



SUNDHEDSSTYRELSEN

Communication project: We can do it

An analysis and exploration of implications by the campaign 'We can do it'

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ABSTRACT

The focal point of this project is the current COVID-19 situation, and the campaign made by The Danish Health Authorities (DHA) focuses on the restrictions, specifically among young adults. This project aims to analyse to what extent the outcome of the meaning-making process of the audience matches with the DHA intended message of their campaign, “We can do it.”

Both a quantitative- and qualitative approach was applied. Firstly a quantitative survey was conducted, and secondly, ten interviews were made. This questionnaire survey targeted a high number of responses, to collect a large sample of general thoughts towards the campaign, in order to analyse the general public’s understanding of the video campaign. Further, to analyse whether the effort from the DHA was influencing their target group of young adults between the ages of 15-29. In addition to the survey, a qualitative interview was conducted with volunteers who participated in the questionnaire. To understand the interviewee sense-making and decoding of the campaign, Stuart Hall’s encoding/decoding theory was used. This was done to get a better understanding of Kim Schröder’s reception analysis. Both the reception analysis and the method of phenomenology was applied to examine the interviewees’ understandings and interpretations of the campaign who perceived the message as understandable and relevant. The discussion outlined the main understanding of the informants interviewed and their reception of the video’s message. Lastly, it discusses the limitations of the theories and methods used in this project. Based on the research conducted, we as researchers conclude that the interviews and the survey showed that the informants understand the campaign’s overall message, but each individual decodes the message differently.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In late 2019 COVID-19 started sweeping across the world. As of April 2021, The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) reports a total number of new cases worldwide of 510,365, with a total number of infection cases of 130,422,190 since 2019, and a total number of deaths from the COVID-19 virus of 2,842,135. Many countries are doing what they can to control this virus and have been reaching out to the public to be more mindful of the spread of viruses and bacteria. The Danish Health Authority (DHA) implemented a citizen-oriented communication effort to spread awareness on COVID-19 effectively. The DHA attempt to reach the general citizens was to make a video that was easy to understand and would give information on how to properly socialize and care for yourself during the pandemic. This is an attempt to help Denmark get through the pandemic well and limit the spread of the virus. The efforts made by the DHA is to reduce the amount of people needing to go to the hospital. That way, those who do end up getting seriously ill can get the treatment and care they need without overworking the healthcare workers and overflowing the hospitals (DHA, 2021).

The numbers of COVID-19 tend to increase when people become more relaxed in society and not taking proper precautions needed to ensure the spread of the virus slows down (CDC, 2020). According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), it is important to practise social distance: *“COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) for a prolonged period. Spread happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are launched into the air and land in the mouths or noses of people nearby.* (CDC, 2020) Pointing out that, it is important to understand how the disease is spread: *”Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay at least 6 feet away from others when possible, even if you—or they—do not have any symptoms. Social distancing is especially important for people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.”*(CDC, 2020) It is important that community members continue to practice social distancing, proper hand sanitation, and to wear a mask to ensure that they are not spreading the virus further. Although DHA did an entire campaign called “We can do it” to bring awareness into society regarding the virus, including several videos beyond the target group of the campaign, our focus was on the four videos made specifically for young adults and the restrictions that are placed. It was decided on these videos because we wanted to focus on the restrictions, specifically those that young adults often are assumed not to be complied with.

2.0 MOTIVATION

As a group of student researchers, we found this topic is exceedingly difficult to overlook since it affects society as a whole. COVID-19 has had a significant influence on all of our lives worldwide. Both COVID-19 and the following restrictions are continuously being heavily debated, both in the news, politics and on social media platforms. Furthermore, it is a worldwide crisis that most people and most governments have never experienced before. This sparks even more interest in us regarding how this is being dealt with, specifically how the population is being informed by authorities, and how the messages are received. When discussing this topic, we agreed that we all receive much information from the health authorities, such as the DHA. However, exactly how efficient and precise this information is, was something we all wanted to explore and investigate. Everybody has their way of making sense of a specific communication campaign, which means that people can have very different ideas and meanings regarding a topic, based on the same set of information. We found this intriguing and indeed very relevant for the effectiveness of DHA's communication campaign. This corresponds perfectly with our interest in the use of reception analysis, which we intend to use to test and understand this campaign, and how young adults understand it. Precise and effective communication is very important for the sender because of the seriousness in dealing with a worldwide pandemic, so we found this approach very suitable for our interests.

3.0 PROBLEMFORMULATION

“To what extent does the outcome of the meaning-making process of the audience match with the sender Danish Health Authority's intended message of the campaign?”

3.1 SUB-QUESTIONS

1. *“What meaning does the audience assign to the campaign?”*
2. *“What is the campaign's effect on the audience?”*

4.0 CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT AND CAMPAIGN

Before analysing whether the interpretations of the target group aligns with the message of the campaign, it is important that we clearly understand the message beforehand. Therefore, we have made a communication content/context analysis of the campaign based on the questions from the book “24 questions for planned communication” written by Jan Krag Jacobsen in 2003. As stated in the introduction of this paper, the DHA already defined and expressed their purpose with the campaign as followed:

“The main purpose [...] is to reduce the spread of infection with new coronavirus among the population [...]. An underlying purpose is to prevent the healthcare system from being overloaded, so that there is enough capacity to give every patient the best possible treatment”¹ (DHA, 2021).

The purpose of the campaign is to make information regarding COVID-19 and the current restrictions easily accessible for the population. Their goal is to reach every Danish citizen and assure easy and accessible information that is understandable for everyone. Further, they describe the importance of disseminating knowledge to citizens with increased risk of developing serious disease if infected by the virus (DHA, 2021).

¹Directly translated from Sundhedsstyrelsen -

<https://www.sst.dk/da/Opgaver/Forebyggelse/Indsatser/Kampagner/Aktuelle-kampagner/COVID-19>

“Det overordnede formål [*med den borgerrettede kommunikationsindsats om COVID-19*] er at reducere smittespredning med ny coronavirus i befolkningen [*og skærme personer i risiko for at blive alvorligt syge af COVID-19*]. Et underliggende formål er at forebygge, at sundhedsvæsenet overbelastes, så der er kapacitet nok til at give alle patienter den bedst mulige behandling.”

5.0 CONTENT OF THE CAMPAIGN VIDEOS

The campaign consists of four short videos targeted at young adults. Each video conveys a message involving one COVID-19 restriction or advice implemented by DHA. The director of DHA, Søren Brostrøm, features in all four videos. Since COVID-19 started, he has been the one to give information and inform the Danes about COVID-19, restrictions and the vaccine. Therefore, Brostrøm has become a very significant figure in Denmark. The restrictions mentioned are: stay home, limit physical contact, go home early from a party and keep the recommended social distance.

The first video is titled “Young person sick with COVID-19”. In a dimly lit bathroom, we see a young man in front of a mirror cabinet. He coughs intensely. Off-screen, we hear his mother saying that he shall stay home today. The young man answers promptly, claiming that he is fine. As he opens the cabinet to take a toothbrush, we briefly see his face in the mirror. He closes the cabinet, and through the mirror, he sees Brostrøm standing right behind him. This horrific moment is accompanied by squealing and scary sound effects. Brostrøm raises his eyebrows, reproving the young man’s attitude. The young man panics and looks back and around the bathroom to see if Brostrøm is there. Now, visibly obedient, the young man says to his mother: *“I think it is best that I stay home today”* (DHA, COVID-19 ung syg 2021).

The second video is called “Parfume”. We see two women walking down the street in the evening. One of the women sees a young man standing in front of a hairdresser. She looks surprised and shouts his name, revealing that she is glad to see him. In the hairdresser window, one can see two big posters of a fashionable young man exhibiting his haircut. The woman jumps with her arms wide open, inviting the young man for a hug, but he takes a step backwards. A whispering sound urges the woman to look at the hairdresser window. At the same time, an image of Brostrøm appears in one of the posters. The woman sees Brostrøm, who looks at her with a serious facial expression. He raises his eyebrows as if he was saying, ‘remember the advice’. This is enhanced by a creepy sound effect. Worriedly, the woman looks at the young man and apologises, adding, *“seriously, I keep forgetting it all the time (that we shall not hug)”* (DHA, Parfume 2021).

The third video is called “Go home now”, and it takes place in a pub. We see two young men and two young women drinking and having fun. Suddenly, one of the young women looks

at her watch and realises that it is late. Hastily, she says that they all must go home now. A young man with long hair ignores her advice and says that they should keep partying. The rest of them put on their facemasks and prepare to leave. He stands up and walks to a jukebox, where he selects a song. To his surprise, he sees an album cover of Søren Brostrøm coming forward and starting to play instead of the song that he selected. While he hears the lyrics, “*go home now goddammit... go home and sleep*” (DHA, Gå nu hjem 2021), he sees Brostrøm on the cover of the album shaking his head disapproving of his intention of wanting to stay longer in the pub. The young man rushes back to his friends and urges them all to go home. He says, “*I think we must go home now*” (DHA, Gå nu hjem 2021).

The fourth and last video is titled “Movie night”. In a flat, we see a group of young people watching a horror film. They are well spread around the room, seemingly keeping the social distance recommended by DHA. Suddenly, a young girl holding a bowl of popcorn jumps onto the couch and sits between a young woman and a young man. In doing so, she violates the social distance measures. This prompts her friends to look judgmentally at her. Without sharing her popcorn, she begins to watch the film on a wide TV screen. In the film, we see a very frightened woman screaming and trying to open a car’s backdoor. Shortly after the backdoor window is opened, the girl sees Brostrøm sitting in the car. Brostrøm is set in a scary setting, which is emphasized by the disturbing sound effect. He cleared his throat while he looked firmly at the girl. Shocked, she stops eating the popcorn. Now visibly embarrassed, she tells the other young people present in the room that she ‘thought that the suggested social distance was only one meter’ (DHA, Filmaften 2021). She leaves the couch and sits elsewhere. The videos can be found on the DHA’s website through this link:

<https://www.sst.dk/da/udgivelser/2020/vi-kan-godt-ungefilm>.

What is the message?

The message of the campaign video is also the name of the campaign itself; “Vi kan godt”, directly translated to *We can do it*. The name refers to the restrictions and the preventive measures that are relevant during COVID-19. What the young adults can do refers to sanitizing hands, wearing a mask in relevant areas, keeping distance, sneezing or coughing in our sleeves and so forth. The message not only encourages young adults to follow procedures but also cheers them on the way by telling them “*I know it is difficult, but we can do it!*” (DHA, 2021). The DHA focuses specifically on four restrictions:

1. Stay home if you feel sick

2. Avoid hugs or other physical contact
3. Go home at 22
4. Keep your distance from others.

Campaign period

The overall campaign “*We can do it*” from the DHA began when COVID-19 officially reached Denmark. The four videos from the campaign were released November 23rd, 2020 (ibid). According to their website, the campaign will continue as long as the pandemic continues.

Who is the target group?

The target group for the campaign according to the DHA is every person in society (ibid). However, we only focused on the campaign videos made for young adults. We have tried to contact DHA to get a precise target group for their campaign videos, but we did not get a response.

Instead we pulled information from an article by Statens Serum Institut (SSI) from September, 2020 (SSI, 2020), which mentions that young people between the ages of 20 to 29 years old, are the ones most likely to be infected with and spread COVID-19. Moreover, we made a rough estimate based on the name and content of the campaign videos “*We can do it - videos for young adults*”. Hence, we have estimated the target group to be between the ages of 15 to 29 years old.

What is the intended effect on the target group?

According to SSI, the target group responsible for the largest spreading of COVID-19 in Denmark is young adults between the age of 20 to 29-year-old (SSI, 2020). The intended effect on the target group, as well as any other subgroup, is to help spread awareness of social distance and wear a mask to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, they intend to prevent the hospitals from being overfilled, so the hospitals and the staff have the capacity and the resources to do their job (DHA, 2021). The campaign videos use a humoristic approach to bring awareness of the regulations made by the DHA and subconsciously see what should be done in various different settings to expand mindfulness on the spread of the virus.

Who is the sender?

The sender of the campaign and video is the DHA. They have a national responsibility for health issues and work to ensure good public health and uniform healthcare services of high professional quality across Denmark. This organisation also focuses on the communication of prevention, i.e. the recent COVID-19 pandemic. As stated on the organisations website:

“We disseminate knowledge of how our lifestyle choices affect our health. We control and manage infectious diseases and ensure effective health emergency management. We develop educational programmes for healthcare professionals, establish guidelines for appropriate use of medicines and develop national plans in areas such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic diseases” (DHA, 2019).

Their main tasks and focus areas include prevention, general healthcare system information, the elderly, radiation protection and rational pharmacotherapy. For what concerns the COVID-19, from prevention, to general information on vaccination, the information provided is, in collaboration with the WHO, spread through different kinds of visual campaigns offered in different languages. A variety of material has been released to spread knowledge about the pandemic, vaccines and other information regarding COVID-19. They have made pamphlets, badges, posters and videos. Our analysis will specifically focus on the videos “We can do it - videos for young adults” and the young people's sense-making of the messages offered by the DHA.

What is the intended effect on the sender?

According to the DHA (2021), they would like to see results from the public based on their campaign. Jacobsens writes it in the book “24 questions for planned communication”: *“This means first and foremost that the campaign should be visible for them”* (Jacobsen, 2019, p. 61), stating the importance of making the campaign visible for the public and the target group. Their intended effect has become successful because it has reached many residents in Denmark due to the campaign being published on television. Moreover, if the DHA is asked what they have done to make people aware of the restrictions and guidelines, they can refer to the campaign. Thus, the results of the campaign can only be seen when interviewing people and observing their behaviour after watching the campaign.

What is the medium?

The DHA's website has various different campaigns in the form of pamphlets, videos, television and radio advertisements, posters, and print media/social media advertisements (DHA, 2021). The analysis of this project will focus on the four videos that the DHA specifically made for young people, titled "We can do it - videos for young adults" (ibid).

6.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

6.1 ENCODING-DECODING BY STUART HALL

This section will give an understanding of Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model and its relevance for this project. It is important to outline this theory since it lays the base for the main theories used in this project with Kim Schrøders reception analysis and the multidimensional model. As described by Stuart Hall, the encoding/decoding model is used to describe how a media product was encoded and how it is decoded and understood by its audience (Schrøder, 2000). Encoding is the process in which a sender produces a message with a set of coded meanings. While decoding is the process of interpretation of such meanings by the receiver. Those processes are influenced by the receiver's context, setting and requests active participation (Just, 2020).

The encoding/decoding model explains decoding with following terms:

1. Dominant reading: if the encoded message aligns with the decoded message.
2. Negotiated reading: when the message is negotiated.
3. Oppositional reading: when the message is rejected or unacceptable to the reader.

Before it is possible to describe, as well as define the above-mentioned terms, Hall presents the word 'preferred reading' which he describes as:

"[...] is the connotative meaning, inscribed in the text which is produced by the hegemonic meaning framework governing mass media production routines and which presents sociocultural taken-for-granted meanings that serve the interest of the dominant social groups" (ibid, p. 6).

This quotation explains that what is encoded by the audience is then the preferred reading. All of the above mentioned would not necessarily be used in this project, but it is still important to understand the theory of reception analysis and the multidimensional model and on what background they were established. Further, the theory of Hall creates a base for the concept of polysemy, which will be included in this project.

Polysemy

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, polysemy occurs when a word carries more than one meaning (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). The concept of polysemy is relevant to the project at hand since it encapsulates some of the interpretative challenges that reception

researchers often encounter when they analyse qualitative audience data (Schrøder 2000, p. 233). Hence, contrary to the concept of monosemy, where a word only has one meaning, polysemic readings are possible because a word, sign or even an extensive text has the property of having several meanings, which are often linked by a semantic relationship and ambiguity. For instance, in this research paper we presume that the DHA is targeting young adults between 15-29 years old. Thus, if their campaign videos prompt multiple meanings within this age group, they are polysemic. The article “Making Sense of Audience Discourses - towards a multidimensional model of mass media reception” written by Kim Schrøder in 2000 states: *“polysemy is usually conceptualized as a textual property of openness that invites readers to actualize the meanings they want, or are somehow socially constrained to generate from the verbal and / or visual signs of the media message”* (Schrøder 2000, p. 239). Similarly, we intend to explore the interviewees’ different understanding and sense-making of the campaign videos using polysemy as an additional interpretative tool. We aim at testing whether the decoded meaning aligns with the DHA’s encoded preferred meaning.

6.2 AUDIENCE RECEPTION THEORY BY KIM SCHRØDER

Following the text “Reception analysis” from 2016, Kim Schrøders theory of reception analysis will be used. In his text, Schrøder argues that reception analysis explores the meanings and experiences people produce of a media product based upon their contextualized encounters. Hence, he believes that various people understand a media product differently based on personal subjective experiences, values, interests and other personal and demographic factors. Therefore, this theory will be used to determine and investigate the efficiency of the message sent by the DHA through their media product “We can do it - videos for young adults”.

7.0 METHOD

In Kim Schrøders text *Researching Audiences* (2003), he presents a variety of different pathways to knowledge and different tools which can be used to gain an insight about the audience. Audience surveys were conducted for this research project, using the quantitative approach. This paper uses a questionnaire survey that targets a high number of responses. This helps to further understand the general understanding of the video campaign, and whether or not the efforts from the DHA are effective in reaching and influencing their target group. Apart from the questionnaire survey, audience reception research was used by conducting qualitative interviews with open ended questions in order to collect in-depth information from the interviewees². There were a total of ten informants who were interested in being interviewed, which allowed for a broader understanding of the opinions, behaviour and experiences of the audience. When using multiple tools from the pathways to knowledge, it is called methodological pluralism. The reason why it is important to make use of methodological pluralism and both quantitative and qualitative approaches, is that combining different methods helps get a broader knowledge of the audience's perception and understanding of the campaign.

7.1 PHENOMENOLOGY

In his book "The Good Research Guide: For small-scale social research projects" from 2014, Martyn Denscombe defines phenomenology as a study of phenomena, adding that it is: "*concerned, first and foremost, with human experience [...] A phenomenon is something that stands in need of explanation*" (Denscombe, 2014, p. 95). In other words, a phenomenon is an observable fact, which needs to be examined aiming to understand its essence. For instance, in this paper, we analysed how the audience experiences the DHA's campaign. Here, the "sense-making" of the campaign is being treated as a phenomenon. The phenomenological approach is ideal for this project because, as Denscombe describes, it emphasises "*subjectivity, description, interpretation and agency*" (ibid: 94). Hence, rather than focusing on measuring people's experience, the phenomenological approach empowers humans by allowing them to express how it is for them to be part of the everyday world (ibid, p. 95). Accordingly, when a researcher encounters the research participants, he or she functions mainly as a facilitator, rather than an active producer of meaning. As Denscombe precisely puts it: "*The phenomenologist's task, in the first instance, is not to interpret the experiences of those*

² We intend to use synonyms for the terms respondents and interviewees, meaning that participants and informants in this case will have the same meaning

concerned, not to analyse them or repackage them in some form [...] social research [...] places the ideas and reasoning of the group being studied at the core of the investigation." (ibid, p. 97). Denscombe also highlights that phenomenology is interested in how people subjectively interpret and experience socially constructed reality. The assumption is that reality is actively constructed by humans. Therefore, phenomenologists view the research participants as agents capable of interpreting real life events.

Denscombe points out that the process of interpreting events is only possible if people can share their readings with other people who live in the same community and share the same reality. Finally, he presents two relevant concepts, which will also be included in our toolbox, which is multiple realities and descriptions. Multiple realities indicate that considering that the world is "*socially constructed*" and experienced by living humans, "*phenomenology rejects universal reality*" (ibid, p. 97). On this behalf, the researcher must be open and consistently seek to test alternative realities by involving different people in the research. We used the target group, young adults, as a point of departure to diversify our research participants, by selecting people from different classes and ages in society. Description, on the other hand, "*emphasis on describing people's authentic experiences*" (ibid, p. 98), rather than interfering or "*act as an editor in the way they explain their experiences*" (ibid, p. 98). In order to produce authentic results, the researcher must describe the research participants' experiences objectively. This is in harmony with the purpose of the reception analysis suggested in this project. It seeks to capture people's actual experiences and opinions about the campaign. Consequently, based on an objective transcription of the interviews and questionnaires, this paper wants to reproduce the respondent's answers and sense-making without modification.

7.2 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

In order to fully understand how the target group perceives the message, we decided to make a survey whilst also conducting interviews. The reasoning for this is that the target group, young adults aged 15 to 29, is quite broad. To conduct the best possible survey for our respondents, we have included Henrik Olsen's book *GUIDE TIL GODE SPØRGESKEMAER* from 2006, in english *A guide to conduct good surveys*³. Firstly, it is worth noting that the book is in Danish, which means that all of the terms are also in Danish. We do not see the translation of these terms as a pitfall, as these specific terms will not lose their meaning in translation.

³ Translated from *Guide til gode spørgeskemaer*

However, we still include the original term in footnotes. Since our target group will include mostly Danish citizens, it makes sense to include Danish methods.

In the book, Olsen mentions mail-surveys⁴, which are surveys distributed by mail. For the sake of modernizing, we assume that mail-surveys is the equivalent of distributing a survey online in various forums, such as Facebook.

Whilst conducting the survey, Olsen mentions a variety of types of questions which includes factual questions, questions of position and background questions.

Factual questions

Factual questions⁵ are questions to which the answers can be verified in one way or the other. A factual question could be *“how many times have you visited your doctor this week?”*, since this would be part of one's medical journal, it is possible to verify the respondents' answer (Olsen, 2006). There are three subcategories of factual questions. The first one, factual-episodic⁶, are questions, like the example above. Questions in which the respondent can think back to concrete events or alike, for example, a concert or a trip to the movie theatre. The next type of questions are called factual-general⁷ and do not have a specific date or event associated with them. This type of question asks about the respondents usual week, month or year. An example question could be *“how many days a week on average, do you usually eat meat?”*. The last subcategory of factual questions, are knowledge-questions⁸. This type of question concerns actual factual data that can be verified in lexicons or alike. An example would be *“Are there bears in Denmark?”* (ibid).

Questions of position

Questions of position ask the respondent how they feel or how high they value something specific. It can be questions about organisations, minorities and also terms, such as democracy (Olsen, 2006). Questions of position have two subcategories, specific and general⁹. The specific questions ask the respondent to imagine a scenario, for example: *“How far from the nearest supermarket, is the furthest away you want to live?”*. The general questions do not

⁴ Translated from *postspørgeskema*

⁵ Translated from *faktuelle spørgsmål*

⁶ Translated from *faktuelt-episodiske*

⁷ Translated from *faktuelt-generelle*

⁸ Translated from *kundskabsspørgsmål*

⁹ *specifikke* and *generelle*

require the respondent to imagine a scenario. Instead these questions can be answered by considering, for example, *“How do you feel about the healthcare system?”* (ibid), allowing for more open-ended answers.

Background questions

Background questions ask the respondent about their backgrounds, such as gender, age and occupation. These questions are asked, so that it is possible to categorize the responses, to see whether men or women, for example, spend the most time in public transportation (ibid).

7.3 SCHRØDER, AUDIENCE RECEPTION RESEARCH AND QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW

The interview process is based on the text "Reception Research Toolbox: The Qualitative Interview" written by Kim Schrøder in 2003. Firstly, the interview setting plays an important role, the location should make the informants feel comfortable to express themselves. According to Schrøder *“for individual interviews the most natural choice of such a setting is the informant’s home”* (Schrøder, 2003, p. 150). Hence, we considered the informant’s home as a first choice of the interview setting. However, moving to the option of the workplace taking COVID-19 and its restrictions. Though, the interviews ended up being conducted through a video-call on Zoom, Teams or Discord, in respect of COVID-19 relative restrictions. Secondly, the focus on the individual interviews in regard to group interviews, is connected to the choice of the setting in consideration to the limitations related to the pandemic. *“More qualitatively, the one-to-one situation also enables the researcher to ask much more detailed questions that may be tailored to the specific circumstances divulged by the informants”* (ibid, p.153).

Thus, getting a more in-depth conversation, gives more time to the informant through an individual conversation, then shared in a collective interview with more informants. When having more informants, it gives each informant less time to express oneself, as the general interviewing time-session is shared among different members. Furthermore, information answers are likely to influence each other through interaction. Although this would be limited by the video-call format of the interview and would give less time to each informant to express themselves in-depth. Nevertheless, we consider individual interviews as giving the researcher more time to understand the informant’s reception of the media product, and have more time to investigate their inner sense-making of the media product.

Regarding the number of the informants for the study according to Schrøder:

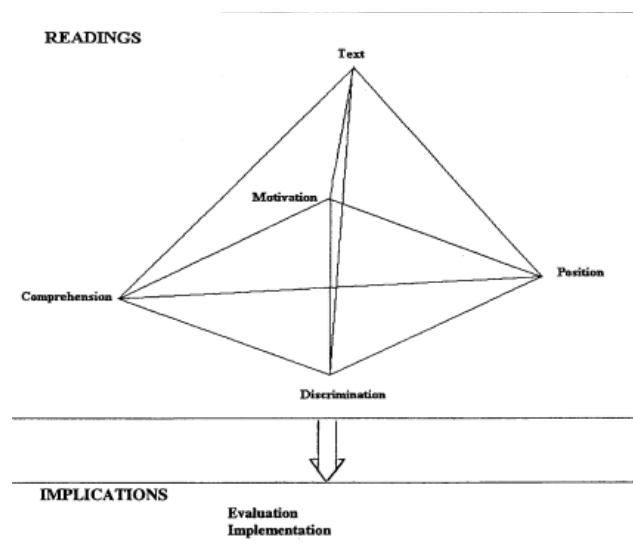
"The rule of thumb is to operationalize the composition of the informant sample according to a fixed set of criteria likely to ensure the occurrence of a diversity of discursive repertoires in the interview" (ibid, p. 160). The set could relate to basic demographic information, from gender to age and so forth. Whereas a balanced group of people for each characteristic would bring a certain range of diversity. Although, considering that an academic study report is smaller than a professional one, the number of informants will be smaller. More specifically, regarding the selection of the informants, the "snowball technique" defined by Schröder would consist of: *"contacting an acquaintance or a friend of a friend, who is then asked to bring together a specified number of other people, who live up to certain specified characteristics"* (ibid, p. 162). In doing so, we collected a variety of informants in our target, without recruiting informants too close to our personal sphere, or network. The survey included a question in the end which asks informants whether they want to be part of a follow-up interview or not. This way it is accessible to handpick interesting respondents and have them elaborate.

The interview is structured around five main questions (see section 7.4). The questions are all open-questions which is why it is argued that the interviews will take form as a kind of semi structured interview. This approach is chosen because the interviewees then are allowed and have the possibility to form the interview and describe their experiences to the fullest. Lastly, it was relevant to make the interviewees and informants agree upon the recording at the beginning of the interview. Moreover, Schröder suggests starting the conversation with informants through small talks to create a confidential and un-formal atmosphere. Then, concluding with a debriefing regarding the interview process, asking informants about their opinion on the process, and what could have been improved, or done differently (ibid, p. 164). This information helped the interviewer in keeping an un-formal, conversational attitude, during the process of conducting the interview, while also learning from the process and adjusting this to the other informants.

7.4 INTERVIEW GUIDE: USING SCHRØDERS MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL

The interview guide is designed using Kim Schrøders multidimensional model from 2000. This is a heuristic and flexible model, used to phrase the questions in the individual interviews, and in the questionnaire surveys. Further it is used as an analytical tool to analyse the interviews and the questionnaire surveys. The interviews are colour coded and the colour coding is based on the five dimensions mentioned in the chapter with Schrøder multidimensional model.

- Motivation
- Comprehension
- Discrimination
- Position/Attitude
- Implementation/Evaluation



The interview and survey questions is divided into the five dimensions defined by Schrøder:

1. Motivation: To analyse the motivation of the interviewee is determining how 'involved' they are with this media product. What is the relevance for the interviewee?
2. Comprehension: This questions examine how the interviewee understands the campaign.

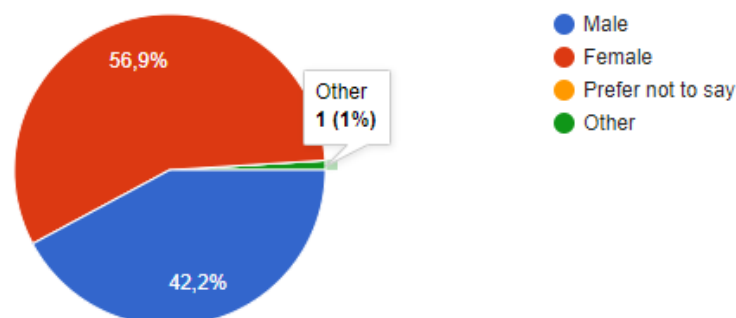
3. Discrimination: The question is based upon whether the interviewee have a critical stance toward the campaign.
4. Position/Attitude: Position is used to look at the interviewees subjective attitude toward the campaign.
5. Implementation/Evaluation: A question concerning whether the campaign will affect the everyday life of the interviewee after watching it (Schrøder, 2000).

7.5 PARTICIPANTS IN THE SURVEY

An online survey was shared in multiple groups and profiles on Facebook as well as on Aula, which is a communication platform for teachers, parents and students in primary schools in Denmark. The conducted survey received 104 responses, whereas 102 of those belong to the target age group, 15 to 29. The responses from the two individuals from outside the target group have been deleted as they are irrelevant. Below are graphs from the survey conducted in Google Forms. These first three graphs enlighten the background of the survey respondents.

Which gender do you identify with?

102 svar

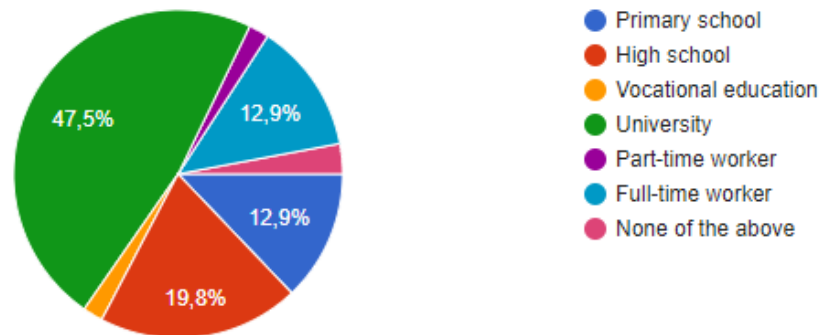


Graph 1 - which gender do you identify with?

Of the 102 respondents in the target age group 15 to 29 years, 56,9% identify as female, 42,2% identify as male and ~1% identify as other.

What is your occupation?

101 svar

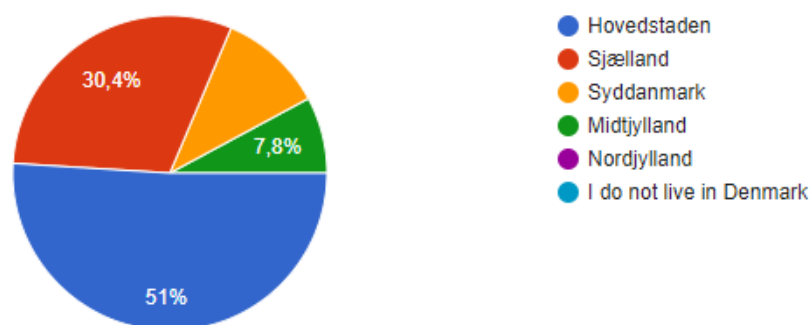


Graph 2 - what is your occupation?

The occupation of the respondents is mainly students in university or high school. 47,5% are university students, 19,8% are high school students, and 12,9% attend primary school. The rest are either full-time workers (12,9%), part-time workers (~2%) or students at a vocational education (~2%). Approximately 3% of the respondents answered 'None of the above' suggesting they might be unemployed, looking for a job or something similar.

In which part of Denmark do you live?

102 svar



Graph 3 - in which part of Denmark do you live?

The place of residence for the respondents is mostly focused around Zealand. 51% live in the capital region, Hovedstaden, and 30,4% live in the rest of Zealand, region Sjælland. 10,8% live in region Syddanmark which covers Fyn and the southern part of Jutland. The remaining 7,8% live in region Midtjylland, the middle part of Jutland. The survey did not

receive any respondents from region Nordjylland nor from individuals living outside of Denmark.

7.5.1 THE INTERVIEWEES

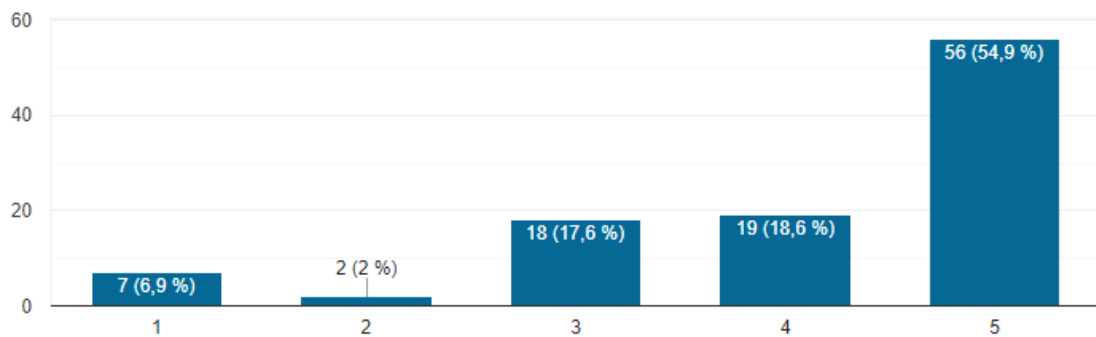
The short presentation of each interviewee includes their gender, location of residence and occupation. The presentation also includes their answers regarding the campaign videos and restrictions as presented in the survey. All interviewees belong to the target age group 15 to 29 years old. We decided not to ask the interviewees their age since they all belong to a relatively narrow target group. Therefore, we can make assumptions based on the whole target group instead of using the specific age of each interviewee. Each interviewee was handpicked amongst those respondents that wanted to participate in an interview. Between the respondents that wanted to participate, we chose those who had different and contrasting opinions. The interviewees consist of seven females and three males. A more specific profile of each interviewee can be seen in the appendix.

8.0 ANALYSIS

The analysis is primarily based on the collected empirical data. Below is the data collected from the online survey which shows the responses from 102 respondents.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how understandable is the video(s)?

102 svar

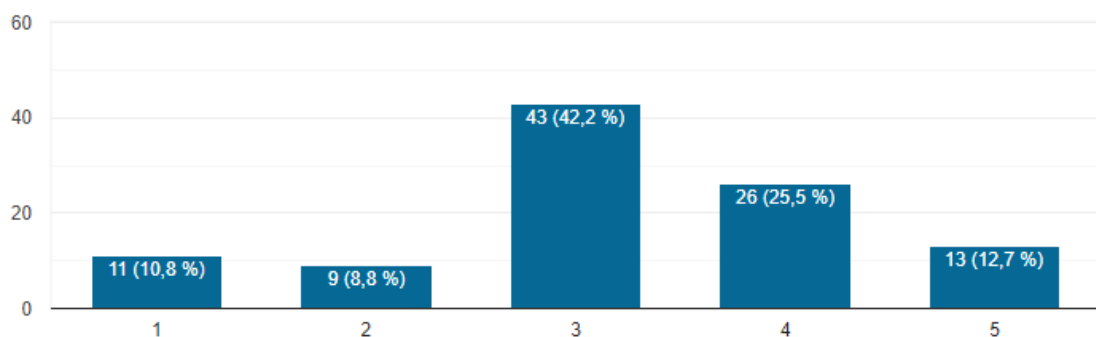


Graph 4 - on a scale from 1 to 5, how understandable is the video(s)?

The first graph shows the campaign videos' understandability on a scale from 1 to 5. 6,9% of the respondents found the videos to be very hard to understand. 2% found them to be hard to understand. 17,6% found them somewhat easy to understand. 18,6% found them easy to understand, and 54,9% found the videos very easy to understand.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how informative do you find the video(s)?

102 svar

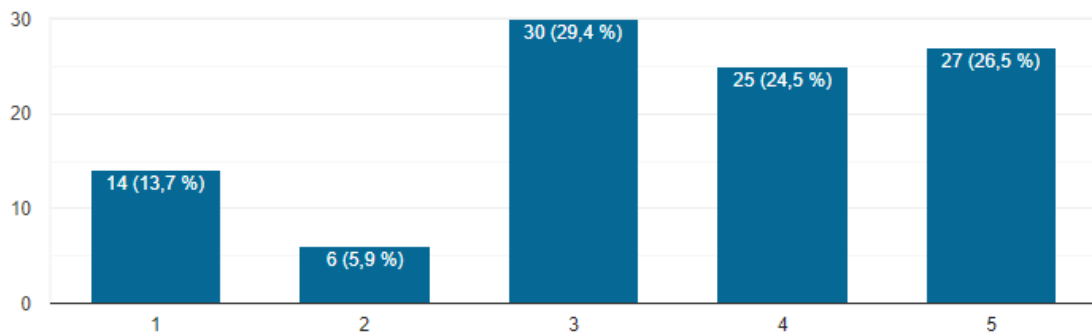


Graph 5 - on a scale from 1 to 5, how informative do you find the video(s)?

The next graph shows how informative the respondents found the videos to be. 10,8% found the videos to be highly uninformative, 8,8% found them uninformative, 42,2% found them somewhat informative, 25,5% found them informative and 12,7% found the videos to be highly informative.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how do you like the approach of the video(s)?

102 svar

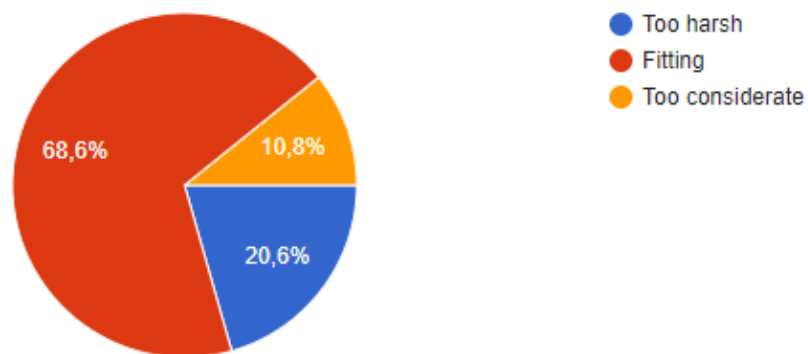


Graph 6 - on a scale from 1 to 5, how do you like the approach of the video(s)?

The final graph shows how the respondents liked the approach of the videos. 13,7% strongly disliked the approach, 5,9% disliked the approach, 29,4% somewhat liked the approach, 24,5% liked the approach and 26,5% strongly liked the approach of the videos.

What do you think of the restrictions made by Sundhedsstyrelsen?

102 svar

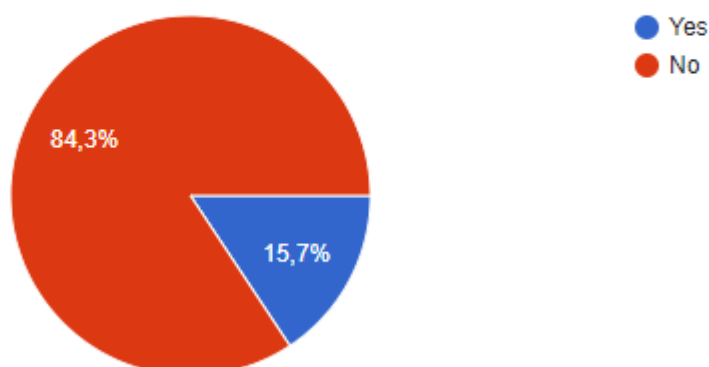


Graph 7 - what do you think of the restrictions made by Sundhedsstyrelsen?

In regards to the restrictions made by DHA, 20,6% found them to be too harsh, 68,6% found them fitting and 10,8% found the restrictions to be too considerate.

Have the campaign video changed your thoughts on the restrictions?

102 svar



Graph 8 - have the campaign video(s) changed your thoughts on the restrictions?

In the final question, 84,3% claim that the campaign videos did not change their thoughts and the restrictions whereas the remaining 15,7% claim that they did.

8.0.1 PARTIAL CONCLUSION OF SURVEY AND PARTICIPANTS

Based on the graphs and diagrams, the survey shows that most participants have not changed their behaviour based on the campaign videos. It is also clear that most of the participants are females on a higher-educational level with residence in the capital region. This might mean that this target group already understands the restrictions and how to abide by them, therefore, they might not need the campaign as a source of information. This is backed up by graph 3 which shows that the main percentage of the respondents only found the campaign videos to be somewhat informative.

8.1 WHAT MEANING DOES THE AUDIENCE ASSIGN TO THE CAMPAIGN?

As mentioned in the theory section, Schrøders reception theory and the multidimensional model has been chosen as the basis for the research's analysis. Looking at the meaning-making processes of the informants, the two mentioned theories support each other. Looking at the quantitative and qualitative data gathered, the following analysis considered the campaign videos and the audience's response to it. This included the

understanding of the Polysemic character in the message delivered. This analysis is examined from the first three dimensions taken from the multidimensional model.

8.1.1 MOTIVATION

The first dimension defined by Schröder is motivation. In this specific project we want to find the relevance for the respondents and interviewees in terms of whether or not they liked the approach of the video, and if it meant anything to them. As shown in graph 6, a rather small portion at 13,7% of our respondents strongly disliked the approach of the video, and 5,9% just disliked the approach. Whereas a larger percentage at 29,4% somewhat liked the approach of the video, where 24,5% only liked the approach, resulting in 26,5% who strongly liked the approach. It is fair to say that the respondents had mixed feelings about the approach of the DHA. This was elaborated more in the in-depth interviews.

In the interviews, we experienced the same kind of mixed feelings regarding the approach and what it meant to them personally. An interviewee thought of the approach as a horror movie, saying:

"Actually, if I am being honest, I find it a little silly.. Maybe it's because it looks like a horror movie or something like that, but with corona. So, I didn't get anything from it." (Appendix, interviewee 3, p. 8). This is an example of an interviewee who did not like the approach of the videos. Another example of an individual who somewhat disliked the approach was interviewee 1: *"I think I answered indifferently, so it didn't mean that much to me."* (Appendix, interviewee 1, p. 1) These were a couple of examples of respondents who disliked the approach of the videos. However, in the in-depth interviews, there were many examples of more positive responses:

"Of course it means something to me, because we are all in this together and we are all affected by the coronavirus, but I would say that I've been quite good at taking care in terms of the whole situation." (Appendix, interviewee 8, p. 44).

This individual explains that even though they have been good at following the restrictions beforehand, it still means something to them. Lastly, we have an example of someone who strongly agreed with the chosen approach:

"[...] what I think the campaign is especially good for is that it shows that all of us are confused and all of us don't know what is going on. That I like a lot. One then knows that none of us

knows what is going on, and I think that is also very well expressed.” (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 6).

This quote shows that the interviewee believes that the campaign helps understand the restrictions, making the situation less confusing.

8.1.2 COMPREHENSION

With “comprehension,” we define the way the informants interpret the media product. Starting by looking at the data collected in the survey, 54,9% of the informants gave 5 points out of 5 regarding the question “how understandable is the video?”. However, 6,9% gave 1 out of 5 points for the same (graph 4). This shows that more than half of the informants understood the overall campaign, while a low percentage expressed the opposite. To analyse this data more in-depth, the interview results will be looked at. For example, as said by interviewee 4: *“It is aimed at the target group, which is young people, who at the running time of this campaign were the group with the highest risk of getting infected and spreading it.”* (Appendix, interviewee 4, p. 12), or interviewee 6 who says: *“I mean it’s obvious that they are trying to connect to young people by making them about things that young people go through”* (Appendix, interviewee 6, p. 23). Meanwhile, most informants recognized both a sense of humour in the message delivered through the video and a background educational purpose, often defined as a “reminder” for young people. The educational purpose is expressed more in-depth by interviewee 5, who says the following: *“Hmm I believe that it has a kind of educational purpose. Because one wants a specific behavior out of this, ehm, so first and foremost it is educational - I believe.”* (Appendix, interviewee 5, p. 17), and interviewee 7 who argues that: *“I think they are trying to make us remember that we shouldn’t be inviting too many people when we socialize and also just be more mindful of the restrictions.”* (Appendix, interviewee 7, p. 29). Thereby, both interviewees believe that the campaign works as a reminder of the restrictions.

Moreover, as mentioned, the video has been understood as delivering the message through a humoristic approach to raise emotions related to fear among the audience. Thus, says interviewee 6: *“They are trying to scare us with the fact that this is serious, but they also still want us to be aware that you will have to change some things, but it’s going to be better”*, (Appendix, interviewee 6, p. 24). Here, the interviewee elaborates and refers to the campaign as having the purpose of scaring its audience. On the other hand, another interviewee finds it

more humoristic: *"I think they communicate a message in a humoristic way, which I like a lot. I like when we are able to make fun of things"* (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 3). Here interviewee 2 understands the campaign as having a humoristic approach which is preferable for this individual. Further, the understanding of the campaign goes widely from a general awareness of the set restrictions by the DHA, specifically, regarding the gathering of people, and simply the message of staying home. As in the quote of interviewee 7, previously mentioned above and interviewee 3: *"Because corona is very dangerous, it's like... I think the video is like you have to stay at home if you have the symptoms, for example, not going to work and all that. That is what I was understanding right there."* (Appendix, interview 3, p. 9), and interviewee 2: *"But the focus is that we should keep our distance and that we should think twice. There is the one which involves the whole thing about not going out if you are sick, don't hug each other."* (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 4). Therefore, young adults show different understandings of the campaign even though they are the ones who have been perceived as the less likely to follow the rules. The use of fear has been comprehended by the interviewees for the majority as a strategy to deliver a serious attitude towards the restrictions adopted by the DHA.

8.1.3 DISCRIMINATION

As seen in graph 7, 20,6% found the restrictions too harsh, 68,6% found them fitting and 10,8% found the restrictions too considerate. Some of our interviewees felt that the campaign shows ageism and prejudice against young adults, with the assumption that they are the ones who are not following restrictions: *"I mean it's obvious that they are trying to connect to young people by telling them about things that young people go through."* (Appendix, interviewee 6, p. 23). It also seems most of the target group already knows about the restrictions. Instead, the older generations and young children should be the ones with the focus for their campaigns, as said in the following quote:

"Maybe they could have appealed to even younger children, because I know that young children watch a lot of television with their parents. [...] Because many young children are infecting each other because they don't need a corona passport when under 15 years. So maybe make a commercial that targeted young children exclusively, so they also get an understanding of how serious this topic is"

(Appendix, interviewee 4, p. 15).

Another interviewee felt as if the DHA was too discriminating against the young adults, stating that: *“I feel like we have been blamed a lot and they haven't really been able to tackle the elderly who continued to go to coffee shops and dates with their friend”* (Appendix, interviewee 10 p. 44), and that the DHA gives the impression that the younger people are the ones not taking the restrictions seriously, but in their experience, this is not the case:

“I think that all of them made it seem like younger people and teens don't take the restrictions seriously and I kind of took offense to that because I take it seriously [...]. But, I see so many older people and older generations that don't follow the rules and I don't really see them (DHA) trying to target the older generations as much.” (Appendix, interviewee 9, p. 36).

The interviewee suggests that the DHA should create a campaign for all generations and not just focus on young adults.

8.1.4 PARTIAL CONCLUSION

The informants were all young Danes, who mostly shared the same opinion on the campaign's delivered message. Firstly, many of the interviewees mention that they assumed that the campaign was about the restrictions. Secondly, they believe that the DHA made this campaign, because they are convinced that young adults do not follow the restrictions. Though, when looking at the graphs, it still showed that a larger percentage liked or strongly liked the approach and 68,6% found the restrictions fitting.

8.2 WHAT IS THE CAMPAIGN'S EFFECT ON THE AUDIENCE?

There are many reactions to the campaign, ranging from neutral, to positive, to offsetting. The following section will answer this part of the research question, by implementing position/attitude and implementation/evaluation from Kim Schrøders multidimensional model. More specifically, this section deals with the effect that the campaign had on the interviewees and their attitude towards it. Further, it addresses the evaluation progress that the campaign made them go through, if any.

8.2.1 POSITION/ATTITUDE

When asked to express their opinion about the information given in the videos, most interviewees showed a high level of acceptance and a positive attitude towards the campaign. Although the interviewees reacted differently to some parts of the videos, they all think that DHA's campaign is essential. For instance, interviewee 1 said: "[...] *the given information in the video, hmm, it's good, it's a good ad. I don't have anything against the ad. And yes, I agree with the message.*" (Appendix, interviewee 1, p. 2). This position is fairly representative of all ten interviews that we have conducted. However, as mentioned in section 8.0 in graph 6, almost 20% of the interviewees disagreed with and disliked the approach used in the videos. This conforms with the responses given in the survey. Interviewee 3 that belongs to the group of respondents that disliked the approach. In the interview she stated that: "*I think it's a little silly, because it reminds me of a horror movie, but still with the restrictions in it [...] but I also think that they should be more original... because they are just imitating a thriller... Come on!*" (Appendix, interviewee 3, p. 11). Their response does not seem like an explicit rejection of the campaign, nor does it reject the use of horror elements. Apparently, they indicate that DHA should be innovative in the way that they design a campaign video. But there are different opinions on the horror element: "[...] *it is smart that they give information, but also raise a finger, and also laugh with a smile. That is also very Danish. It is very Danish to use humoristic approach and it makes sense to use Søren Brostrøm*" (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 6). Here, the interviewee expressed how they liked the approach and praised the use of horror elements, as they perceived it as humor.

8.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION

Graph 8 asks the question, "*Has the campaign video changed your thoughts on the restrictions*", to which 84,3% felt as if the campaign did not change their thoughts of the restrictions. Meanwhile, 15,7% said that it changed their thoughts. An example of an interviewee who believes that the campaign influenced their behaviour is interviewee 2, who says: "*I think it helps us remember to limit how many people are coming to visit when we have parties. Well, not parties, but when we get together with a group of friends*" (Appendix, interviewee 7, p. 30).

The interviewee here argues that the campaign worked as a reminder of all the restrictions one needs to remember and follow. Another interviewee does not believe that the campaign has affected their behaviour: *“I feel that it was a refreshing way to handle this, and I do remember the video. I do listen to the restrictions no matter what, so it hasn’t made me change behavior as such”* (Appendix, interviewee 4, p. 14). This quotation shows that interviewee 4 was not affected by the campaign itself, but still thinks of it as a refreshing way for the DHA to deliver a message. What is also mentioned is that this interviewee already knew about the restriction, and was already following them. Therefore, it did not influence the interviewee. This is also the case with interviewee 2, who says:

“Besides that I have a dad who has poor health [...], therefore, from the start it was necessary to be like: there is no reason to do it. And before all of this happened, I was also home a lot... So no, it hasn’t changed the way I behave or behaved” (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 5)

The interviewee states that they did not change their lifestyle, because of other factors which made it necessary to be aware of the restrictions, even before they saw the campaign video.

8.2.3 PARTIAL CONCLUSION

As mentioned, 84,3% felt as if the campaign did not change their thoughts of the restrictions. Looking at the interviewees, most found that the campaign did not affect them. Others felt the humoristic approach made them remember the regulations a little more mindfully. However, most of them agree that the campaign worked as a reminder of the restrictions one needs to remember and follow.

9.0 DISCUSSION

9.1 DOES THE MESSAGE OF THE SENDER ALIGN WITH THE TARGET GROUP'S PERCEPTION OF THE MESSAGE?

The respondents seem to understand the core message of the campaign. However, they presented different perspectives on the videos shown. This indicates that there is a possibility of multiple understandings of the same media product, and actualising its meaning differently. As stated in the reception theory section, people have different understandings of a media product. This is often based on their subjective life experiences, values and age. Schröder refers to this phenomenon as polysemy (Schröder, 2016).

In this framework, polysemy is motivated by a cause-and-effect relationship between the respondents' personal life experiences, and their encounter with the media product. For instance, the interviewees 2 and 9 have relatives in the so-called high-risk groups. This indicates an increased risk of more severe disease if infected by COVID-19 (Appendix interviewee 2, p. 7 and interviewee 9, p. 38). On the other hand, it is fair to claim that interviewee 1 wants to protect their freedom. Additionally, interviewee 1 was slightly off put from the videos because the interviewee is in their late twenties, which is the age limit of the target group that the campaign is intended to (Appendix interviewee 1, p. 3). Hence, we can argue that the observed polysemy in the survey and in the subsequent interviews is a subjective proffered meaning triggered by the respondents' personal life experiences. How has this influenced the decoding process of the videos? Furthermore, is it even possible that the encoded message aligns completely with the decoded message? The short answer is no.

To answer the former question, we need to recall Schröder's reception theory. He defends that a text can carry many meanings, which have to be actualized by readers, whose life stories and life circumstances are different (Schröder, 2016). Equally, now answering the latter question, a reception researcher and the audience shall not be expected to find the exact meaning of a text. Schröder justifies this by asserting: "*Epistemologically, the attempt to discover one privileged textual meaning is bound to fail, for the simple reason that any decoding, even that of a skilled textual analyst, is always already another encoding [...]*" (Schröder 2000, p. 241). Thus, the DHA might have encoded a specific meaning into the

campaign videos. However, they become polysemic when the audience attempts to interpret them. In other words, the videos gain multiple meanings depending on an individual's life circumstance and socio-cultural background.

9.2 THE RELEVANCE OF OUR PROJECT AND ITS LIMITATIONS

With COVID-19 restrictions in place, it was difficult to conduct interviews for this project since there is no option to provide an in-person interview. Interviews online are very limited and can also have their obstacles. In our experience, we found that the flow of the conversation is not present when you are conducting an interview online, as opposed to conducting it in-person. This brought up the concern that we did not get the same results from our interviewees as we would have if we met them in person. For example, some obstacles that arose while conducting one of the online interviews was that one of the researchers' microphones did not work. Since only two researchers did the interview, this left only one to conduct and ask follow-up questions. The only way for the other researcher to stay present was to interrupt the interview through written messages in the Zoom chat. Another factor that complicated the interview process was the fact that we interviewed Danish-speaking persons in English. Although most Danes speak English, many of the interviewees had trouble formulating themselves in English, which may have complicated their responses.

It could be debated whether it would have improved our analysis if we received a larger number of respondents for the survey, based on the responses received. Since our target group is young adults, it would have been interesting to understand all mindsets behind the campaign and include various perspectives. This includes individuals who do not speak or understand Danish who also live in Denmark.

The survey was only posted in the group of whom the interviewers were a part of on Facebook. Therefore, it can be debated whether it would have been more beneficial for the analysis results, to get responses from people who were not 'near' to the interviewers. Hence, it could perhaps have been useful to reach out to more Danes in the Danish Community. This might mean that the responses received in the survey only really show the tendency at a specific location. Although, looking at the location of respondents in the survey shows that the responses came from all regions in Denmark, except for Nordjylland.

When creating the survey, it was decided that the first three questions were to be

demographic questions. Initially, the idea of adding these questions was to find out their gender, occupation and where they live. This was done to find a correlation between this and their reaction and thoughts about the campaign. We added the question about the occupation to see if the level of education affects the perception and understanding regarding the campaign videos. The question concerning where the respondents lived was added to better understand how the perception and understanding of the campaign were represented in several parts of the country. Also, to determine whether or not their understanding and perception varied between the different locations. If we had found any correlations between where the respondents live and other parts of the country, it would have been insightful and relevant to research further how and why. Moreover, it was discussed whether or not we had included enough questions in the survey. When creating the survey, we found that the questions included were enough to give us the data needed to understand the general perception and interpretation of the campaign videos. However, more questions could have given a broader view of the topic, i.e., questions about culture. Further, this could have helped choose the right people for the interviews and ask them even more specific questions.

9.2.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RECEPTION ANALYSIS AND THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL

While making the interviews and the analysis of this project, it became clear that some interviewees mention and focus on the cultural aspects of the campaign videos. Hence, looking at the interviews, the campaign has been perceived as understandable, directed to a target of young Danes and of informative character. Concerning Schrøder's reception theory, the level of understanding of the campaign is influenced by the cultural background of the informants, which includes the language and cultural related codes in the media product. This is expressed in the following quote: *"That is also very Danish, it is very Danish to use a humoristic approach and it makes sense to use Søren Brostrøm"* (Appendix, interviewee 2, p. 8). The cultural perspective here, as the interviewee refers to as 'very Danish' is seen in the humour and use of a Danish authority figure such as Søren Brostrøm. This is arguably one of the limitations of reception analysis as an analytical tool in this paper, since it does not include a cultural dimension or cultural perspective. This is mentioned with the assumption that the cultural perspective influences the interviewees' understanding of the campaign. Additionally, interviewee 6 states the following: *"So because I'm Danish I 100% understand the hidden*

jokes and whatever with him appearing in the mirror” (Appendix, interviewee 6, p. 27). As stated, the interviewee believes that it is possible to understand the campaign’s message even if the person seeing it is not Danish. However, to understand the meaning, one needs to be Danish or understand Danish culture.

It is debatable whether a non-Danish person would understand the cultural codes such as the ‘Danish humour’ or Søren Brostrøm, and cultural perspective included in the campaign and decode it as the sender intended. Do they understand the campaign at all or just parts of it? However, if this project was to include a cultural dimension, one could argue that the project would have turned out differently and have another focus. Potential research that could happen in the future could be how non-Danes perceive campaigns with Danish culture.

10.0 CONCLUSION

In this project, we have looked at the campaign “*We can do it - videos for young adults*” made by the DHA, focusing on the videos with young adults as the target group. We have tried to test the campaign and see if it worked with the intended effect of the sender. Based on this, we formulated the following research question: “*To what extent does the outcome of the meaning-making process of the audience match with the sender Danish Health Authority’s intended message of the campaign?*” To gain a better understanding of our target group of young adults between the age of 15-29 and if they felt that the campaign helped them follow or be more mindful of the restrictions.

To understand the campaign, this paper outlined a small communication plan based on the campaign. This included a brief description of the medium, target group, message, sender, intended effect on the audience and intended effect on the sender. Further, through the theories of Kim Schrøder, the multidimensional model and phenomenology, it was investigated whether the sender's intended message aligns with the message decoded by the target group. This was done by analysing the participants' understanding and interpretations of the campaign through the survey and interviews. These theories ensured that we would gather a large number of interpretations, whilst also analysing the research questions in depth.

In the discussion, we argue that if we had chosen to conduct more interviews, there would have been more data to analyse. This could perhaps have led to an even broader understanding of the effectiveness of the campaign videos. However, this would have required a larger number of diverse responses to our questionnaire. We have also identified polysemy, which showed that the campaign has multiple meanings and is perceived differently by the audience/young adults.

Based on this information, we as student researchers have concluded that the interviews and the survey show that the informants understand the overall message of the campaign, and each individual decodes it differently. The DHA might have encoded a specific meaning into the campaign videos. However, they become polysemic when the audience attempts to interpret them. In other words, the videos gain multiple meanings depending on an individual’s life circumstance and socio-cultural background. This paper does not succeed in covering the whole graph when looking at demographic and ethnicity. Thus, it can be concluded that it is

not possible to say anything general about whether this campaign is decoded as intended by its target audience, but only that the interviewees decoded it as intended. Therefore, even though the participants decode the message from the campaign differently, and have various opinions about the campaign, we can conclude that they still understand the overall intended message of the sender. Hence, we acknowledge the campaign as successful when seeing it as a friendly reminder in terms of the restrictions but not as a source of new information, because the participants already knew about the restrictions. However, it is difficult to say if this is the case for the entire target group, or if this a tendency that only applies to the subgroup of higher-educated females from the capital region.

11.0 POPULAR ARTICLE AND EXPLANATION SCOPE

This section will contain the article and will be followed by an explanation scope.

11.1 ARTICLE



Is The DHA Focusing Too Much On Young Adults In Their COVID-19 Campaigns?

With COVID-19 raging worldwide, it has become increasingly important for various health authorities to spread information regarding the virus. It is the duty of the health authorities to create campaigns and set restrictions for the population, to ensure the safety of the general public during these troubled times. But are they succeeding with this? This question sparked the curiosity of a student research group, who decided to investigate the issue further. According to Statens Serum Institut, the target group responsible for the largest spreading of COVID-19 in Denmark is young adults between the age of 20 to 29-year-old (SSI, 2020). Based on this information, the Danish Health Authorities (DHA) have made a campaign, published on the 21st of April 2020, which aims to make young adults follow and remember the restrictions.

“The concept behind the campaign videos is to motivate young adults”, says Niels Sandø, who is the unit manager at DHA¹⁰. In many ways, the intention with the campaign is to motivate the young adults in a positive way. But is this also how it is being perceived and accepted by the audience?

A team of student researchers from Roskilde University examined and studied how young adults felt about the campaign made by the DHA, through interviews and survey responses

¹⁰ Dansk oversættelse: “Tanken er at kampagne filmene skal motivere de unge” fortæller enhedschef i Sundhedsstyrelsen, Niels Sandø i en pressemeddelelse”.

based on the campaigns target group for young adults. The study suggests that some young adults feel like they are being blamed for spreading the virus and becoming villainized.

“I feel like we have been blamed a lot”

While others make remarks that compliment the campaigns efforts in reminding them of the restrictions.

 Email

 Twitter

 Facebook

 LinkedIn

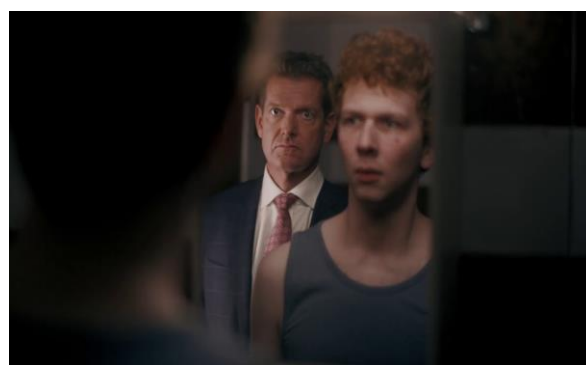
 Print

Majority of the informants declared they have been aware of the restrictions and that they perceived the campaign as a reminder. Other informants mentioned that they took offence to the campaign and how the DHA approached young adults.

“Yes, especially because it came right after there has been a huge focus on how young people were behaving in regard to COVID. I feel like we have been blamed a lot and they haven't really been able to tackle the elderly who continued to go to coffee shops and dates with their friends.”

The respondent said that the authorities should not only have focused on young adults, but on other age groups as well.

Birte Darting Biker, responsible for making this campaign, says that it was made to encourage young adults with a more humorous approach.



“With the focus on the young adults, we have also made an effort to show an understanding of how difficult it is to live normally during the pandemic. By using Brostrøm as the image of all the corona restrictions, we give the young people the opportunity to laugh a little and feel that they are being heard”¹¹.

Even though the intentions from DHA are pretty clear, some of the respondents felt like the message was unreasonable. The interviewee argued that the campaign hits her quite personally, because she already follows the restrictions since her grandparents belong to a high-risk group when saying:

¹¹ Danish translation: “Med sporet til de unge har vi også gjort os umage for at vise forståelse for, hvor svært det er for at leve nogenlunde normalt under en pandemi. Ved at bruge Brostrøm som billedet på alle corona-restriktionerne, giver vi de unge mulighed for selv at grine lidt af det hele og føle, at de bliver hørt.”

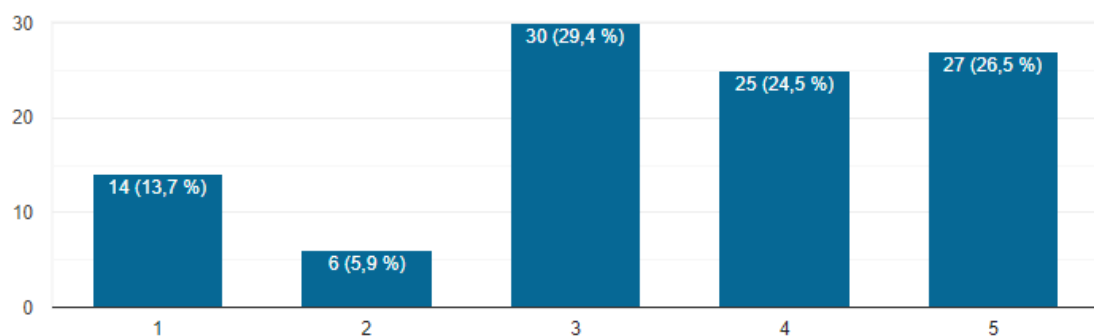
“I think that all of them made it seem like younger people and teens don’t take the restrictions seriously and I kind of took offense to that because I take it seriously”.

The research raises the question on whether or not the DHA might not have the intended effect they have initially planned, resulting in young adults not receiving the message in the motivational way.

Though some of the interviewees disliked the approach, it is important to mention that 80,4% of the respondents actually liked the approach of the videos as shown in the graph below.

On a scale from 1 to 5, how do you like the approach of the video(s)?

102 svar



This means that even though some people think badly of the campaign, the main percentage of the target group actually enjoys the campaign and the approach used.

Although there are many contrasting opinions about the approach of the campaign videos, there is still an underlying message that is important. That message is to stay safe and stay healthy.

11.2 EXPLANATION SCOPE

This article will be posted in the news media The Conversation.

What is the message?

The article is about a study from Roskilde University, which shows that some young people feel villainized by the campaign made by The Danish Healthcare Authorities (DHA). But studies have shown that this is not the case, and that majority found the campaign to be a helpful reminder.

What is the medium?

The medium is an article posted on the popular website www.theconversation.com. The article has been based on an academic research project by students of Roskilde University, therefore, drawing an open discussion through quality data collected.

Who is the target group?

The article's target group covers an audience of people who are concerned with news regarding COVID-19. Besides the intended target group, The Conversation also represents a free source of access and, therefore, has a large audience, who are interested in knowledge from experts. Numbers show that they have more than 3,7 million readers per month who also become part of the target group. Of those 3,7 million readers the majority are between 18 and 44 years of age, and 61% of the total readers are under 44 years old.

Who is the sender?

The popular article is published on The Conversation. This is a popular independent news portal online, filled with written content by the academic and research community. In collaboration with Universities and Researchers, professional journalists and editors create content regarding complex and current affairs on The Conversation. Perhaps, opening a wider range and higher quality of public debate. Each writer can create and publish articles from their area of expertise and knowledge, contributing to a high quality and reliability of information shared (The Conversation, 2021). For what concerns the article above, writers have been a group of University students from Roskilde University (RUC). As students of International Global Humanities, communication and public health are included in the humanitarian area of expertise of the students. A topic related to the current COVID-19 pandemic has been treated

academically and based on project research. The article is based on selected theories and data gathered through academic fieldwork by the students.

Language/writing style

When writing a popular article, the language and writing style should firstly be dynamic, expressive and informative. Secondly, because 85% of the audience who read *The Conversation* are non-academic persons, the language should also be easy to understand and simply written. This means that the article shall be written in an everyday language, which is easy to understand for a larger audience. Finally, it is essential that an article is interesting to read and written with a persuasive writing style, so the audience finds it pleasant to read.

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