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Masculinity in Transition? (Re-)Constructing Masculinity Through the Prism of Success on Male-Led Podcasts

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Abstract

This paper explores the construction of masculinity through discourses of success in male-led motivational podcasts on YouTube. Drawing on critical discourse analysis of 10 highly popular podcasts published between 2024 and 2025, the study examines how narratives of success serve both to reinforce and challenge hegemonic masculinity. The analysis demonstrates that, while traditional masculine ideals, such as financial achievement, physical discipline, and emotional restraint, remain prevalent, an emerging counter-discourse advocates for men's vulnerability, emotional wellbeing, and alternative definitions of success. By investigating how language and social norms contribute to conceptualisations of masculinity through the lens of success in these podcasts, the study reveals masculinity in a state of transition, signifying a stepping away from hegemonic masculinity ideals. Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of contemporary evolution of masculinity through its relationship with success.

Keywords: alternative masculinity; hegemonic masculinity; podcasts; success