# Women's Programs from the Perspective of Conspicuous Consumption:

# A Study on Gelin Evi (Bridal House) Audiences

Gösterişçi Tüketim Perspektifinden Kadın Programları: Gelin Evi İzleyicileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma

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#### **Abstract**

The roles of the concepts of "bride" and "groom" of marriage, which make up the basic building block and enable society to exist, are changing day by day through popular culture and media in a globalizing and digitalizing world. The media, which is communicated with the mass media, realizes this with images and symbols and directs the meaning, duties and perception of these two concepts. Television, which is the most important of these tools, has become an indispensable part of our daily life since its invention and is still classified as a tool that still maintains its importance in the changing, developing and innovative media field. This tool changes the perception of the "bride" in the society in the direction of "skilled bride, competent bride", and imposes the opinion that social status will be achieved by owning expensive luxury products by emphasizing the external appearance, through "daytime TV women's programs". These programs, in which the practices of conspicuous consumption, which are a part of popular culture, are exhibited, target female audiences of domestic women, who spend most of their time at home, and by creating program contents that have been planned before, they have also affected the way of application of traditional customs and traditions. Bride candidates competing in the "Gelin Evi (Bridal House)" program, which was broadcast between 2015 and 2019 and decided to continue broadcasting again in 2022, created a competitive environment among them, also creating a competitive environment for their homes, their own bridal dowry, clothing, jewelry, food items and arrangements, wedding, and miscellaneous items. It is a program that selects the most assertive bride by scoring the ceremonies and the bridal belongings mentioned in the previous sentence within the scope of the competition. From this point of view, the aim of this study was to reveal the map of this program on the society within the framework of conspicuous consumption policies, and in-depth structured interviews were conducted with 20 women who were the audience of the program. At this point, it has been understood that the program on 20 women included in the research has changed the perception of the bride and created individuals who argue that the bride, who has flashy and exaggerated luxury consumption products, is one step ahead.

**Keywords:** Television, Women's Programs, Conspicuous Consumption, Bridal House.

Öz

Toplumun var olmasına olanak sağlayan, temel yapı taşını oluşturan evliliğin "gelin" ve "damat" kavramlarının rolleri küreselleşen, dijitalleşen dünyada popüler kültür ve medya aracılığı ile günden güne değişmektedir. Kitle iletişim araçlarıyla iletişimi sağlanan medya, bunu imgeler ve simgeler ile gerçekleştirmekte, bu iki kavramın anlamını, görevlerini, algıyı yönlendirmektedir. Bu araçların en önemlisi olan televizyon, icadından itibaren günlük hayatımızın vazgeçilmez bir parçası haline gelmiş, değişen, gelişen ve yenilikle dolu olan medya alanında hala önemini koruyan bir araç olarak sınıflandırılmaktadır. Bu araç, toplumdaki "gelin" algısını, "becerikli,/hamarat gelin " yönlerinde değiştirmekte, dış görünüşün altını çizerek, pahalı gösterişli lüks ürünlere sahip olunarak sosyal statü sahibi olunacağı kanısını "gündüz kuşağı TV kadın programları" aracılığı ile topluma dayatmaktadır. Popüler kültürün bir parçası olan gösterişçi tüketimin pratiklerinin sergilendiği bu programlar, domestik kadının, zamanının çoğunu evde geçiren kadın izleyicileri hedef olarak belirlemekte ve öncesinde planı yapılan program iç erikleri oluşturarak geleneksel, örf ve adetlerin uygulama biçimini de etkiler hale gelmiştir. 2015 ve 2019 seneleri arasında yayımlanan ve 2022 senesi ile tekrar yayın hayatına devam etme kararı alan "Gelin Evi" programında yarışan gelin adayları, aralarında rekabet ortamı oluşturarak, evlerini, kendi gelinlik çeyizlerini, giyimlerini, taktığı takıları, yemek eşya ve düzenlerini, düğün ve çeşitli törenlerini yarışma kapsamında puanlayarak en iddialı gelini seçen bir programdır. Buradan hareketle, yapılan bu çalışmada amaç gösterişçi tüketim politikaları çerçevesinde bu programın toplum üzerindeki haritasını ortaya çıkarmak olarak belirlenmiş ve program izleyicisi olan 20 kadın ile derinlemesine yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Gelinen bu noktada, araştırmaya dahil edilen 20 kadın üzerinde programın, gelin algısını değiştirdiği, gösterişli, abartılı lüks tüketim ürünlerine sahip olan gelinin bir adım önde olduğunu savunan bireyler oluşturduğu anlaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Televizyon, Kadın Programları, Gösterişçi Tüketim, Gelin Evi.

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# Introduction

The family is a part of society, and every part of the concept is considered important due to its structure. These parts don't come across as just the bride and groom. Both parties have responsibilities and duties to each other, and every decision taken is only capable of affecting the family and the society. In marriages, both parties have expectations from each other. One of them is to have a "solid family" structure and to show the other side that efforts are made for this. When it comes to details, there is the "best groom" or "best bride" and these concepts are changing day by day and dragging individuals into a race. One of the main reasons for this change is the media, which directs the expectations relations among individuals.

Popular culture does not aim to provide useful information or educate people; The main purpose is to make people have a good time. Therefore, negative functions are often attributed to it; It is claimed that it numbs the audience and prevents it from deepening (Bektaş, 1996). development of technology and the active use of mass media, which is the result of the concept of industrialization, instills popular culture in communities that are prone to be affected, and brings distinctive standard behaviors and perceptions. The television, which pioneered the transfer of visual and auditory elements to the audience, has become an indispensable part of today with its basic features such as broadcasting all day without interruption and easy presentation of information from every field that belongs to human beings. When it is classified among the mass media, it is an obvious reality that it has the feature of presenting the messages that multiple social fields such as television, technology and economy want to give to the audiences and making them addicted.

Television content producers are competing to achieve a high rating rate combine the contents that are planned and assembled around determined framework with popular culture elements, presenting them to individuals who do not have a conscious consumption habit and cause a negative interaction on them. When evaluated from an ethical point of view, it is seen that this situation is far from an objective publishing approach. It is said that the daytime programs broadcasting in the morning and in the afternoon have a negative effect by targeting the audience, mostly women, due to both their content and the message they convey. The fact that women in Turkey deal with housework causes them to stay away from business life. Women who spend most of their time at home are determined as the viewers of daytime television programs. The topics and broadcast streams in these programs are shaped according to the comments and interests of housewives. Among women watching daytime TV programs, weekday viewing rates increased from 3.8 hours in 2006 to 5.3 hours in 2012. The daily time spent in front of television by women who spend most of their time at home is determined as 2.5 hours (Etiler & Zengin, 2015). Despite the fact that traditions and the balance of production in society are involved in the determination of gender roles, mass media have a great influence. It can be said that television, which is at the forefront of the mass media used by women, has an undeniable role on the life of women at home, that is, on their private life, in restructuring the gender role of women and making her a consumer.

Television, in which visual and auditory messages are used intensely, serves as a mediator in shaping the perception of social reality, emotionally internalizing the content of the audience and making gender roles clear. It has an effective feature in meeting the entertainment

needs of the audience as well as having news, culture and information. The increase in the number of organizations involved in mass communication and the creation of a competitive environment among them in order to have an interinstitutional reputation caused the media to become stronger, and individual life rather than a collective life came to the fore. An important reason why the media has become widespread is the popular culture elements it uses. In addition to these, while the media conveys clear sections of the reality we perceive, it also presents sections with exaggerated forms that have been distorted or preconstructed by using the necessary advertising and marketing strategies in order to make a profit in the free market. From this point of view, the media presents ideal personalities, heroes and types to the masses and realizes this effect process through television (Gorton, 2009).

When we look at the recent years in our country, the increase in the number of "women-oriented" programs and the simultaneous realization of this with the mass media emerges as an ongoing situation. According to Geçer (2015), the reason for this situation is that women are determined as the main audience and integrate the products with the lifestyles resolved bν popular culture conspicuous consumption policies to the messages that need to be conveyed. In addition, it is believed that women's persuasiveness is easier, and content is prepared according to women's interests. "How to be a good bride? How is the house arranged? How should a marriage proposal be? How to communicate with mother-inlaw?" The "Gelin Evi (Bridal House)" TV program, in which answers to questions such as these are sought, conspicuous consumption elements are used, and newly married women compete, emerges as the most popular daytime women's program of recent years. In the program where five bride-to-be candidates compete each week, "Who will be the best bride?" The answer to the question is sought. From this point of view, the subject of this study is the examination of the "Gelin Evi (Bridal House)" TV program within the framework of conspicuous consumption. Within the conceptual framework, emphasis will be placed on television and popular culture elements and conspicuous consumption, and then it will be determined how the situation is integrated with women through daytime women's programs. The aim of the research is to determine how conspicuous consumption factors affect women and to reveal the map of the society. As a method, in-depth interviews will be conducted with 20 daytime female TV program viewers and the interviews will be deciphered in the findings section.

# 1. Television and Conspicuous Consumption

Baudrillard (2001) in his book Screened Out says, "Television exists to tell us about the world, as a self-respecting communication tool, to give way to the event. But for quite some time, it seems that he either no longer respects himself or puts himself on the scene." The world of television has dynamics that center the phenomenon of production and consumption. While these dynamics produce content for audience, it works to ensure its consumption at the same time. (Mutlu, 2008). Mass media have significantly increased their social impact levels with technological changes. This level of influence has facilitated the manageability communities television of through broadcasting and its contents, whose effectiveness has been proven (Yengin, 1994). On the other hand, although the claim that television loses its power with the new media is relatively justified, it increases the dominance of visual and formal codes with new media technologies (Cheviron, 2013). From this framework, it is possible to point out the power of television in the production and broadcasting of consumption codes.

Today, television has ceased to be just a technological tool and a tool that we turn on and watch in our spare time, but has turned into a mass communication tool that is kept on "there should be sound in the background" at all hours of the day. Television has become a part of families' lives and creates changes in environment it is in by transforming the messages it conveys into visuals. According to Postman, television "mass media that is subjected to a culture and society changes according to the interests and expedience of the society in which that culture takes place and has a stronger effect than other mass media." (2010). In this context, it can be said that television and other mass media have the feature of reshaping the culture and society by stimulating them. Pierre Bourdieu says that there is only one hand in revealing what the society's idea is, and that this is television, and says, "The elements that do not matter or have no value in society have their hidden sides, and these elements are attractive because they are so important." expresses it as (Bourdieu, 1991). It can be mentioned that the questioning of what kind of a role television has in the social context and how it represents the real world has been moved away. It comes to such a point that while the basic facts are masked, an unidentified audience actually turns into a person who only talks to themselves while producing a program for the audience (Baudrillard; 2001). While society is constantly looking for what it wants as if it is a disease, it has fallen into a moral disorder that seeks fault by looking at what is reflected on the television screen (Baudrillard; 2011).

In today's world, the decrease in adherence to beliefs, the atomization of people, the weakening of religious and political institutions attract people to leisure activities in the media. In this period, people saw television as a shelter for themselves and showed a tendency towards virtual shelter with rootlessness in the modern world (Mutlu, 1999). Meriç (1986), on the other hand, defines television as "a bridge between hell and earth" and expresses it as a remedy for individuals who have not achieved the ability to read and think. It is a device that changes individuals' perception of reality and traps them in the universe where dreams exist. Television, in which the show and the show stands out, distract the individuals from their worries and drag them into the void by creating a moment of short-term entertainment.

offers its followers Television the opportunity to watch programs in different such as movies, formats documentaries, news and competitions. Competition programs, which are among mentioned formats, create competitive environment both in front of the screen and among the participants competing in the program and make people more visible on the screen. exposed to Audiences images messages also realize this competitive environment and want to express their opinions. Bourdieu argues that the reason why individuals are included as participants in TV programs lies in the desire to be seen and to be noticed (Bourdieu, 1991). In fact, some competition programs are prepared and presented in a format where the public votes for the contestants and an active part of the public, allowing millions of people to be locked onto the screen (Zorlu, 2016).

Thus, he concludes that being noticed by many people gives pleasure to individuals.

Today, television appears as a powerful tool in increasing the importance of the meaning of the objects we use today, rather than their function. The objects that an individual needs in order to have a say in the society and make his presence felt, symbolize that he is included in a certain social class and are considered as proof that the roles are determined through this Popular culture process. creates "commodities" in the society it is in and is an element of popular culture. Another concept that the popular culture that conceptualizes the consumed "commodity fetishism" (Gürbüz, 2014). Human needs, culture, information and emotions are actually listed as goods within the processes and they have to be made similar to each other in order to be purchased. Therefore, "so-called needs" are constructed to be transformed into new signs and objects in order to be sold. For example, it can be said that the objective purpose of marriage is now the consumption of objects, while symbolic objects expressing a relationship between them in the past (Baudrillard; 2010), today the ceremonies for marriage and the objects consumed in the process cover far beyond the purpose.

The social logic of consumption is based entirely on the externality of objects. In fact, objects lose their function and become the unifying element of a much larger world of objects (Baudrillard; 2012). In fact, Ritzer (2011) mentions that consumption is commoditized even the birth of a baby with the studies conducted for babies whose gender can be predicted within the framework of rationality. Thornstein Veblen on conspicuous consumption Veblen stated consumption habits change over time and that the individual tends to acquire

consumption objects due to the prestige it will provide. Veblen, in his work titled "Theory of the Leisure Class", written in 1899, stated that consumption habits are an act performed for show rather than necessity, and because of this tendency, social class differences occur in society (Veblen & Galbraith, 1973). According to Veblen's explanation, individuals who tend to consume conspicuous are those who try to resemble individuals in the highest social class status. Simplicity has left its place to show and exhibition. In the nineteenth century, only ostentatious clothes and expensive jewelry took place in the social life of women. The reason for this was that men emphasized their achievements over women and asked their wives to carry the gifts they received in a flamboyant way (Erdoğan & Hülür,2022). In the modern world, it is possible to see it in daytime women's TV programs that include these conspicuous consumption elements. There are more than one element that symbolizes this perception as a reflection of wealth, such as expensive jewelry, gifts, and expensive luxury bags that men buy for their wives.

When the literature is examined, it is concluded that the conspicuous consumption indicators in the television series Aşkı Memnu, Ufak Tefek Cinayetler and Yasak Elma are analyzed in the study of Erdoğan and Hülür (2022), which is made within the framework of conspicuous consumption and television, and that the television series support conspicuous consumption. In another study, Gürer and Gürer (2017) dealt with the demonstrative consumption elements in Cesur ve Güzel, a television series about rich families, with semiotic analysis.

# 2. Daytime Television Programs and Women

Today, we see in our environment that women are in a "store display" position where men can display their earnings. In a world where private lives are exhibited and there are no limits of sharing, the value judgments of society are changing and appearing with new forms. Mass media, especially television and social media, present this situation to us clearly and impose the western style consumption model.

The fact that women, who spend most of their time dealing with their daily routines or doing housework, get away from their routines, gain knowledge about different areas and make use of their time shows that television has functional and self-connecting features. In their research, Batmaz and Aksoy (1995) found that women watch television more than men, that television is more easily manipulated and influenced by women, and that they have a sense of curiosity for those who are unfamiliar to them.

When we look at the broadcast hours of daytime programs in general, they are adapted to housewives, the family lives of women who are busy with housework are taken as the subject and a portrait of working women is drawn. It has been said that the striking element in these portraits is that the woman is a tool that brings innovation to her own feelings, thoughts and perspectives, and shows alternative ideal lifestyles. Although the main purpose determined is entertainment, it has been observed that women can lose their functionality at some point, even though the programs are aimed at increasing their own development and consciousness (Kurt, 2001).

One of the television content that has become an indispensable part of our daily lives in Turkey since the beginning of the 2000s is the "daytime women" programs mentioned above. These programs have become able to guide women's clothing, make-up products, home design and accessories, food types and presentations. The expectations of the society, which was under the influence of women's programs, from brides have also changed in this direction and have led to the emergence of concepts such as "ideal bride" and "skilled bride". Another feature of these programs is that by associating the consumption culture with the female element, the modern and popular, the most preferred one is put forward, made widespread, and imposed on the audience the opinion that the most ostentatious is the best (Kebeli & inan, 2020). In other words, the perception of reality of the individuals emphasized in the previous paragraphs is played with, and the concept of the female element is reconstructed by integrating with the daytime women's programs, which are fed with the practices of the concept of popular culture with the stories made before the plan and fictionalized instead of the real. With this aspect, the media has become an industry and constitutes consumers rather than production. For these individuals who have a desire for fast consumption, the fact that an object is "functional" has lost its importance, and the idea that the modern and ostentatious object deserves the adjective "exemplary" or "idol" has gained importance. The aforementioned situation forms the basis of conspicuous consumption practices, and this situation is imposed on "women" in many daytime women's programs.

"Daytime women's programs" that capture all the symbols belonging to women, from clothes to make-up, from home decoration to kitchen and even food types, change the perception of "women" of the audience. The image of women represented on television is supported by the viewers who follow the programs, and they ask the women around them to follow these symbols. The pre-planned content stimulates the audience and re-transforms the existing image of women (Kebeli & inan, 2020). Traditional values in the society are being destroyed and the perception of women gains a different dimension day by day.

Traditions and customs have become elements of popular culture through the media. According to Atay 's (2018) discourse, the cultural values in the society surrounded and shaped by visuality, our fundamental reasons for existence, enter the mass production process through the media, are recreated and brought before us for our consumption. Women who spend most of their time at home are chosen as the target audience for these programs. Program content producers are aware of this situation, and content is produced based on the cultural values, traditions and customs of the society in order to have high viewing rates.

The daytime women's generation programs that instill the image of being a "role-model woman", in which the subjects such as being resourceful, understanding housework, respecting the ancestors, mother and father are discussed, are among the most popular content of our day. Based on this, every production progresses in almost the same formats as each other. According to Geçer (2015), daytime women's programs created the opportunity for housewives to see that they are not alone, not only the productions they watch in their spare time, but also become their friends. The contestants in this program show their different skills every day, prepare the most delicious meals, share the home

decoration, watch the most intimate wedding tape, wedding dress," bindallı" (henna night dress among Turkish women), videos of their honeymoon vacation with their spouses, and show how good their relationship with their mother-in-law is, and the title of "best bride". Racing with others for the daytime generation is a content that takes place not only in Turkey but also in TV program formats of other countries, and it has a high audience. Some formats are adapted based on the cultural structure of Turkey.

The "Gelin Evi (Bridal House)" program, whose content is based on Turkish customs and traditions, is a format prepared for housewives and has a competition feature. Brides with almost the same characteristics visit each other's homes and are compared with their bride qualifications and get points. Brides who do not conform to the way society can predict, act out of tradition and custom, and design their homes differently are touted as not having the quality of being a "good bride". The starting date of Gelin Evi (Bridal House), which started broadcasting on Show TV and whose production company is Joker Production, is December 7, 2015. As of January 19, 2023, it has left its 1013th Division behind. Apart from being a bride, the contestants claim to be the bride who organized the most magnificent wedding, spent the most money, had the most gold, made the most memorable word, marriage proposal and engagement. The act of "asking the price of an object", which is known by everyone in Turkish society, is not strange for the individuals competing in this program and the audience in front of the screen. Contestants ask the price of each item in every house they are guests without hesitation, and the bride-to-be who competes that day tells these fees one by one. All kinds of unacceptable behavior language is perceived as a normal situation in Turkish society through this program. Brides who are competitors come to the forefront with their budgets spent for the wedding, with their flamboyant marriage proposals, with the excess of the amount of jewelry worn, and they find themselves in a competitive environment. Another situation in which the program changed the perception is that one of the traditions could not be completed, the possibility of any mistake, the feeling of incompleteness and backwardness arouse in the brides who are the audience and change the existing perception. While every individual on the way to becoming a bride has the decision to adapt the concept she wants in her own wedding, every wedding held and every new order established through this program becomes uniform. Today, the act of marriage has evolved into a "show", every application necessary to create an wedding unforgettable process immortal memories with the person who will spend a lifetime has turned into a show, and the reflections of this have been revealed through this program (Atay, 2018).

# 3. Methodology

In the research, it is assumed that conspicuous consumption practices are integrated into the society with the "Gelin Evi (Bridal House)" program. It is aimed to reinforce the traditions, customs and traditions of Turkish culture with the element of popular culture and to determine what kind of a map the change in the perception of the "new bride" of the audience creates on the society. From this point of view, the structured interview technique, which is a qualitative research method, was used in the research. A list of questions was prepared as the interviews served a specific purpose and had to be planned beforehand. The questions to be asked in structured interviews should be

easily perceptible by the participants and should not direct their attention to another element (Krueger, 1998). The list of questions used in the research is based on Ilgın and Uruç 's "The television series Medcezir, which is the Turkish adaptation of the "The Orange Country" series , was used by focusing on the study aimed to reveal that American culture is transmitted by mass media (Ilgın and Uruç, 2018). In this direction, the questions asked to the participants were evaluated by focusing on the subject of our study and adapting them to the structured interview structure and conspicuous consumption that took place in this study. The categories in the interview questions are life styles, places, clothing styles, furniture, decorations and ceremonies, and the last two questions include general evaluation. The participants in the research were determined as "housewives between the ages of 25-45 who follow the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) TV program. In this context, a total of 20 people, who were determined within the framework of the sample, were interviewed separately. The interviews were carried out by the researcher by signing the consent text and taking a voice recording. In addition to that, were held between 15.01.2023 and 25.01.2023 after ethics committee approval.

In this context, the questions asked to the participants are given in Table 1 below.

Tablo 1. Structured Interview Questions

Categories	Questions
Lifestyles	1) Is the lifestyle of brides competing in the program similar to those around you?
Living Spaces	2) How do you find the living spaces in the program? Why, can you explain?
Places	3) Do you want to live in the living areas in the program? Why, can you explain?

Clothing Styles	4) How do you find the dressing styles of the brides in the program?
Items and Decoration	5) Are there any differences between the items belonging to the brides in the program (the plate, bowl, cutlery set etc. used in dowry, table presentation) and yours?
Ceremonies	6) Are there any differences between the ceremonies that are important for the brides in the program (marriage proposal, promise, betrothal, henna, wedding, honeymoon, etc.) and the ceremonies that take place in your environment
General Evaluation	7) In your opinion, what is the most distinctive feature of this program based on the cultural values in the society?
General Evaluation	8) According to you, is there a main feature that distinguishes the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) Program from other programs? What is it, if any?

Source: Explanation of the Table Source if any

Structured negotiations started on 15.12.2022 and ended on 08.01.2023. This study was carried out with the decision of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Graduate Education Institute Scientific Committee Research Ethics dated 15.12.2022 and numbered 22/31, which was found to be "conformed" to ethical principles.

# 4. Findings of the Research

In this section, the participant answers will be given in the determined order in accordance with the categories and tables with frequencies. From this point of view, life models, places in the program, brides' clothing styles, items belonging to places, decorations, ceremonies constitute the categories mentioned. Before mentioning the answers, information about the format of the program is included.

The five brides in the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) program, which is broadcast every day for the week, go to each other's homes every day. At the end of the program, the guest bride is scored and the bride with the most points on Fridays is the winner and is rewarded with gold. The format is as follows: the bride who will host the guest greets the other competing brides, the outfits and welcoming style of the bride competing on that day are interpreted, coffees are served, the decoration of the area where she lives and her dowry are carefully interpreted, criticized, offered a meal, how she received an offer for her own marriage process, the girl He presents his wishes, engagement, bundle, henna wedding and honeymoon procedures to the guests with photos in video format one by one. However, at this point, it should be underlined that brides should be equipped with indicators such as exaggerated and extraordinary state, attitude, clothing and make-up, which are far from simplicity and reality.

#### 4.1. Lifestyles

As the first question, the participants were asked whether the lifestyles included in the program were similar to their own and the lifestyles around them, and they were asked to explain their reasons. Participants are divided into two about their lifestyles. Some of the participants, P3, P7, P8 and P14, liken the lifestyles around them to the lifestyles of newly married women around them, but they do not compare them to their own lives.

#### P3, as this to say:

"A program that doesn't fit my lifestyle, if I were getting ready for marriage, I wouldn't be someone who fled to such exaggeration and luxury. I have an aunt around me that I can give as an example. My aunt is not much different from the women competing there. In the show, as you can see, when they start preparing for marriage, they get themselves done a lot of plastic surgery. A

ton of money for the wedding and henna night, as well as the home style decor, the make-up materials to be used, the kitchen utensils.". (Beautician, 27)

The participant touched on the question of lifestyles, the issue of equality on both sides of the marriage and expressed her opinion that expectations should be reduced to a minimum.

P7 expressed her opinion on this issue as follows;

"Unfortunately, under the conditions I am living now, it is not possible for me to live a life like there. I have to work right now, I have rent, I have bills, I have loans to pay. We currently have 3 people living in the house: me, my older sister and my younger sister. Each of us works separately and tries to balance them at the end of the month, unfortunately the expenses are very high. If I were to get married in the future, I would like a husband who would not tire me out financially, but okay, I will definitely contribute to the household, it is housework, food, cleaning, on top of that, I do not want to have a stable work life". (Cashier, 26)

The participant thinks that she does not have a life like the one in the program at the moment, but her own views may change after marriage, and her expectations from her husband and herself will be like the lives of the brides in the program. In addition, the participants stated that the lifestyles in the program were exaggerated and that the producers had fictionalized this situation in order to have high ratings.

# P2 explained this situation as follows:

"The lifestyles in the program are not so unless you have a very high income level. In reality, people are trying to support the house with the salaries they earn, and take bread home in the evening. I had two marriages, both of them failed. When I was a 19-year-old bride for the first time, my mother-in-law would not let me into her own house, let alone kissing, buying things in the house. I didn't have that kind of jewelry or flashy clothes. Everything shown

there is fiction. Even my wedding dress was the one that my mother used and wore in her youth". (Banker,42)

The participant refers to the fictional world of television and criticizes the reality of what she sees from her own framework.

**Tablo 2.** Frequency of the Lifestyles Category

Lifestyles	Is the lifestyle of brides competing in the program similar to those around you?
Answers	Frequency
"The lifestyles in the program are similar to the lifestyles of the newlyweds around me, but it doesn't reflect my lifestyle. I am on the side of a simple lifestyle."	8
"If I become a bride one day, I would like to have a lifestyle similar to the lifestyles of the bride candidates competing in the program."	12

### 4.2. Living Spaces

As a second question, the participants were asked how they found the living spaces in the program. Most of the participants emphasized that the living spaces in the program are ostentatious, exaggerated and only the decor comes to the forefront rather than functionality. In addition to these, most of the participants underlined that the designed houses, rooms, halls and areas used for personal needs became exaggerated by filling them with unnecessary details.

### P1 explains her idea as follows:

"I really doubt the reality of the houses shown in that show. Even the details of gold leaf mirrors, frames and furniture sets are made of gold. Everything from the handle of the window and the door to the container where they put their toothbrushes is golden. Don't these people's eyes get tired at all? They don't think they're exaggerating. Everywhere one color, everything monotonous. And you know the reactions there, right? If your carpet and bedspread are not the same color, if there is an absurd color in a room, they criticize you very harshly. My God! You burned." (Housekeeper, 33)

While P1 criticized the exaggeration of the living spaces in the program, on the other hand, she expressed her opinion that the contestants could be criticized if the decoration color used, which is the striking feature in home decorations, does not consist of a single color.

Tablo 3. Frequency of the Living Spaces Category

Living Spaces	How do you find the living spaces in the program?
Answers	Frequency
"Most of the living spaces shown to the audience in the program are exaggerated, ostentatious, lacking in functionality, exceedingly maximalist, trying to prove how rich one is by transferring them to living spaces."	20

#### 4.3. Places

The third question asked to the participants was "Do you want to live in the living areas in the program?" was the question. Most of the participants answered this question clearly as "No". When the participants were asked for their opinions, they emphasized that the venues shown in the program were for show purposes and that they could not imagine themselves in them and said that they could not identify with themselves.

P7 explained herself on this subject as follows:

"I would definitely like to live, are you crazy? Why wouldn't anyone want to live

like that? I would like to have a very flashy, cool house. My armchairs, furniture sets, wallpapers must all be the same color, the viewer must take another look. Wouldn't you like to live in the houses you see on social media, in the houses you see on the Pinterest app? is in the form." (Cashier, 26)

# P19 explained this situation as follows:

"While I was living in Iğdır, my house had a stove and I did not have armchairs, we used floor mattresses, we did not even have our own bedroom, I had to live in the same house with my mother-in-law. None of the items I wanted were bought for me, and I couldn't get it either. Until I settled in Canakkale and got the life I wanted with my own husband. I got support, I started my own business. I built my own house, I am happy with my husband and children. I furnished my house with my own taste, from curtains to carpets to armchairs to the furniture on the terrace. It looks like the houses in the program, but I am happy in it.". (Nail Bar Owner, 29)

The participant told us that when she reaches a certain socio - economic status, she decorates her house according to her own tastes and feels good even though it has a decoration style parallel to the places in the program.

**Tablo 4.** Frequency of the Places Category

Places	3) Do you want to live in the living areas in the program?
Answers	Frequency
"I don't even want to imagine myself in the living spaces included in the program, too many decorative items, too flashy and tiring"	12
"I would like to live in the houses there, why wouldn't anyone want to live there? The more ostentatious it is, the richer it looks."	8

## 4.4. Clothing Styles

Within the scope of the fourth question, the participants were asked how they found the clothes of the bride contestants in the program. Almost all the participants think that the brides in the game show find their clothing "tacky" and that their "purpose is to show themselves as very pompous and ostentatious and to act on the screen during the program".

P3 explains this situation with these words:

"Most brides in the program do not know how to make outfit combinations yet, how can you wear a red dress and a green stiletto on their feet? I don't remember which episode, a brunette, slightly overweight bride-to-be, with a dark purple eyeshadow on her eyelids, a fuchsia blush on her cheeks and a dark burgundy lipstick, is sitting on the screen with her friends, her eyes narrowed. Especially the outfit she's wearing, oh my god!". (Cosmetologist, 27)

The brides in the P3 program mentioned that their clothes were incompatible and that the make -up and jewelery they wore were irrelevant.

P7 expressed a different opinion in the question asked:

"I find it irrelevant what brides wear, frankly. Okay, it's a rating, don't show yourself, maybe she's trying to step up the program and become famous, we don't know. We shouldn't be too ashamed, I don't say that I dress very well, in my own personal life anyway. Rather than dressing, they act against the program flow and this seems very artificial to me. A bride coming from Germany to be very artificially angry at the criticism of her friends in German, a bride saying "brides are not robots" etc. stupid moves made for the sake of rating. I don't remember in which episode I saw it, a bride made a curler out of a water bottle and is a guest at her friend's house. When asked, she answers climate awareness, so I didn't know if there was anything to do in such a program.". (Cashier, 26)

P7 thinks that clothes and accessories are irrelevant, and in addition, she thinks that

the behaviors exhibited rather than the clothes are contrary to the program flow.

Tablo 5. Frequency of the Clothing Styles Category

Clothing Styles	4) How do you find the dressing styles of the brides in the program?
Answers	Frequency
"The dressing styles of the brides competing in the program are extremely exaggerated and tacky. They show how rich they are with gold accessories worn on their arms and necks. From the make-up to the hairstyles, every bit of it is incompatible."	20

#### 4.5. Items and Decorations

The fifth question posed to the participants was whether there were any differences between the brides-to-be's belongings (dowry, plate, bowl, cutlery set, etc.) in the program and their own belongings. The participants stated that they did not own most of the items used in the program, and that they did not dare to take off even when an important guest was hosted, such as dinnerware, cup sets, expensive cutlery, and placemats. The participants said that they have kitchen accessories that can be called "once in forty years" and described "the meaning and value will be lost after use".

#### P2 summarized this situation as follows:

"Yes, it looks like my own furniture in my house, I would love to prepare such tables for the guests who come to me, but one cannot resist. While serving, I am afraid that it will break or be scratched, I can't stand it. Yes, I am very fond of those tables in the program, those exaggerated napkin holders, gold cutlery set, wicker cups, those carefully furnished decors, live flowers. I see such tables a lot on social media, my friends share it. How can they chop it up?" (Banker, 42)

"It's not like the people there. Kitchen utensils are very, very flashy, I think a new trend has emerged now, old retro-looking white goods, such as green and red mold yellow. The other day, our water heater in our house broke down and we started looking for a new one. I look at the websites, I come across those old looking devices all the time and the price is not that cheap. I thought I'd ask my friends; they also use such shabby looking things. They were very pleased, I thought I'd go in and see. I was thinking how much a water heater can be at most, I checked, and it costs 5 thousand TL." (Cashier, 36)

P11 said that social media and programs with this effect affect his friends and that he is also affected inevitably.

**Tablo 6.** Frequency of the Items and Decorations Category

Items and Decorations	5) Are there any differences between the items belonging to the brides in the program (the plate, bowl, cutlery set etc. used in dowry, table presentation) and yours?
Answers	Frequency
"I do not own most of the items used in the program in my own house, if an important guest is to be hosted, expensive dinnerware, cutlery and accessories are revealed and care is taken while using them carefully."	11
"I envy the dinnerware, cutlery, flamboyant goblets and cup sets, service accessories and expensive electrical kitchen appliances used in the program, and I would like to have them too."	9

# 4.6. Ceremonies

The sixth question was whether there were any differences between the important

ceremonies for brides (marriage proposal, promise, betrothal, henna, wedding, honeymoon, etc.) and the ceremonies around them. The participants stated that they found most of the ceremonies shown in the program to be exaggerated, that similar ceremonies took place around them, that even their friends, spouses and friends, who did not like exaggerated and ostentatious ceremonies and favored simplicity, were affected by the programs and felt lacking.

"Isn't there a difference, there are tons of them. My husband proposed to me unexpectedly. When I got the proposal, we went out to the public garden to play sports, I was wearing tracksuits. He was also wearing sweatpants. I was trying to do pull-ups, I guess I don't remember very clearly, it was also a tool, he suddenly threw himself on the ground. Panicked, I immediately ran to him in fear. I looked at her kneeling in her hand, a ring from one of my favorite jewelry designers. It's not that expensive either. I was so excited and said yes. I know what is shown in the program, when you receive a marriage proposal, do you think they are not written on the leds on the bridges, do you say " marry me" by the beach or fireworks? Very very exaggerated offers." (Master Student,28)

# P19 added the following:

"Yes, as I mentioned, I was living in Iğdır, , there was no marriage proposal, no promise, no honeymoon, these did not happen during my marriage process. Our families were getting to know each other, mothers came and went and introduced us to each other. We got married within 6 months. They wanted me, the wedding was done that's all. We didn't even have the money to buy rings, let alone our honeymoon. But when you settle in a new city, you make friends, when I go to my friends' weddings, I don't know, I don't care. Dancing with the girls in their wedding dress, bindallı (henna night dress), henna night. I wish I could do it. Well, maybe I'll do it in the future, it's still inside me, but time is not ours, is it? Everything is okay.". (Nail Salon Owner, 29)

P12 and P19 stated that they completed their marriage process with very simple ceremonies, but they had feelings that could be called unfulfilled desire.

Tablo 7. Frequency of the Ceremonies Category

Ceremonies	6) Are there any differences between the ceremonies that are important for the brides in the program (marriage proposal, promise, betrothal, henna, wedding, honeymoon, etc.) and the ceremonies that take place in your environment?
Answers	Frequency
"Ceremonies such as engagement, wedding and honeymoon that belong to brides in the program are not like those around me. The ceremonies are extremely extravagant and vulgar."	13
"It is like the ceremonies of the people around me, but me and my relatives who have no financial means are affected by these programs and cannot perform our ceremonies as we wish. This naturally leads to disappointment."	7

#### 4.7. General Evaluation

In the seventh question, the participants were asked what the most distinctive features of the program were based on cultural values. The participants gave answers related to the fact that "traditions and customs" were exhibited at the extreme points where they could be exaggerated, that they were under the influence of the states in the west, and that

television and social media contributed a lot to this change.

P11 explained this situation as follows:

"I got married when I was 25 years old, thank God I have been married for 12 years, it was never like this when I got married "will you marry me?" There were no surprise written marriage proposals. They would eat in a special place, get married in public, or go on a vacation and receive a marriage proposal there. But now all the loved ones have to be in the same place and so on. I can't understand at all. For example, in my time there were simple-looking invitations with a picture of the bride and groom. The most extravagant would be pictures of the bride and groom.". (Cashier, 36)

P7 answered this question in a different way:

"Yes, unfortunately times have changed a lot. I used to like it too, and I would love gold bracelets that were worn by my relatives when I was little. Gold is very fashionable, yes, it's still in fashion, but branded gifts aren't that popular anymore, don't you think? For example, when my wife proposes to me, the ring must be from the " Cartier "(expensive jewelry brand) brand. Once I saw it, I want it from a social media content producer. My wedding dress should definitely be "Vakko" (expensive bridal shop). I saw a model in Duygu Özaslan (famous Turkish Instagram influencer) and I liked it very much . I want to wear that model too. Going to my wedding dress rehearsal and choosing it with my mother makes me feel very happy. The wedding must be in a mansion, the mansion should be rented, I think it's a good fun with few people, maybe an artist can come. My henna night should be a concept, for example, when my friends come, color should be dressed like that, maybe it will be a carnival concept, I didn't know. I want to go abroad for my honeymoon, there was a blonde foreign woman in the Gelin Evi (Bridal House), just like her, maybe Thailand.". (Cashier, 26)

As can be understood from P7's statements, she expressed that she wanted to adapt details similar to the marriage processes of individuals she saw on

television programs and on the social media she followed into her own life.

Tablo 8. Frequency of General Evaluation Category

General Evaluation	7) What is the most distinctive feature of this program based on the cultural values in the society?
Answers	Frequency
"Traditions and customs are displayed and modified at extreme points in the program. With the influence of the Western World, the order that we are accustomed to seeing is being changed day by day."	20

#### 4.8. General Evaluation

As the last question, the participants were asked to make a general evaluation including whether there is a basic feature that distinguishes the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) program from other programs. In general, the participants evaluated the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) as a program in which dialogues were constructed to achieve high ratings, the importance of exaggeration, ostentation and appearance was underlined, and value judgments were lost. reported that their followers believed in this.

### P13 expresses her opinion as follows:

"In other programs, things always revolve around a bad situation. We are already listening to the evening news every day, what is going on in the country. I also follow this program during the day so that I can enjoy myself. On the one hand, I do the housework, on the other side, my little girl plays with her toys, this program is on on the TV. But what caught my attention was that in that program, we already know that they acted, I think that they do not know how to act on screens at all. For example, a bride finds the number of sugar cubes brought with her to be low when tea is

offered and says, "I only drink it with 5 sugars." she says arrogantly in the house where she is a guest. So it looks so artificial from the screen.". (Receptionist, 34)

P13 thinks that the dialogues of the brideto-be in the program with each other are carried to the screens with exaggerated expressions of emotion and that this flow is artificial.

# The other participant P20 said:

"Gelin Evi (The Bridal House) is very funny to me, I often find myself laughing because I am embarrassed for them. I'm already watching the show in a way I don't understand, I guess it's addictive after a while. Aren't you weird? Does this program seem normal to everyone? RTÜK (Radio and Television Supreme Council of Turkey) interferes with everything and does not really interfere with it. There were marriage programs before, it's bullshit. And these programs are out. My bride is in the kitchen, my bride is on my head. Now they produce and publish how many more ridiculous formats there are to entertain people even more. In one episode, a bride attends a henna night on a sailboat with a huge evil eye bead around her neck, and in the other episode, her mother-in-law hangs a deed around her neck at the wedding night of her bride. I mean, it's really the bottom of your bad manners, my eyes bled while watching it.". (Housewife, 29)

She stated that she found the comments of the bride candidates in the P20 program to be contradictory, and that they reacted by doing the opposite of a situation they defended. In addition to these, it was stated that the participants wanted to see, respectively: cultural values, customs and traditions belonging to each region can be shared clearly as they are, sincere dialogues, comments and criticisms should be constructive within the framework of healthy communication.

**Tablo 9.** Frequency of General Evaluation Category

	8) Is there a main
General Evaluation	feature that
	distinguishes the
	Gelin Evi (Bridal

	House) Program from other programs? What is it, if any?
Answers	Frequency
"The program has a content designed to break high rating scores. The elements of exaggeration, ostentation and appearance are underlined, and the values that belong to us are lost at the expense of them."	10
"I want to see the facts. For example, I would like to watch images in which the traditions and cultural values of each region are directly transferred, and the dialogues are sincere."	10

#### Conclusion

As a result of these changes in society, the media prepares the ground for the creation of cultural news. While the media is influenced by culture, it also influences it. For this reason, the media plays an active role in all formations, whether in the form of national, mass culture, or popular culture (Karakoç, 2014). While the "codes", "signs" and "commodities" placed in life today draw the boundaries of happiness and unhappiness, television appears with an important broadcasting role like other media tools in this strong flow. Societies different structures. have histories. cultures, lifestyles and traditions. From this point of view, it is possible to see that these cultural indicators in every society are commodified in the context culture. consumption The television program Gelin Evi (The Bridal House), which is discussed within the scope of this study, is clearly seen in a format in which traditions are commodified as consumption indicator with a television program. In this study for the Gelin Evi (Bride House) TV program broadcast on Show TV, the details of the program were tried to be approached from perspective of conspicuous consumption, and the map of the program on the society was tried to be revealed. As a result of structured interviews with 20 people, it was concluded that the program had conspicuous consumption elements and had an impact on the audience. Although the lifestyles, places, clothing styles, furniture, decorations, ceremonies in the program are similar to the elements in the lives of the participants, the audience is aware that they act in the perspectives determined the by conspicuous consumption policies. The participants, expressing their opinions in a clear language, want to continue their lives in models similar to the lifestyles of brides and they express that their expectations from their spouses are in this direction. For example, during the research, "When my wife proposes to me, the ring must be from the brand "Cartier" "I wonder if the sea here is the same as the sea in Thailand, Phuket? If my wife wants to marry me and be happy for a lifetime, he has to fulfill them." "My wedding dress should be "Vakko" statements support this idea.

It has been noticed that the brides' personal belongings, table arrangements, kitchenware, furniture, decorations, ceremonies during the marriage process, in the Gelin Evi (Bridal House) television program, which is far from simplicity, exaggeration and the brand stand out, create the impression of "being like them" even though they are exaggerated by the participants. In addition, the state of "imitating the upper class", which is one of the foundations of the conspicuous consumption perspective, was observed through the answers given by the participants as follows: to buy the brand, to realize what the latest trend is, to adapt and make it to Turkey as the ceremonies are held in western states. Among the findings, "will you marry me?" written marriage proposals, paper mock-up invitations used to report place and day, carnival-themed henna night can be associated with situations with western synthesis. With this aspect, the program changes the existing Turkish traditions, customs and traditions and reflects this to the audience.

Evi (Bridal House) television Gelin program, which is among the daytime women's programs that underline the importance of external appearance and aesthetic perception, as Yılmaz (2020) says, changes its customs, such as showing the bride's bedroom, which can be considered as "private" in Turkish culture. It is a production that argues that the secrecy of life has disappeared, that women should understand the kitchen work and that they should do whatever is desired in their relationship with their husband and mother, and it reveals that the position of women creates a false perception in the society. According to the study findings, although the producers have said that they are inspired by the accepted in the society, such as the bride, guests, food, dowry, wedding, etc., it can be said that they produce programs that are planned and realized beforehand in order to have a high viewership rate by taking advantage of the presence of women in the society. For instance, making a curler out of a water bottle for climate awareness and attending a henna night on a sailboat with huge evil eve bead neckless give countenance to thought of construction. This situation damages the image of the bride in the society and instead, as Yılmaz (2020) stated, puts it, it brings the concept of "media bride".

# **Declarations**

- \* Approval of Institutional Review Board (IRB): Ethical approval was received on 15.12.2022 with the 22/31 numbered decision from the Institutional Review Board of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Türkiye.
- \* Authors' Contribution Rate: The first author's contribution rate is 60% while that of the second author is 40%.
- \* Conflict of Interest: The authors declared no conflict of interest.
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- \* Acknowledgements: The study was neither produced from a thesis, nor presented at a congress, symposium, or conference.

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