THE REFLECTION OF THE DISSOLUTION AND DETERIORATION OF THE FAMILY INSTITUTION IN DAYTIME PROGRAMS DUE TO THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: THE CASE OF THE "ESRA EROL'DA" SHOW

SOSYAL MEDYANIN ETKİSİYLE AİLE KURUMUNDAKİ ÇÖZÜLME VE BOZULMANIN GÜNDÜZ KUŞAĞI PROGRAMLARINDAKİ YANSIMASI: "ESRA EROL'DA" PROGRAMI ÖRNEĞİ

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Abstract

Social media has become one of the most important communication media of the digital age. This digital medium, which penetrates every aspect of our lives, also shows its effect on family relationships, the smallest unit of society. In this study, it is aimed to examine how family relationships, which have deteriorated due to the use of social media in the digital age, are represented in daytime programs. The population of the study consists of daytime programs about family relationships in Turkey. Representing this universe, "Esra Erol'da", the most watched daytime program in our country in 2024, was selected as a sample. All episodes of the program, which constitutes the sample, covering a period of 4 months between 2 September-31 December 2024, were analysed using the content analysis method within the scope of case study, one of the qualitative research designs. In the events encountered in these episodes, the themes that cause the deterioration of family relationships through social media and the frequency of repetition were tried to be determined. With the data obtained as a result of the research, 5 different categories named "infidelity, violence, fraud, unhappy marriages and parental exposure" were reached. By explaining the categories obtained within the framework of Gerbner's cultivation theory, it can be concluded that social media today plays an intermediary role in the deterioration and dissolution of family relationships and the events within the scope of these categories are repeatedly processed in daytime programs and replanted in the public consciousness.

Keywords: Social Media, Digitalized Society, Cultivation Theory, Daytime Programs, Family Relationships.

Öz

Sosyal medya dijital çağın en önemli iletişim ortamlarından biri halini almıştır. Yaşamımızın her alanına nüfus eden bu dijital mecra, toplumun en küçük birimi olan aile içi ilişkilerde de etkisini göstermektedir. Bu çalışmada; dijital çağda sosyal medya kullanımı nedeniyle bozulan aile içi ilişkilerin gündüz kuşağı programlarında nasıl temsil edildiğini incelemek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini Türkiye'de aile içi ilişkileri konu edinen gündüz kuşağı programları oluşturmaktadır. Bu evreni temsilen 2024 yılı içerisinde Ülkemizde en çok izlenen gündüz kuşağı programı olan 'Esra Erol'da örneklem olarak seçilmiştir. Örneklemi oluşturan programın 2 Eylül-31 Aralık 2024 tarihlerindeki 4 aylık süreyi içeren tüm bölümleri, nitel araştırma desenlerinden örnek olay (vaka/durum) incelemesi kapsamında içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Söz konusu bölümlerde karşılaşılan olaylarda sosyal medya aracılığıyla aile içi ilişkilerin bozulmasına neden olan temalar ve tekrarlanma sıklığı tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda elde edilen verilerle "aldatma, şiddet, dolandırılma, mutsuz evlilikler ve ebeveyn teşhiri" adlı 5 farklı kategoriye ulaşılmıştır. Elde edilen kategoriler, Gerbner'in ekme kuramı çerçevesinde açıklanarak günümüzde sosyal medyanın aile içi ilişkilerin bozulması ve çözülmesinde aracı rol oynadığı ve bu kategoriler kapsamındaki olayların gündüz kuşağı programlarında tekrar tekrar işlenerek toplum bilincine yeniden ekildiği sonucuna varılabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Dijitalleşen Toplum, Kültivasyon Teorisi, Gündüz Kuşağı Programları, Aile İçi İlişkiler

INTRODUCTION

With the development of information communication technologies, social media is becoming a part of our lives, affecting the basic structure of families, which is the smallest unit of society, and causing the values it has to change. The traditional values that make up the Turkish family structure and intra-family relations have been transformed by the new forms of communication offered by social media. In addition to the positive aspects of this change and transformation, it has also caused negative effects such as privacy, interfamily communication, relationships with children, divorce and has become an important research topic of social sciences. Media has become an important power in modern societies. Especially with the effect of digitalization and globalization people prefer to communicate through social media instead of face-to-face communication. This new form of communication has started to cause the deterioration and dissolution of family relationships.

Rapid development in new communication tools and especially the use of smart phones have increased access to and use of social media. Through social media, people socialize in a network of virtual relationships. One of the most important factors that will enable a society to be healthy is the healthy conduct of family relations, which is the foundation of society. This situation causes the weakening of relations between individuals. The changing spiral of new relationships affects family relationships and the communication and interaction of family members with each other is decreasing. Flexible and uncontrolled relationships on social media reduce the sense of trust between spouses and cause an increase in cases such as infidelity, unrest and murder (Güleç, 2018, pp. 105–108).

With the digital transformation, television programs have started to reshape social norms, especially through daytime programs. By appealing to a wide audience, daytime programs make social problems visible and strengthen the reflections of family breakdown on the media. These programs, which are based on real life stories, give the viewers a sense of reality as the participants present their private lives to the public, and this perception of reality created by the media plays an important role in the reconstruction of social norms.

According to We Are Social's 2024 report, 62% of the world population is an active social media user. This rate corresponds to 5.04 billion of the world population of more than 8 billion. In 2023, 266 million new members started to use social media with an increase of 5.06 per year. This figure shows that an average of 8.4 new people started using social media per second. The same report reveals that in 2024, the usage time of social media users also increased, with one person spending an average of 2 hours 23 minutes a day on social media. When the social media usage rate by population is analyzed, it is seen that Turkey ranks 43rd with 66.8%. The report shows that the most used social media platform in the world is Facebook, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram and Tiktok (*Dijital 2024*, 2024).

With the digitalization process, social media has become one of the most important interaction platforms and has become effective at all levels, especially the family, which is the most basic unit of society. This effect of social media on interpersonal relationships appears as a dynamic that leads to dissolution and deterioration in the family structure. The aim of this study is to examine how the effect of social media on the dissolution and deterioration of the family institution is represented through television programs. The program named "Esra Erol'da" was selected as the sample. The reason for selecting this sample is that it is the most watched program among the daytime programs dealing with family relations. The data obtained from the program selected in line with the sample were analyzed using the content analysis method within the scope of case study, one of the qualitative research designs. By analyzing the data through Gerbner's Cultivation Theory, the effect of social media on family relationships was tried to be determined. Although there are many studies in the international literature on the effect of social media on family relationships, the small number of studies in the national literature and the fact that this effect is examined in terms of the representation of the content of daytime programs makes the study unique.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON DIGITALISED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Social media, which is a virtual communication area, has become one of the practices of daily life and has started to influence 21st century people like eating and drinking. It brings together people from different cultures from all over the world in a common socializing denominator (Çakmak & Müezzin, 2018, p. 196). Social media is the interaction that allows people to create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (Kuladeiraj, 2014, p. 28). Social media relies on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms where individuals and communities create a fully or partially open platform where they can share user-generated content, make friend lists, follow different people on other profiles and their posts. These platforms radically and pervasively change communication between organizations, communities and individuals. Therefore, it has become a social rather than a personal phenomenon (D. M. Body & Ellison, 2007, p. 211; Kaplan & Michael, 2010, p. 61; Ramnarain & Govender, 2013, p. 2495). When the development of social media is examined chronologically, its foundations can be traced back to Usenet, founded in 1979 by Tom Truscoft and Jim Ellis, where articles were sent to news groups. Later, IRC (Internet Relay Chat) was established, allowing link and file sharing (Hazar, 2011, p. 155). The first modern social media network was SixDegrees, which was established in 1997, but this network could not show the technological developments desired by the society and ended its service at the end of the 2000s. The reason for SixDegrees' lack of continued popularity was the lack of different applications that users could do on the site after accepting friend offers and the inability of the site to compare its users with people from different ethnic groups (D. M. Body & Ellison, 2007). Mark Zuckerberg, a Harvard University student, founded "The Facebook" in 2004 with his friends Andrew McCollum and Eduardo Saver. The platform, which was first established for the use of Harvard University students, started to be used by members of other universities. In December 2004, the number of users reached 1 million. In August 2005, the name of the site was changed to 'Facebook.com' for 200 thousand dollars. By the end of 2005, more than 25000 universities in the UK, Canada, USA, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland had become members of the site. In time, university students started to invite their high school friends to the system, the site opened to everyone in 2006 and started to accept members with e-mail addresses, the network gradually expanded and became one of the largest organizations in the world after Google (Toprak et al., 2009, pp. 37–38).

With the emergence of the Internet, a new historical process called the digital age has been entered into, and this process has been effective in all segments of society. One of the most important actors of the digital transformation is families, the smallest unit of society. The family is a social, economic and legal institution that generally shares the same house and is connected to each other by different duties, responsibilities and blood ties. It reflects the culture of a society, has a dynamic structure, is open to change, and ensures the transmission of social culture. With this structure, the rapid transformation in the family (Özgüven, 2001, p. 1) causes alternative new life styles, new social problems such as divorce, infidelity, having children out of wedlock; issues related to the structure, function and importance of the family remain on the agenda (Zeybekoğlu Akbaş & Dursun, 2020, p. 2247). One of the most important actors of this social change in family relations is the use of social media (Bakan & Bakan, 2017; İnan Kaya, 2021; Zeybekoğlu Akbaş & Dursun, 2020).

Social media platforms occupy an important place in the use of the Internet and attract intense interest among individuals. Among the main factors that increase this interest are that individuals can easily express their feelings and thoughts, the opportunities to establish relationships that are limited in real life become more accessible on these platforms, socialization and entertainment opportunities are offered, and it appeals to every income group with its low cost. At the same time, the fact that social media offers users the opportunity to produce data, organize this data and share it on different platforms at any time makes it different and attractive from other digital tools (Yıldırım, 2021, p. 1240). The new form of communication formed with social media is much more distant from the form of communication that is suitable for human nature. While face-to-face communication takes place in a certain period of time within certain social areas, communication via social media takes place much faster. In this medium, which takes place in the form of a virtual communication, social culture is reshaped (Çakar & Yengin, 2024, p. 1252; Sucu, 2014, p. 55). In this structure called digital culture, communication is

carried out under virtual identities independent of time and space (Sancar, 2023a). The widespread use of the Internet and the use of smartphones have led to the widespread use of social media. People who socialize with these applications based on the internet are in the state of social power united in the virtual environment rather than being an individual (Çalışkan & Mencik, 2015, p. 250). This new social structure, also called the information society, touch society (Denizci, 2009, pp. 48–49; Gökçe, 2001, pp. 15–17; Yengin, 2014) has changed the phenomenon of "socialization" by distancing individuals from the real world and loneliness has become measurable by the number of friends on social media (Bardak & Alkar, 2016, p. 57; Yengin & Bayrak, 2023, p. 137). Social media has many advantages such as organizing collective activities easily, getting news from current events, connecting people, increasing awareness, but one of the biggest disadvantages of social media is that it is addictive (Sancar, 2017). This addiction causes people to become asocial and thus face different psychological problems. It also has the ability to manipulate society in different directions with misinformation. In addition to these and many similar features, it has been proven by different studies that it has serious effects on families. The widespread use of social media after the 2000s has caused significant changes in the Turkish family structure, which consists of elements such as love, loyalty, respect, moral values, unity, as well as being effective on many societies around the world (Arıbaş & Özşahin, 2022, p. 38; Erol, 2022, p. 1128).

In a study conducted in Turkey on whether the social media use of married individuals has an impact on their marriages; 60 married individuals living in different provinces were interviewed, and it was concluded that the social media use of the sample individuals while establishing their marriages and during their marriages played an active role in their relationships and caused problems in family relationships (Kalaman & Çelik, 2019, p. 424). In a different study conducted among unmarried young people aged 1820 in Turkey, it was found that loneliness has a mediating role on the negative effect of family belonging and social media addiction (Semerci et al., 2023, p. 273). Similarly, in a study in Ankara, in which the relationship between internet addiction and loneliness levels of 348 university students (144 males and 204 females) according to the purposes of using social media platforms was examined according to the gender variable; it was found that males had higher loneliness levels than females and used social media for this purpose (Bardak & Alkar, 2016, p. 55). In the research conducted by Gülnar & Öztat (2020, p. 31) with 1108 married participants who had face-to-face meetings with family members for an average of 6 days a week and an average of 4 hours a day, it was determined that the rate of face-to-face meetings with family members decreased as the general social media and WhatsApp usage time of the participants increased. In a study conducted on university students to determine the role of social media in family relationships, it was concluded that it isolates people, causes conflicts between mothers, fathers and children, and negatively affects the intra-family relationships of especially male students (Dilber, 2019, p. 334). In a study conducted on the differentiation of intra-family relations according to the level of social media usage of 356 students studying at different levels of four different secondary education institutions in Hatay Province; it was concluded that as the duration of social media usage increased, students were less able to participate in activities requiring physical participation with their families (Kır Elitaş, 2020, p. 2616).

When we look at the studies in the international literature, in a study conducted on 1082 people in the USA; it was concluded that social media technology is effective in strengthening family ties (Williams & Merten, 2011, p. 150). In order to investigate the impact of social media on family systems, a questionnaire was administered to 227 Italian parents who had adolescent children and communicated with their children using social media platforms, and the results of the study revealed that these perceptions were an intermediate factor affecting the relationship between collective family competence and communication openness. This suggests that in addition to the actual effects of social media on family systems, parents' perceptions of these effects and their confidence in their ability to manage social media use without damaging family relationships for themselves and their children (Procentese et al., 2019, p. 5006). Research reveals that social media sites reshape issues related to children and young people's family ties, personal interests and friendships and change our perception of how we relate to others (D. Body, 2008, p. 120; Simpson, 2016, p. 95). Eichenberg et al., (2017, p. 349) in their study systematically addressed the impact of social media on relationship development, couple and family formation processes, and emphasized that this effect has a multifaceted interaction especially on having partners and families. The study addressed all these effects on the basis of academic findings. In a study

conducted on work-life balance and social media balance in Muslim and teacher families during the pandemic period in Indonesia, it is stated that family resilience in family relationships in Islamic teaching is based on the principles of zawj (being a couple) mîsâkan galîzâ (strong bond), muşâran (good livelihood) and mushâran (good livelihood) and mushawarah (mutual consultation). The study aimed to investigate the effect of work-life balance and social media balance on teachers' family resilience and that this resilience is measured by Islamic family resilience values, and the research results showed that work-life balance and social media balance variables had a significant effect on family resilience (Rahayu et al., 2021, p. 169). Social media distracts people from real feelings and emotions and creates a false perception. In this artificial world, it steals time from the individual's family, reduces their skills and causes anti-social behaviors. Thus, relationships within family members deteriorate and this situation causes damage to the structure of societies (Amedie, 2015, p. 1).

GEORGE GERBNER'S GENERAL COMMUNICATION MODEL AND CULTIVATION THEORY

In Gerbner's general communication model, communication is considered as a social and dynamic process. In this model developed in 1956, communication is analyzed in two different dimensions. The first of these dimensions is perception and impression, and the other is the control dimension. In Gerbner's formulation of this model, a person perceives and reacts to an event and creates a content through some tools. This content is transmitted to the other person through the control of the media. The message in question is perceived and understood by the person receiving the message within the framework of cultural codes. Gerbner argues that this process is objective, unbiased and therefore subjective and variable. In the model, communication is derived from the interpretation of internal concepts under the influence of external stimuli. Cultural codes are also very important in this process. In other words, communication is not only psychological but also a cultural output (Fiske, 1990, pp. 43–51; Güngör, 2022, pp. 74–75; Özçetin, 2021, p. 145).

One of the most important differences of television from other mass media is that it presents a wide range of interests in a narrow framework. The viewer is the person who is available to watch at a certain time interval. Viewers have a heterogeneous structure. Programs are made with a commercial concern rather than the interests and needs of this structure. Television is a central storytelling system, the distinctive and dominant cultural force of our age. In cultivation theory, television enters our lives from infancy and plays a major role in the formation of predispositions. It is therefore a symbolic mirror of the period we live in, our emotions and thoughts. Throughout our lives, television forms the basis of a broad worldview through the repetitive lessons we are exposed to. This has made it an important source of general values, ideologies, perspectives and images (Gerbner, 1998; Hawkins & Pingree, 1982; Morgan, 1990).

Gerbner, the dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, introduced cultivation theory in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The theory started with the example of (Özer, 2021, p. 593) violence within the cultural indicators project, but later expanded its research area with different topics. His main focus is on storytelling. According to the theory, those who produce messages are institutionalized and centralized authorities. Messages are created, perceived and served within a certain social reality (Gerbner, 1998).

According to Gerbner, the type of stories that make up our cultural environment can be divided into three; the first are those that are created to tell how things work. These stories are called fiction and construct a fantasy that we define as reality, the second one, like the news, tells how things are and serves to confirm society's value judgements and thoughts, and the third one is advertisements, which are stories that tell what should be done. These three types of stories continue to function in balance with each other, but it is advertising that finances the first two types of stories. According to Gerbner, digitalization leads to monopolization, speciation and globalization. Media messages do not create instant behavior and attitude changes, but value judgments that spread over a long period of time in our lives (Gerbner, 2004; Özçetin, 2021, pp. 128–133).

Cultivation theory is a field of communication research that examines the relationship between television viewing and individuals' beliefs and attitudes about the world. This theory argues that heavy television

viewers tend to develop beliefs and worldviews consistent with the content to which they are exposed. For example, it suggests that individuals who frequently watch violent television programs are more likely to believe that the world is a more violent place. Gerbner and his team adopt the idea that the messages presented by television bring heavy viewers closer to a mainstream point of view. Accordingly, differences in opinion on certain issues between different ideological groups such as conservatives and liberals may decrease depending on the level of television viewing. Today, the increase in media diversity and the widespread use of digital platforms have raised the question of whether the effects of cultivation will persist in the long term. While some researchers argue that the influence of television in the traditional sense may diminish, Gerbner et al. argue that the media industry can ensure the continuity of these effects by maintaining its control over storytelling. However, examining the impact of media genres, long-term social changes and the role of television in social transformation processes in the context of cultivation theory are among the research areas that still remain important today (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, pp. 253–257; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999; Shrum, 1995).

Originally introduced by George Gerbner, Cultivation Theory was formulated to explain how prolonged exposure to television content could gradually shape audiences' perceptions of reality. Heavy viewers, as Gerbner and his colleagues emphasized, tend to adopt the dominant themes and representations repeatedly portrayed on television—particularly those related to violence, fear, and social norms (Gerbner et al., 2001, p. 7). However, with the rise of social media, traditional broadcast models have evolved into user-driven, interactive, and highly personalized digital platforms. This shift has prompted scholars to reassess the applicability of Cultivation Theory in today's media environment. In the social media landscape, users do not merely consume content—they also produce and disseminate it. Despite this participatory nature, control over information flow remains significantly influenced by platform algorithms. These systems determine which posts, videos, or news articles appear in users' feeds, often reinforcing existing beliefs and isolating individuals from differing viewpoints (Pariser, 2011, p. 10). Consequently, the repetitive exposure to certain themes and perspectives persists, albeit in a new form. In this sense, social media continues to foster cultivation-like effects by shaping how individuals perceive social reality through algorithmically curated content.

Although social media deviates from traditional television in its fragmented and interactive design, it still reproduces patterns reminiscent of the cultivation process. Gerbner's theory emphasized the cumulative influence of repetitive media messages over time. In the context of digital platforms, these repetitions emerge not from a central broadcaster but from algorithmic personalization and socially filtered networks (Sunstein, 2018). Personalized feeds often expose users to content aligned with their previous behaviors and preferences, thereby limiting exposure to contrasting worldviews and fostering a distorted sense of consensus. The fragmented structure of social media appears to allow for diverse perspectives; however, the dominance of algorithmic filtering often results in users being encased within narrow informational environments—so-called "echo chambers." Within these chambers, dominant narratives are circulated and reinforced, mirroring the repetitive nature of television content described in Cultivation Theory. Thus, the theory retains its explanatory power, albeit within a digitally transformed media environment where reality is shaped through personalized yet homogenized streams of content (Couldry & Hepp, 2017, p. 102).

DAYTIME PROGRAMS

"The types of programs that are created with information, explanations and interesting live music pieces for the audience in different segments of the society; that include short, applicable information; where personal and social issues of interest to the audience and various elements taken from the daily life of people and society are covered with one or more presentation techniques in accordance with the determined aims, objectives and principles, and that have an integrity within themselves." (RTÜK, 2014) are called generation programs. Generation programs are broadcast on television screens at certain time intervals. Even if the viewer does not know the programs individually, he/she knows what kind of programs he/she can watch at which time interval. With the establishment and increase in the number of private radio and television channels, producers started to search for new formats in order to increase their viewership rates. This search led to the emergence of daytime programs broadcast between 10.00

-18.00. The viewers of these program formats are mostly women. These programs have become an indispensable part of daily life and have gained popularity and a permanent place with their new narrative format for women (Köker, 2007, p. 124). Program formats prepared in accordance with women's daily life are also called women's programs. They are prepared in a format that women can listen to like a radio program while doing housework. These formats are not only a television program for women but also a voice and a friend at home.

One of the first daytime programs in Turkey was "Women and Family", broadcast by TRT in the 1970s. This program aimed to support family life and provide educational information to the viewers by targeting housewives in particular. The program included various topics such as recipes, handicraft skills, health and hygiene information and child education. In line with the social structure of the period, this program format was prepared with an approach that addressed the daily lives of housewives. However, in the following years, with the widespread use of private television channels, the content of daytime programs changed; magazine, entertainment and discussion-oriented formats aimed to reach a wider audience (Çakır, 2010; Ertürk, 2015).

Although television is a one-way communication tool, it creates a collective consciousness and makes its viewers feel that they belong to a group. Being a social tool, television creates a social completion and mosaic with its viewers (McLuhan, 1965). Therefore, it has the quality of reshaping societies. Daytime programs, which cover a large period of time in television programs and which we call OPT (Off Prime Time), create serious social effects and these effects have become an important research topic of social sciences. When examined in this context, daytime programs can be categorized as cooking and cleaning programs, programs on criminal incidents, gossip programs, fashion and style programs, which deal with issues related to daily life. It is seen that the participants of these programs consist of viewers. The participant presents a situation related to his/her private life to the public and demands a solution to this issue (Akyüz & Meder, 2020, pp. 125–129). One of the most important features of daytime programs is that they are made up of stories and people extracted from real life. Therefore, all content is accepted as real by the audience. Hall (2003, p. 624)'s research on the elements that make up the concept of reality in the media showed that probability, typicality, emotional involvement, narrative consistency and persuasiveness are at the forefront.

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine how the impact of social media on today's family structure and family relationships is represented in television programs. In this context, it was tried to determine within which themes the events that cause the deterioration of family relationships through social media are discussed and how often these themes are repeated.

In this study, the role of social media on family dynamics is evaluated by analyzing the content of the program Esra Erol'da, which deals with family conflicts and broken relationships. Case study, one of the qualitative research designs, was used for this research. Within the scope of the research, all events were analyzed using content analysis method. Content analysis is a research method that allows written, visual and verbal texts to be sorted systematically to reach certain themes and meanings. This qualitative and quantitative method is widely used in fields such as communication, sociology and psychology. In content analysis, it is tried to shed light on social events by extracting social reality from the analyzed data. This method is used extensively in the scientific literature in analyzing media texts. Krippendorff (2022) explains content analysis as a research technique that includes repetition and valid results are obtained. In the research, in accordance with the stages of content analysis, all episodes of the program 'Esra Erol'da' between the specified dates were watched and the events were listed, data were collected from the events in question, themes and categories were created using the collected data, and the findings obtained were interpreted and conclusions were reached.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research, a coding sheet prepared in accordance with the purpose of the research was created and data coding was carried out. All of the programs were watched again by the researcher at different time periods and a second coding sheet was prepared. The fact that the consistency between the two coding sheets obtained was above 70% confirmed the

reliability of the research. The fact that a study gives similar outputs at different measurement times is an indication that the measurement provides consensus in the context of certain standards and is therefore reliable (Shenton, 2004). The fact that the research is a television program and that it can be watched again from its records in digital media increases the reliability of the research.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The population of the study consists of daytime programs in which family relationships are the subject in our country. Among these programs, Esra Erol'da, which was the most watched in 2024, was selected as the sample. In addition to being the most watched daytime program in Turkey, the fact that it appeals to a wide audience, deals with social values and norms, and deals with important social issues, especially domestic relations, was important in its selection as a sample. After the opening and introduction at the beginning of the program, the guests are invited in turn, and information is given about the guests and the topics, enabling the audience to understand and empathize with the subject. Experts in their fields provide information and comment on different aspects of the topics covered. The search for solutions to the problems experienced by the guests is presented. Since 31.08.2015, Esra Erol'da has been aired on television every weekday and the duration of the program is approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes, including commercials.

When sampling media content, taking a small number of samples from a program broadcast throughout the year increases the likelihood of an unrepresentative sample (Stempel, 1952). Therefore, selecting a larger sample reduces the possibility of the analyzed text being atypical (Atabek & Atabek, 2007, p. 29; Gerbner et al., 1977) and increases the validity and reliability of the research.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS AND ANALYSIS

In the program named Esra Erol'da, which is the subject of the research, all episodes within the 4-months period between 02.09.2024 - 31.12.2024 were examined. These dates were chosen in order to make the research more up-to-date and to witness a closer time period in the society we live in. Notes were kept by the researcher about the watched episodes, and coding was made at the end of the monitoring based on these notes. After 2 months, all programs were watched again by the same researcher and coded again. As a result of 70% similarity between the two separate coding, the code table, themes and categories were created, and this process took an average of 6 months.

The coding process was carried out in line with Strauss and Corbin's (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) coding method based on concepts derived from the data. At this stage, the data obtained were analyzed in detail, divided into meaningful sections and the meaning of each section was tried to be determined. In order to ensure systematic and consistent coding, similar data were coded under the same categories. In order to increase the reliability of the process, the coding process was repeated by the researcher at different time periods. During the coding process, subjective judgements were avoided and only the meaning of the data was focused on. The collected data were evaluated by inductive analysis method, the similarities between the codes were determined, classified and named according to their content. The codes obtained in this direction were structured as themes within the framework of meaning relations.

FINDINGS

Within the scope of the sample; 86 programs were watched in the 4-month period between 02.09.2024 and Wednesday, 31.12.2024.

Table 1. Dates and durations of the programs examined

Publication Date	Broadcast Duration	Publication Date	Broadcast Duration	Publication Date	Broadcast Duration
02.09.24	56min.32sec.	03.09.24	1h.9min.29sec	04.09.24	1h.9 min.29 sec.
05.09.24	1h.16min.8sec.	06.09.24	2h.07min.8sec.	09.09.24	2h.8min.9sec
10.09.24	2h.6min.25sec.	11.09.24	2h.06min.52sec.	12.09.24	2h.7min.14sec
13.09.24	2h.8min.53sec.	16.09.24	2h.7min.12sec.	17.09.24	2h.6min.7sec.
18.09.24	2h.3min.37sec.	19.09.24	2h.4min.54sec.	20.09.24	1h.31d.46sec.
23.09.24	1h.30min.17sec.	24.09.24	2h.6min.19sec.	25.09.24	2h.5min.49sec.
26.09.24	2h.6min.26sec.	27.09.24	2h.6min.27sec.	30.09.24	2h.8min.14sec.
01.10.24	2h.6min.49sec.	02.10.24	2h.6min.8sec.	03.10.24	2h.7min.56sec.
04.10.24	2h.7min.40sec.	07.10.24	2h.8min.29sec.	08.10.24	2h.6min.54sec.
09.10.24	2h.5min.35sec.	10.10.24	2h.8min.24sec.	11.10.24	2h.10min.2sec.
14.10.24	2h.6min.42sec.	15.10.24	2h.8min.11sec.	16.10.24	2h.8min.33sec.
17.10.24	2h.8min.1sec.	18.10.24	2h.13min.6sec.	21.10.24	2h.10min.2sec.
22.10.24	2h.10min.12sec.	23.10.24	2h.11min.31sec.	24.10.24	2h.20min.30sec.
25.10.24	2h.16min.58sec.	28.10.24	2h.6min.58sec.	29.10.24	2h.5min.44sec.
30.10.24	2h.10min.26sec.	31.10.24	2h.14min.54sec.	01.11.24	2h.5min.14sec.
02.11.24	2h.7min.57sec.	04.11.24	2h.7min.32sec.	05.11.24	2h.7min.5sec.
06.11.24	2h.7min.2sec.	07.11.24	2h.5min.28sec.	08.11.24	2h.6min.36sec.
11.11.24	2h.7min.41sec.	12.11.24	2h.8min.44sec.	13.11.24	2h.9min.24sec.
14.11.24	2h.9min.6sec.	15.11.24	1h.58min.29sec.	18.11.24	2h.9min.11sec.
19.11.24	2h.8min.56sec.	20.11.24	2h.9min.11sec.	21.11.24	2h.9min.28sec.
22.11.24	2h.8min.34sec.	25.11.24	2h.6min.51sec.	26.11.24	2h.10min.8sec.
27.11.24	2h.13min.11sec.	28.11.24	2h.7min.8sec.	29.11.24	1h.31min.36sec.
02.12.24	1h.39min.3sec	03.12.24	2h.4min.13sec.	04.12.24	2h.6min.3sec.
05.12.24	2h.8min.8sec.	06.12.24	2h.6min.43sec.	09.12.24	2h.9min.
10.12.24	2h.8min.12sec.	11.12.24	2h.10min.32sec.	12.12.24	2h.8min.9sec.
13.12.24	2h.8min18sec.	16.12.24	2h8min 43sec.	17.12.24	2h.6min.37sec.
18.12.24	2h.7min.43sec.	19.12.24	2h.8min.34sec.	20.12.24	1h.55min.27sec.
23.12.24	2h.8min.8sec.	24.12.24	2h.7min.49sec.	25.12.24	2h.5min.57sec
26.12.24	2h.7min.8sec.	27.12.24	2h.7min.32sec.	30.12.24	1h.47min.49sec.
31.12.24	2h.16min.57sec				

Table 1 shows the dates and durations of the episodes of the program Esra Erol'da that were examined within the scope of the research. The program is broadcast on ATV screens every weekday starting at 16.20 on weekdays until the main news bulletin at 19.00. In the program broadcasted every weekday, 86 episodes were analyzed. In the analyzed episodes, 107 events were coded. The events in question

900

were categorized into two groups: those in which social media was used as a tool and those in which it was not used.

**Table 2.** Incidents where social media was not used as a tool

Incidents where Social Media was not used as a tool	Number of Incidents
Deception	20
Domestic Violence	5
Lost Child	18
Divorce	4
Child Abuse	1
Domestic fraud	5
Missing mate	8
Fraud with the promise of marriage	2
Unwanted marriage	1
Children looking for their biological parents	3
Missing parent	1
Fraud	1

In Table 2, it is seen that social media was not used as a tool in the deterioration of domestic relations in 69 of the 107 incidents in the examined episodes of the program named Esra Erol'da, which was selected as a sample in the research. From these 69 incidents, 13 different themes were reached. Within the scope of these themes, cheating incidents in which social media was not used as a tool were coded 20 times, domestic violence 5 times, missing children 18, divorce 4, domestic fraud 5, missing spouse 8, fraud with the promise of marriage 2, children looking for their biological family 3, child abuse, unwanted marriage, missing parents and fraud themes were coded 1 time each. Since there was no use of social media in all these incidents, they were not included in the study and were excluded.

Table 3. Incidents where social media was used as a tool

Events in which Social Media was Used as a Tool	Number of Incidents
Deception	21
Domestic fraud	2
Fraud with the promise of marriage	4
Running away from home	6
Making a bad marriage	4
Fraud	2
Parents exposing their children	2

In Table 3, it was determined that social media was used as a tool in 41 incidents out of 107 incidents that caused the deterioration of domestic relations in the departments examined within the scope of the sample. For these incidents, 7 different themes were reached and within the scope of these themes, deception was coded 21 times, domestic fraud 2 times, fraud with the promise of marriage 4 times, running away from home 6 times, making a bad marriage 4 times, fraud and parents exposing their children 2 times each.
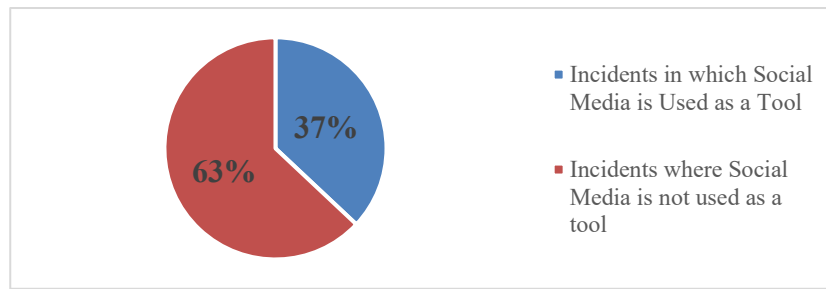
Graph 1. Distribution of the events whether social media is used as a tool in family

Graph 1 shows the distribution of the incidents in which social media was used as a tool in the episodes analyzed within the scope of the sample. By excluding the events in which social media was not used as a tool in the analyzed events, 41 events in which social media was used as a tool were coded and 7 themes were reached and the themes and coding numbers are given in Table 3. It is seen that social media was used as a tool in 63% of the issues addressed within the scope of the sample. As a result of the analysis, the following categories were determined.

•   Deception
•   Violence
•   Fraud
•   Unhappy marriages
•   Parental exposure

Case Example 1: Deception
M.Ö. developed an emotional relationship with H.A. through social media and, during this process, left her spouse and four children, abandoning the family home. This case demonstrates how social media can erode intra-family loyalty and function as a factor threatening the unity of the family.

Case Example 2: Violence
In today's world, relationships formed through social media are becoming more vulnerable due to the visibility and speed provided by digital platforms. The crises experienced within these relationships are not limited to the digital realm; they can also escalate into physical violence. Social media influencer A.G. began a romantic relationship with another influencer, V.Ş., whom they met online. However, over time, this relationship turned into a cycle of control, pressure, and abuse. During the course of the relationship, the violence inflicted by V.S. on A.G. was not limited to psychological and digital abuse — it escalated into physical violence as well. A.G. faced threats, blackmail, and physical assaults, and her private life was exploited by someone she met through social media. This case highlights the dual nature of violence in the digital age, exposing the oppressive dynamics that can occur both online and offline.

Case Examples 3: Fraud
Individuals T.Ş. and S.O. reconnected on social media after many years upon realizing they were former elementary school classmates. What began as a friendly interaction quickly developed into an emotional relationship, culminating in promises of marriage. However, the situation eventually turned into a case of fraud, where one party deceived the other under the pretence of marriage to obtain financial gain. This incident highlights how trust formed through uncontrolled use of social media can be exploited, leading to psychological and financial harm, and the manipulation of one's aspirations to establish a family. Such examples reveal that even in the early stages of forming a family, social media can present serious security and ethical challenges.

S.K., the child of M.K. and H.K., used a false identity via social media to deceive and financially exploit his father. By impersonating another individual online, S.K. requested money from his father, resulting in a case of intra-family fraud. This incident reveals how social media can undermine trust within familial relationships and weaken core values such as loyalty, honesty, and mutual responsibility. It demonstrates how digital platforms can challenge and disrupt the fundamental dynamics of the family

structure.

Case Example 4: Unhappy marriages

The case of F.D. and G.D. illustrates the transformative impact of social media on the institution of family. Despite strong objections from both families, the couple met through social media and decided to marry. However, their relationship quickly encountered serious problems. As conflicts intensified within the marriage, G.D. reconnected with another individual through social media and eventually left the home, taking her child from F.D. with her. This situation reveals how digital platforms can influence individuals not only in partner selection but also during times of marital crisis, often leading them toward alternative relationships and weakening family unity. The case demonstrates how the unregulated nature of social media can accelerate individual decisions that conflict with traditional values, potentially resulting in harmful consequences—particularly for vulnerable members of the family, such as children.

Case Example 5: Parental Exposure

Parents D.A. and M.A. shared photos of their young child posing with objects that are not developmentally appropriate, on social media platforms. These posts drew significant public criticism and sparked discussions around children's rights and responsible digital parenting. The act of sharing such content, often for attention or approval on social media, may compromise the child's privacy and psychosocial well-being, indicating a failure to uphold parental responsibilities. This case demonstrates how social media can expose children to risks within the family environment, raising ethical and developmental concerns.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to analyze how the effects of social media on contemporary family structure and family relationships are reflected in television programs. In this direction, it is tried to determine within which themes the negative changes in family relationships through social media are addressed and how often these themes are repeated in the broadcast content. In line with the aim of the research, 'Esra Erol', the most watched daytime program, which deals with the deteriorating family relationships in our country, was selected as a sample. This program exhibits a dynamic structure that appeals to a wide audience by focusing on family relationships, social problems and individual issues. The program generally provides a platform where problems are discussed, solutions are sought and emotional exchanges take place. At the same time, it reflects the impact of these norms on social perceptions by conveying comments to the viewers about social values and norms. In the program, the changing family structure and the problems of the changing social structure are discussed and solutions are offered. This makes the program an important media text for understanding the changing structure of family relations. For this reason, examining the content of this program is important for understanding the family relationships that have deteriorated through social media. The content of the program was examined by using the content analysis method within the scope of case study, one of the qualitative research designs. All contents were coded with the coding chart specially prepared for the research and themes and 5 different categories were reached from the themes. These categories were named as "cheating", "violence", "defrauding", "unhappy marriages" and "parental exposure". With this study, it has been observed that social media in the digital age can be used as an intermediary in family communication and interaction processes, causing the deterioration of family relationships. It can be concluded that this situation has started to be covered intensively in daytime programs and social media has become a tool that causes disruption and dissolution in the traditional Turkish family structure.

In George Gerbner's (1969) cultivation theory, it is accepted that television is seen as a family member and assumes the role of a narrator. This role is performed by different contents through different programs, and over time, it affects the feelings and thoughts of family members and causes behavioral patterns to change. Thus, families, which are the smallest unit of society, and in connection with this, it causes the structure of societies to change. Today, this effect of television has gained an even wider dimension with the rise of social media. Social media platforms change the dynamics of family relationships by causing individuals to constantly interact with different narratives and value systems. In particular, social media, while providing individuals with alternative feelings of belonging, can weaken traditional communication practices within the family and make it difficult for individuals to

unite around common values. Constant online presence may reduce face-to-face interaction between family members, weakening emotional ties and alienating individuals from each other. Therefore, Gerbner's conceptual framework on the narrative power of television remains valid in understanding the possible disruptive effects of social media on family relationships.

In the program Esra Erol'da, one of the main categories that cause the deterioration of family relationships through social media is the act of cheating. This concept, which is also defined as "online cheating" in the literature (Hertlein et al., 2022; Kaya & Şakiroğlu, 2023) has become one of the most important reasons for the dissolution of the family structure today. Various studies reveal that social media offers an environment that prepares the ground for infidelity behavior (Mileham, 2007; Young et al., 2000). It has been determined that especially couples can detect this situation through messages and images shared by their spouses on social media platforms and this leads to the end of their relationships (Hertlein et al., 2022). In this study, similar findings were reached and it was determined that the destructive effect of social media on relationships is an important factor in terms of today's family dynamics.

According to the research findings, one of the important themes that emerged is violence. The phenomenon of violence is one of the most emphasized topics in Gerbner's cultivation theory. According to Gerbner, media contents penetrate the society in general and pave the way for the formation of repetitive, organic and stereotypical judgements. Especially the production of television content based on violence can cause the society to become desensitized to violence over time and even develop an attitude that demands violence (Erdoğan, 1998, pp. 167–170; Gerbner et al., 1980; Ulusal, 2022). The data obtained within the scope of the research show that violence in domestic relations is constantly reproduced through social media and that this theme is frequently covered in the television program Esra Erol'da.

It is seen that social media distances individuals from the real world and exposes them to various risks under virtual identities. One of the most striking among these risks is fraud. Research findings show that family members who are exposed to fraud due to social media use experience deterioration in family relationships due to this situation. This problem was also frequently addressed in the sampled television program. The data obtained reveals that family structures are digitalized along with digitalized societies and that social media can be an element that strengthens family ties when used correctly, but when used incorrectly, it can weaken the family structure and lead to unhappy marriages. This situation is also reflected in the content of television programs and reveals similar results with the studies on social media and family relations in the literature.

With the widespread use of social media, one of the most discussed issues is 'parental exposure'. Parents enter their children's privacy area through social media, take away their right to be forgotten and expose them to many risks of the virtual world (Çimke et al., 2018; Duygulu, 2019; Sancar, 2023b). In the results of the research, it was concluded that one or both of the parents exposed their children through social media; this situation is one of the important factors that cause the deterioration of family relationships.

In line with the data obtained from the television program Esra Erol'da, which was examined within the scope of the research, it was analyzed how the effect of social media on the change and deterioration in the family structure was represented in television content. In this framework, the selected program contents were analyzed with a special coding chart and five basic categories were formed by determining the most frequently recurring themes. From the perspective of Gerbner's Cultivation Theory, the constant presence of these themes in media content can be considered as a process that can affect the viewers' perception of reality in the long term and shape their perspectives on family structure. With the effect of digitalization, social media is instrumental in the reproduction and dissemination of negativities within the family in traditional media. In this context, it can be concluded that social media in the digital age is used as a tool in the deterioration and dissolution of domestic relations and this situation is reproduced in television programs with different topics and planted in people's consciousness. The limitation of the research is that the program 'Esra Erol'da', which is the most watched program in which

domestic relations are the subject of the research, is determined as the sample. In future studies, it is recommended to present a new perspective on the subject by conducting audience research on the same and different programs.

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