think the idea was that if they could make a... of course they want to create good publicity for TV 2, but I don’t think this has made more people watch TV 2, I don’t think more people buy TV 2 to their packages. I simply think it was a ‘proudness-campaign’ to show ‘this is Denmark, and this is what we stand for’.” (Appendix 1:175)

The interviewee quoted below mentions that TV 2 has probably spent a lot of time on designing the message using values that would create a positive image for TV 2, which is also the reason for its success. It can be inferred from this that the message of connectedness seems like a positive message that the majority of viewers would agree with.

“P: Eeh.. Well, I’m sure someone has thought about that a really, really, really long time. And maybe that is exactly what... I don’t know if it has come as a surprise to them that it has become the success it has. Eeh.. But I’m sure it has been a mix of... The value... That you think positively when you hear TV 2. And that you think of the commercial. I believe that does something.” (Appendix 3:98)

In the quote below, the participant is talking about how TV 2 are purposefully using the commercial to create a specific image for their network. Furthermore, the participant says that the emotional angle is also a conscious decision made to appeal to the customers and to bring the message across.

“P: When I saw it the first time, I can remember at least, I thought back then, nothing more than ‘Cool, well done! It’s great’ and... and now I can remember that there are some of those small spots (...) Uh... I thought ‘That is okay. It’s good that it’s made and such but yeah... when the message fits you then... It’s a bit hard from an emotional perspective. I mean it’s a bit... They have turned on the charm. I think. (...) It’s just on my limit... to where it would be too much (...) It

is right to... to when I think 'Yeah, okay, no more. No more. No more tears in the corner of the eye and so on' So... They of course know what they are doing."

(Appendix 4:54)

In the quote below, the participant mentions that the commercial seems to be part of a campaign of changing the image of TV 2. Prior to the release of the campaign, the participant thought of TV 2 as a channel aimed towards the younger half of the Danish population. The message of the commercial seems to be in contrast with this image, as it specifically reaches across the society and makes an appeal to all Danes. This is seen both as an attempt at branding themselves but also of attracting attention to themselves. The reason for which it would attract attention is that, normally, companies and brands do not try to appeal to the population at large, or at least that is the impression that the participant has.

"P: Well, I think it's... Well I also talked about it in one of the previous... like a new way of branding themselves... like... like including everyone, instead of... of focusing on the younger half of the population. Because it's very rare to see something that concerns everyone. Uhm... And it's a way to make.... to create attention around themselves." (Appendix 5:38)

During the interviews, we get a glimpse of how commercials are generally perceived by the viewers. The participants we have interviewed talk about commercials as these vehicles through which companies try to sell their products or services. There is, therefore, an expectation that something will be advertised together with a 'call-to-action' for using that product or service. When watching the commercials that are part of the campaign 'All that we share', the interviewees look at it through the prism of what they expect from a normal commercial. The lack of a selling point makes the respondents perceive the video as different from typical advertising.

"P: I think... it's... it's different because it actually... this... any commercial for me is a... either an obvious branding or trying to sell me something. Where this, as I mentioned at the beginning, I don't feel like they are trying to sell me something. I am aware that they are doing it but I don't feel it. It's... It's well hidden. So I think that's the difference. That I don't feel this as being that much a

commercial. I feel it's just a message they want to get out. It's good communication." (Appendix 6:46)

We can notice from the answers of our interviewees that the commercials do not seem like typical commercials. This is mostly attributed to the lack of a concrete selling point in the commercials. Instead, the participants describe the commercial as trying to send a message to the society at large, which in turn is being interpreted as either a benevolent gesture or as a way of getting some good-will by associating themselves with the concept of community. The former is exemplified in the quote below, where we can observe that the good nature of the message together with the lack of a direct 'call-to-action' sales message creates a sense of 'innocence' of the intention of the commercial.

"P: Uhm, I actually think it's... it's a good commercial. I wasn't thinking about it as a commercial, honestly... when watching it. (...) Yeah, actually as I was thinking of it... It was more a... sort of a... I know there is a statement in the commercial but it's not... I didn't feel that they were advertising something. I was more feeling that they were trying to get a message out, you know? Learn something from them (...) I don't feel like they are trying to sell you something. Uhm... Why? Probably because I think it's 'innocent'. I didn't feel like they are pushing anything." (Appendix 6:4-6)

5.2.1.1.5. Increasing network credibility

The opinion mentioned in the paragraph above is brought a step forward in a later response from the participant in which they say that the commercial's intention is to create an association between the TV channel and the values portrayed in the commercial, which seem to be diversity and connectedness. The ultimate reason would be increasing the credibility of the TV network. We can see from this response that the participants themselves associate the concepts of connectedness and diversity with the credibility of a media provider, which we will discuss further in the theme 'Doing this for society' (chapter 5.2.6.). As this is the same participant that saw the commercial as a benevolent message, it becomes apparent that there can be cohesion between a company trying to send a good message out there and at the same time getting something out of it for themselves.

“P: I think their intention is credibility to them as a news station... As a... As a public news channel. So, when they are saying something, people actually believe what they are saying. So, their commercial is for themselves. It's for TV 2 (...) So you get to associate TV 2 in many different connections you wouldn't have done if you didn't see the commercial.” (Appendix 6:50-56)

Another participant makes it very clear that they are not seeing an economic intention in the commercial, as there is no sales message. The participant interprets the commercial as a portrayal of an ongoing social issue and therefore they see the campaign as a way for TV 2 to brand themselves using the values and message present in the commercial. For them, the commercial is only useful to the company as it shines a spotlight on the topic discussed and, since they interpret the message as one that is universally agreeable, bring on a positive association with the channel's brand. It is also interesting to note that the participant did not have a clear idea of the brand of TV 2 prior to the current campaign. Therefore, the direction of the campaign seems a bit different from what they previously thought of TV 2. This makes the interviewee perceive the commercial even more as a way of creating a different brand image for the company.

“P: Well, they are obviously not trying to sell a product. They are obviously not trying to push down something on the viewers. They're not saying, 'you are wrong'. They're not saying, 'You should do it like this'. They're just presenting a notion of... how the world actually is, that we are not... that things are not black and white. Uhm, groupings are not definitive. Uhm... As a more conventional commercial, you would always try to sell something, either by saying it's really cheap or you really need this in your life. They're not doing this. So it's... It's not, uh, public information... what's it called? Public service they're doing. And it's not a conventional commercial they're trying to do. It's more like... trying to start some thoughts in people's heads, about how they perceive people around us and the society or different parts of society.” (Appendix 7:34)

As we have described above, we see that the commercial is seen as a way for TV 2 to brand themselves. This comes not only from the explicit message that the commercial is sending but also from the implicit messages that the interviewees interpret. The different associations that are made between the commercial and the presumed branding intention can help us get

a further glimpse at the way the interviewees understand and perceive the commercial. Two participants mentioned the idea of credibility as a news channel when talking about the brand of TV 2. In their responses, we can observe that a trusted news channel should not be focused on only certain groups of society but instead on the whole of society equally. Given that they see the commercial as taking on the issue of diversity and connectedness, this reinforces for them an image of a trusted news channel.

“P: I don't... I've never seen TV 2 a... Of course, it is a brand, but I've never seen it as a brand who's trying to take stat... to do statements or saying this is what we value. Of course, they've been a brand that provides news. Of course, they have to be credible there. I think the commercials are in their intentions, in what they show, in what they're trying to... gain with this... a credible... so it only adds to seeing, TV 2 as a good company. So, it's well bran... good brand for them... branding for them” (Appendix 7:85)

There is also a difference between how the different parts of the campaign are being perceived in terms of branding. One participant, who believed that the first commercial was a part of a rebranding strategy, talks about how the second commercial is too similar to the first commercial and therefore thinks that it does little more than just repeat what is being said in the first one. For them, branding should be a continuous process in which every step should be thought-out and contribute substantially to the overall brand image.

“P: I don't think it's appropriate for TV 2... I think in... I think they should maybe go down another path in order to change their... uh... yeah, brand and image, then making these commercials. Uhm... Or try to shake things up a bit more. Instead of repeating something that was really successful the first time. So... I don't think it is very successful this time.” (Appendix 5:56)

Another participant mentions how the TV breakers have an important role in the branding campaign because they are able to bring the message of the campaign further across to the viewers by the constant and subtle exposure to the message. For the participant, this is another confirmation of TV 2's intention to brand themselves using the underlying message of diversity and connectedness. Several other participants bring up the idea that the TV breakers serve as a reminder of the commercials and the overall campaign, which tells us that

the interviewees could perceive a consistent message throughout the different parts of the campaign.

“P: I think what it does. It reminds us of the commercial. So if you have seen the first commercial or the second commercial, I think, it's a small reminder to the bigger idea behind this whole marketing campaign and this branding campaign. I think that's the purpose of them.” (Appendix 7: 68)

For some participants, the message of the commercial is linked with the TV network in the sense that the hidden connections that are brought up in the commercial lead up to the fact that a commonality between different members of society is also that they enjoy the programming offered by TV 2. This drives the participants to believe that the ultimate goal of the campaign is to create the image of TV 2 as a shared connection across a diverse Denmark.

“P: But then I also think they want to sell their own product. Yes, so I think that by this they round it off. The way it ends. That is TV 2 that is all that we share. So, you kind of get the feeling that if you want to be part of the community, you have to have TV 2.” (Appendix 2:112)

Overall, the campaign is seen as a good instance of branding. This tells us that the viewers find the use of this message appropriate for a branding campaign and that overall the campaign received a positive response.

5.2.1.1.6. Campaign and politics

Another way the commercial is being interpreted as a branding campaign is through the prism of a political message. This is an interesting point because we see that some interviewees perceive the message as political while others do not see the message as such. Since the commercials the participants have watched are the same, yet their interpretations are different, it confirms the important role that the context surrounding a viewer, when watching a commercial, is also important to the resulting interpretation. In the quote below, one of the participants is making a connection between the diversity message of the first commercial and a political discussion that occurred in Denmark regarding refugees and immigrants. The participant perceives the commercial as the TV network adding their contribution to the discussion and therefore thinks it is ‘courageous’ of the brand to be taking such a statement, given the high-spirited nature of the discussion.

"P: I thought at least when it came that it was a bit courageous, when it came, because I think the first time it came there was that stupid thing about immigrants on the right... So, I thought that time that it was actually really courageous, and it was almost constantly negotiation about media settlements. Isn't there, maybe, a risk that some party will chop them to pieces for sticking their nose out? so I actually thought that it was a bit courageous that time."

(Appendix 4:28)

This point of view is supported by two other participants that also make a connection between the commercials and politics by identifying a message of inclusivity in the commercials. The concept of inclusivity is seen as being one of the values held by the left-wing side of the spectrum of politics. This is especially relevant in relation to the aforementioned discussion of refugees because the discussion was driven by a very strong message of opposing the inclusion of refugees and migrants due to the perceived differences between refugees and Danes. The use of a message that is opposite to the at-the-time current rhetoric is therefore understood as the network using the opportunity to solidify the position of the brand through transmitting a message of what the channel's opinion is on the subject. It is also mentioned by the participants that there is not an explicit message in the commercial of which political side one should choose but that it is the implicit values that make the participants believe the message is political.

"P: Well, it is very political. But of course, they are not saying 'All of us who vote Dansk Folkeparti'. But the things with... It becomes... It is these subjects that can be a bit religious. And there... there... there of... yes. That's a good question actually. You could say maybe that they have always been quite liberal, because they are commercial and perhaps with this try to be a bit more on the left-wing."

(Appendix 2:88)

The lack of an explicit political message is also brought up by another participant that, however, takes it a step further and mentions that the message of the commercial is not political at all. This could be because they interpret the message of inclusivity in a positive way and as being the status-quo in Denmark. These two factors combine to make the interviewee take the message for granted. Their opinion does come with a caveat, as even though the message itself is not perceived as political, they still believe that there lie political

intentions behind the release of the commercial. This happens during a further reflection upon the commercial. What we can observe is that the message, being similar to the allegedly prevalent values of Danish society, can easily escape the attention of the viewers as not being political since the context in which the commercial is watched does not suggest that a political message is going to be presented. However, upon closer analysis, the interviewee can sense the political intentions behind the way in which the message is portrayed.

“P: When I'm watching, I don't see it as a political message, if that helps because honestly, I'm not thinking of... I'm just watching it without any assumptions. I never see it as a political message (...) When I see it Friday night here when it's been a long day and you relax, then I don't see the political message in it but if you really look at it then you start seeing the stage they have made for this being possible.” (Appendix 6:42-44)

The question of the politics involved in the commercial takes an interesting turn with one of the participants that believes the message of inclusivity is the matter of society, therefore making a distinction between what politics are concerned with and what society is concerned with. For him bringing up the topic of inclusivity is used as a way of linking their brand with the allegedly prevalent cultural value present in Danish society.

“P: I don't think they take a political standpoint. I think they... take a cultural standpoint of how we should perceive each other and how the community should be more open to other walks of life or other backgrounds and so on. I don't think there's a political uh... standpoint in this. They don't stand to gain anything political here, except for branding and goodwill. Good PR. Uhm... so that's also kind of why I feel it's a little bit too staged. Uh... because from my perspective it's just branding of themselves. Trying to make a good internet hit, basically. Get some... yeah, get some social... media response in this. I think that's what they're trying to do.” (Appendix 7:32)

5.2.1.2. Target group

Another point that shows the consumers' knowledge of marketing practices is the focus that interviewees have put on considering the target audience for the commercials and for the brand in general. We can observe that the interviewees expect that certain products or

services are going to be aimed at certain groups of people. This comes into play when watching the commercial but also in their interpretation of the brand. In the quote below, we see that one of the interviewee's perceptions of the commercial is influenced by the fact that the commercial seems to be aimed at the whole population of Denmark. This leads to creating a positive opinion of the commercial as well as increasing the credibility of the commercial.

"P: Well, as I said a bit earlier with... with that... uhm... commercials often target... young girls with like makeup or... I don't know, T-Hansen is more like uh... male, maybe 30 plus. Where this one [the commercial] kind of addresses every single person living in Denmark. Uhm... So, you can't really say 'Well, it's not really anything that... concerns me' because it really is. It embraces every single person." (Appendix 5:34)

As the interviewees perceive the target group as being the whole of Denmark, it does raise an interesting point. This perception stems from the message of diversity that the commercial arguably is trying to send. Since a varied group of people are portrayed, the interviewees perceive the commercial as embracing everyone. The intention could, however, be different. It could be the case that diversity was chosen as a way to appeal to a broad target group or it could be the case that the appeal to a broad target group is just the by-product of using diversity as a concept in the commercial. Our interviewees seem to think that the commercial is deliberately choosing the people in the commercial in order to relate to as broad of a target group as possible. This is exemplified by the quote below in which the interviewee describes how they perceive that the choices were made in both commercials and the differences they can see.

"P: Yes... but I also think they learned with the first one that they didn't. They probably didn't reach out to all people. So, by this commercial they have culture, age, skin colour. This time actually no sexuality was involved. But everything else more or less was involved uhm... on this one. Actions. So, I think they hit... They're going to hit a broader aspect this time than they did before."

(Appendix 6:75)

One of the features of the commercial that have inspired the respondents to think of the commercial as a means of branding is that the commercial focuses on people instead of the

service offered by TV 2. This tells us something more about the way that viewers perceive normal commercials. The focus set on selling a product makes a commercial feel like advertising. In the quote below, we can see that the interviewee notices the focus on people that the commercial has, and this makes the commercial stand out and helps with the reception. Even though the participant sees no economic intention in the commercial, they are still aware that the commercial must provide some benefit to the channel, which is why they think that it was done for the purpose of branding themselves.

“P: Well... It... It makes... It makes us think about the people instead of a product. And I guess that is the biggest difference. Sometimes you can see commercials for something, and it just goes in one ear and out of the other. But I think it is the human aspect, that is what makes it catch.” (Appendix 3:80)

“P: Well, again it is the human emotions that they focus very, very much on. Eeeh.. opposite many other commercials where it is a product’s features that you focus on.” (Appendix 3:129)

For one of the participants, the campaign ‘All that we share’ is seen as a rebranding strategy, as they interpret a different image of the TV network from this campaign than the image they previously had. According to the interviewee, TV 2 has had a clearer focus on the younger part of the Danish population, mostly reflected through the content they would broadcast on the channel. As they interpret the message of this commercial as ‘embracing’ everyone in Denmark, this leads to the idea that TV 2 might be switching focus to include other groups into their targeting. Furthermore, this brings out the comparison between DR and TV 2, which will be further discussed in the theme ‘Doing this for society’ (chapter 5.2.6.).

“P: Yes and no, because... as I just said, I think DR has always been the one who tried to embrace everything at once, where TV 2 has been more focused on maybe the younger half of the population... And I think... I think everyone needs this commercial, but I think the oldest half of the Danish population needs it the most. So... I think it's a new kind of... I wouldn't expect this one from TV 2. I would expect it more from DR than TV 2.” (Appendix 5:30)

Conclusion to theme

We can see throughout the theme that the interviewees show a critical attitude towards the campaign and towards commercials in general. This is manifested through the reflection of the intention behind the commercial, the underlying motives of the commercial and the target group. These reflections are taken into consideration with their idea of the marketing strategies that could be lying behind the campaign. This leads us to conclude that viewers do not just passively watch and accept the message sent by the campaign but instead actively question the authenticity of the claims made by commercials.

5.2.2. Community

Introduction

This theme will explore the two facets of the message that the interviewees identify within the campaign - namely diversity and connectedness. Furthermore, a short section will touch upon the connection that our participants see between the message of the campaign and the current COVID-19 pandemic. The theme will end with a part conclusion.

5.2.2.1. Diversity

We can see that one of the participants understands the message of diversity as being the topic that the first commercial attempts to talk about. They saw this mainly from the appearance of the participants of the commercial. Our respondents found that the different people coming into the room symbolize the many different ways that people of Denmark are. Although one interviewee did not find this image entirely representative of the area where they live, they could still recognize the message of diversity overall in Denmark. What they think is missing, however, is a group of 'average' Danes. In the commercial, they are portraying different groups of very different people. While these groups are found in Danish society, the proportions seen in the commercial do not reflect the actual proportions in Denmark.

"P: The message I receive is that... it's... it's diversity. It's that there is space for all of us. And we are different. And remember that now." (Appendix 4:18)

"I: Yes. And you say again that... that it makes you think of diversity. What is exactly in the commercial that makes you?"

P: Yeah, it's the different types. I mean their clothes that... I mean their clothes and skin colour and what else do they have... yeah, their appearance also... that they look so different. And also, more different than... than... I really don't know. No, I think so. I think that they're more different than when I go to the grocer in Vejgaard.” (Appendix, 4:49-50)

Regarding the groups that are left out of the first commercial, one of the interviewees mentions that the commercial is portraying different groups that make up today's society yet no groups that are 'controversial' are used. In their opinion, the groups featured on screen are all groups that are widely accepted by society and, for the most part, positively associated.

“P: Another interesting thing is they didn't take any, like very controversial groups. They didn't... take, let's say for instance nerds... in quotation marks or what you want to say... nerds or handicapped. They didn't.... take refugees, they did take something that's already ingrained in Danish society. Something that... we know, like everyone knows about and everyone sees as a valid group, as valid Danes. They didn't try to go far out and actually contest our, our views and our beliefs.” (Appendix 7:6)

When talking about their thoughts on the persons that TV 2 have represented in the campaign, other participants agreed that they found it to be a generally well-represented picture of the Danish society, and that they also thought that TV 2 had done this to show diversity and broadness in their campaign and their image. Keeping in line with what we discussed above, we observe that the visual representations on-screen are evocative of distinctive social groups, which is what prompts our respondents to reflect upon the way that society divides people into groups. This is immediately connected with a conscious decision by TV 2.

“P: Well I think they've taken groups of people everyone saw or could see or have had experiences with and there's no group in that commercial that the initial groups, where you don't know what kind of group they're trying to represent. Uhm, so it's something that is close to all of us. They could have gone for very small groups but that wouldn't resonate. Uhm... If it's some group that half the population doesn't know of. Which is kind of interesting.” (Appendix 7:6)

Another participant agreed that the topic at hand is diversity. However, they further linked it with connectedness and the fact that we are all human beings and thus should see each other as equals no matter the nationality, skin colour, sexuality etc. We can see from the quote below that the participants mention the aspect of commonness and equality. No matter how you look, where you are from or who you are, you are likely to share something with others, and most likely even others who appear very different from you. And this aspect seems very relatable for our participants, which aids the credibility of the campaign.

*"P: I think we touched upon it. Again, it's the same thing 'All that we share'.
Translated we all have something in common, we can all relate to each other.
We all should look at each other as equal beings. Uhm but also within this...
I think it's a brave standpoint to do, to actually try and humanise refugees. It's a
brave thing to do as a national channel, where everyone will get to see it. Every
one of their customers or their users will get to see this and everyone on social
media will get to see this." (Appendix 7:62)*

Many of our participants, when being asked what they understood of the commercial, mentioned aspects such as commonness, connectedness, sharing and, again, diversity. Even though they also mentioned that the manner of which the commercial portrayed these aspects was sometimes a bit too emotional, they still found it agreeable, especially in the first commercial from 2017. Further, they shared that they, in fact, enjoyed the lesson they felt they were being taught from the campaign.

*"P: At least, they make me open my eyes to how we are socially in Denmark. I
mean, they remind me of what we are bad at. The thing about us not being that
good at speaking with the neighbour." (Appendix, 2:151)*

The commercial touches upon the idea that people might seem different but end up being quite similar on a closer look. The respondents, one after another, engage with this message and they all provide similar responses of how the commercial is reminding them of the fact that there is not much difference between people. What we can see here is that the message is received in a positive way and the respondents talk about the message as if it is something they already know and yet they do not always keep in mind. The approach of the commercial,

one that appeals to the emotional side, is also seen as being able to reach across to the viewers and make the message even more relevant.

"P: Mmmhhh... It's just repeating, but... diversity. But also, that your friend may... may be different from you but your enemy is the same. Actually, you don't know until you... you see it. Because the people who are gathering in a group are so different, appearance wise, also social background and more or less everything. That's what they... For me it looks like... So it's that... you could be a second generation Dane and then and still experience and feel the same as the good old 'Thybo' who's not been outside the country, you know, farmer whatever. You can still be going through the same social difficulties so to say."

(Appendix 6:24)

One of the perspectives that the participants take when looking at the first commercial is that the connections that the speaker in the commercial is trying to make, make them think of a time before they were part of a specific group. This tells us something about the way groups are defined. At birth, we are all the same, and then the choices made through life are what ultimately define the groups that we find ourselves in.

"6: I also think there is a sort of... They go back a lot, to the roots, where they [the groups] didn't have all these titles, where they asked, 'Who were the class-clown' and 'Who has been bullied' and 'who has bullied'. So, then you kind of get the idea that they go back to before you had all these titles of a banker or nurse or... Ask questions to a point in time where everyone was just a student or where everyone was on equal ground." (Appendix, 1:59)

Furthermore, another participant touches on the same idea, mentioning that they found the commercial as a reminder that, in the end, we are still all the same, no matter what paths life has led us on. And that in the end, that connects us.

"P: Yeah, it does. For me it's still just a small reminder that 'Hey, we have this thing that we think everyone should get along' that is very pink and very lovely, everyone should get along, everyone is connected somehow... We are all people in the end, yeah." (Appendix, 7:78)

5.2.2.2. Connectedness

While the message of the first commercial is seen as a mix between diversity and connectedness, we can observe that diversity is less of a focus on the second commercial and connectedness takes centre stage. Our respondents perceive that the second commercial is trying to convince Danes to talk more with each other in order to find the connections they all share.

“P: And also, the one with the lady who has a husband who... that has saved her husband. How crazy is it that you don't meet these people? Again, they make us open our eyes to the fact that we kind of forget how we actually are connected, right, in this small country. And I think they are able to show that... I also think it is impressive that they are able to take the thing about community a bit further.

In the first commercial, then it's a bit about the thing about breaking down prejudices. And here it's about other social limits. Eeh... And I think that is pretty cool that they can show that as well, that they are able to show that as well.”

(Appendix, 2:121)

One participant mentions that the commercial is trying to be more relatable to the individual viewers by showing situations that anyone could identify with, such as a waiting room.

“6: Here, they are putting a... I don't want to call it a problem, but a situation that happens in the everyday life, where they start with sitting in a waiting area together. And that's something everyone does, whether you are sitting in a waiting area at e.g. a bus station or a train station waiting for the train to depart, or you are sitting in a waiting area at a doctor or. You rarely sit alone, and you could as well talk with the people, because you don't know what you have in common. So, it gives a specific situation at the beginning of the video or commercial, where they are all sitting in the waiting area, and is just sitting and looking their own way without talking to each other.” (Appendix, 1:207)

Overall, when being asked what our participants saw as the message of the campaign and following commercials, many of them first answered aspects of connectedness and diversity as we previously mentioned. However, being the knowledgeable consumers that we described them to be in the chapter 5.2.1., we can also see that the respondents can look

past that and see the economic benefits that the commercial can bring TV 2 in terms of getting more customers.

“P: Well, kind of the same as before, right. The thing about, both... the thing about TV 2 being a part of the community. ‘If you want to be part of the community, you should be more connected, and then you should watch TV 2’.”

(Appendix, 2:135)

Furthermore, after having detected the underlying aspect of TV 2 wanting to attract customers, our participants also elaborated on what they then understood as the underlying intention and meaning with the campaign and its message of diversity.

“2: But now it's a lot about TV 2 making programs about all that we share. That's how I understand it at least. That there is something for everyone and all that we share, you can see on TV 2.” (Appendix 1:221)

“2: I think that is that TV 2 are making some programs

3: That we share. Yes, I also think of it more as advertising for TV 2.”

(Appendix, 1:259-260)

“P: Eeh.. Well, as it is a TV channel or a TV broadcaster, I would imagine that it is to show that... that the different things that they show on their different channels, that there is something for everyone.” (Appendix, 3:54)

From the quotes below, it is clear that our interviewees also see the commercial as TV 2 trying to portray the diversity in their programming. However, many also mentioned that the programs that TV 2 send are also some who connect the Danes and are something everyone watches.

“2: Well they [the programs] are all something that people in one way or the other talk about, follows, or sits down to watch that one time every week.

1: That's something you could talk about in the waiting area.

3-5: Yes.

1: That you had seen ‘Badehotellet’.

3: Yes. Or ‘Toppen af Poppen’ or...” (Appendix, 1:270-274)

While discussing their opinion of the second commercial, one of the participants shares a story about their childhood. Although the story is not evidently connected to the commercial, we can interpret an implicit message about the meaning of community. The beginning of the commercial shows people sitting in a waiting room and they are all looking at their phones, not talking with each other. The interviewee recognizes that this is a situation they can relate to from their daily life. They feel that the sense of community gets lost nowadays due to the increasing sizes of the big cities and also due to technology, such as mobile phones. For them, part of being in a community is talking with others and nodding to each other when paths cross. Their experience with a big city is that people do not acknowledge others, as opposed to the small towns and neighbourhoods that they have lived in. Mobile phones are as well a distraction from waving at others since people are spending an increasing amount of time looking at screens. The interviewee interprets that the commercial is trying to teach people to talk to each other and thus, the commercial reminds them of the fact that Denmark is a community and that people should just spend more time on talking to each other. They themselves recognize that their idea of community was probably influenced by their upbringing since their grandmother used to treat all people equally. This tells us that the interviewee makes some deep connections with the commercial, as these personal experiences come to the surface when thinking about the commercial.

"P: Yes, I think so. I think it's the same. The same message that... that we have more in common... and the classic, one can say, that you can get so angry over people sitting all with their phones, like the commercial starts with. It is really... Now I am from a time where we didn't have phones and where one is from a smaller city... and I experience the same here in Vejgaard, partly in Aalborg actually, at least in Nørresundby where I work. People greet each other. I just think that it's so cool... that... I can't... I can't go to grocer and back without passing by someone I nod at. It's of course a bit different in the city center, when I cycle through the center. (...) First time, as a kid, I came to a bigger city... I was maybe 10 years old when I started being aware and I couldn't understand... There are so many people and then you had to nod to all of them. And then my mom and my dad said, 'You don't have to do it here.' It was in Randers. 'You

don't have to do it here in Randers because there are so many people and we don't do it so much when there are so many'." (Appendix 4:52)

5.2.2.3. COVID-19

As mentioned earlier in the project, when conducting the research, the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. This was of course also something our interviews bore marks of and it was the most visible in a quite interesting observation from one of our participants. They related the campaign to the pandemic by arguing that we are currently in a situation where the message of the campaign is being put to a test. The interviewee perceives the commercial as sending the message of people being part of a community. Although they can notice that people are not always good at remembering to care about others, they believe that most people still know that sticking together is better than being alone. As they can observe situations in which people help each other and think of others during the current crisis, they get a confirmation of the message being transmitted by the TV 2 campaign. This contributes to raising the credibility of the commercials. Two other participants also mentioned the topic of COVID-19 amongst their responses. One of the interviewees talked about how the claim that everyone is interconnected, is validated by the COVID-19 pandemic, given that the appearance of a virus in one part of the world evolves into a global pandemic. Another participant claims that being affected by the virus is a connection that everyone is sharing at the time. We see from these examples the impact that the context of the time has on the perception of a commercial. Even though the two commercials and all but one TV breaker were released before the global crisis, its presence in the viewers' minds has an effect on how they look at the campaign.

"P: So, I'm thinking it's fine that they made this. It's okay. And... Then I don't know how long it will last. When we will forget a bit about it again. At least, it has been fun to see with Corona and draw some parallels, right. Because the Corona crisis has shown some of this, where you can also see some of this. (...) I actually think, in that way, this is a full scale trial of what they advocate in their commercial. We actually do have something that keeps us together. We kind of forget it and we go around in our own small problems. But when it really counts, then you know, that the guy who just stood and yelled at you and called you something, because he found out you came from somewhere. If you drop down,

he would still help you, right? The chance, or the risk that he would just... I mean, we hear stories of people who just lay, especially if you see drunk people and homeless, then you can sometimes hear stories about no one doing anything. But it is really rare that we hear that no one went over to loosen the tie so that he was able to break again or... That's okay. So now you also got a perspective of the Corona crises.” (Appendix, 4:126)

Conclusion to theme

We can see that the respondents share that they could see diversity being portrayed in the campaign and that this image well reflects the society present in Denmark. Furthermore, our respondents share that they understand the underlying message of diversity and connectedness in the campaign as a reminder that we are all in the end humans and that connects us. However, our respondents also see the economic angle for TV 2 in the campaign. They mentioned that they could also translate the message of diversity and connectedness to TV 2's programming and argued that TV 2 also made this campaign to show broadness and diversity in the programming they make, and that these in the end also can connect the Danes. The theme ends with a short section on the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly all of our respondents touched upon this subject, showing us the way they make a connection between the message of the campaign and the current pandemic. We can see from the theme that one participant argues that this current pandemic is one big trial of the lesson that the campaign wants to 'teach' us - that we are all part of a community and that we have more in common than we think.

5.2.3. Prejudice

Introduction

The theme of prejudice will deal with our respondents' comments surrounding the prejudice they both see in the campaign, but also the prejudice that they acknowledge to have themselves. Further, the theme will be looking at our respondents' thoughts on what to do with prejudice and how this campaign has affected their mindset. The theme will end in a short conclusion.

5.2.3.1. Prejudice portrayed

We can infer some interesting points about the message from the way that the respondents interpret the visual cues in the commercial. This is especially interesting as we have described above the choices TV 2 has made for the commercial. We see then that the different respondents have different interpretations of the images they see on screen. One of the points we found intriguing was that our participants also detected some underlying meaning with these. For instance, one of the interviewees mentioned that in the first commercial the occupations of the people inside the groups were not mentioned - only a describing feature of the group. Nevertheless, our participants automatically created their own thoughts and meanings about what the groups represented, without it actually being said.

“6: They are also good, in the commercial, to put meanings on us when they show e.g. nurses and then say, ‘the ones we trust’ and the ones in suits and say ‘the ones that make a lot of money’ and then the old people and say “those who make no money”. (Appendix 1:40)

Our participants seemed to acknowledge the use of visual elements to represent certain groups and they sensed an underlying message of prejudice in the campaign and justified that they meant that this is an important dimension of the message of the campaign. While in the previous theme, we have established that the campaign is tackling the issue of diversity and connecting to those that are different from oneself, it is using certain stereotypes in order to portray the diversity of the Danish society. The way that the interviewees interact with the stereotypes gives birth to interesting reflections about the way different people are perceived. As can be seen from the quote below, we find that the respondents engage with the visual elements in the commercial to identify the certain groups that are being represented. The preconceived ideas of the people displayed on screen come to light during the interviews, as the interviewees reflect on what they see.

“P: Because they are shown between every program, I think. But I'm also thinking that again there is something... It is able to combine it a bit because it is also about breaking down prejudices. They have the thing about, it is often 2 opposites they put together, right. Like, an old and a young, a doctor and... I don't remember who the other one was, but they had a pacemaker. Yes... Also,

the thing about a doctor who has a pacemaker. Then you think... I don't always think about that. I think that a doctor is a hero who can save me and always is fit for fight. But they can also become sick. So again, I think they are able to break down prejudices and start the thoughts, just by those 5 seconds or how long it is." (Appendix, 2:177)

Other interviewees believe that the topic of prejudice takes a more central role in the first commercial. Through their discussions of the first commercial, our respondents describe that the commercial is trying to send a message about breaking prejudice and looking past preconceived ideas of other people.

"P: No, you think of it as... eeh.. something to teach us that sometimes you should throw away the prejudices and look further than what you think, what is your first impression." (Appendix, 3:18)

One of the interviewees states that the commercial is giving an accurate representation of the prevalence of prejudice in society, as they talk about how they can observe the behaviour described in the commercial in their local area. The way that the commercial groups people together based on similar appearance reminds the interviewee of the way their fellow city dwellers engage with people of different appearance.

"P: I do. Uhm, because I think I'm probably coloured by what I... study. But uhm because I am from... Jutland and a small town. Uhm, I feel like there can be a lot of uhm... stereotyping and... I would even call it racism. So... Like if... Like people.... Well, of course, it's also stereotyping what I am doing right now. But a lot of people in my town they see colour before uh... like. I think it's hard to describe. But it's... Their perception of being Danish is still very much connected to... skin colour... and language. (...) So yeah, I think it's nice to have a commercial that is... kind of putting a new angle... and yeah... mixing things up."

(Appendix, 5:22)

However, some participants also felt that the representation of the society had been stretched a bit too far. While they understand that the strong visual difference between the groups was used to exemplify the different parts of society, they also feel that more 'average-

looking' Dane and other groups had been left out, which did not help the desire for broadness on TV 2's part.

"P: I've just been thinking that it's precisely to symbolise the way we divide ourselves in. And I think they hit, at least, many of my stereotypes. It could well be that there were more groups and I am very sure that if I would see it again then I would think 'Ah, it doesn't look like this when I go around Vejgaard or Aalborg'. So, it's missing something. Or it's too many different kinds. And we blend in more. It's missing more people in normal dark clothes. So that is what I thought. It's just a division they have made. It works with me" (Appendix 4:14)

Furthermore, one of the respondents went as far as to say that it is TV 2 themselves that are displaying prejudice, by associating one defining feature to the whole group. We find this interesting because TV 2 is seemingly not portraying any explicit message of prejudice. It is actually the interviewees themselves that add a label to the group and therefore associates certain prejudice with every group and yet they feel as if the prejudice is forced on them in some way. Moreover, the viewers identify that the topic is indeed a problem.

"P: I think you go... but that's the thing about this commercial, you go far... In the beginning I thought 'Okay, that's really a little stereotypical' right? Like 'all of us who have a high income' well then, they all have really nice clothes on, suits. And then those who do not have a high income come in and they have sweats on... so you're kind of 'argh, what is it they...' then you suddenly think that it's them who are prejudiced, the ones who made this commercial" (Appendix 2:12)

"2: Then it's not someone where you have to create a new opinion about. It's very easy to put them into the boxes and take out the opinion that you already have." (Appendix, 1:39)

"P: Also, because I think there are so many... We are a country of many prejudices, and I just really think they are good at putting words to it in this commercial... In a good way without pointing fingers at anyone specific."
(Appendix, 2:10)

Our participants sense a difference in the visual representations when watching the second commercial. Where the first one, featured visual elements that led them to think about stereotypes and prejudices, they did not find these to the same degree in the second commercial from 2019. This has an influence on the message of the commercial, as the interviewees interpret that the second commercial focuses more on showcasing the connections between people and not so much on the fact that people that are very different from each other can have something in common.

“P: In this one people weren’t put into boxes from the beginning. No, they definitely weren’t. They started as gathered in a group together. Then they pull some. And in the other one they are already in some groups. And they are being pulled from those. We know there was a ‘plot’ there. (...) There weren’t any in any profession clothes, no one that seemed to stand out, was there? I don’t think there were as many stereotypes in this one.” (Appendix 4:64)

5.2.3.2. Breaking prejudice

When discussing the intention behind TV 2’s choice of using the message of prejudice, all of our participants came to the same conclusion. The participants, in their own responses, mentioned that prejudice should not control one’s opinions and one should always try and look deeper to find new things in the people they meet. This was interpreted as being the reason for which TV 2 made the first commercial.

“P: I think so. As we... as we’ve discussed. I think... I think I know what TV 2 wants us... wants their... wants us to think what they... want to achieve with this. Trying to move our sense of community and how we interact with other people, how we see other people and try to be less prejudiced when we meet new people.”
(Appendix, 7:80)

“P: No, you think of it as... eeh... something to teach us that sometimes you should throw away the prejudices and look further than what you think, what is your first impression.” (Appendix, 3:18)

In addition, we could see that our participants also acknowledged the fact that we ourselves also put ourselves in boxes. This happens because the grouping of people in different categories has the ultimate effect of creating categories for oneself to belong in. Helped by

the commercial, the responded quoted below reflects on the fact that one might be easily tricked into behaving in a certain way because of the way others perceive them.

“P: I think most of us do in some way. We have... we kind of always... we always have this ‘we are those...’ - the tough guys, sportspeople, those in scrubs and those in suits and... then you have some pictures of how you are as people as well, just because you wear that suit. And forget to think... yes, put in boxes.

I: So, maybe you also put yourself in boxes?

P: Yes. I think you do that as well. I also think so... And that is what I think is most important, that you remember to get out of your own imagination about how you think of yourself and others.” (Appendix 3:36-38)

We could see that the way that the campaign portrayed some of the topics, made our participants rethink their own prejudices. Experiencing the way stereotypes are stretched to the extreme in the commercial helps the viewers reflect on how the commercial could easily make them think about a certain group of people just by providing very simple descriptions of the group.

“P: Exactly the thing about that there can be many prejudices about different things and... now, I, myself, come from West-Jutland where the thing about being religious maybe connected with something... at least in the city where I come from, where there was an asylum camp, then you might quickly think about that that it is Muslims and terrorism and such... eh, but that is the same... When someone comes in who is a football player, then it is... then you... then they do something with my prejudices...” (Appendix, 2:36)

Conclusion to theme

Overall, we can identify that the issue of prejudice plays an important role in connection with the message of diversity. Our participants recognise the visual elements used in the commercial as being an example of prejudice. Engaging more with what they are seeing, leads them to acknowledge that this topic is an issue in today's society and that seeing the commercial makes them reflect on their own way of thinking. Finally, they interpret the campaign as TV 2's way of getting involved in this issue and society and trying to fix it by promoting the breaking of certain prejudices.

5.2.4. Credibility

Introduction

This particular theme will look at how our participants see the credibility of the campaign and the message. Some of the aspects that the theme will deal with are the credibility of the message vs the commercials: when is a message credible and why, and further, what did TV 2 do to look credible? 'Credibility' will also show a brief comparison to another Danish commercial made by the Danish political party Social Demokratiet. While the quotes displayed throughout this theme may seem quite similar, it is the slight differences and particularities of each of them that portray the different views on the credibility of the campaign that our participants have. As always, the theme will end with a short conclusion.

5.2.4.1. Credibility of the message

Another interesting facet of the way viewers interact with the message of the commercial is the credibility of the message. In the negotiation of credibility, there is an interplay between the message itself, the way it is transmitted, the presumed motives and the underlying values mentioned. All of these different factors work together to create a sense of credibility, which then itself influences the overall image of the campaign. Further, we can observe the differences in the perception of these factors and the results they have on the credibility of the message.

In order to see how credibility is affected by the different factors, we must first have a look at how the different factors are perceived. One of the factors is the message itself. We can infer from some of the participants, as exemplified in the quote below, that the perceived message of the campaign, is that connections between people are not easily noticeable. This is framed as a problem in society since we are missing out on possible discussion and connections with others due to the fact that we do not feel like we would have something in common with other people that are only seemingly different. The reason for failing to notice the connections that people share with each other is not only the reluctance to engage in conversation with different people but also that some commonalities might lie farther than the normal conversations that strangers engage in.

"P: Uhm... Yeah, I think it's to shake things up... That okay, it's not just the visible features that connect us, not just skin colour or ethnicity. It's... interests, feelings,

sexuality, uhm... pasts, occupations. So... it's also the non-visible things... And the things that we don't talk about, especially.” (Appendix 5:12)

The two commercials feature two different ways of revealing these hidden connections. In the first commercial it is by bringing up the broad topics that people do not normally discuss and letting the participants discover the hidden connections on their own. In the second commercial, it is by digging deep into the histories of each participant and looking for connections to be revealed.

“3: But, the main difference between the two was that it was like the conferencier [speaker], or what you call her, and TV 2, it was them who had found the connections. In the other one they just asked, who was the class-clown etc. If you and I didn't know each other and meet in a bus station, then I would never know that your great grandfather had saved my grandfather in WW2.”

(Appendix 1:279)

The different way in which the commercials choose to reveal the connections leads to slight differences in the interpretation of the message as well. As we can observe from the quote below, one participant mentioned that the focus of the first commercial is on exemplifying the connections that people share with many others, as part of a group. This in itself is perceived as slightly problematic, since it attempts to break the forming of pre-defined groups in society, by defining groups that just revolve around different concepts. While the second commercial is perceived as being truer to the message as it exemplifies the hidden connections that individuals have with other individuals.

“P: The other one got people to relate to people in the groups and only one was alone. Here it's individuals which relate to individuals so it's not a group thing. It's just telling that you can't know if you have something, connections with your neighbour, which something, something. There is always in some way a path that you are connected somehow. I like this better, that message, then putting people in groups as the first one did. After my opinion.” (Appendix, 6:65)

5.2.4.2. Credibility in the portrayal

The idea that people share underlying connections that are normally hidden away from view is interpreted by the interviewees through the visual portrayal of the participants in the

commercials. Throughout the campaign, the people featured look quite distinctive from each other and yet they end up having something in common, which brings the message across that we can share commonalities with anyone. This is the most visible on the small TV breakers, as one participant describes below.

“P: I kind of like them because the pictures they show are people that you have a lot of prejudice about and they are like opposites. So, I found them credible, yeah.” (Appendix, 5:64)

The TV breaker that has been running on the TV channel during the COVID-19 lockdown features homemade videos sent by TV 2 viewers. The breakers end up displaying, side by side, clips that do not have such contrasting differences as the other commercials. This leads some of the interviewees to perceive it as less credible in relation to the message of the campaign. We can, therefore, observe that the message of the campaign is based on the premise that seemingly opposite people can have something in common, and when the commercial is portraying individuals that are not too different, the premise of the message does not apply anymore and the credibility of the message decreases. As this happens, the commercial is perceived as failing to continue the overall thread of the campaign when failing to portray diversity.

“P: Well the last one, like the three last clips. Like the two first I really liked. Uhm... But the last one... I think they should have chosen probably from maybe... It should have been more obvious maybe that they were from different areas of Denmark... or maybe different... people of different incomes... stuff like that.” (Appendix 5:84)

“P: Yeah, because I think in all the other clips it, as you say, embraces diversity. And also, in the [one with] ‘we who sing in the shower’ there is a girl who probably has a middle eastern background and a farmer. So that's very obvious how they kind of have different backgrounds, but still they have this thing they share. And this last one, I think it could have been like just two Danish families. I just think the scenario has to be way more different because this could be within the same day, probably within the same hour and within the same family. So, it doesn't stand out to me. So, it's not around diversity in the last one, because I think it's not about diversity anymore.” (Appendix, 5:88)

The credibility of the message in relation to the hidden connections is not only dependent on the difference between the people portrayed in the commercial but also on the connections being shown. One of the places where this becomes visible is for the small TV breakers displayed on TV 2's channels. While there was consensus from the participants that the people depicted in the TV breaker are always of a resembling difference from each other, not all the participants find the connections credible. Some participants, as can be seen from the quote below, buy into the difference between the people portrayed on screen that they go as far as questioning the extent to which the connections are indeed accurate. This gives rise to a discussion of how far one has to go before you can say that two people have something in common. During the focus group interview, we see the participants discussing whether 'broad' interests or hobbies should count as commonalities. The argument that takes shape is that a common interest might have sub-sections that are themselves different from each other, and when combined with the striking difference between the people portrayed in the breaker, it renders the 'connection' inaccurate.

"6: I don't think that the people who are standing there in the spots are aware of what they are being asked. I just think it seems so unlikely that the lady and the little girl both love the same type of pop music, or pop music in that way. (...) I know that pop music is very different, but I think the purpose is that they should have kind of the same pop music taste. And I just think that seems very unlikely. (...) I also don't think that is trustworthy, because then they don't differentiate at all what pop music is. Because then it might be that she [the older woman] loves 'Birthe Kjær' and the little girl loves 'Justin Bieber'. (...) Then I don't think that it is trustworthy, because then you haven't asked a question that ties them together. If you both love exercise, he loves to bike and you love to run, then it's not the same kind of exercise, then you don't have that in common." (Appendix, 1:392)

The same point regarding the depth of the connections is made by another interviewee in regard to the connections displayed in the second commercial. As the commercial tried to find connections between specific individuals, it resorted to using such connections as 'having lived in the same house at the same address'. For the interviewee, this connection does not seem relevant and true to the message of the commercial because of the 'banality' of it.

"P: Well... Of course, uhm... like a guy who lived in another's person's house. It's like... yeah! If you haven't built your own house, then it's just kind of how life goes. So... I would... But I also kind of notice myself smiling at points so it's like... So, it went both ways." (Appendix, 5:46)

Another criticism of the connections displayed in the campaign is towards the one featured in the COVID-19 TV breaker. Again, the connection is perceived by some interviewees as being too broad to be relevant to the message. While they see the reference to the lockdown as relevant to the times, they do not think that the connection is meaningful enough to be relevant in itself, given the fact that everyone in Denmark has to respect the restrictions of the lockdown.

"2: But it's also easy because there doesn't exist a Dane who hasn't had a new everyday life." (Appendix 1:467)

"6: I think it changes it a bit. Because, the thing about 'All that we share' I didn't think I could feel that from this.

2: No, I think this is a bit irrelevant that one. It might as well have been 'we who are tired of the rain' or 'we who' (...)

2: Well, it is the easiest thing to talk about, when you are to be connected about something. That is what we are already talking about. So, the weather and Corona." (Appendix 1:481-487)

Another participant chimed in suggesting that the message would have been more credible if the connection would have been more specific, giving examples of some of the things that people under lockdown could have in common.

"2: Then you could have made one that said 'All of us who are renovating the bathroom during this time' or something. Or 'we who started experimenting with sourdough'." (Appendix, 1:513)

We also notice a difference between the participants that have not seen the breakers before and those that have previously seen the breakers on the TV channels. One of the participants that recalls having seen the TV breakers several times in between TV 2's programming

describes in the quote below how the commercial starts to lose its credibility after repeated viewings. This is due to the fact they have noticed pictures of people being reused, but with changing texts. In turn, this makes the viewers question whether the statements are accurate or whether they are just made up to fit the purpose of the campaign. We see, however, in the quote below that these questions are not enough to make the message completely lose its credibility. What keeps the interviewee still believing that statement might be true is if they are able to relate personally to some of the connections.

"P: They are, and they aren't, [credible], right. Because I've noticed that sometimes it is the same people that are shown, but next time with another text.

And we actually have also talked about it 'Can that be true?' Also, because sometimes it's you know 'That farmer, does he really sing in the shower?' you know? And are they making fun of him, or something like that, right? But oppositely, we are a lot of people who sing in the shower, so I'm thinking that it is quite trustworthy. Yes, I will say, it is something we sometimes talk about at home 'Can it be true?' when these are shown. But... Why shouldn't it be true?

I: Because they reuse the people?

P: Yes. That's it. And because it is really easy to just put a text in, right? Also, because I recently saw they had one with Corona. 'All of us who stay at home and work' or whatever it is. Where you think, they are good at keeping it current.

So, they can quickly do that but adding a text and [it] fits the day.

So with that, I can think it is a bit untrustworthy." (Appendix 2:171-173)

Comparing the perceptions of the two commercials, we see that the difference in the way the connections between people are presented changes the response sparked amongst the interviewees. While some of the interviewees find the first commercial more in sync with the message, others believe that the second one is more appropriate for portraying the message. The second commercial focuses on showing specific connections between personal, individual stories. This sparks different interpretations among our interviewees. In the quote below we see that having specific connections, which helps the viewer connect the story to an individual person, makes some interviewees believe that the commercial is more credible than the first one. That is because hearing the elaborate stories behind each connection and being able to put a face to each story, creates the impression that it has to be a real person.

While the participants are not claiming that the first commercial is not credible, they are making a hierarchy of the two commercials by comparing the credibility of them. Furthermore, the focus on the individuals during the second commercial helps drive the message across for one of the interviewees. This is caused by a better exemplification of how connections between individuals might be hidden under the surface and that there is always something that one has in common with another.

"P: But you also know that they've both been refugees. You know, as I... It's facts. Straight facts on the people. I think that it's more credible." (Appendix, 6:71)

"6: So, it gives a more specific situation compared to the first one. I think it makes the whole thing seem a bit more real." (Appendix, 1:209)

"6: For me it is the human contact where they put person against person and then you find the point between those two, what ties them together. Compared to the first one where they just throw something out there and then those who catch it are those it fits." (Appendix 1:359)

Another interviewee brings up the fact that the second commercial has a bigger focus on individual connections, and this leads them to believe that this angle is more relevant for the message. The reason for that is that the first commercial is guilty of making the same prejudice it is trying to prevent. By portraying the different things that groups of people have in common, it is showing the multitude of connections between people, but it is just making new groups for people to gather in. Furthermore, the individual angle of the connections is connected with the lack of strong visual indicators of the background to result in the interviewee perceiving the second commercial as no longer generalising people, which in turn increases the credibility. What we can take away from this is that the message of the commercial is seen as having two facets. There is an element of diversity and an element of connectedness. As the first commercial tries to depict diversity, it resorts to using strong visual indicators of the different groups portrayed. While this helps transmit the concept of diversity to the viewers of the commercial, it also furthers the stereotypes it is trying to break. The second commercial does not feature such visual indicators and the concept of diversity is not perceived to the same extent as in the first one, but the concept of connectedness is

perceived even more, which is the reason the interviewee below still considers the message is credible.

"I: So, you are saying that uh... it's a very similar message, the same message but it's another take on it.

P: Yeah, I think actually the message is the same. But the take is completely different. And it is... by focusing on the individuals instead of groups. It's very... what do you call it.... you generalise in the first one. You generalise that a nurse saves lives. Yes, that's the common opinion but do you know that a nurse saved a life? Here you know that... she was the... what do you call it?

I: Uh... midwife

P: Midwife, yeah. But you also know that they both been refugees. You know, as I... It's facts. Straight facts on the people. I think that it's more credible."

(Appendix, 6:68-71)

At the same time, while specific stories make the commercial in itself more credible, it does not fare so well in regard to the credibility of the message. Having specific stories translates into displaying connections that are less inclusive than the connections in the first commercial. By being less inclusive, the commercial becomes less relatable to the individual interviewees, which in turn hurts the message of connectedness, since the interviewees feel like they have less in common with the commercial or the people portrayed in the commercial. It seems, however, that the overall message of the campaign is not considered completely un-credible. The interviewees perceive the message of the campaign as a combination of diversity and connectedness, and while diversity is not portrayed as strongly in this commercial, the interviewees still perceive the concept of connectedness. The connections that are indeed featured in the commercial, although less inclusive of the society at large, are so 'beautiful' that they compensate for the lack of diversity.

"P: Uhm... and maybe that's also what made it less relatable. Because it was very specific stories. While the first one was very... If you save a life; If you've been bullied, step forward. Most people can relate to that, whereas these stories it's like... I've never experienced that. But it's beautiful still. So..." (Appendix 5:58)

"1: Yes, I also think with the first one you might imagine a situation where you think of 'maybe I have something in common with the person', and you can also do that with this one 'oh how funny', but you wouldn't ever think 'maybe that was my great grandfather whose cousin had'..." (Appendix, 1:344)

5.2.4.3. The underlying motives

In the quote below we can see that the message is perceived as trustworthy because it is relatable to the interviewee and as it is not accompanied by a sales message. This tells us that a sales speech can negatively affect the credibility of a commercial. Given how the majority of commercials feature a sales message, we do not expect that all commercials seem untrustworthy. Instead, it seems that if the commercial is portrayed as depicting a real story, then the viewers will sense a discrepancy between the credibility of the story and the economic intentions of the commercial.

"5: But it's not like they have a product that they ask us to trust. Everyone can relate to what they are saying, and thus it is trustworthy. Had they ended with 'we have a nice offer that you can buy as a subscription' well then I would say that the trustworthiness would go." (Appendix, 1:82)

We can observe that some of the interviewees are having an internal deliberation on whether the commercial used regular people or actors for shooting. One of the points that play a huge role in the result of this deliberation is also the perception of how accurate the message is. In the quote below, the participant ends up deciding that the events depicted in the story are so relevant to the message, that the credibility of the commercial is increased.

"P: I've kind of said it. The thing about... But I also again sit and think about the thing 'is it real or what?'... I mean, is it acting or is it real people? Because, if it is real people, they have really done a huge research job to find how they are connected across.

I: But do you think the commercial is trustworthy?

P: Yes, I think so. because, again because they are able to be as time-present?

I: Yes.

P: I mean, it's kind of crazy that they have found a couple that fled across... I don't think there are a lot of those left.

I: Those who fled from...

P: Those who fled from World War 2.

I: Yes.

P: I mean... that is maybe a bit 'okay...'. But there are many who are refugees, and that is not always just those who come from Syria. There're also others. Yes, I think so. I think it seems very trustworthy, I think so. Otherwise, it is really good actors" (Appendix 2:125-133)

As we can observe from the quote below, what prompts the interviewees to overlook the extent to which the commercial is staged or not is the belief that the same outcome would result if the events from the commercial were replayed in real life. This belief invites the interviewees to think that if the commercial used actors, it did so out of convenience.

"I: Yes. So, you think it is real people they have got?

P: Eeh... I don't know, but it could be... No, I'm not sure it is... I don't know if it is actors, they have bought to do the role. But it could be... I don't know.

I: No.

P: But I think if you took a section you would get the same result. So, in that it could be.

I: Do you think that changes the message? If it's actors...

P: If it's one or the other? No, because I actually believe it. I believe it would be the same result." (Appendix 3:63-68)

5.2.4.4. Credibility of the commercials

Another factor that influences the credibility of the campaign is the perception of the commercials themselves. Both commercials are trying to transmit a message by portraying these elaborate 'social experiments'. While the commercials generally receive positive reception from the interviewees, there are distinctions between how the interviewees perceive the different commercials. To start with, in the quote below we can observe that one of the participants thinks that the first commercial features some moments that are a bit hard to believe. The reason for this is that the commercial is portrayed as being a real story, and there are some moments in the commercial that appear to be contrary to the expectation that our interviewee has of reality. This leads them to suspect that, although portrayed as a

real story, the commercial is actually staged using actors that follow a script instead of real people that participate freely.

"P: It's trying to be a bit humorous at times. Also, sometimes it seems a little bit too good to be true, like it's a little bit too staged. Other than that, it's a good commercial. (...) So that's my initial thought of it." (Appendix, 7:2)

Another interviewee has a similar opinion and goes on to describe a scene from the commercial that leads them to believe the commercial is staged. The commercial features an emotional moment where 'those that are bisexual' are invited to take a step forward and join each other in a group. However, out of the different groups of people, there is only one person who steps out of the crowd and goes forward, which prompts the rest of the groups to erupt into supportive applause. The interviewee mentions that, while on the first viewing he thinks that he would have done the same, a bit of introspection leads him to say that it does not seem plausible unless someone in the recording studio would have had control over the situation beforehand. We can see here that even if our interviewee was supportive of the moment, thinking about the likelihood of the same outcome happening in real-life won the interviewee over.

"I: Yeah. Uhm... Do you think that the commercial is credible?"

P: Now thinking about it, yes. Uhm... Then a bit no. Especially the one with the bisexual in the end where it really shows that it's good to be the one sticking out and everyone is clapping and supporting. Yeah, [like] that's going to happen in real life... No! It's not. So that's where I think the credibility is lacking. It's getting a bit too sugar-sweet, so to say." (Appendix, 6:27-30)

The same commercial sparks the opposite reaction in one of the other interviewees. For them, it seems like the TV network was in control before the recording by selecting which groups would be represented and that otherwise the commercial just shows the events as they occurred unscripted during the recording.

"P: The first one seems more real. It seems much more real because of course they chose the public groups very deliberately. But the response is from the public groups. They couldn't predict that. They couldn't predict how many went

up to the stage to present who they were and what they had in common. So that seems more believable.” (Appendix, 7:64)

The second commercial is also treated with scepticism by one of our interviewees. This comes specifically from the fact that the stories and events depicted in the commercial are lined up perfectly to bring the message across, which the interviewee interprets as being staged.

“P: Yes. Number one more than the one I find ‘sugar-sweet’.

That is too much and too staged.

I: So, the thing about it hitting you in the feelings overshadows what you think is their message?

P: Yes. I think so. With number 2.” (Appendix, 3:161-163)

Despite the different interviewees perceiving the different commercials as more or less staged, what we find interesting is that we can observe a difference between the credibility of the commercial and the credibility of the message. Although the commercial is the vehicle through which the message is communicated, having a commercial that is suspected of being staged does not affect the credibility of the message. In the quote below, one of the interviewees describes how they can relate to the message being transmitted and therefore it is not relevant whether or not it was actors or real people that performed the actions they saw on screen. This shows us that it is important for the message itself to be constructed in such a way that it can relate to the audience.

“6: Well, of course, you can always doubt whether it was all staged or not. It could be a lot of actors that have been put in clothes and staged it all. But I don’t think it ruins the message of the commercial, whether or not you choose to believe that it is real people or you think it is actors, then the message is that we all have... because you start to think: ‘I was actually also the class-clown’, and then you think that that might also be the case for others that are not the same place in their life as I am, but also was that [the class-clown] back then. So, no matter if it is trustworthy that it is ‘real people’ that are in the commercial, I think the message is trustworthy.” (Appendix, 1:87)

Several other interviewees share the same opinion. The interviewees seem to all question whether the people they can see on-screen were acting out a script or just being genuine, but

in the end, they come to the conclusion that the message is credible because they believe that the events could indeed play out in real life. From this, we can begin to understand how viewers engage with the credibility of a commercial. One of the reasons for which the interviewees are quick to overlook the fact that the commercial could potentially be staged is that commercials are expected to be staged. The typical commercials that can be observed on TV are fabricated stories made to persuade consumers into buying products or services. As it was discussed in the theme 'Knowledgeable consumers' (5.2.1.), viewers are aware of the marketing practices that companies employ. Therefore, although the events taking place in the commercial are depicted as genuine, the expectation that commercials are staged could contribute to creating the perception that staging the commercials happens in order to record the commercial more conveniently. The emphasis is then moved on the message. As long as the message is convincing and the viewer believes the events could genuinely happen in real life, the credibility of the commercial is upheld.

"P: Yes. I think so... It's kind of funny because I am always sitting and thinking 'is it actors or is it real people they have put in?'. And I don't know if it is... Ehm... Also, you think, the things about all of those who have bullied. Is that really the little 11-year-old boy that goes out and looks a bit sad and gets a pad on the shoulder. I kind of feel: 'Okay, would that happen?' Would he have that much self-insight, that he can see that now, when he is still maybe at a young age."

(Appendix, 2:76)

"P: Hmmm... Yeah, it's credible. I think all the stories are true. So, what... what is happening there is credible, and the reaction of people is credible. Uh... it's... I can't... like take off the notion it's staged because... something like this needs to be staged. A lot of background work needs to be put into this, so the people they set up to meet each other. They expect these people to meet each other, you expect these people to react to their common thing. So, in that way it's staged. But it's staged in a way where it doesn't matter because that's not the point of it. That's not the point of the commercial, to show it as genuine. The point of it is to showcase this... like to move our perception." (Appendix, 7:60)

There is however a limit to how staged a commercial can be, even if the message is credible. During the focus group interview, the participants discussed the case of a commercial that

they perceived to be similar. The commercial was made by the Social Democrat party in Denmark and it was sending a message that is very much aligned with their politics. After the release of the commercial, it was made public that the members of the youth party were used as actors in the commercial and that seemed to have a detrimental effect on the credibility of their message. We, therefore, argue that the organisation releasing a commercial also has an influence on the credibility of the message being sent. It could, however, be that viewers are more sceptical of political parties trying to send a message and therefore their efforts receive more scrutiny.

“5: Someone just did something similar, that ended really bad. Was it Danske bank or someone, where they did something where they staged a lot...? I don’t remember exactly how it went but then afterward it was found out that... no, it was Socialdemokratiet that did it.

1 + 2: Oh, that’s right.

5: They did it the same way, where afterward it showed that it was SU people [Socialdemokratisk Ungdom] and that really gave a backlash.

6: Was that the one where they were given a handball and then they had to throw it in the opposite goal, and then for everything in their life that went well, then they were allowed to take a step forward? So, in the coincidence that you had two happy parents that were still together, then you could take a step forward? So the point was that there are some in life that have better ...

3: Odds

5: Terms

6: Terms yes, than others, but we have to try and help everyone. Well yes, that was also...” (Appendix 1: 89-95)

Conclusion to theme

In this theme, we can observe that our participants give a lot of thought to the credibility of what they are seeing. Given that the commercial is dealing with an actual societal issue and that the events in the commercial are portrayed as real, the viewers hold the different parts of the campaign to scrutiny as they attempt to assess their credibility. The central finding of this theme is that the message transmitted by the commercial can be perceived as authentic even though the commercial is perceived as staged. We argue that this happens because

viewers, in general, expect commercials to be performances fabricated by companies to get a message across.

5.2.5. Emotions

Introduction

The following theme will deal with the emotional angle that our respondents perceive from the campaign and we will, therefore, run through some of the emotions they felt while watching the different elements in the campaign. These will include both positive and negative feelings. The theme will end in short with our respondents' thoughts on using emotions in marketing and a conclusion to the theme.

One of the perspectives of the campaign that continued to come up during our interviews was emotions. As mentioned earlier, most of our participants could, to a large degree, relate to the messages of the different commercials. This came to light through, for instance, the feeling of compassion. As our participants explain, the commercial is trying to fight prejudice by making the viewers experience the emotions of different people, which leads them to feel, for instance, compassionate to those that are different.

"6: You could really feel that it was about getting you to have this compassion in the body. You should understand what other people are thinking and maybe that we are not that different, all of us." (Appendix, 1:6)

"6: Yes. Compassion. And then those who have bullied, where you then turn it around and suddenly feel that they are 'the bad ones'. You go all around [the register]. When a bisexual is shown, then you again feel compassionate and then everyone applauds the bisexual and then again you feel happy in your body. So, I would say that it goes all around [the register]." (Appendix, 1:21)

As we have previously mentioned, the angle of the commercials is made to be very emotional - TV 2 'wants' to evoke feelings in their viewers, when they watch the campaign 'All that we share'. We can also observe that our participants are quite aware that TV 2 is doing this on purpose. This proves again that the viewers are knowledgeable consumers who keep a critical eye to what they are being shown and somewhat pushed into. However, as we will see from the following comments, many of our participants welcome these feelings while watching the

commercials of the campaign. It is interesting to see that the level of emotional engagement of the different commercials of the campaign goes well with the overall message. One of the reasons, for which our interviewees do not mind the strong emotional reactions they get from the commercial, is that our respondents perceive the emotional angle as appropriate for driving the message across. Throughout their responses, we can see that the interviewees believe the appeal to emotions is making them better understand and connect to the message of the commercial.

"P: I think so. It's difficult. I haven't been out to measure if, the people, they... But I really think... It really hits... Like I said, I really got all emotional now when seeing it again, because... I'm also a sensitive person but... I really think people hear it and listen. Exactly, because people can relate to what they say. Like, they reach almost everyone in Denmark with that, I think." (Appendix, 2:74)

"P: So, I just think that it was... it, it, I'm going along with it. It is emotional-porno, I think at the same time, but I'm going along with it. I'm just thinking... Yes, cool! And that... there is somebody that does this, pokes around this because we are so... we became so... yeah, I don't know if we have become... It has, at least, been this way." (Appendix, 4:8)

As we have acknowledged that the consumers understand what TV 2 wants them to do, and even welcome it at most times, we also see from our data that the participants feel impressed, to a certain degree, with what TV 2 has done in their marketing strategy. Specifically, the respondents praise the way the commercial is able to convey emotions of compassion, empathy, acceptance and social connections through the way they portray the events on-screen. As can be observed from the quote below, the experience of watching the commercial is linked with the experience of watching a movie. As we have mentioned before in the theme 'Knowledgeable consumers' (5.2.1.1), commercials are normally seen as a nuisance to the TV viewer, since they disturb the flow of the programming being followed. This commercial, however, managed to rise above that level and instead show a short story that can be followed and provides the same level of engagement and excitement as a movie would. From what we can observe, this is the result of a tight balance between all of the elements we have mentioned so far. The fact that the commercial is perceived as having a message that is both credible and positively received, combined with the right visual image, the seemingly

‘innocent’ intention and the right level of emotional engagement, makes the commercials become a cinematic experience in itself.

“P: It's... It's the angles on the people's faces, those feelings that the people in the picture have, together with the music. That is for sure. I mean, that's also what I'm saying that I'm definitely with it. I'm buying into that just like some kind of a tearjerker movie where you suddenly get yourself captured in. So they know what they are doing, no doubt about it. But I am on board. I was ready for it.”

(Appendix, 4:12)

5.2.5.1. Can it be too emotional?

However, we can also see from our data that many of our participants find that there is a limit to how emotional they want to become during a commercial break. Some of the participants found that parts of the campaign were too far stretched and reminded them of another commercial, which they disliked. Interestingly, several respondents brought up the name of the same commercial. When talking about the excessive emotional angle in the second commercial, they mention a commercial released by ‘Tryg’. ‘Tryg’, an insurance company in Denmark, released a commercial in which they present three people that read letters from their loved ones. In the letters, people write that they would come to miss them if the person reading the letter were to pass away. This is connected with the fact that the insurance company sponsors lifebuoys around the country that save people from having to lose their loved ones. The commercial ends by saying that customers buying insurance from ‘Tryg’ contribute to saving lives. The respondents mentioning this commercial seem to have a negative opinion of the commercial. This is motivated by either the feeling that the emotional message is not appropriate for the commercial or by the feeling that the company has no business marketing their products using such emotions. We see therefore that the level of emotional engagement that a commercial is generating is really important for the perception of the commercial. While this might suggest that viewers are not ready for the strong emotions elicited by some advertisements during commercial breaks, it also adds the dimension that the perception of the appropriateness of the emotional angle is influenced by the other components of the commercial.

"3: Not as good as the first one. It's good as well but it reminds me a bit about the 'Tryg' commercials that's on. And I think that one is totally stupid. The one with that life buoy or defibrillator. This one reminds me a bit about that, and I think it's driving a lot on emotions again. I think the other one is much better."

(Appendix, 1:194)

"P: With the defibrillator? With a heart attack, and someone who saved him, and she's crying etc. That is simply too much. That is too much. That becomes too... I think that is too... It's great that there are defibrillators to save lives etc. But it goes too far... It is a commercial for an insurance company..." (Appendix, 4:100)

We can observe that the use of an emotional angle in a commercial is perceived by the viewer in relation to the scope of the commercial. One participant found that when watching the aforementioned commercial where an insurance company tries to sell on the emotions of taking care of others' lives, they find that this is rather misplaced as they believe that such things should be left to the state via taxes. It becomes apparent that the viewer's personal beliefs interact with the message being transmitted and the strong emotional character of the commercial. Given that the interviewee believes that the state should be taking care of its people, they think that commercials, in general, should preferably not deal with such issues where the consumer can help in situations of life and death. Thus, for this interviewee, it is the disagreement with the message of the commercial that contributes to the dislike of the use of the strong emotional angle.

"P: And that is... that's... that's... I'm more... With a lot of things, I'm more of a classical... what's it called... An ordinary citizen who thinks 'I have to pay my taxes, and I will have healthcare covered and third world support and aid for the poor and people who become unemployed'... That should not be that this money has to be lured out of me to what I think. The state has to take care of that. And then I do know that the state is cut as much that it cannot handle that anymore. So, we have become kind of half American... 'We are really happy, so now I'm going to give my money to someone, and then I can also get my name at the bottom of a scrolling text', right. I just don't want that..." (Appendix, 4:102)

Conclusion to theme

We can conclude from the theme that our respondents felt many emotions while watching the campaign. Amongst these was the emotion of compassion to what is being portrayed in the campaign but also recognizing what TV 2 was trying to push in the campaign. Our respondents welcomed these emotional feelings as they found them relevant and agreeable to the message and credibility of the campaign. However, we can also see in this that our respondents have an opinion on when advertising is emotionally irrelevant. This shows us that the emotional angle in advertising has to be warranted, relevant and to the right level. Otherwise, it may damage the overall intention and credibility of the advertisement.

5.2.6. Doing this for society

Introduction

This particular theme will be dealing with our respondents' thoughts on the campaign in connection to how it contributes to society and further, what our respondents take from this. Additionally, it will be looking at the Danish media climate, especially in relation to DR and TV 2, at the concept of Public Service and at how these work together. The theme will end with a short conclusion.

Although we have discussed in the previous themes that the viewers can look behind the actions of TV 2 to see that the TV network is trying to create a positive image for themselves, there is another interpretation of TV 2's intention with the campaign. For some of the participants, the lack of a selling point in the commercial and the message regarding a current issue in society combined, create the impression that TV 2 made the campaign for the purpose of improving the society they are a part of. As we will observe, this is intrinsically linked with the perception they have of TV 2.

At the core of this theme, lies the fact that the commercial portrays a current issue in today's society. As mentioned in the theme 'Prejudice' (chapter 5.2.3.), our interviewees acknowledge that the events depicted in the commercial are an accurate representation of the way people give in to their prejudice when interacting with others, or of the way people do not talk with each other. After watching the commercials and TV breakers, the interviewees acknowledge that seeing the issue tackled on-screen makes them reflect upon

their behaviour and actions. Throughout their responses, this takes an important role in the discussion of both commercials.

“P: And make me think, okay why is it that I necessarily think that and why is it then that they say that a football player is also religion... Maybe that is because they have the same motives and the same patterns in their behaviour, eh... and rituals etc. So, in that way they make me reflect on my own prejudices as well.

And I think that is really cool” (Appendix, 2:38)

“P: And also, again the thing about getting me to open my eyes to things that I maybe do not think about every day, but still that I can feel matters.”

(Appendix, 2:147)

5.2.6.1. Reminding people to behave better

We can also see that the interviewees feel that the message communicated in the campaign is something they already knew. This makes them interpret the commercials as a reminder about the important topics of diversity and connectedness. Although the topics are sensitive and can easily evolve into debates, the participants do not feel like the campaign is telling them off. We argue that what leads to the untroublesome reception of the campaign is the combination of the angle of the message and the approach of the campaign. The respondents seem to appreciate, for example, that the first commercial is not casting blame on those who have prejudice but instead tries to show a way to see past them.

“P: Well, they are obviously not trying to sell a product. They are obviously not trying to push down something on to the viewers. They're not saying, ‘you are wrong’. They're not saying, ‘You should do it like this’. They're just presenting a notion of... how the world actually is, that we are not... that things are not black and white. Uhm, groupings are not definitive. Uhm... As a more conventional commercial, you would always try to sell something, either by saying it's really cheap or you really need this in your life. They're not doing this. So, it's... It's not, uh, public information... what's it called? Public service they're doing. And it's not conventional commercial they're trying to do. It's more like... trying to start some thoughts in people's heads, about how they perceive people around us and the society or different parts of society.” (Appendix, 7:34)

"P: At least... maybe not exactly a raised finger, but a... then a... reminder that... that the groups that are more and more of, that you should stop and think."

(Appendix, 3:30)

One of the participants identified the topic of refugees as the focal point of the second commercial. We can see in the quote below that the commercial leads the interviewee to reflect on the way refugees are treated in Denmark.

"P: Uh... I think they... clearly build up to the last relation, we're talking refugee. That last relation is like... Everything builds up to that. (...) And then we, of course, have the... the very like... very pressing issue like the refugee issue, saying 'Both of these are actually refugees.' One of them we could see as ingrained part of Denmark already and other of them... we... we know it's a part of Denmark but they are still... yeah, we still don't look at them as Danish, because they're new. (...) Why don't we see the refugees from Syria... as Danes, even though they have been in the exact same shoes as the people from Kosovo, as the people from the first initial Afghan war... as the people from Second World War... Wh... Wh.. Wha... Why? Is it just because they are the newest introduc... introduction to the Danish society that... that we somehow alienate them... I think that's the ultimate goal of this commercial. It's to... kind of deal with this... alienating of.. of refugees, or people coming to the country, that are not... yeah... for real Danes that we don't regard them as real Danes." (Appendix, 7:54)

Going on from the messages identified above, the participants interpret further that the intention behind the campaign is to push for a behavioural change in society. They feel that the way in which the commercial identifies an issue and presents an ideal way of dealing with said issue is TV 2's way of telling people how to behave. Given that the participants agree with the way the issue is portrayed, they feel that the message of the campaign benefits the society at large and that TV 2 made the commercial to contribute to the Danish society.

"P: Well, I think what it says is, that just the thing that you can have the idea to make such a commercial, says something about that you have a community. And that you actually are willing. And maybe that you have... maybe... are missing a bit more community across... that you remember... that you need to be reminded

that you can have something in common with some that you don't immediately think.” (Appendix, 3:96)

We also notice that some of our participants mention another commercial that also has a similar message of reminding people to behave better. As mentioned before, our interviewees think of commercials as just something they have to go through when watching television. The fact that they are able to remember another commercial and even relate the message of the two commercials tells us that this approach of tackling a societal issue might be a good way of standing out in the sea of commercials that viewers experience.

“P: Yes. It reminds me a bit about those CBB commercials, where you have to ‘speak nicely to each other.’ That is also a really good commercial, because it is able to not just tell us that we should buy CBB, but it is also able to say... to remind us that we have to speak nicely to each other on social media etc. A lot about something that teaches me something and that is very current.

I think that is cool.” (Appendix, 2:149)

We can see in the responses of our interviewees that the way they perceive the message of the campaign is interlinked with the way they perceive TV 2. They interpret that TV 2 has made the campaign for the benefit of society due to the image they have of TV 2 as a channel that is both public and commercial. The first indicator of this perception they have of TV 2 is that during our interviews whenever the participants talked about their idea of TV 2, they would bring up the other national TV channel in one form or another. This hints at the fact that there is a close relation between the perceptions of the two in the Danish media climate, which contributes to the viewers’ perception of the campaign as an attempt to better society.

5.2.6.2. DR and TV 2

In order to understand the connection drawn between DR and TV 2 and the way it contributes to the perception of the message, we must first have a look at the landscape of the Danish media. In Denmark, both public and private channels are operating. On the public side, there is the public broadcaster DR and the government-owned commercial broadcaster TV 2. On the private side, TV3 and Kanal 5 are the biggest broadcasters, although with a significantly smaller audience share than both DR and TV 2, which are in close competition for the first place (Statista, 2019). The fact that the two channels are competing for the number one spot

in terms of audience can also be seen in the responses from our participants. While we did not have any questions regarding the Danish TV channel, the interviewees themselves mention DR when talking about TV 2's brand. Regardless of their preference towards one or the other, the respondents always mention both of them when talking about TV 2's place in the media climate. As can be seen from the quote below, the discourse is also shaped around the fact that DR is the channel funded by public money while TV 2 is seen as more commercial, given the network's reliance on a subscription and advertising. Through this distinction, we can already start observing that there are different ways the TV networks are perceived based on their source of funding.

"P: Well, it is kind of funny, because I have always thought of TV 2 being the very commercial one, playing against DR 1, right. Where DR 1 is... where you pay the license fee and they have to make something for everyone, embrace everything and make channels for some who are only interested in history, right. So, I actually think... I would say that TV 2, with that commercial have done so that I at least think more that TV 2 is also all-embracing in Denmark, right, and also maybe is kind of Public-service'ish. They have to... I also think they get some subvention which does that they have to do a little of those programs. But I'm thinking it's a responsibility that they have put more on themselves, after seeing this commercial." (Appendix 2:84)

Being perceived as a commercial network comes with a certain image of what a TV channel should be, which is ultimately defined as what a public channel is not. Given that a public channel is funded using public money, there lies an expectation that a channel should provide content that is relevant for the whole population. Commercial networks are therefore seen as focusing on certain segments that are going to be the most profitable. This is also seen in the argument below that certain media outlets focus on covering conflict, because this is the kind of content that is popular, despite not being an accurate picture of reality.

"P: Media, in general, is by and large fed by conflict... and... that is why you get a bit tired sometimes. Because then you hear one side but do not really ask the other side. And then tomorrow, the newspaper will publish the other part if we are lucky, right. And sometimes, it is almost what you call 'microphone holders'

right... People are permitted to stand and speak all of their bull-shit without being confronted with it.” (Appendix 4:106)

However, TV 2 enjoys the benefit of being perceived as a mix between a public and a commercial station. Although our interviewees are not entirely aware of the way TV 2 is funded, since several different answers were floated around, many of our participants give a similar description of TV 2 as being a commercial station that also performs public channel duties. This is seen in the way that our participants influence the message of the commercial. Given that the commercial is seen as portraying a representation of Danish society and addressing the whole population, our interviewees talk about expecting this type of a commercial to come from DR. However since TV 2 is considered a mix between public and commercial, the campaign is seen as the TV network trying to move closer towards the image of a public, national channel.

“P: (...) they are a private, commercial TV station... which also has some public service and I think... I... it's yeah... Maybe that is also something they needed. I have always perceived them as... as definitely a more commercial TV station than DR, excluding the local TV channels. They are more relatable and relevant to the local.” (Appendix, 4:18)

“P: I actually do. I... I... throughout the years I think I've got the feeling of TV 2 as a public news. Even though it's not. Because it is... it is... It's a private television station who earns money on commercials and so on. But... but I still feel like they have just as much credibility as DR 1, for example. So, in that... somehow like I said I see their brand as public news.” (Appendix, 3:36)

5.2.6.3. Public Service

When talking about a public channel, one aspect that our participants often mentioned was the concept of ‘Public Service’. Although the participants mentioned the concept by name several times, they do not explicitly voice what they mean by this. We can understand that the concept seems to be something everyone should be acquainted with. We presume that DR has been effective in their mission of promoting their channel as a public service channel since our participants seem to associate the two. From the way that our interviewees talk about the topic, we can infer that for them, public service means that there is content for

everyone and that the broadcaster is contributing with knowledge and entertainment to the public - i.e. providing the public with a service.

“P: I thought they would like me to think about a TV station for all people and it is... That's at least what I would say if I need to link it to their brand. (...) And everything it's showing is indeed a [type of] public service... TV channel. So, I think maybe that... they would like... they would like... It's extremely unthinkable for me to imagine that this would come on TV 3. That I couldn't imagine myself. That it would come out on one of the other [channels]. It's... I would almost expect it from DR. So, I'm thinking it's to say 'Hey, we also have... We are also diverse.' They are indeed with their regional coverage, I think. Or...

I: Yes. And when you say that it was something you expected from DR it's because you have this expectation that DR is a bit more... like you say, public service or...

P: Yes, it's more public service. More... more democratic... more a part of society really than TV 2 was... or is. So...” (Appendix, 4:32-34)

This understanding of a public channel stems from the funding that lies behind the channel. DR is funded from the money collected by a Media Licence. Every person above the age of 18 that has a device capable of receiving media is obligated to pay the licence. Since public money is used to create the content available on a public TV station, there is an expectation that the station will provide content that everyone can enjoy, no matter how specific one's interests might be. This expectation is so ingrained in our interviewees' minds, that it becomes a defining feature of a public channel. As mentioned above, the image of a commercial channel is defined in relation to the image of a public channel and therefore commercial channels are expected to focus on specific groups. It is this context that contributes to the way our respondents perceive the message of the campaign and the way they associate it with TV 2's brand. Given that TV 2 is seen as a mix between a public and commercial network, taking on the message of diversity and attempting to bring people together is seen as TV 2's attempt at getting closer to the idea of a public service channel.

“P: Where DR 1 is... where you pay the license fee and they have to make something for everyone, embrace everything and make channels for some who are only interested in history, right.” (Appendix 2:84)

“Hmm... Yes. I think so... But actually not... Now when I think about it, I would say that it is more for DR 1, or DR’s, because it is them who are more broad in their programs. They go a bit wider, where there are more wide reaching programs about history and something for every taste” (Appendix 2:137)

“5: I think their first message is, as it was released in connection with the license fee and the discussions around license fees on Danish radio, DR radio, at that time... They [TV 2] was never a part of the license subscription as far as I remember... I have always thought of it [the commercial] as a counterpart to the one on DR ‘All that we share’ [License is something we give each other] with the license fee etc.” (Appendix, 1:62)

Conclusion to theme

As mentioned in the previous themes, the commercial is seen as a benevolent act on the part of TV 2, done for the benefit of society. This understanding of the message happens with the help of the idea of TV 2 as a mix between a public and a commercial station. Specifically, the concept of public service is outlined as being an important part of the way viewers understand the Danish media climate. Public channels come with the expectation of including all parts of society with their programming, which associated with the campaign contributes to the authenticity of the message.

5.2.7. Denmark

Introduction

The following will be dealing with our respondents' thoughts on the campaign in relation to Denmark and the branding thereof. Furthermore, it will contain comments on the Danish way of thinking in terms of ideology and the Danish humour that our participants also recognize in the campaign. The theme will end with a short conclusion.

5.2.7.1. A Danish message

One of the things that caught our attention during our data collection process was that most of our participants identified the campaign as being more about Denmark and less about TV 2. This reflects as much about the participants' perception of the commercial as of their country. Taking a closer look at the way the participants refer to Denmark in regard to the

commercial, we can observe that the values transmitted by the commercial seem to appeal to the values that the participants find to be present in the Danish society. As can be observed in the quote below, one of the participants mentions that the Danish society is centred on the idea of having a community where there is space for everyone. This is very similar to the message that people have more in common than they think. The fact that the interviewees believe the message of the campaign is so similar to the Danish values could be the reason behind the commercial's positive reception internally in Denmark.

"6: So, I think it gives some Danish publicity, some Danish good-will kind of, where you can see how the Danish society works because we are very focused on the fact that there has to be room for everyone and everyone should be able to be in Denmark and be well." (Appendix, 1:147)

"I: So you actually get a feeling that there are a lot of types but there is also room for them?

P: Yes.

I: Because you said community?

P: Yes, exactly. But also, the thing with... when you think of a Dane, that doesn't have to be a blond eh... 'The Danish song is not a young blond girl'. Like, that is also all of... We are all different and that is what is room for in this country. That is the kind of thing I think of." (Appendix, 2:23-26)

From the different quotes above it is clear that the participants refer to a commercial and campaign that is centred around Denmark, more than a commercial trying to sell a specific product to a consumer. We can see from the data, that many of our participants have found that the commercials and the overall campaign in large show a narrative of what it is like to be a Dane. And that they, moreover, relate to this narrative.

"P: Well, I really enjoy it because I think it sums up all the things that I... Denmark... that makes Denmark." (Appendix, 5:2)

"I: Yeah, so when you look at the commercial you... yeah, you kind of feel this connection with the commercial and what it means to be from Denmark or to be Danish?

P: Yeah, I think most of the things I can connect to, I can... It's things that I see in society." (Appendix, 5:3-4)

When discussing what it means to be Danish, we found that many of our participants circled around the aspect of 'social democracy', meaning that everyone should be able to be - and thrive in Denmark and further, everyone should contribute to a healthy and good community.

"2: Yes, or socialistic. This thing about including everyone and there should be room for everyone. It's about...

5: Community.

2: Community, yes. And that you put the community above yourself. And not the liberal way of thinking where you make your own luck." (Appendix, 1:109-111)

Several of our participants also related the message of the commercial, and thus the success of the campaign, as a result of the Danish 'social-democratic' ideology, which they argue as being represented in Denmark.

"2: Yes. Had it been in another country where we had not been as Social democratic as we, after all, are in Denmark, also on the right-wing, then I think it would have been looked at as being very socialistic." (Appendix, 1:107)

It is clear from the quote above that the participant believes that Danish ideology, in general, is quite social democratic, even in the liberal parties. The same participant adds:

"2: Well, that is the way of thinking that we mainly have in Denmark. So, in that way it's not anything that unordinary but had it been in another country, then I'm sure that it had been..." (Appendix, 1:113)

You can see from the two answers that the participant believes that the success of the campaign is, to some degree, found in the production- and publishing country. Furthermore, the participant suggests that had the campaign been released widely in other countries that are less 'social democratic' in their ideology, the outcome might have been different, which is quite interesting, as we know from our research that the campaign did, in fact, have a lot of viewer-success in multiple countries. This perspective will be explained further in the theme 'International' (chapter 5.2.8.).

5.2.7.2 Humour

When talking about what it means to be Danish, it is also interesting that many of our participants mentioned the aspect of humour, when watching a specific part of the first commercial. As we see in the first commercial, the speak-over of TV 2 says 'we who are religious' and into the box goes a group of football hooligans, implying that being religious in Denmark means cheering for a specific team in soccer/football. This notion is something many of our participants found funny and could relate to.

"P: Well I found it very interesting that they.... uhm, when the football fans came, they called it 'Us, that are religious' because... uhm... Religion is a thing that a lot of Danes don't identify with. So instead they used that as a Danish religion: football. So, I found that very... relatable. Uhm... and I think there's been a lot about feeling lonely in the media as well and uhm.... and society in general. Uhm, that a lot of people feel lonely and they don't talk about it. So... yeah." (Appendix 5:6)

Furthermore, one of the participants mentioned that this perspective of a religious group touched upon their prejudice about what it is to be religious, which actually made them feel embarrassed.

"P: But then there was this with 'All of us who are religious' and then it's football players that come in. And I think that is really cool because then they are playing a little bit with it... Like suddenly it's me who's sitting and feeling kind of embarrassed because I was thinking 'Okay, now a group of Muslims are going to come in' or Christians or something, because they are playing a bit with what the words actually can mean." (Appendix, 2:14)

One of the participants mentions that they feel proud that this commercial has been made in Denmark. Just like the similar answers of the other participants, this tells us that our interviewees agree with the message of the commercial and the way it is portraying society.

"5: Also - I think you feel a bit proud of it. Because, as we previously talked about, it has been shared and copied many places, it is a very well-prepared commercial, which I feel that you can, as a Dane, feel proud that has come from here." (Appendix, 1:22)

Conclusion to theme

We can conclude that the theme concerning Denmark in fact also shows that our participants find the success of the campaign to be connected with its portrayal of Denmark and the fact that our participants can recognize this image portrayed. Furthermore, it is clear that our respondents argue that Denmark is quite ‘social democratic’, which in short entails a way of thinking, where there’s a place for everyone i.e. diversity. We would argue that this has had an effect on the success of the campaign. In addition, we found that certain elements of the commercials were identified as being humorous in a way that they recognized as Danish humour. This again shows the Danish aspect that the viewers saw in the commercial.

5.2.8. International

Introduction

This short theme will deal with our participants’ opinions on the international success of the campaign and the message’s applicability across cultures. The theme will end with a brief conclusion.

As mentioned in the section ‘Background and research context’ (chapter 2), the campaign found a lot of attention abroad. Especially the first commercial from 2017 was highly shared across borders and societies. In an attempt to see how our respondents interpret the commercial in an international context, we have asked them about their thoughts on the success that the campaign has enjoyed outside of Denmark. What we have observed is that the interviewees embrace the message portrayed and extrapolate it on the rest of the world. Thus, they assume that the message is applicable to other societies as well. This is an interesting development from a previous idea that was identified during the theme ‘Community’ (chapter 5.2.2.). Previously, the commercial was identified as portraying the society in Denmark, and the focus that Danes put on the community. We see that, when taking an international context into consideration, the perception of the message of the commercial evolves to consider that other countries might be sharing similar opinions on the subject.

“P: I make of it that... the message, what this is showing in terms of diversity but also similarity, you can be the same, it doesn't matter whether you're from Denmark or Romania or you're from a Muslim country in you know in the Middle

East, it doesn't matter. The message is the same. Whatever you put in it. Or 'what hat' you put on it. Then it's the same. And I think that's the most brilliant thing about it." (Appendix, 6:48)

As the interviewee above explains, the message of diversity, which is found in the campaign, is a message that can be shared across borders and cultures. Another participant continues:

"P: I would say that... that we share everything together. It's not just one thing, it's not just one connection. It's a billion connections and something happening in China makes us share something in Denmark three months later, together so that's... I would say yes. That's my... That's my... sort of their statement is really good 'Alt det vi deler', All that we share. Because we share everything."

(Appendix, 6:100)

Another aspect that is brought up by our respondents when considering an international context is that the commercial is interpreted as advertising the Danish way of living. We have mentioned before that the interviewees perceive the message of the commercial as relating to the Danish society, and when this is combined with thinking of the commercial being watched by people outside of the country, it leads them to think that the campaign is reinforcing the image of Denmark.

"P: Well, I think that is really good marketing for Denmark. Because, I don't know, they [other countries] don't watch TV 2, I don't assume. So that is suddenly Denmark, that suddenly is being branded." (Appendix, 2:102)

"P: It is... it's a... It does have some marketing value that... It is... Just that you can have the idea to make such a... that you would like to show that... that... yes. I think it is a good commercial for Denmark." (Appendix, 3:96)

Conclusion to theme

It is concludable from the theme above that our respondents contemplate on whether the campaign would find the same success in other countries. We can see that the participants feel that the message is transferable across cultures and that diversity is something all can relate to. Furthermore, we see that when our respondents take the international perspective into account, the commercials appear more like a branding of Denmark and less about TV 2.

5.3. International perspective

Introduction

In the following theme, we will be investigating the international perspective of the campaign. The theme will be starting with an analysis on the perspective of relevant international media coverage of the campaign. Then we will briefly give account to a few relevant influential persons who have commented on the campaign, and finally, we will be analysing online comments from the 'ordinary' foreign viewer, who found and commented on the different commercials on YouTube.

5.3.1 International media

As previously mentioned, the commercials, especially the first one, had a huge international response. In the following third part of the thesis' analysis, we will be accounting for our secondary data, which comes from articles and other online media responses that we have found to be relevant to represent the international response.

Several online news outlets reported on the commercial. The message being spread is very similar across the international articles. The commercial is being praised for its attempt at promoting a different approach to dealing with a supposed problem in today's society. The reporters claim that, across the world, people are giving in to the idea that our differences often set us apart. This encourages people to focus on those that they appear to be similar to and to form groups around apparent commonalities. In this context, the commercial is understood as promoting connectedness and the fact that there is more to the people that you encounter than meets the eye.

"It's a heart-warming reminder that our perceived labels do not define us. If we look below the surface, we can find common ground with those we perceive as most different to ourselves." (Butterfield, 2017)

We can see that the commercial caught the Huffington Post's attention. The article starts by describing the commercial in order to give context to the readers and then goes on to present their interpretation of the video. We see that the reporter makes a connection between the message of the commercial and the prevailing 'us vs them' narrative. In his interpretation, the video comes as a response to other types of media that are trying to divide people into distinct categories. Furthermore, the commercial is being looked at in the context surrounding it.

Therefore, the date of its release is being associated with other occurrences on the same day. The ones being mentioned in the article are the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the entry into force of a travel ban against Muslim-countries in the US. These connections have also been mentioned in other newspaper articles reporting on the commercial. The fact that these two occurrences are being associated with the release date of the English version of the commercial provides us with further insight into the meaning taken out of the video. In this way, the commercial is being seen as promoting an idea of inclusivity and connectedness. The way the article is written also suggests the idea that the commercial is understood as likely to elicit an emotional response. In the beginning of the article, the readers are invited to 'grab a tissue' before watching the commercial. We can thus observe that the message itself and the way it is portrayed has an effect on viewers.

"The TV 2 ad has gone viral for its simple yet effective conveyance of a universal message, delivered at a time when it's deeply needed." (Digges, 2017)

The phrase above portrays the strong emotional response evoked by the commercial. Similar to other articles, such as the one in the Daily Mail, the reporter claims that the 'heart-warming message' of the commercial is the reason for its online success. Not only is the message of the commercial understood as being relevant across the globe, but it is also perceived as being released at a time of need. This refers specifically to the fact that the growing divide between different parts of society is becoming a problem. The effect of this divide can be seen in such actions as the 2017 ban on travelling from Muslim countries to the US. What the journalist finds interesting is that despite the intensity of the problem, the three-minute commercial provides a very simple approach on how to interact with others who are different from us. He further mentions that this approach could lead to people discovering that they have more in common than one might assume. Realising that we have things in common with people that are different to us is a remedy to the growing divide, according to the article. Similar to the other articles, the wording used to describe the commercial aims to appeal to the emotions of the reader, thus focusing on the communication technique of pathos.

"Something is lost in trying to explain (...) [the commercial] in words. (...) The difference here is that so much of what matters isn't said. Instead, it's visibly felt (...) through the delight in finding oneself in a group whose diversity suddenly looks charming." (Natividad, 2017)

In an article in AdWeek, an online news site focused on brand marketing, the commercial gets praised once again. The reporter is focused on the parts that are not being said directly, but instead can be read in-between the lines. She is saying that the power of the message lies in the unspoken parts of the commercial. One of those is the way the video shines a new light on the topic of connectedness. Instead of the usual approach of trying to break the stereotypes from outside, the commercial introduces the idea that people can be part of different groups at the same time. Putting a new perspective on the idea of connectedness has the effect of making it more appealing than it previously was. Furthermore, the author suggests that, unlike previous approaches to connectedness, the video does not aim to “shame or punish” those that do not value diversity but instead bring a more positive and alluring light on those that find connections with others. And in this way, showing that we are not as different as we thought we were.

5.3.1.1. Influential people

The reach of the commercial does not only stop at news articles. The video has made its way to some famous celebrities, which have in turn decided to share it with the world. On the social media Twitter, we could find examples of famous people sharing the commercial. We can see that the way they are talking about the commercial is similar to the coverage in the news articles. The video is described as eliciting a strong emotional response and as being a reaction to the increasing division between people.



Figure 6, Source: Twitter



Figure 7, Source: Twitter



Figure 8, Source: Twitter

Having the video shared on social media by celebrities is likely one of the factors that increased the number of views of the commercial. Given the fact that celebrities have large amounts of followers that check their latest updates, the number of people that would watch the commercial after being shared is large.

5.3.2 Online comments

Introduction

In the following, we will have a look at the comments that have been made on the two commercials. This data has been found on YouTube. The comments will only be from foreign viewers and are found in order to assist us in reflecting the international perspective of the campaign, from the eyes of the 'ordinary viewer'. The comments will be analysed through the same thematic analysis approach as the rest of the thesis' analysis section. Given the size of the individual themes, the whole section will end with a conclusion instead of having conclusions for each individual theme

5.3.2.1. Prejudice

We can see throughout the social media comments that the international viewers also identify the visual cues used in the creation of the commercials as an example of prejudice. This is combined with the message of creating connections with others that are seemingly different from oneself and leads the viewers to perceive the commercial as a call to break prejudice and look past what is noticeable on first sight.

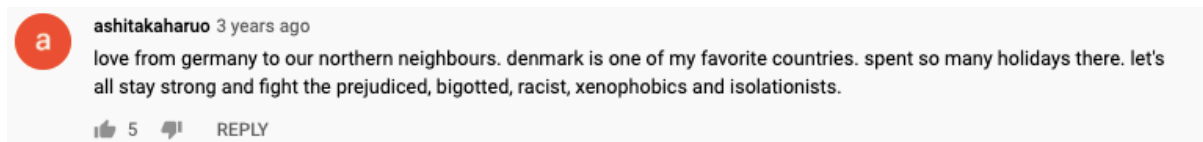


Figure 9, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.2. Community

Throughout the comments, we can get an idea of how the viewers interpret the message of the commercials. Just like the Danish viewers, their international counterparts see the message as revolving around the idea of community and that there are two facets to it portrayed in the commercial, diversity and connectedness. While the Danish respondents could see the portrayal of diversity in the commercials as a mirror of the social diversity present in the Danish society, we see that the commenters on social media go one step further and perceive the diversity as a mirror of the social diversity of the world.

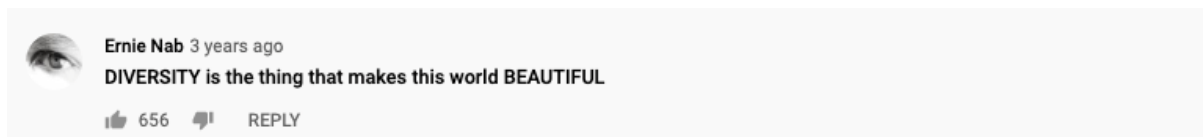


Figure 10, Source: YouTube

In the comment below we can observe that one of the users acknowledges that despite the diversity present in society, this is not something that is widely accepted and therefore that the commercials are going against the current prevailing narrative.

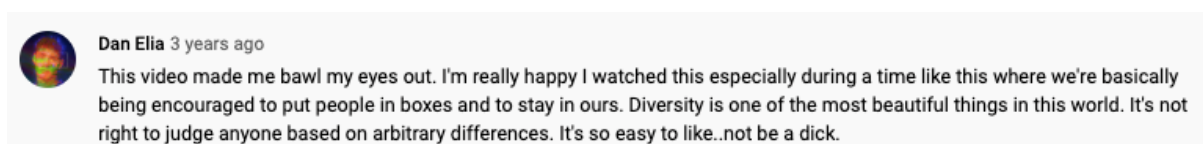


Figure 11, Source: YouTube

The commenters further mention that they can see the commercials' focus is also on portraying the underlying connections that arise between people. This is seen as a direct link

to the message of diversity in the sense that despite the difference between different parts of society, there are still many connections between those.

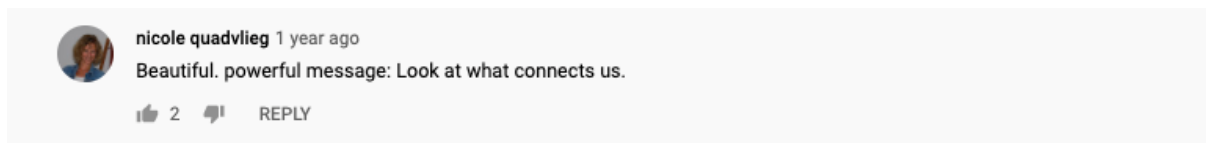


Figure 12, Source: YouTube

Furthermore, we can see that some commenters interpret the scope of the commercials as going beyond advertising for a TV station. They understand the campaign as TV 2's way of taking on a societal issue.

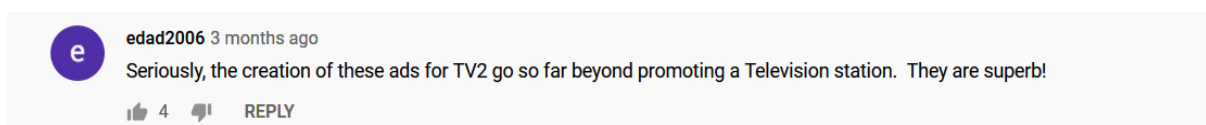


Figure 13, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.3. Denmark

One interesting observation coming out of the comments to the two commercials is that the message of the commercial is associated with the country of Denmark. The commenters talk about how the values portrayed by the commercial seem appropriate with the Danish way of thinking. This shows us the image that international commenters have of Denmark, and also that this image contributes to the understanding of the commercial's message.

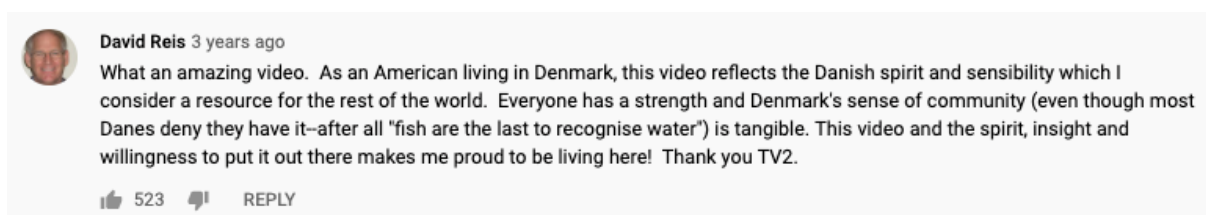


Figure 14, Source: YouTube

Furthermore, the commenters that found the message of the campaign as positive perceive the country of Denmark as being an example for other countries in terms of their approach to the diversity of a society. We can see that for some commenters the campaign becomes just as much about portraying the Danish way of being as a commercial for TV 2.

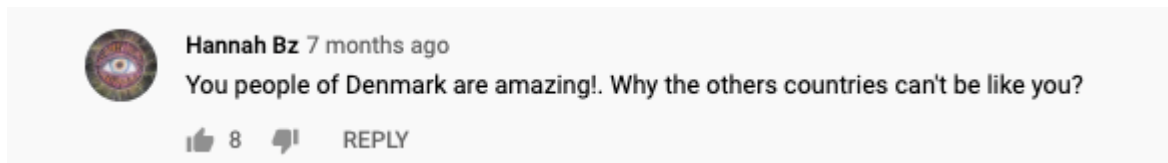


Figure 15, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.4. Doing this for society

As was the case with the Danish perspective, so can we see from the comment below that the foreign viewers also felt that they could take a lesson with them from watching the commercials. This reinforces that the message of diversity is understood and that the user further understands another message, which is that we should stop judging those who are different from us.

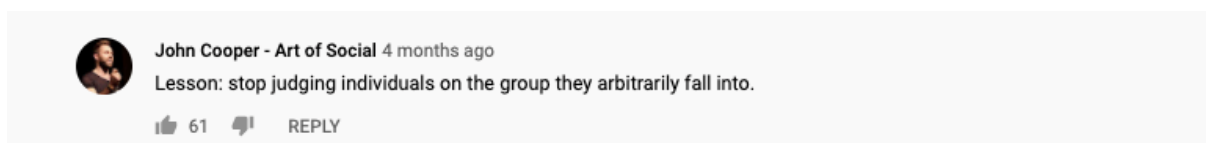


Figure 16, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.5. Emotions

From the comments below we can see that the users on YouTube, as mentioned in the section about the international media as well as with our Danish respondents, indeed also feel quite emotional while watching the commercials of the campaign and furthermore, they recognized feelings of empathy for the individuals on screen. Again, this confirms the argument that the message is international, and that diversity and connectedness speaks an international language.

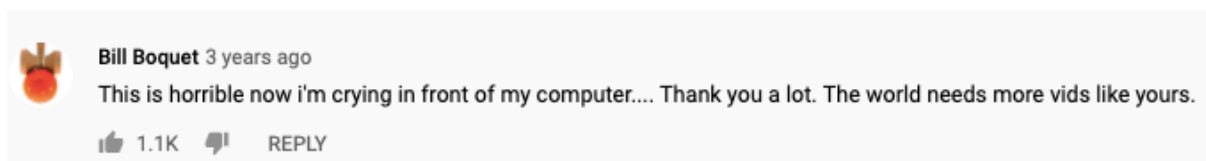


Figure 17, Source: YouTube

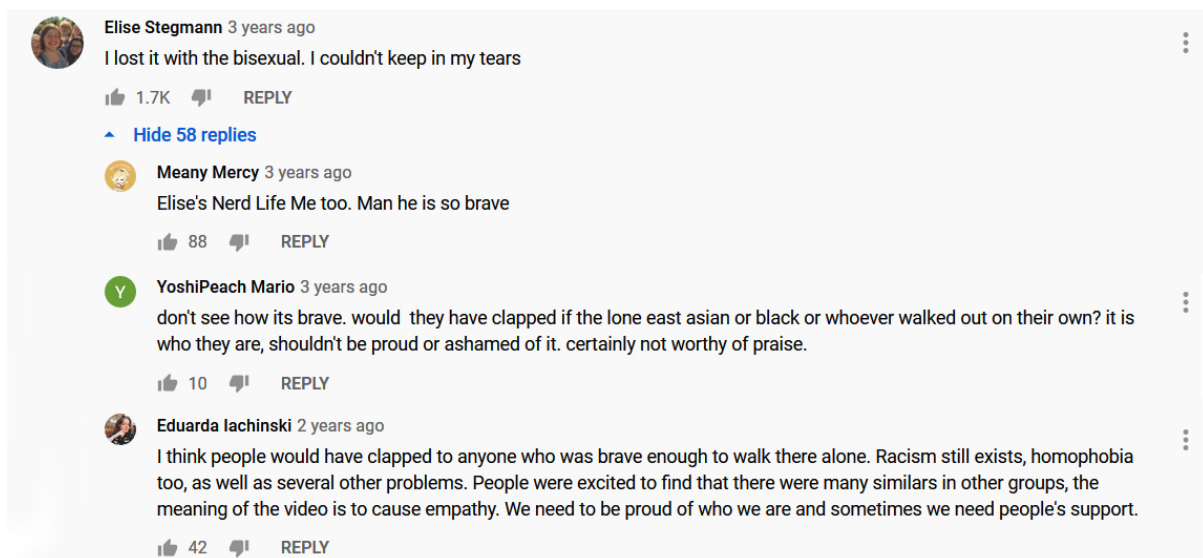


Figure 18, Source: YouTube

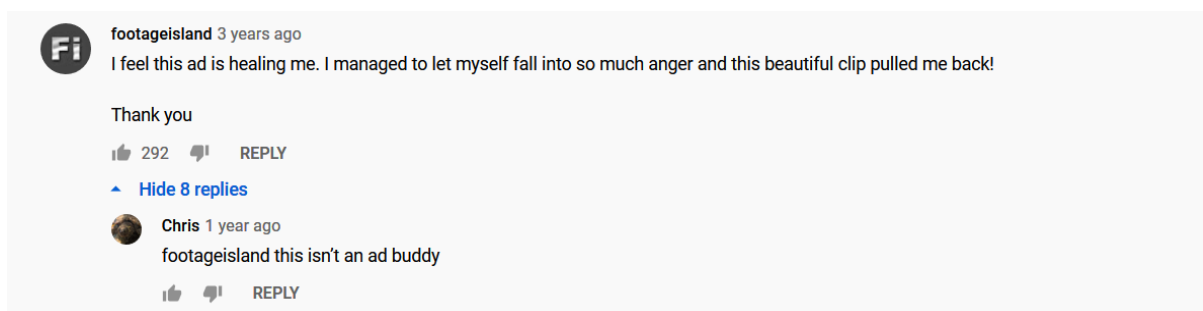


Figure 19, Source: YouTube

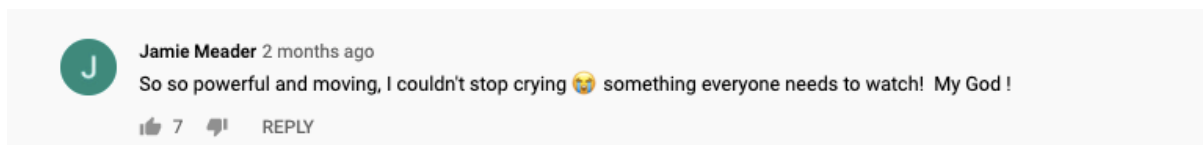


Figure 20, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.6. Sexuality

We can see from the below that several of the comments touch upon the subject in the first commercial, where the speaker asks for 'we who are bisexual'. Oppositely, we did not see the same amount of interest in this particular subject, from our Danish participants. We interpret that this is because the Danish participants are more used to the acceptance of others no matter their sexuality, whereas this might be different in other countries and thus different for other viewers of the commercial. We can, however, see that the comments on this are greatly positive and met with a lot of emotions. Furthermore, many of these found comfort in the commercial and its message and mentioned that it had helped them.

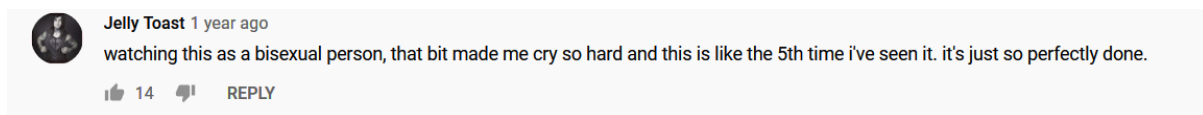


Figure 21, Source: YouTube

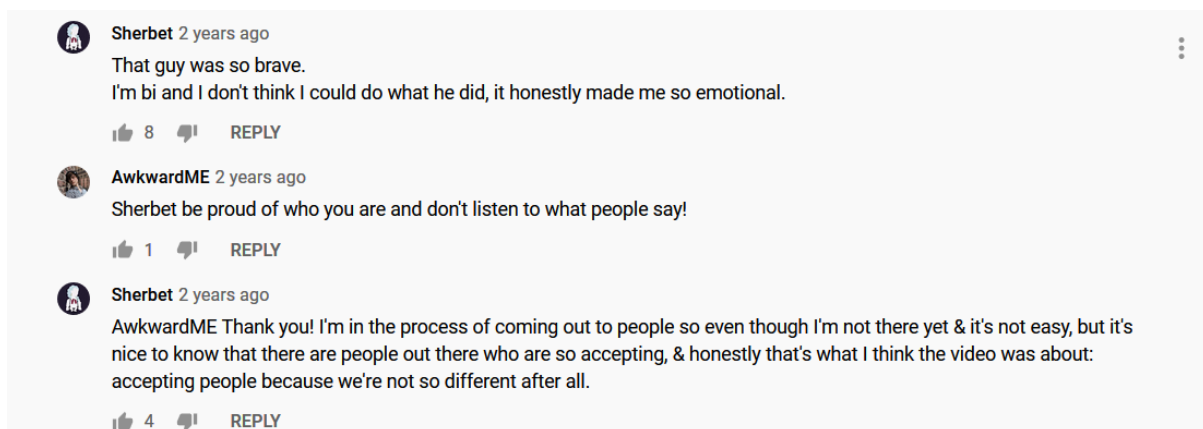


Figure 22, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.7. Persisting relevance

In the quote below we can see that the user Sharon Massey finds the first commercial remarkable and beautiful. But there are also two other interesting things about the comment below; first, we can see that Sharon was directed to the commercial via 'The Optimist Daily', which is a news station that only reports optimistic news. This tells us that the editors of the blog found that the campaign 'All that we share' was valid under those criteria and shared it with their subscribers. As one of our participants from the interviews mentioned, they found that "Media, in general, is by and large fed by conflict" (Appendix 4:104). This comment tells us that 'The Optimist Daily' is a response to this tendency. Secondly, the time of the comment and the publishing by the 'The Optimist Daily' gives us the impression that the international media are still finding the campaign and its commercials relevant as they are continuing to publish this even after more than three years of its initial release. This was also the picture Vicky Dahi described during our interview, as she mentioned that TV 2 is still receiving inquiries about the first commercial.

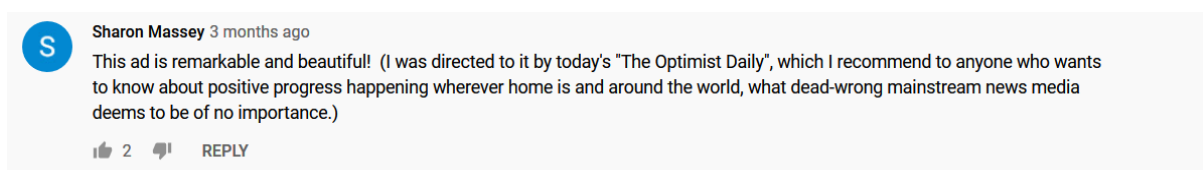


Figure 23, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.8. Other countries should follow suit

One interesting thing we saw while researching for international views was that several of the comments were dealing with foreign users who wished that their own countries had done something similar.

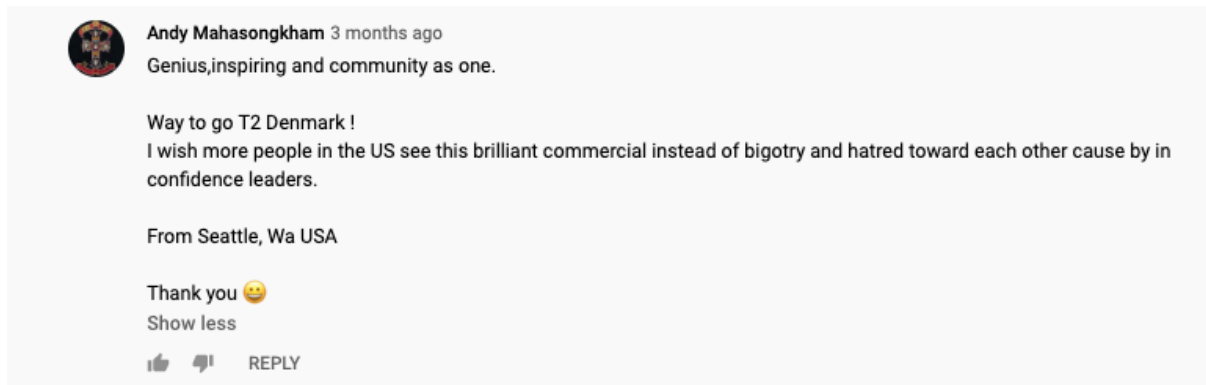


Figure 24, Source: YouTube

This reinforces the argument that the message of the campaign is, in fact, cross-cultural and that the subjects and stories portrayed in the campaign are ones that reach across international borders, whilst keeping the same reflection by the viewers.

In addition to this, we also found examples of comments from users who had in fact been included in a copy of the exercise from the first commercial, which was looking at diversity and that we are not as different as we might think. The user had found it very positive to have experienced this. And yet another user intended to take the exercise from the first commercial to her classroom in Belgium to show her students the message.

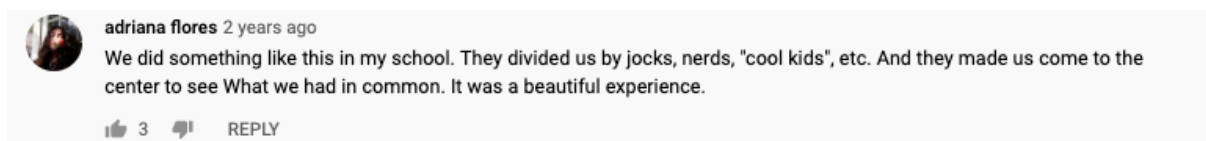


Figure 25, Source: YouTube

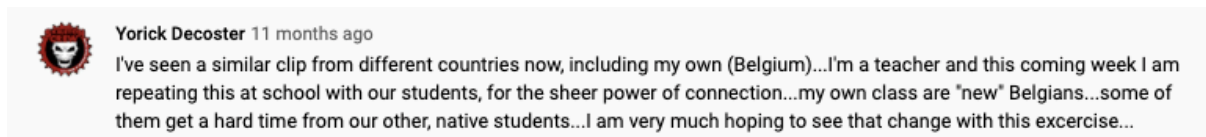


Figure 26, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.9. Cinematic experience

From the quotes below, we can see that also the international viewers found the commercials to be about more than selling/branding TV 2. In fact, they agreed with some of our Danish participants that the commercials appear as cinematic experiences.

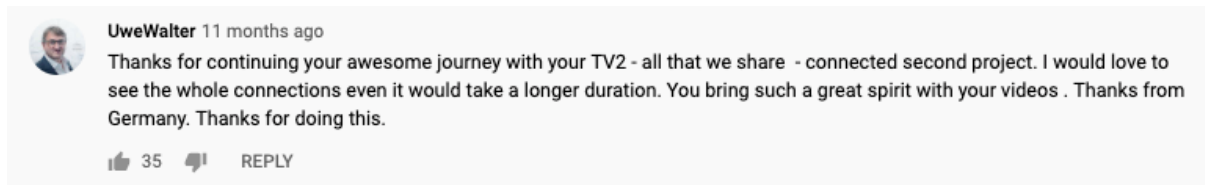


Figure 27, Source: YouTube

We can see from the comment above that the user 'UweWalter' from Germany has followed the campaign and praises TV 2 for continuing this with the second commercial. However, he feels sad that the commercial was not longer, so he could see all the connections between the individuals of the second commercial. This reinforces the argument that the viewers see the commercial as something more and that they would not mind it being longer if that just meant that the story of the commercial would be further revealed.

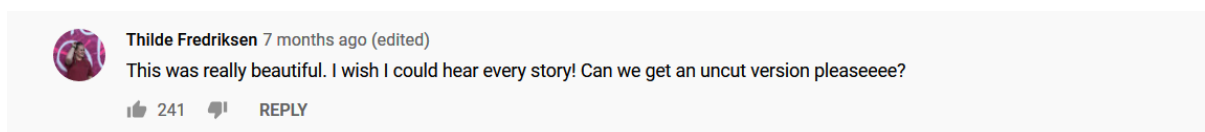


Figure 28, Source: YouTube

This shows us that the viewers engage with the campaign in such a way that they are both emotionally invested in the stories portrayed, and further that the viewers enjoy watching the campaign, even while knowing that it is released by a TV network, they can see behind their assumed understanding of what a commercial is and enjoy and relate to the content for its message.

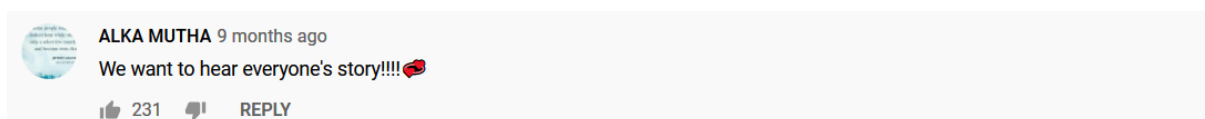


Figure 29, Source: YouTube

5.3.2.10. Conclusion

We can see that by and large, the international viewers have a similar understanding in several aspects of the message of the campaign. This shows us that the values portrayed by the campaign have a certain universality that can be understood by people from different

cultures. However, we can also see that the way people talk about the commercial indicates the differences in perceiving the message that comes with the fact that the context of every viewer is different. One of the ways where this is most visible is with the topic of sexuality. While the portrayal of a bisexual man in the first commercial did not spark many reactions from the Danish respondents during our interviews, we could see that the international commenters brought it up often. We interpret this as a pointer towards the acceptance of sexuality in different cultures. Furthermore, the message of the commercial takes a broader meaning and gets associated with the production country. As it is quite clear that the commercial is made in Denmark, the international viewers recognise the Danish values in the campaign, and this reinforces the argument of the campaign being a branding of Denmark as well.

DISCUSSION



6. Discussion

Based on the analysis above we will now discuss the findings we see as most significant in relation to our research question. We can, amongst others, see that context plays an important role in the creation of brand meaning. Although all of our interviewees, as well as the international viewers, watched the same commercial, we can observe that the interpretations of the message of the campaign and of the brand of TV 2 are similar, although with slight differences across the respondents.

When discussing the campaign, the interviewees seem to give a lot of consideration to the different elements of the campaign and what lies behind them. We interpret this as being a confirmation of the post-modernist theory of consumer culture, specifically with Douglas Holt's (2002) argument that as brands pursue to create perceived authenticity through cultural resources, sceptical consumers are increasingly watching out for inauthentic claims.

As outlined in the section 'Literature review' (chapter 3) there can be a difference between brand identity and brand image. Throughout our analysis, we can observe that the identity that TV 2 was trying to portray through the campaign matches the image that the viewers take out from the campaign. We argue, therefore, that TV 2 have been successful in creating a campaign to portray their desired new brand identity.

During the analysis, we can observe that the viewers correctly identify the message of diversity and connectedness, and that their reception towards the message is positive. While the topic of diversity is sensitive and arguably has led to debates in the past, the message of the campaign is accepted by the viewers and regarded as representative of what they see in society. This leads us to believe that viewers are ready to engage with an intercultural message and that the approach that the commercial had to the topic of diversity was suitable. While campaigns trying to promote inclusivity usually bolster diversity and impose the right behaviour on viewers, TV 2's campaign takes a softer approach by portraying diversity as an underlying natural thing.

Another interesting finding that we made was that both nationally and internationally, the campaign seemed more of a cinematic experience than a commercial and this appealed greatly to the viewers' interest and engagement while watching the commercials. Both Danish and foreign viewers could, as we mentioned above, accept the message of diversity and

connectedness and agree with the campaigns' portrayal of Danish values and society. In turn, this has shown that the campaign also functions as a branding of Denmark, which tells us that in marketing, the home-country of the publishing company, can be included - willingly or not - in the reception of the message of the given marketing strategy.

6.1. Managerial implications

We can observe that TV 2's use of cultural branding for changing their image has been positively received. This would go to argue that there is potential for the use of cultural resources in creating brand identities, as observed also from the participants' mentioning of another similar commercial. However, the participants have also mentioned commercials that did not fare so well with their cultural messages, such as the Tryg and SAS commercials. While there seems to be potential in employing a cultural branding approach for creating a brand identity, we argue that due consideration should be given to the cultural message used and the applicability to the brand's context. As we could observe from our analysis, the understanding of the campaign was influenced by many different factors, which make for a long list of considerations to be taken when creating a branding campaign.

Furthermore, the campaign's positive reception also shows that intercultural messages can be tackled in mass media with the right approach. While diversity and inclusiveness are sensitive topics that can quickly lead to debates, we see that TV 2's approach on focusing on emphasising connectedness managed to talk about the issue, without meeting much resistance.

The approach to the intercultural message in the campaign seemed to also be well received on social media, allowing the campaign to spread widely without advertising costs from TV 2. We argue that this shows the potential of social media for viral branding strategies, as well as for reaching audiences at an international level.

CONCLUSION



7. Conclusion

We will now answer the research question of what TV 2 has been trying to convey with the campaign 'All that we share' and further, how the Danish viewers of the campaign have interacted with the message of the campaign. Furthermore, the conclusion will include an understanding of how the campaign is perceived from an international perspective.

From our analysis of the media declarations made by TV 2, we have been able to make sense of what TV 2 was trying to convey with their campaign 'All that we share'. We saw that the TV network thought of this campaign as a way of communicating, both internally and externally, a new identity of their network, and thus re-brand TV 2 Denmark. For their new identity, TV 2 have looked inside their core and decided to embrace and stress their public service position. Therefore, their message was shaped from a desire to address a problem that they have identified in society. The problem identified is not only one that is important to their customers but also one that clashed with their values of journalistic integrity. This led to a campaign focusing on the way people in a diverse society do not connect with each other and the way connections can be made between members of society. TV 2 felt that this aspect of diversity and connecting people goes in line with their own values as a TV network and further, with their selection of content on their different channels and platforms. Furthermore, TV 2 wanted their campaign to show authenticity. In order to do so, TV 2 decided to create their commercials using 'real' Danes (their own customers) and their true stories and reactions, to in turn portray the authenticity and credibility of the TV 2 brand.

Through our analysis of the interviews we have conducted, we have made up an idea of how the Danish viewers have understood the campaign. We can see that they interact with the message on different levels. The viewers identify the use of prejudice in the commercial and acknowledge that this is an issue in today's society. This leads them to understand the campaign as taking on the topic of diversity by promoting connectedness between people. The campaign is understood as TV 2 trying to remind its viewers how to deal with the issue of prejudice. This is interpreted as a benevolent gesture from the TV network and is attributed to their public service nature. The fact that TV 2 is a mix between a public and commercial network plays an important role in the reception of the campaign, as it influences the credibility of the campaign. We can also observe that the message of the campaign can be perceived as credible even if one of the commercials is perceived as staged, which shows us

the viewers' expectations of commercials in general. Furthermore, our interviewees show a critical attitude towards the different elements of the campaign, which we interpret as a confirmation of the argument that post-modernist consumers are more knowledgeable of marketing practices. Viewers take into consideration elements such as underlying motives, target group and marketing strategies when reflecting upon the campaign and correctly identify it as a branding campaign. Finally, we can see that our respondents identify a Danish dimension to the campaign by associating different parts with Denmark. This leads to them interpreting the commercials as branding Denmark when considering the campaign in an international context.

The analysis of the international responses revealed both similarities and differences between the understanding of the campaign by the receivers from Denmark and abroad. The international viewers also identify the campaign as bringing up the topics of diversity and connectedness and that this is done through the use of prejudice. The diversity portrayed in the commercial is applied to the world as a whole. The values presented in the commercials are recognised as being Danish and the campaign takes on a broader meaning as a portrayal of the Danish way of life. One interesting difference that we could observe is that the use of a bisexual man in the first commercial spurred more attention from the international commenters than from the Danish respondents. This suggests that the acceptance of different topics in culture has an effect on the perception of the campaign.

To sum up, it is concluded that from the thesis we can see that TV 2 was, in fact, aiming at a rebranding of their network, where they would portray more of their public service nature. In doing so they have taken up societal issues of diversity in their campaign and wanted to show that there is more that connects us than what divides us in Denmark. We can see that this is also what the Danish viewers, by and large, have understood from the commercial, which argues that TV 2 have succeeded with their intentions. We can conclude that the message of diversity and connectedness between humans is also received by the foreign viewers, showing the applicability of the message across cultures. Finally, we can see that the majority of the international viewers recognize the portrayed image of Denmark and further, encourage that the message of the campaign should cross borders.

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