



INSTITUTIONEN FÖR
SPRÅK OCH LITTERATURER

FOOD COMMERCIALS AND GENDER

A Comparative Analysis of Gender-role Portrayal in
Swedish and Japanese Food Commercials

Niklas Sjöberg

Uppsats/Examensarbete:	15 hp
Program och/eller kurs:	SIK240
Nivå:	Avancerad nivå
Termin/år:	Vt/2021
Handledare:	Fusae Takasaki Ivarsson
Examinator:	Martin Nordeborg
Rapport nr:	xx (ifylles ej av studenten/studenterna)

Abstract

Uppsats/Examensarbete:	15 hp
Program och/eller kurs:	SIK240
Nivå:	Avancerad nivå
Termin/år:	Vt/2021
Handledare:	Fusae Takasaki Ivarsson
Examinator:	Martin Nordeborg
Rapport nr:	xx (ifylles ej av studenten/studenterna)
Nyckelord:	Gender, Sweden, advertising, cross-culture, cooking

The aim of this thesis is to investigate Swedish gender role stereotypes in advertising by analysing 82 different Swedish video commercials of the product category food and cooking and then conducting a cross-cultural comparison of earlier data from Japanese commercials. The commercials are categorised based on the setting that it takes place in, and examples of appearing roles and gender portrayals are described. The contents are compared against a theoretical framework of Swedish gender stereotypes in regards to cuisine and foodwork as well as official government data. The results show that the Swedish commercials do reflect real life gender stereotypes related to foodwork, particularly in professional settings.

Preface

Any translation of the material included in this thesis has been performed by the author unless stated otherwise.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Aim and Research Questions	2
2.1 Choice of Commercial Category	2
2.2 Hypothesis and Research Questions	5
3. Background and Framework	6
3.1 Previous Research	6
3.2 Previous Thesis Summary	7
3.3 Defining Gender	9
3.4 Doing Gender	9
3.5 Defining Stereotypes	10
4. Method	12
4.1 Method for the Japanese Commercials	12
4.1.1 Prominent Character Gender	13
4.1.2 Assisting Character Gender	13
4.1.3 Prominent/Assisting Character Role	13
4.1.4 Prominent- and Assisting Character Pairings	14
4.2 Method Differences	14
4.2.1 Quantitative Analysis	14
4.2.2 Commercial Style and Availability	15
5. Analysis	16
5.1 Comparative Categories	16
5.2 Data Review	17
5.3 Swedish Commercial Analysis	18
5.3.1 The Family Setting	19
5.3.2 The Professional Setting	23
5.3.3 Other Examples	27
6. Discussion	30
7. Conclusion	34
References	36
Appendix	39

1. Introduction

As our world grows smaller and smaller through globalization, people from a myriad of cultural backgrounds, with their own unique views, ideas and identities, are meeting and interacting with each other more than ever before. In the small country of Sweden alone there are over 2 000 000 residents from well over 100 different countries, making up 19,7% of the Swedish population (SCB 2021). It is clear that mutual intercultural competence and understanding of sociocultural values is essential in this modern society. The aim of the current thesis is to shed light upon a field where this fact has practical implications through the need for successful intercultural communication.

One area where intercultural communication becomes essential is within the world of advertising. When wanting to spread your message to other parts of the world, you must understand the values, ideals and ways of thinking that you will find there. Characters and settings that appear in advertising must appear typical to the audience for them to be understood (Arima 2003). In other words, for advertising to be successful, the message must be relatable and easily understood by the target audience. Advertising can be said to be a mirror reflecting the culture at which it is directed (de Mooij 2010). Therefore, this thesis uses advertising as a medium for investigating one area of steady societal change and cultural friction. That is, gender role stereotypes and their portrayal in advertising.

This thesis expands and builds upon the results of the author's previous work on the subject of gender in Japanese advertising (Sjöberg 2020). One limiting factor of that thesis was that it focused only on commercials from a single national culture. The current thesis hopes to remedy this by performing a comparable analysis on Swedish commercials, thus giving strength to the arguments of both works by adding a cross-cultural aspect to the discussion.

Important to note, is that much of the theoretical and analytical framework of this thesis is based on the idea of national culture, which does not accurately reflect the true multi-faceted and diverse nature of culture and identity on the individual level. Nevertheless, as advertising often aims to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, it needs to be directed at the average ideals of a community. As such, national culture serves as a useful tool for the specific purpose of investigating advertising.

2. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the current thesis is to investigate Swedish gender role stereotypes in advertising and then to expand upon the results of Sjöberg (2020) by comparing the results to that of a similar analysis conducted on Japanese commercials.

2.1 Choice of Commercial Category

As the purpose of the analysis is two-fold, to provide insight into gender-role portrayals in Swedish TV commercials and to conduct a cross-cultural comparison to that of Japanese commercials, consistency becomes important when it comes to the choice of material. Because of this, the commercial category of food and cooking must be chosen for this thesis, same as Sjöberg (2020), in order for the results to be comparable.

In Sjöberg (2020), the choice of category was made based on a description of Japanese family ideals by Appelgren (2013), citing Goldstein-Gidoni (2012) and Holloway (2010), which validated the suggestion that a likely setting where disparities in gender-roles would be clearly visible would be that of ‘the family’. A set of Japanese surveys investigating the division of labour between heterosexual couples at home as well as weekly time spent at work was used to narrow the category down further (Kitou 2020; Sun 2020). The results of the surveys clearly demonstrated that women tend to be those that spend more time doing household work, regardless of time spent at work by either spouse. Furthermore, a customer survey, carried out by the household gas company, Tokyo Gas, showed that among all household chores, cooking is the one that the male spouse does the least (*Seikatsu teitenkansoku chousa ni miru “kajiraku/jitan”* 2017). As such, commercials of the category food and cooking was determined to be the most likely to reflect these gender-role differences and demonstrate the connection between social cultural values and advertising. To then compare the Swedish food and cooking commercials to Japanese ones, a similar investigation of familial gender-role disparities and the role of the Swedish man and woman in the kitchen is needed.

Statistiska Centralbyrån¹ is the Swedish governmental agency responsible for national statistics under the Ministry of Finance. The following table has been obtained from their website (SCB 2019). The units are hours per day.

Table 1. Average time spent at work vs. doing household work per day by each gender (SCB 2019)

	1990/91	2000/01	2010/11
<u>Weekday</u>			
Paid work			
Women	5,08	4,95	5,55
Men	7,70	7,22	6,92
Unpaid work			
Women	4,62	3,87	3,50
Men	2,47	2,40	2,60
<u>Holiday/weekend</u>			
Paid work			
Women	0,94	1,05	1,30
Men	1,32	1,18	1,20
Unpaid work			
Women	5,08	4,62	4,32
Men	3,88	3,57	3,82

The table shows statistical data from the years 1990, 2000 and 2010 of the average number of hours spent doing paid work compared to unpaid work between the genders on regular weekdays as well as weekends and holidays. Paid work means regular compensated employment, including lunch time and travel to and from work, while unpaid work represents household work, maintenance work, child rearing and general household chores. According to this data, although the gap has slowly been diminishing, women still appear to be spending considerably more time doing unpaid household work compared to men.

Specifically related to cooking, a popular scientific report article titled “Männen tar makten hemma i köket” (The men are taking charge of the kitchen at home) from the Swedish

¹ <https://www.scb.se/>

online science news site, forskning.se², discusses the recent change of division of household labour between men and women in Sweden (Rosengren 2017). Particularly, men spending more and more time in the kitchen and what this has meant in terms of the status and stereotyping of the cooking chore. According to the article, food and cooking has been found to be among the most gendered areas and has historically been delegated to women in Sweden, but in recent years men have begun doing more of the cooking at home up to the point that one third of all meals are being cooked by the male spouse. However, there is a difference in the purpose for cooking between the genders. While women tend to cook for the purpose of providing sustenance for their family, men are more likely to cook as a form of hobby (Rosengren 2017). The article also notes that in the fields of gastronomy and professional cooking, men are the vast majority.

In another article, Marcus Klasson and Sofia Ulver (2015) examine how gendered identity in Sweden is configured by men in the cooking domain through the lens of hegemonic masculinity. They conclude that masculinities incorporating egalitarian relationships between men and woman are currently shown to be the most honoured way of being a man. And although Swedish men of the middle-class are making domestic, feminised masculinities a part of their own masculine identity, complete equality in domestic labour division between the genders is still far in the future (Klasson & Ulver 2015).

Finally, a collection and summarization of dissertations from the Uppsala University by Nicklas Neuman (2016) is intended as a means of understanding questions regarding men and masculinities in Sweden through the use of foodwork and cooking. Foodwork refers to “the work of meal planning, food purchasing, meal preparation and after-meal clean up” (Bove, Sobal & Rauschenback 2003 as cited in Neuman 2016). The thesis consists of five different papers. The first discusses the relation between an increased public interest in cooking and gastronomy combined with a cultural idealization of gender equality as a possible explanation for why Swedish men can assume domestic cooking duties without risking feelings of emasculation.

The second, third and fourth papers all draw from the same interviews of 31 men from the ages 22 to 88. The second paper demonstrates a connection between domestic foodwork and cooking and the idea of Swedish progress in gender equality as well as culinary skills. The

² <https://www.forskning.se/>

third then shows that men doing cooking is not only a means to assume domestic responsibility but also a way to socialise with friends, partners and children. The fourth paper investigates men's responses to the representations of food in media while the final, fifth paper, reviews a series of texts on the role and position of the Swedish culinary community within society (Neuman et al. 2016).

In summary, Neuman's (2016) work shows that men do not only cook due to personal interest or enjoyment in the form of a hobby as implied by Rosengren (2017). Domestic foodwork in Sweden is closely associated with progress in gender equality and culinary skills and is also used by men as a social tool. As such, male cooking has become a form of cultural expectation. However, Neuman (2016) and Rosengren (2017) make similar statements about the state of Swedish professional cooking. Although the Swedish culinary community paints itself as a tolerant, open and progressive community, concerned with things such as environment and animal rights, it is still pervasively male dominated and very few women ever work their way up to the top of the hierarchy.

These sources together show that although the division of labour both in and outside the household has been closing between the genders, it is still the female spouse that does most of the unpaid work at home. Similar to the Japanese data, women's household workload has barely decreased while their time spent at their workplace has been increasing steadily (SCB 2019). Food and cooking is also shown to be presented as symbol for the strife towards gender equality with men spending more time in the kitchen and engaging in other household chores more often than in the past (Neuman 2016). The reasons for cooking and the ways that it is done seems different between men and women however, with men more often doing it for the enjoyment of it or for reasons other than simply providing food for the family (Rosengren 2017).

2.2 Hypothesis and Research Questions

The thesis will work under the hypothesis that the roles that genders are depicted in, the distribution of genders between those roles and the interaction between genders will differ significantly between the countries. In terms of gender equality, Sweden ranks 3rd in the world

compared to Japan at 24th on the Gender Inequality Index according to the United Nations Development Programme (2019). As the state of gender politics and gender equality are in different stages between Japan and Sweden, the content of the commercials from either country is likely to reflect this.

1. How are genders portrayed in Swedish video commercials of the category food and cooking?
2. How do the portrayals reflect real-life perceived gender role situations?
3. What are the differences and similarities between the Japanese and Swedish gender role portrayals?

3. Background and Framework

In this chapter, the framework for the thesis will be provided. Examples of previous work on the topic of gender stereotypes in advertising and their relevance to this thesis will be summarised along with a summary of the methodology and results of Sjöberg (2020). Furthermore, definitions and concepts critical to the thesis analysis will be established.

3.1 Previous Research

De Mooij (2010) makes use of Hofstede's cultural dimensions as a basis for analysing and proving the connection between national culture and the contents of commercials stemming from that culture. Although the concept of cultural dimensions and national cultures are inherently generalizing in nature, it makes sense for advertisers to appeal to a generalization of the culture of their target audience. As such, de Mooij's work provides a theoretical basis for this thesis by allowing the assumption that what is displayed in a commercial of the category of food and cooking, either Japanese or Swedish, is a direct reflection of that nation's current sociocultural beliefs regarding gender roles. She clarifies that, although cross-cultural research on the national level, such as in this thesis, is sampled from individuals within the larger population, there is an overlap between the individual values and the wider national cultural values. If there was not, individuals within the society would not function (de

Mooij 2013). This further reinforces the idea of advertising reflecting the aggregate norm of the culture in which it is based.

Paek, Nelson and Vilela (2011) examined the gender-role portrayals of television commercials from seven different countries and performed a cross-cultural comparison between them. Specifically, they analysed the contents of the commercials by using a content analysis methodology that compared the gender and occupation of the *prominent character* of the commercial, as well as the gender of any voice-overs. They found various differences depending on the cultural values of the origin country, but they also found common consistencies, such as the type of product being conformed to the gender of the prominent character of the commercial. This thesis, as well as that of Sjöberg (2020), uses this article as the main inspiration for their method of analysis. In both cases, the method has been borrowed and adapted from Paek, Nelson and Vilela (2011) to include the observation of the gender of the *prominent character* and the *assisting character* and their respective roles within the commercials.

Matthes, Prieler & Adam (2016) conducted a very similar analysis to that of Paek, Nelson and Vilela (2011), the observation of prominent characters and voice-overs, but on 13 different countries and using an expanded multilevel method model which included: Hofstede's masculinity index, GLOBE's gender egalitarianism index, gender-related development index, gender inequality index and the global gender gap index. Their results showed that, contrary to common belief, TV commercials do not depend on the country's prevalent gender equality. This means that the level at which culture affects gender stereotypes in commercials is less than thought. This point is important to consider when discussing the results of this thesis.

3.2 Previous Thesis Summary

The Magister-level student thesis written by the author, titled "Gender-stereotypes, Food and Advertising: An Analysis of Gender-role Portrayal and Gendered Language in Japanese Video Commercials", made use of 115 individual Japanese video commercials to conduct a combined quantitative and qualitative analysis with the aim to illuminate the current state of gender norms and stereotypes in Japanese society (Sjöberg 2020). The analysis was based on

the idea of advertising as a reflection of the sociocultural characteristics of the dominant national culture in which it was created and targeted towards (Arima 2003; de Mooij 2010), meaning that the commercials were made to be as relatable and understandable to the main audience as possible.

With a need to limit the scope of the thesis and decrease the number of variables present in the analysis it was decided to analyse commercials of only one distinct category. The chosen category became ‘food and cooking’ and it was elected by determining the family and the household as one of the settings where gender role division is most visible (Goldstein-Gidoni 2012; Holloway 2010 as cited in Appalgren 2015). Together with the results of various surveys, showing food and cooking-related housework to be the least equally distributed between the genders (Kitou 2020; *Seikatsu teitenkansoku chousa ni miru “kajiraku/jitan”* 2017; Sun 2020), the hypothesis was made that commercials of the chosen category would most clearly depict the differences in portrayal between gender-roles.

The subsequent analysis was then done in two parts, a quantitative and a qualitative component. The qualitative part utilized a selection of examples taken from the commercials that were closely analysed and described based on a set of pre-determined variables. The variables observed who the prominent characters were, their portrayal and interactions with assisting characters and finally how their gender affected their language use. The quantitative component was used as support to the arguments made in the qualitative part by compiling a set of diagrams made from data extracted from each commercial. The variables included the settings of the commercials, the types of characters and their designated roles.

The thesis then answered three different research questions using the results of the analysis. The questions inquired about how gender stereotypes were portrayed in the commercials, how gendered language was used to bolster the portrayal and how the portrayals reflected real-life perceived gender role situations. It was determined through the analysis that female roles were more often portrayed as a stable mother figure who is diligent and skilled in her work when cooking and taking care of the family while male characters were more often portrayed in diversified roles outside of the family setting. It was also shown that gendered language was used to reinforce the roles that the appearing characters played in terms of gender, age and relationships to other characters.

3.3 Defining Gender

As one of the core-foci of the thesis, the definition of gender must be clearly specified. West & Zimmerman (1987) distinguishes between gender and sex by three different terms. They are *sex*, *sex category* and *gender*. They define sex as a socially determined classification of a person as either male or female, based on agreed upon biological criteria. Such as what genitalia they possess.

The social determination of membership of a person to a sex is called sex category and is achieved through socially required displays of one's sex. These displays include visual cues like facial hair, and implicit social rules determining, for example, which sex can wear what clothes (Westbrook & Schilt 2014).

Gender then acts to bolster a person's membership to a sex category by acting in accordance with normalized social conceptions of attitudes and activities belonging to one's sex category (West & Zimmerman 1987).

In summary, this way of defining gender emphasizes the social processes of gender over the biological (Westbrook & Schilt 2014). Sex is biologically determined at birth in a binary manner as either male or female. Then, sex category is determined through social markers and visual cues, and lastly, gender is the active participation within a sex category by behaving according appropriately to it. The important distinction to be made between the three terms is that while sex and sex category are passive states of being, gender is an active behaviour, performed in order to try to adhere to the expectations of one's sex category.

3.4 Doing Gender

With gender described as the social behaviour and actions of a person to play the role of their sex, its definition will be used in the thesis through the concept of *doing gender*. As described by West & Zimmerman (1987), *doing gender* is the idea that unlike natural or biological differences between men and women, gender represents the differences that are constructed, sustained and reproduced through societal institutional arrangements. Gender is attributed

with characteristics that distinguishes between men and women and then reinforced as essential to either gender. Examples include the need to separate men and women in public bathrooms or the idea that men should be stronger than women. These ideas are sustained through a social desire for individuals to fit in to their gender category to prevent judgement and ostracism from others (West & Zimmerman 1987). The important distinction between biological sex and gender then becomes that gender is a learned behaviour and an action that can be observed in discourse, while sex is a determined state of being.

Combined with the idea that commercials must be recognisable and relatable, and therefore reflect sociocultural norms (de Mooij 2010), it can be declared that the definition of gender and the concept of doing gender provides a solid analytical framework for the thesis. The characters appearing in the commercials must ‘do their gender’ through acting the stereotypes associated with the roles they play (Sjöberg 2020).

3.5 Defining Stereotypes

Besides gender, the definition of stereotypes must be clarified for the sake of consistency in this analysis. When referring to the Oxford English Dictionary, a stereotype is defined as “a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing”. The Cambridge English Dictionary goes one step further by stating that a stereotype is “a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong”, adding a claim that stereotypes are typically different from reality.

Stereotypes are ubiquitous and can refer to a variety of things such as ethnic groups, political groups, situations and genders (Bordalo et al. 2016). Examples of stereotypes can be “Women are caring” (gender related stereotype) or “Swedish people are good at English” (ethnic related stereotype).

According to Bordalo et al. (2016) there are three approaches to stereotypes within the social sciences. The first is the economic approach, which sees stereotypes as a form of statistical discrimination where beliefs about a member of any given group are rationally derived from the aggregate average of that group. This means that if the majority of members from a group share a certain trait, any one individual from that group can be stereotypically

assumed to have that trait from an outsider's perspective. However, this model does not account for the problem that many stereotypes are inaccurate to reality. For example, Bordalo et al. (2016) mentions the stereotype that "The Irish people have red hair", when in truth only 10% of them do.

The second is the sociological approach, which is limited to social groups, and views stereotypes as incorrect and derogatory by nature. This approach suggests that stereotypes reflect the stereotyper's own prejudices and internal motivations. Social groups, such as ethnic minorities, that have been mistreated historically are kept in a negative light through the utilization of bad stereotyping by groups in positions of power. While this approach is relevant and important while discussing such instances, it does not take into account that some stereotypes can be quite close to the truth or of a positive nature ("Swedish people are good at English") (Bordalo et al. 2016).

The third is the most relevant to this thesis and is dubbed the social cognition approach by Bordalo et al. (2016). This approach originates in social psychology and is centred around the idea that people tend to intuitively generalize groups of people in order to limit usage of cognitive resources. This approach defines stereotypes as "mental representations of real differences between groups [...]" (Hilton & Von Hippel 1996, as cited in Bordalo et al. 2016). This allows a person to quickly understand their surroundings and the individuals in it without having to deeply analyse and consider everything they see in detail. Stereotypes tend to be more focused around the most distinctive and less variable features within a group, and that differs the most between several groups. A related hypothesis within this approach is the so called "kernel-of-truth hypothesis" which states that stereotypes stem from a base of empirical truth but is likely to include exaggerations (Bordalo et al. 2016).

While all three approaches have their positives and their drawbacks, and are worth taking into account, it is the third, social cognition approach that is the most relevant to this thesis. The approach ties in well with the concept of doing gender as well as the idea that advertisements must be easily understandable and relatable to the viewer, as both points imply the importance of stereotypes to advertising and their need to hold some semblance to reality.

4. Method

With the theoretical framework determined, the method for analysing the commercials used in the thesis will be clarified in this section. To allow for comparison between the Swedish and Japanese commercials, the method used in Sjöberg (2020) must be considered in order to facilitate comparable results.

4.1 Method for the Japanese Commercials

Sjöberg (2020) utilized an adapted set of variables, borrowed from Pack, Nelson and Vilela (2011) as well as Artz, Munger and Purdy (1999) to perform a combined quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Japanese commercials. The quantitative section used the variables borrowed from Pack, Nelson and Vilela (2011) to compile and categorize data from each commercial. This data was then used to provide support for the arguments made in the qualitative part of the thesis. A set of four variables were constructed based on their article to help categorize certain features of each commercial and to identify the most common gender-role portrayals. The variables were *prominent character gender*, *assisting character gender*, *prominent character role* and *assisting character role*.

In Sjöberg (2020), Artz, Munger and Purdy's (1999) work was used to identify and discuss the presence of gendered language in the Japanese commercials. The variables borrowed from them were the *sex of primary speaker*, *type of speech* and *presence of gendered language*. However, these variables are unused in the current thesis as gendered language is not as prevalent in the Swedish language as compared to the Japanese language. Therefore, while these linguistic variables were useful for the analysis of Sjöberg (2020), they are not applicable in this thesis.

On the other hand, the variables relating to character role and gender are still quite relevant and will provide the main point of comparison between the commercials of Sjöberg (2020) and this thesis. As such, an overview of the meaning of each variable follows.

4.1.1 Prominent Character Gender

The prominent character is the character which plays the main role in the narrative of the commercial. This is usually, but not exclusively, the character interacting or handling the product being advertised. In Sjöberg (2020) the prominent character would often be the one cooking the food or playing the role of family care giver, but there were also cases where the prominent character was presented as the care receiver. For example, a child who is telling a story about their parent or parents who cooking. This variable refers to ‘gender’ as the concept of *doing gender* described in section 3.4, meaning that gender is an active performance done fulfil the expectations placed on an individual based on their sex category.

4.1.2 Assisting Character Gender

The character who is supporting and interacting with the prominent character is considered to be an assisting character. Similar to the prominent one, the assisting character can both be depicted as cooking and caretaking as well as the one being cooked for. As an example, the commercial could focus mainly on the father as a prominent character who is interacting with the family while the assisting character is the mother who is only shown towards the end of the commercial, finishing preparing a meal. The importance in distinguishing between assisting and prominent characters is to observe what gender is given more or less focus in the scene of the commercial.

4.1.3 Prominent/Assisting Character Role

Determining the role of the characters in the commercial is essential as a means to illuminate how portrayal of the characters in similar settings is dependent on their gender. In an example of a family setting, a female prominent character could be depicted as a mother, working hard to cook and take care of the family, while a male character would be shown to be incompetent or struggling in the same situation. The same applies for assisting roles, where male and female assisting characters can differ considerably in their roles in the same setting.

In Sjöberg (2020), the quantitative analysis found that the roles played by both prominent and assisting characters could be divided into several categories. They are: *Mother, Wife, Single woman, Father, Husband, Single man, Child, Professional, Presenter* and *Celebrity*. Each occurrence of a role was counted and compared between the genders. The natures of the different role categories were then analysed in detail in the qualitative section of the thesis.

4.1.4 Prominent- and Assisting Character Pairings

This final variable logged the genders that appeared together the most in the commercials. It prioritised the characters which interacted with each other directly as the prominent and assisting roles. The pairings were found to be prominent female and assisting female, prominent female and assisting male, prominent male and assisting male, prominent male and assisting female, female and non-applicable gender, and male and non-applicable gender.

4.2 Method Differences

While the theoretical framework and analytic parameters of this thesis and that of Sjöberg (2020) share many similarities in order to be comparable, there are some changes and adaptations that had to be made in the current thesis.

4.2.1 Quantitative Analysis

Sjöberg (2020) made use of a combined quantitative and qualitative analysis while the current thesis will feature only a qualitative analysis. The reasons for this stem from the difficulty of comparing the results of the quantitative part between the Swedish and Japanese commercials. In Sjöberg (2020), the quantitative results provided useful support to the arguments made in the qualitative section by showing the rate of appearance of both genders in the various roles, settings and together with what assisting characters. However, a number of issues appeared when trying to do the same for the Swedish commercials in this thesis.

4.2.2 Commercial Style and Availability

First, there was a considerable disparity in availability of Swedish commercials compared to Japanese ones. Japanese commercials were available for viewing, not only from official websites and channels, but also from privately uploaded videos. The number of commercials to be used had to be restricted for the sake of time and space limitations. Meanwhile, Swedish commercials were more difficult to acquire. They could only be found via official brand YouTube channels, and were not available on official websites or through privately uploaded channels. It is therefore not as easy to find a sufficient number of commercials to allow for a useful quantitative analysis.

Second, naturally there are apparent cultural differences between Sweden and Japan regarding food culture, family tradition and advertising style which makes it difficult to fairly compare the commercials in a quantitative manner. For example, while the typical mother role in Japan could be a hardworking and wise housewife whose husband and family would be helpless without them, the Swedish one could be a full time employed worker happily delegating the housework to their just as competent husband. These two would both be counted as ‘mother’ in the quantitative sense, which would fail to illuminate the differences and nuances of the roles.

For the reasons above, and since the current thesis aims to make a cross-cultural comparative analysis between the gender-roles of Swedish and Japanese commercials, the quantitative section has not been included in this thesis. Focus will instead be placed on deeper qualitative analyses and comparisons between concrete examples from both Swedish and Japanese commercials. The cultural differences in family, food and advertising culture will be looked at further in the discussion section.

5. Analysis

5.1 Comparative Categories

Before beginning the analysis of this, it is first necessary to be aware of the findings of Sjöberg (2020). In order to perform a comparative analysis of the Swedish and Japanese commercials some standardized points of comparison need to be established to allow for consistent and easily comparable results. The setting and role categories that were found in the quantitative analysis of Sjöberg (2020) are useful for this purpose even though the current thesis will not perform its own quantitative analysis.

In section 4.1.3, a number of role categories were mentioned that were found in the quantitative section of Sjöberg (2020). The results of the analysis showed that there were four gender specific roles (Mother/Father, Wife/Husband, Sister/Brother, Single Woman/Single Man), and six non-specific roles (Child, Professional, Presenter, Celebrity, Friends, Personified Object) that appeared in the commercials.

The appearance rate of each role, both prominent and assisting, showed that the *Mother/Father* role was the most prevalent role held by either gender. This makes sense as the analysis also found that among the seven appearing settings (Family, Home Alone, Friends, Eating Out, At Work, Professional, Making of), *Family* was by far the most common with 71% of all commercials using the setting. Another finding is that male characters tended to have more varied roles, more often appearing as professionals, celebrities or presenters while female characters tended to adhere to the family type roles. Finally, a count of the role pairing compositions showed that both genders were most likely to appear either by themselves or together with the opposite gender and much less often with the same gender.

The following analysis of the Swedish commercials and the subsequent comparative analysis uses the above role and setting categories as comparison points for discussion.

5.2 Data Review

The data collected for the analysis consists of video commercials uploaded to the Google-owned YouTube online video sharing platform by their respective brands. The videos are being used in this thesis for research purposes under the protection of fair use. During the primary screening of the commercials, those that were of different lengths but otherwise identical were ignored. So were those that showed little or no interaction between any characters or were otherwise deemed of no use to the thesis. In total, 87 useful videos have been collected, featuring one commercial each.

The search method was performed by finding the official YouTube channels of the respective brands and then reviewing their video library for useful material. Unlike Sjöberg (2020), where three specific search terms were used to randomly find commercials, this different method had to be used due to not being able to find any suitable material using equivalent Swedish search terms. Therefore, it was necessary to directly search for each brand's official channel. However, an effort was made to maintain equality between the materials by primarily using brands of relative similarity to the Japanese ones.

Following is a table summarising brands, product descriptions and numbers of the commercials used. It is relevant to be aware of the brands and products of the commercials as it affects the contents of the commercial as well as who the target audience is.

Table 2. Commercial Information List.

Brand Name	Product description	Number of commercials
Arla	Various dairy products	10
Pågen	Various bread products	10
Scan	Various meat products	5
Dafgårds	Ready-made frozen meals	7
Felix	Condiments, frozen vegetables and ready-made meals	12
Findus	Frozen vegetables, fish and ready-made meals	8
Grandiosa	Frozen pizzas	4
Guldfågeln	Poultry products	8
Ekströms	Instant dessert products	1
Krav	Main Swedish organization for sustainable food production	2
Kronfågel	Poultry products	9
Hälsans kök	Frozen vegan/vegetarian products	4
Lönneberga	Sandwich spreads and cold cuts	2

A total of 82 Swedish commercials from 14 different brands have been collected, compared to 115 Japanese commercials from 22 different brands in Sjöberg (2020). Each commercial has been assigned a letter and a number. The letter is either ‘S’ representing Swedish commercials and ‘J’ for Japanese ones. This is to help differentiate between the country of origin in the text. The numbers can be used as reference to find information about the commercial and a hyperlink leading to the respective video the appropriate commercial in the appendix.

5.3 Swedish Commercial Analysis

In this part, examples from the Swedish commercials will be presented and analysed based on the theoretical framework established in section 3, and the method specified in section 4. The

examples will be separated and compared based on the the role and setting categories mentioned in section 5.1.

5.3.1 The Family Setting

The family setting will be the first to be investigated. With food and cooking as the choice of commercial category, most commercials take place in the family context to some extent, as the choice was based in large part on its connection to the family setting and the gendered nature therein. A commercial is determined to belong to the family setting if it at some point depicts adults interacting with their children, a couple eating dinner together, or other combinations of characters and events that imply familial ties between the characters. Note that a single commercial can include several settings at once, such as a farmer being shown working followed by a scene where the same farmer cooks for their family. This type of commercial would fit in to both the family and the professional setting.

Arla S#1, S#5, S#6, S#9 These commercials from the Arla brand depict different types of commercials that include the family setting. S#1, S#6 and S#9 all focus heavily on the importance of the family and how the brands environmentally sustainable production is necessary for the happiness of future generations. They do this by showing scenes of adult characters interacting with their children between farming related scenes. In S#1, a woman is seen as the prominent character, working as a farmer under harsh conditions with scenes of her spending her free time with her children with no male father figure present. S#6 then shows two women implied to be farmers, followed by a scene of several families enjoying the products together in nature. Unlike S#1, this commercial shows both male and female characters helping to prepare the food as well as interacting with the children present equally. S#9 is a 60-second-long music video showing both male and female characters equally in the farmer role. However, in the family scenes, a male parent is shown preparing breakfast for their daughter while the only female role is that of a single woman by herself.

Finally, commercial S#5 is the only commercial from Arla that is purely in the family setting. It shows a tired looking, pregnant mother who is grocery shopping with her daughter when suddenly an older woman charges ahead and snatches the last available packet of milk. The dejected mother now has to deal with her disappointed daughter.

Pågen S#11, S#14-19 The family setting commercials from the Pågen brand puts much less emphasis on the production aspect of the product. Instead, all of the commercials listed except S#14 takes place in the kitchen to some extent. S#11 shows a father eating breakfast and laughing with his two daughters and no mother present. In S#15, both parents are seen preparing breakfast and doing morning chores on opposite ends of the kitchen with the children seated in the middle, eating breakfast. S#16 depicts a stressed mother, hurriedly preparing to take her daughter to pre-school before heading to work themselves, only for the child to point out that it is actually Saturday today. In S#17, a young boy prepares a sandwich and tries feeding it to his father who has fallen asleep during play, and in S#18 and 19, we see two examples of a husband preparing breakfast for his wife.

The outlier in this set of commercials is S#14 where the commercial takes place during a children's' birthday party. The prominent character in the scene is the father who looks apparently bored and is contemplating whether to eat the last treat or not. He chooses to do so, and the assisting character, a little girl, looks sad while the father seems not to care. Meanwhile, the implied mother is seen busily taking care of the other children in the background.

Scan S#23 The only commercial from the Scan brand to utilize the family setting does so through a multitude of small scenes put into one video. It shows a mother eating the product while the father is holding their new-born child in the foreground, an older father character bringing food to the table of a family dinner and a boyfriend trying to impress their family-in-law with skilled cooking.

Felix S#37, S#39, S#41-44 The Felix brand commercials feature a variety of family setting types. In S#37, both men and women are shown cooking at the barbeque. However, the commercial puts considerably more focus on the mother barbequing for her family, showing her in a full body shot, while the apparently male cook gets much less screen time and only gets his arm and torso revealed. In S#39, a young man presents the product as his own and cooks a dish for his family which deeply impresses his grandfather who gives him praise. S#41 features a little boy presenting the many uses of the product while his father is cooking in the kitchen in the background. S#42 depicts a pair of twin-sisters who are instructed to cook instead of their mother, who has to pick up their father at the train station. Then, S#43 takes place during a family dinner where the father emerges from the kitchen with the food,

only to be surprised to see his favourite spot at the table taken. When he protests, his family ridicules him and he is forced to concede. The final Felix brand commercial of the family setting, S#44, shows a woman preparing and presenting the product to her male guest during a romantic dinner.

Findus S#45, S#48, S#50, S#52 The Findus brand also has a number of commercials belonging to the Family setting. S#45 depicts a busy family doing various activities together. The final scene shows the wife holding the child while the husband is focused on the cooking. S#48 again combines the farming role with the family setting, but unlike most of Arla's farmer depictions, this time it is the father who is the farmer and the mother is the one preparing dinner for the family.

Commercials S#50 and S#52 feature some particularly rich family scenes. In S#50, a father is shown struggling to take care of his daughter on his own. He is unable to set up her hair, he fails to repair her bicycle and can not retrieve her lost toy and the daughter is visibly disappointed in him. All is remedied however, when the father cooks dinner for the girl using the product and she quickly asks for seconds. Then, in S#52, a mother is shown preparing dinner for her daughter as her mother-in-law visits and immediately criticises her choice of food and chastises her for working too much and therefore not being able to cook something proper for the children. Suddenly a man named "the freezer man" appears and ridicules the mother-in-law while at the same time defending the mother's choice of dinner.

Guldfågeln S#57-59, S#61-62 Commercials S#57, 58 and 59 of the Guldfågeln brand all feature the same family. In S#58 and 59, the mother is the one cooking for the family with no events of note taking place. But, in S#57, the scene shows the mother rushing into the kitchen with grocery bags. Stressed, she pleads to the husband to quickly cook something in her stead as she has to leave again soon.

S#61 shows a woman cooking for her family and their guests while the husband is idly watching while lounging with a glass of wine in the kitchen. Lastly, S#62 shows a father and his adult son cooking together in a very serious manner. The tone of this commercial and the way in which the characters interact and talk to each other is more masculine compared to the other commercials analysed so far.

Ekströms S#65 This commercial from the Ekströms brand shows a woman sitting alone on a patio as her husband comes out of the house to urge her to join the family to watch a movie. The wife rebuts her husband with an upset tone, stating that she will not move until the dinner is complete, implying that it is the husband who cooked and that he had forgone the desert.

Kronfågel S#68-76 All of the commercials collected from the Kronfågel brand utilize the family setting to convey their message which is often, but not always, concerned environment-mindedness. S#68 and 69 both show similar non-complicated scenes of a father cooking for his family with environmental suggestions. But the commercials S#70, 71 and 72 all use time-pressure and complexity to convey their message of fast and simple cooking. In S#70, a father is seen busily doing chores around the house while the impatient friend of his children comment that they never eat this late at their house. S#71 and 72 shows a mother prominent character struggling with providing food for her kids. In S#71, the mother is unable to cook the recipe she is trying to do, getting frustrated and stressed, while her little daughter is causing a mess and her older daughter is sighing impatiently at the dinner table. Meanwhile, in S#72, the mother is late in bringing her children to training because she was unable to cook good enough food for them in time.

The remaining commercials, S#73, 74, 75 and 76, all use environment consciousness as a marketing tool, always depicting a male character as the ‘climate criminal’ being corrected by a climate-minded female character in some way. In the commercial S#73 a grandfather is seen with his wife in the kitchen, preparing to cook Christmas dinner with his granddaughter present in a videocall. The scene implies, through the grandfather’s interaction with the granddaughter, that the grandfather has been convinced to cook with minced chicken instead of regular minced meat. Both he and his wife are sceptical of success, but with the granddaughter’s assistance they manage to make a tasty meal. Then, in S#74 a young girl is shown looking through window with a sad expression at her father and brother barbequing. The next scene then shows the girl grown up, looking through the same window, at her daughters who are also barbequing, with a more wistful and happier expression, before joining them in barbequing. The commercial implies that they are barbequing in a more environmentally sustainable way. S#75 has a similar character interaction, this time focusing on the father being shown by his daughter in various ways how he has been living in a climate-unfriendly way. In the end of the commercial, he regains some of her respect by

choosing to cook with the advertised, sustainable product. Finally, S#76 presents yet another barbecuing scene, where a heavily stereotyped man is cooking in an obviously climate-negative way. The scene is interrupted by an alarm and switches to a party scene where a younger woman barbeques instead, demonstrating the error of his ways to the man.

Lönneberga S#81 The final commercial of the family setting shows a man preparing a sandwich dinner for his family in a very sophisticated manner, using specialized tools with classical music in the background.

The appearance rate was similar between the genders in regard to commercials using the family setting. The way that the roles were depicted was also similar but with some differences. Many commercials from various brands made use of a scene type where single family and large multi-family gatherings were shown to enjoy the product together. Men and women were sometimes shown to share the preparation work equally in these commercials (S#6, 15). But more often, the commercial focuses on one gender doing the cooking for the family and in these cases the presentation could differ between the genders.

Male characters were more often criticized by their family than female characters were, and for different reasons. Examples include, the father being ridiculed when wanting to sit at his favourite spot after cooking (S#43) and being criticized for being environmentally irresponsible (S#74, 75, 76). However, female characters were also criticised in some scenes, although less explicitly so, such as for taking too long to cook or for cooking the wrong thing (S#52, 71). Furthermore, male and female characters both played the role as failing parent. Female examples include being so busy that they forget something important (S#16, 57, 72) or simply failing altogether (S#71). Male examples show similar scenes, such as failing to take care of their daughter (S#50) or being too busy to cook on time (S#70). The mother role was also the only one shown to need to delegate their cooking chore to another family member (S#42, 57).

5.3.2 The Professional Setting

The professional setting includes commercials where the appearing characters either, depict professional chefs or specialists, or play themselves as they are chefs and specialists in real

life. This means that the roles of the professional setting include farmers, people acting or playing as professionals, and people who are actual professionals.

Arla S#1, S#3-4, S#6-10 As mentioned in section 5.3.1, the Arla brand emphasises sustainable production in their marketing. Which is why commercials S#1, 6, 7 and 9 all utilize farmers as the prominent characters, with 1 and 6 even displaying the name of the featured farmers on the screen. It is also implied that the voice-overs are performed by the named farmers as well, as they refer to themselves in the first-person. Commercials S#1 and 6 both feature female farmers. S#7 also only features female farmers, but with a male voice-over using plural first-person pronouns. The last Arla brand commercial that features farmers, S#9, is in the form of a music video where farmers of both genders are represented.

S#3, 4 and 8 all feature the same, male, prominent character in the professional role as a ‘cheese master’. According to the descriptions of the videos, the shown man is not an actor, but is in fact their current cheese master. In S#4, there are also three students in the assisting role, two men and a woman, who are observing the master at work. Both male students have an almost entranced look to their faces. When one of them tries to imitate the master, the concentrated looking female student stops him.

S#10 is the last Arla brand commercial to feature the professional setting. It features the “Cook of the Year 2016” winner Jimmi Eriksson, which is displayed in a large font in the middle of the screen, who demonstrates a cooking method using specialised equipment, for the purpose of teaching the viewer how to impress potential dinner guests.

Scan S#22, S#24-25 Commercial S#22 of the Scan Brand shows a male professional butcher, who is named in the description of the video and is also providing his own voice-over, while picking out a selection of meats. S#24 includes an example of a caricatured stereotype farmer. Unlike the instances of farmers in the commercials analysed so far, this one is not implied to be a real farmer and is instead a purely acted role. The character is male and his appearance and demeanour is amplified to fit the farmer stereotype. S#25 is a commercial showing clips from a marketing effort by the brand in the form of a large dinner party taking place on a farm. All the farmers and chefs and other professionals that are shown working with the food are male.

Dafgårds S#26-32 The prominent characters of the Dafgårds brand commercials are all professional chefs, except for S#27 where they are in the assisting role. Unlike most brands, Dafgårds commercials feature mostly female chefs, except for their main marketing icon Leif Mannerström, whose name and picture are printed on most of the Dafgårds products. The famous Mannerström appears in S#26, where he pretends to steal his own product at a grocery store stating that they are in fact his already, confusing the female store clerk. He appears briefly in S#27, which is a commercial featuring a factory tour, when the presenter stops by a kitchen staffed by the famous chef. His last appearance is in S#28 where he presents his product based on his recipe.

S#29, 30, 31 and 32 all have a female chef who presents and prepares the advertised product. However, none of the presenters get their own name and picture on the product like Mannerström, and in S#29 the female chef is in fact preparing the male chef's recipe.

Felix S#33-34, S#36, S#38 The Felix brand example include two commercials, S#33 and 34, where two different sales professionals are trying to sell the advertised product to a panel consisting of four children. The professionals are both male and they give a very confident impression, to the extent that the one featured in S#33 boasts openly about his accomplishments as a salesman. The other two commercials, S#36 and 38, instead focus on production aspect with male farmers presenting the product. In S#36, the male potato farmer talks about his work and in S#38, a young boy praises his father as "the world's best dad", because he produces the potatoes used by the brand.

Findus S#48, S#51 The commercial S#48 has already been mentioned in 5.3.1 as it contains both a family and a professional setting. The professional setting is once again that of producing the product through farming and in this example, the farmer is a man. S#51 however, features another male chef professional role. This time traveling around the world, collecting ingredients, while wearing his chef's uniform.

Grandiosa S#53, S#55-56 The Grandiosa brand commercials include two commercials, S#53 and 55, where the professional role is held by female chefs. S#53 shows a man from Brooklyn visiting a restaurant in Sweden, at first he is sceptical, but after the female chef prepares the product for him he is delighted by the results. S#55 also features the only example that could be found using the search method of this thesis, where a female chef is

presented by name and having her status used as a marketing tool. The brand states that she is the inspiration for the advertised line of products.

Commercial S#56 then shows a more stereotypical ‘pizza baker’ scene two male chefs are taking orders and working busily behind the counter of a less expensive looking restaurant than that of S#53 and 55.

Guldfågeln S#60, S#63-64 In commercial S#60 of the Guldfågeln brand, a young boy plays the role of chef preparing the product, intending to market the use of the product as “so easy a child could do it”. S#63 depicts a televised cooking show, complete with play-by-play narration, where both contestants are male chefs. It is implied that they are racing against each other to finish the dish. While one of the chefs very hurriedly works on his dish, the other instantly finishes preparing the advertised product, winning the competition. In the final Guldfågeln commercial of the professional setting, Mannerström appears again, playing the role of himself preparing his own recipe. Going as far as to guarantee the products quality based on the fact that it was he himself who made the recipe.

Krav S#66-67 Both of the commercials, S#66 and 67, made by the Krav organisation uses the professional setting to advertise their production sustainability agenda. The first, S#66, shows a female chef who works at a care home for the elderly. She demonstrates the work she does and advocates ecological food choices. In the video, a male chef can also be seen working in the background, but the head chef is female. The second, S#67, uses the farming professional setting. The commercial has the same format as that of S#66, but this time the prominent character is a male farmer showing how he produces his sustainable products.

Hälsans kök S#78 The last commercial of the professional setting, S#78 comes from the Hälsans kök brand. It uses a very similar presentation not that of, S#60, where a young boy presents the product in the role of a chef, in order to advertise the ease of use of the product.

The roles that were played by either gender varied considerably depending on the brand. For example, in the role as farmer, the Arla brand commercials more often used women, including their names to improve legitimacy (S#1, 6, 7). While they appeared in some commercials, there were never exclusively male farmers (S#9). Meanwhile, other brands such as Scan, Felix and Krav, only ever used male farmers when they were included in the commercials (S#25, 36, 38, 48, 67). When a farmer was used in a story telling capacity rather

than a documentary one, the brand chose to depict the farmer as a more stereotyped farmer played by a man (S#24).

Overall, there were many cases of both men and women being presented in a professional role, although more often men. Some tendencies and examples are of particular note. There are large number of commercials that utilize the celebrity status of known chefs and food experts who are predominantly male. This is often done by having the person present who they are, what they do and what the product is (S#10, 22, 27, 28, 64), but they could also be acting in the story of the commercial itself (S#3, 4, 8, 26). In contrast, female chefs are only presented in this manner in three of the commercials included in the thesis (S#30, 55, 66).

Other commercials using chef characters without the added celebrity status include both male and female chefs. In the case of actors playing the chef role, there was only one instance of a female character (S#53) while there were several instances of male characters. Examples include professional chefs on a gameshow, children acting as chefs, and regular chefs who are cooking (S#51, 60, 63). Dafgård is a brand that made particular use of female professional chefs to promote their product, often using them in a mascot-like capacity (S#29, 30, 31, 32).

5.3.3 Other Examples

The final set of examples include those commercials that do not belong to the family setting, nor the professional setting. The roles that appear in these examples include, single men and single women ('single' meaning 'by themselves' rather than referring to their relationship status), friends and celebrities.

Arla S#2 S#2 of the Arla brand is a short commercial without any speaking or interacting characters. However, it does show a distinction between the appearing actors. The shots of the commercial show a man and a woman cooking separately only revealing their upper bodies and not their faces. In one shot, the man is wearing a fashionable dress shirt with no apron and is tossing a kitchen knife from hand to hand. In the final shot, the man can be seen walking out of the shot while dusting off his hands with large claps. The woman, on the other hand, is wearing functional clothing, a sweater and an apron, and is giving off a determined

impression by jabbing her spatula into the countertop, compared to the man's confident and skilful impression from toying with his tools.

Pågen S#11-13 S#20 Of the Pågen brand commercials, S#11, 13 and 20 all feature the single woman role. In each commercial, the characters are performing similar acts, which consists of enjoying the advertised product by themselves, either at home or at a restaurant, while a voiceover presents the product. However, commercial S#12 includes an instance of a female celebrity role by showing an interview with an athlete swimmer. She is introduced by name and talks about how she uses the product to help her in her sport.

Scan S#21, S#23 S#21 shows a similar upper body shot to that of S#2 of a man barbequing the product. The presentation of this commercial is noticeably masculine in both visuals and audio. The man enters a completely black and smoky room. He violently handles the ingredients, crushing a lemon and smashing the spices, all with an electric guitar rock riff for background music. S#23 was mentioned in section 5.3.1, as it made use of the family setting. But the commercial also features both genders in various scenes and roles. Both genders appear in the single man, single woman and the friends roles. Worth noting is the appearance of a pair of female characters barbequing together.

Felix S#35, S#40 The Felix brand uses an occupational stereotype to advertise their product in S#35. The commercial is a summary piece from a series of marketing videos featuring a group of male truck drivers who are challenged with only eating a vegetarian diet during a long-distance trucking trip. Commercial S#40 shows a young man in the presenter role, showing off the advertised product but not showing him cook it.

Findus S#46-47, S#49 Commercials S#46 and 47 come from a branding series titled "Jag ska bara" ("I'm just going to"), referring to the challenges of home cooking. Both commercials feature single men in difficult situations who are then saved by the product. In S#46, the man is working very fast in the kitchen in a stressful manner and in S#47 he opens a fridge to see nothing available to make dinner from. S#49 has a very different theming, instead featuring many different single man and single woman characters who are presented in similar situations of cooking beyond their limits with the help of the advertised product.

Grandiosa S#53-54 Male characters are featured in the prominent roles of both S#53 and 54. S#53, that included a female professional as mentioned in section 5.3.2, has a single man in

the prominent role, playing a stereotyped Italian American character interacting with the chef. Meanwhile, S#54 has two men in the friends role who are on a vacation together. They experience a cultural communicative misunderstanding as they order what they believe to be pizzas at a restaurant only to receive alcoholic drinks. Eventually the irritated female waitress catches on and gives them what they wanted all along.

Hälsans kök S#77, S#79-80 Commercial S#77 of the Hälsans kök brand has a woman in the role of presenter as she speaks to the target audience, parents, about the difficulties of cooking healthy food for your children. She introduces the advertised product as a solution. S#79 and 80 once again focuses on the barbeque setting. S#79 includes both a single man and a single woman role. The man is shown at the barbeque, tossing a lit match on the coals with a serious expression. Meanwhile, the woman is showing in the kitchen, using the oven and stove to cook. S#80 then shows a caricatured, paper cut-out style animation of a man who is explained by the voice-over to love barbequing. He is praised for using the advertised product and the voice-over congratulates him for being a barbeque master.

Lönneberga S#82 The last commercial of this analysis is S#82 of the Lönneberga brand. In it, two male friends are accosted by a group of male bikers as they prepare for a dinner. Instead of being scared, they invite the group to the dinner and they all enjoy it together.

In general, the manner in which men and women are depicted cooking differs considerably. Men are depicted at the barbeque much more often than women and when women appeared grilling along with men, they were given more screen time (S#37) or were implied to be barbequing in a more climate friendly manner (S#74, 76). Emphasis was also put on men performing more advanced cooking, either out of personal interest or to impress their dinner guests, compared to women simply performing the cooking chore (S#23, 81). Explicit praise was also given more often to male characters (S#23, 38, 39).

Worth mentioning is that, while many food and cooking professionals were used in part through their celebrity status, there was only one person appearing in a 'pure' celebrity role and it was a female athlete (S#12). A pure celebrity role meaning that she appeared only as herself without acting as a character or having a professional connection to food and cooking.

6. Discussion

The results of section 5.3 will be discussed in this chapter in an effort to answer the research questions of the thesis. That is, how are genders portrayed in Swedish video commercials of the category food and cooking? How do the portrayals reflect real-life perceived gender role situations? And finally, what are the differences and similarities between the Japanese and Swedish gender role portrayals?

Question 1. Section 5.3 has already detailed how genders are portrayed in Swedish commercials. In summary, men and women held quite similar roles but with some considerable differences in presentation. Men were more often shown at the barbeque while women more often cooked in the kitchen. Men tended to be portrayed as cooking more advanced meals and using specialized tools in a professional-like manner while women were more often shown to be cooking in everyday situations. Both genders were criticised with similar frequency, but for different reasons. Men were most often criticised for not being conscious of the environment, and were often corrected by women, or for acting in an undesirable way while women were more often criticised for failing at household duties in some way. The food and cooking related professionals that appeared were mostly, but not exclusively male. Although acted professional roles were almost entirely male and most non cooking related professionals were also men, but the gender of farming professionals varied depending on brand.

Question 2. As for how well these portrayals reflect real-life gender roles, there are some definite similarities to the findings of current cuisine related gender studies. The studies used as framework for the hypothesis of this thesis indicated that men are spending a lot more time in the kitchen. One of the main reasons being that the public interest in cooking and gastronomy has been increasing in Sweden (Neuman 2016). This is then combined with a Swedish cultural idealization of gender equality, which leads to domestic cooking being an area where men can easily take part in domestic work without risking emasculation (Marcus & Ulver 2015; Neuman 2016).

In terms of gender differentiated depictions, there is a clear preference towards showing male characters in the role of professional food workers. This can be connected to Neuman's (2016) work which indicates a predominantly male dominated gastronomic community in

Sweden. But the differences do not only exist in the professional setting, but also in the domestic settings. Studies show that, although men are doing more and more of the domestic foodwork, the purposes for this have more to do with personal hobby interests or as a social tool to allow for more interaction with friends and family, rather than purely accepting domestic responsibility (Neuman 2016, Rosengren 2017). This is reflected in the commercials in several examples.

A theme that was not covered within the frame of this thesis, but that is definitely worth noting, is that of environmental sustainability. It is apparent that the climate, the environment as well as sustainable production were a primary marketing tool for many of the analysed commercials. There is also a noticeable trend among the commercial examples towards placing the male characters in the role as ‘climate-criminals’, often barbecuing using lighter fluid or choosing unsustainable products. Meanwhile, women are placed in the role of ‘climate-heroes’, correcting the behaviour of the criminal men.

Question 3. Finally, when it comes to comparing gender portrayals between the Swedish and Japanese commercials, there are some points that become apparent. As a summary of Sjöberg (2020) has already been provided in sections 3.2 and 5.1, this part will focus on comparing the results of the current thesis to that of Sjöberg (2020), including examples.

Focusing on the family setting first, the most noticeable difference is in the roles of the mother and father. The parental roles in the Swedish commercials are much more equally distributed between the genders and are not as clearly differentiated as they are in the Japanese commercials. In the Japanese commercials, the father is placed in the role of caretaker and domestic food worker only very rarely, and when it occurs, the father was almost always depicted as being unskilled and in need of help from the mother (J#47, 50, 54). For example, in J#50, the mother is shown being busy at work and so must ask her father and son to cook dinner in her stead. However, they are unable to do it alone and must call her repeatedly asking for help and advice, which the mother gives dutifully. In J#47 the whole family is at home and the same father and son duo is tasked with preparing dinner. In spite of this, the mother constantly monitors them, making sure they do not need any help with the father having to insist that they have it under control. In the end, at the dinner table, the mother comedically finds a large, poorly cut piece of vegetable in the food implying that they

although the father and son should be applauded for their valiant attempt, the mother is still the proficient one in the kitchen.

In the cases that the father was not unskilled, it was still almost exclusively in cases when he had to stand in for the mother and often received much praise from his family for his heroic intervention (J#35, 54, 57, 58, 73, 78). Such as in J#57 and 58 where the mother is at home sick, or occupied with work and the father steps in, receiving much praise both from the mother and their daughter. Similarities to Swedish commercials include the father being praised or having to stand in for the mother, although the Swedish father also had to endure more explicit criticism. Generally, the Swedish father role was more equal to the mother, appeared more often than the Japanese father, and did not always need a motivational factor for doing so.

A very common theme for the Japanese mother role was that of risking failure in their role as family caretaker. Either by not having enough time, not being able to appease the family, or simply by being too tired (J#12 through 19). A clear example can be seen in J#17, where a mother reads the packaging of the advertised product to find that the cooking time is only 10 minutes. She can not believe this to be true and the scene cuts to her imagining embracing her husband in tears, apologizing, “I’m so sorry, the food isn’t cooked yet!” as the children look on with sullen faces. There were a few Swedish examples placing the mother in a similar role, but unlike with the Japanese commercials, this type of scenario was also shared with the father role.

The Japanese mother was predominantly depicted as being the backbone of the household, by being all-knowing, patient, strong and durable, and ever diligently cooking and doing other chores (J#46 through 53, 55, 74, 76). Even commercials that do not focus on the mother, like J#22 through 28 of the Japanese “Cook Do” brand, still have the mother present in a background role, doing the cooking for the father and daughter, without any lines of dialogue. Not being able to keep up with the responsibilities was equated to failure as a mother. This type of weight was shared between both genders in the Swedish commercials, and even though the characters sometimes failed to meet the expectations, this was used more for comedic purposes rather than for inciting urgency and alarm.

When comparing Japanese and Swedish commercials, the impact that culture has on commercial content beyond just gender role ideals and politics is very noticeable. While gender related cultural norms affect how the characters behave and interact with each other and, of course, which gender is placed in what role, there are many other cultural factors that affect the settings and themes of the commercials as well as the products themselves. How this problematised the method for comparison was mentioned in section 4.2. and is clearly seen when trying to compare the professional setting.

Despite the lower number of Swedish commercials, compared to Japanese commercials, there are a much larger number of commercials using the professional setting. While there are plenty of Swedish commercials showing chefs, farmers, and other professionals, there are very few instances of these types of professionals in the Japanese ones. Instead, the Japanese commercials consist almost entirely of the family setting. This is a clear example of how culture affects the contents of the commercials themselves, which in turn affects the appearance rate of certain genders. As gastronomy and advanced cooking is becoming more popular in Swedish society, it is natural that this is reflected in the commercials. When there is a demand, there must be a supply. Cooking does not have the same status in Japan and therefore there is no interest in advertising a product as something a professional would use. When observing commercials and advertising in this light, it demonstrates many differences and particularities between cultures.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has observed and analysed the portrayal of gender roles in Swedish commercials as a reflection of the social ideals of the national community in which they were conceived and towards the audience which it was targeted. 82 commercials were collected and analysed in order to answer the questions of how gender roles were constructed in Swedish commercials and how their portrayal compared to reality. The results were then compared to the results of Japanese commercials from Sjöberg (2020) as a cross-cultural component intended to highlight cultural impact on advertising contents. The category of food and cooking was chosen to facilitate comparability and to limit the scope of the research. The theoretical and methodological framework was also carried over and adapted from Sjöberg (2020) for the purpose of creating comparable results.

The results of the analysis revealed that Swedish commercials, similar to the Japanese ones, do feature gender portrayals that closely resemble that of real-life stereotypes and expectations, with differences in portrayals and settings between the cultures reflecting this. Swedish commercials often portrayed male and female characters as more equal in the family setting, but with a heavy male bias in the professional setting.

The differences in portrayal, setting and theming between Swedish and Japanese commercials also helped to reinforce the concept of advertising as a reflection of sociocultural ideals. Where there were differences in gender ideals and stereotypes, so where there were differences in the content of the respective commercials.

The thesis has tried to observe sociocultural gender roles and stereotypes by analysing their portrayal in video commercials, as well as simultaneously trying to tie into the results of Sjöberg (2020). As such, there are naturally several limitations to this study that are important to acknowledge. The scope and time limitations required to complete this assignment means that the commercial sample size and categorical width had to be limited. Ideally, this type of study would make use of many more commercials from different product categories other than just one in order to create a much more comprehensive picture of the relationship between culture and advertising content. The author's familiarity with the data must also be considered. Unlike the Japanese commercials in Sjöberg (2020), the author is much more likely to have a bias towards the commercials chosen for analysis, as he himself identifies as a

part of the national cultural demographic to which they are targeted. So, while Sjöberg (2020) called for the application of a cross-cultural element to the study of gender role stereotypes in advertising, the author would like to widen the analysis to include other product categories in future research.

References

- Arima, Akie N. 2003. "Gender Stereotypes in Japanese Television Advertisements". *Sex Roles* 49(1), 81-90
- Appelgren, Staffan. 2015. "Att Forma Sitt Liv i Nära Relationer: Familj, Genus och Arbete i Japan". In Hagström, Linus; Moberg, Pia (eds.). *Japan Nu: Strömningar och Perspektiv*. Stockholm: Carlssons
- Artz, Nancy; Munger, Jeanne; Purdy, Warren. 1999. "Gender Issues in Advertising Language". *Women and Language* 22(2), 20-26
- Bordalo, Pedro; Coffman, Katherine; Gennaioli, Nicola; Shleifer, Andrei. 2016. "Stereotypes". *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 131(4) 1753-1794
- Eisend, Martin. 2010. "A Meta-Analysis of Gender Roles in Advertising". *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 38(1), 418-440
- Ford, John B; Kramer Voli, Patricia; Honeycutt Jr, Earl D; Casey, Susan L. 2013. "Gender Role Portrayals in Japanese Advertising: A Magazine Content Analysis". *Journal of Advertising* 27(1), 113-124
- Hua, Zhu. 2014. *Exploring Intercultural Communication: Language in Action*. (2nd edition). London: Routledge
- Kitou, Yuudai. 2020. *Otto "Ore wa yoku yatteiru", tsuma "Mada-mada tarinai", kaji ikuji no "ninshiki zure" wo uzumeru tameni shitteokubeki 'jukyuu gyappu' to wa?*.
<https://www.itmedia.co.jp/business/articles/2001/23/news075.html> (DATUM)
- Klasson, Marcus; Ulver, Sofia. 2015. "Masculinising domesticity: an investigation of men's domestic foodwork". *Journal of Marketing Management* 31(15-16), 1652-1675
- Matthes, Jörg; Prieler, Michael; Adam, Karoline. 2016. "Gender-Role Portrayals in Television Advertising Across the Globe". *Sex Roles* 75(1) 314-327
- de Mooij, Marieke. 2010. *Global Marketing and Advertising: Understanding Cultural Paradoxes*. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

- de Mooij, Marieke. 2013. "On the misuse and misinterpretation of national culture". *International Marketing Review* 30(3), 253-261
- Neuman, N. 2016. "Stories of masculinity, gender equality, and culinary progress. On foodwork, cooking, and men in Sweden". *Digital Comprehensive Summaries of Uppsala Dissertations from the Faculty of Social Sciences* 132(1). Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. ISBN 978-91-554-9701-9.
- Paek, Hye-Jin; Nelson, Michelle R.; Vilela, Alexandra M. 2011. "Examination of Gender-role Portrayals in Television Advertising across Seven Countries". *Sex Roles* 64(3), 192-207
- Rosengren, Izabella. 2017. *Männen tar makten hemma i köket*. <https://www.forskning.se/2017/03/17/mannen-tar-makten-hemma-i-koket/> (19 May 2021)
- Seikatsu teitenkansoku chousa ni miru "kajiraku/jitan"*. 2017. <https://biz.tokyo-gas.co.jp/kodate/trend/pdf/data170616.pdf> (DATUM)
- Sjöberg, Niklas. 2020. *Gender-stereotypes, Food and Advertising: An Analysis of Gender-role Portrayal and Gendered Language in Japanese Video Commercials*. [Magister's thesis, Gothenburg University]. Gothenburg University Publications Electronic Archive. <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/64659>
- Statistikmyndigheten SCB. 2019. <https://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/107287> (22 April 2021)
- Statistikmyndigheten SCB. 2021. <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/utrikes-fodda/> (8 May 2021)
- Sun, Yawen. 2020. *Dansei wa kekkon suru to kaji wo shinakunaru no ka?*. <https://www.works-i.com/column/works04/detail016.html> (DATUM)
- United Nations Development Programme: Human Development Reports. 2019. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii> (16 May 2021)
- West, Candace; Zimmerman, Don H. 1987. "Doing Gender". *Gender & Society* 1(2), 125-151

Westbrook, Laurel; Schilt, Kristen. 2014. "Doing Gender, Determining Gender: Transgender People, Gender Panics, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System". *Gender & Society* 28(1), 32-57

Appendix

Commercial List

Arla

#1 Handprints

https://youtu.be/PBL7lgl_wiU 30s

Svensk Smör, Påsk

#2 Swedish Butter, Easter

<https://youtu.be/QKtLf52k1eY> 20s

När mästare och hyvel blir ett

#3 When master and cheese cutter become one

<https://youtu.be/F14aEMIxS2M> 30s

Vax på eller vax av?

#4 Wax on or wax off?

<https://youtu.be/3q8gz4RCZRI> 30s

Trölk när mjölken är slut?

#5 Trilk when there's no milk?

https://youtu.be/2uj75C7_Ack 30s

Smaker för stunder att minnas

#6 Flavours for moments to be remembered

<https://youtu.be/-7c91Zsa8nw> 30s

Välkommen till framtidens mejeri

#7 Welcome to the dairy of the future

https://youtu.be/qo2f9hh_P2o 60s

Mild Ädel

#8 Mild blue cheese

<https://youtu.be/gQqwkOcl9wA> 30s

Vi ger dig vår morgon

#9 We give you our morning

<https://youtu.be/-TvTB4ybLk0> 60s

Luftigt smörskum

#10 Airy butter froth

<https://youtu.be/9enT0AjlBE> 20s

Pågen

Italienskt Lantbröd

#11 Italian Country Bread

https://youtu.be/CnP3Ph_iabE 15s

Varierad kost med LingonGrova

#12 Varied diet with LingonGrova

<https://youtu.be/dYVZANywX10> 15s

Bara färskt bröd smakar färskt

#13 Only fresh bread tastes fresh

<https://youtu.be/az0oCMx3bws> 15s

Kalaset

#14 The party

<https://youtu.be/i1LCnShhDyg> 20s

Grötbröd bakat på svenska råvaror

#15 Porridge bread baked with swedish resources

<https://youtu.be/eR09UpVkNMY> 20s

Fånga dagen

#16 Catch the day

<https://youtu.be/o8D9ZXmZIwc> 15s

Leken

#17 The game

<https://youtu.be/j5ZrUjIwd8o> 15s

Grötbröd

#18 Porridge bread

https://youtu.be/tPJrws_In8s 20s

Färskt

#19 Fresh

<https://youtu.be/ZooeRZ5v1Ok> 20s

Hållbarhet

#20 Sustainability

<https://youtu.be/QZssWEhLEWs> 30s

Scan

Korvmakarna

#21 The sausage makers

<https://youtu.be/GIgroCcDMzw> 15s

Styckmästarens Utvalda

#22 The butcher's chosen

<https://youtu.be/RtAJkPQOpB0> 15s

Vi är Scan. Smaken av Sverige

#23 We are Scan. The taste of Sweden

<https://youtu.be/jiMVXIc86zg> 45s

Svensk Rapsgris

#24 Swedish rapeseed pig

<https://youtu.be/hgkZOr3JOKQ> 30s

Tack för i år!

#25 Thanks for this year!

<https://youtu.be/Ahjh7ztpI8M> 80s

Dafgårds

Fem frasiga paj-nyheter från Dafgårds

#26 Five new crispy pies from Dafgårds

<https://youtu.be/9qfZ02Ak1ZU> 20s

Magnus Dafgård visar runt i köket i Källby

#27 Magnus Dafgård shows us around the kitchen in Källby

<https://youtu.be/pyrhIBwAsd4> 45s

Leif Mannerströms Köttbullar på Jul!

#28 Leif Mannerström's meatballs on Christmas!

<https://youtu.be/mnllNF71bbc> 15s

Alma lagar Leif Mannerströms lyxlasagne

#29 Alma cooks Leif Mannerström's luxury lasagna

<https://youtu.be/Yi7It3SZsOk> 45s

#30 Singapore firecracker chicken explosion

<https://youtu.be/CfQEpGTEs8w> 15s

Kullen vid sjön

#31 The hill by the lake

<https://youtu.be/sapTjI-Udfg> 30s

Grönkålsbiffar

#32 Kale patties

<https://youtu.be/iYLuwHVbXzA> 15s

Felix

Säljproffset presenterar sig

#33 The sales-pro introduces himself

https://youtu.be/kK_bcrdbzu8 20s

Bilsäljaren möter barnen

#34 The car salesman meets the children

<https://youtu.be/ufoWuPP0qnE> 20s

Veggie Truckers – Ett lyckat experiment

#35 Veggie Truckers – A successful experiment

<https://youtu.be/CkH-sFnsUKg> 30s

Felix potatis

#36 Felix potatoes

<https://youtu.be/pjzMxB7HdSc> 60s

#37 Felix BBQ Ketchup

<https://youtu.be/33gvgN31w4Q> 20s

#38 Minirösti

<https://youtu.be/IOzi4cn7778> 20s

#39 Pasta

https://youtu.be/O7eD5_Ug3pU 20s

#40 India

<https://youtu.be/bMtmZsCUk8E> 20s

Tomatketchup

#41 Tomato ketchup

<https://youtu.be/FUNIEATfcjg> 20s

Klipp Klipp Klart

#42 Cut, cut and done

<https://youtu.be/Gg96-WvqFVA> 20s

Viktigaste stunden "Min Plats"

#43 The most important moment "My place"

<https://youtu.be/5JLxSz5NoZY> 30s

Medelhavspaj

#44 Mediterranean pie

<https://youtu.be/IG5RRj35Zh8> 20s

Findus

Vad blir det för mat? Alla gör vi så gått vi kan!

#45 What's for dinner? We are all doing our best!

<https://youtu.be/h7mZPkaUAMQ> 5s

Jag ska bara fixa lite fettuccine

#46 I'm just going to fix up a little fettuccine

<https://youtu.be/OwEAzvgTz5E> 10s

Jag ska bara trola ihop något på det jag har hemma

#47 I'm just going to cook something up with what I have at home

<https://youtu.be/BNFYOrTJ69k> 10s

Vår allra sötaste och finaste ärta Ebba

#48 Our cutest and prettiest pea Ebba

<https://youtu.be/b5QGCUI24Do> 30s

Det är lättare än du tror att fiskelyckas!

#49 It is easier than you think to have luck with fishing

<https://youtu.be/89ICnS8-uLo> 30s

Fiskelyckas

#50 Lucky fishing

https://youtu.be/kRMYniibL_o 30s

#51 World selection

<https://youtu.be/gLBE-2fqAGI> 30s

Frysmannen vs svärmor

#52 Freezer-man vs mother-in-law

<https://youtu.be/gH9oc0ef9HU> 40s

Grandiosa

#53 Flatbread

https://youtu.be/_bXwIj3t05s 30s

#54 Quesadilla

<https://youtu.be/USo1SggIQDk> 30s

Surdegspizza

#55 Sourdough pizza

<https://youtu.be/QmCrZ6MIsQU> 30s

X-tra allt

#56 X-tra everything

<https://youtu.be/SDhsBnDoT0w> 20s

Guldfågeln

Middag på en kvart

#57 Dinner in 15 minutes

<https://youtu.be/vKO2RYG9twU> 20s

Färs svensk majs kyckling

#58 Fresh Swedish corn fed chicken

<https://youtu.be/3E3Ede4fg8o> 20s

Tacokyckling

#59 Taco-chicken

https://youtu.be/l_leuLI5YAk 20s

Frysta tunnskivade kycklingfiléer
#60 Frozen thinly cut chicken filéts
https://youtu.be/3_qE4Dvrrc 20s

Svensk Färsk Majskyckling
#61 Swedish fresh corn fed chicken
<https://youtu.be/tSIYKvkoeig> 20s

Gula pippin
#62 Yellow birdie
<https://youtu.be/RIPXdAIBVn4> 20s

Rakt ner i pannan
#63 Straight into the frying pan
https://youtu.be/HZp_65gn2BI 20s

Mannerström tvådelad filé
#64 Mannerström double filét
<https://youtu.be/TFmmwgeuZDo> 20

Ekströms

Middag utan efterrätt är inte okej!
#65 Dinner without dessert is not okay!
<https://youtu.be/Xs-j7cw8euI> 20s

Krav

#66 Karoline Nordefors
<https://youtu.be/QKvCV1ePKCM> 60s

#67 Thomas Björklund
<https://youtu.be/jDon1nZ7YBc> 45s

Kronfågel

Gör något enkelt för klimatet

#68-69 Do something simple for the climate

https://youtu.be/_ldM7xf_ByY 30s

https://youtu.be/z07_PVkrO_U 15s

Middag på 15 minuter

#70-72 Dinner in 15 minutes

<https://youtu.be/e-VIsSNsaiw> 15s

<https://youtu.be/TZdYZrk3Yuc> 15s

<https://youtu.be/sVjq6aksALY> 20s

En god jul för alla

#73 A merry Christmas for everyone

<https://youtu.be/8cKhNN8rq34> 40s

Grilla för nästa generation

#74 Grill for the next generation

<https://youtu.be/13PKdR9iEWw> 30s

Välj kycklingfärs nästa gång

#75 Choose minced chicken next time

https://youtu.be/q7_kK8teeRs 30s

Grilla klimatsmart i sommar

#76 Grill climate conciously this summer

<https://youtu.be/DXP45m7Jq9s> 30s

Hälsans kök

Hela familjens favvo

#77 The entire family's favourite

<https://youtu.be/sv-VzyZYUNI> 20s

#78 TexMex

<https://youtu.be/0md0LoAthgg> 30s

Gjord för att provas

#79 Made to be tested

<https://youtu.be/oGVQIYISCjI> 20s

#80 Sensational barbeque

<https://youtu.be/YxgFOxSNer0> 20s

Lönneberga

Macka till middag

#81 Sandwich for dinner

<https://youtu.be/XMz74HLC-cg> 15s

Objudna gäster

#82 Uninvited guests

<https://youtu.be/LUx7Aua1oyU> 15s

