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Sportive Male Narrative in Advertising

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Abstract

One of the new interest of the advertisers who say that we will find the meaning of our lives in the things we consume is the sportive male body. For this reason, sportsmen, who come to the fore in advertisement, are shown as role models to the society with their clothing and lifestyles, many products are marketed through them. In addition, sports heroes who are subject to advertising narratives through his body are the wealthiest people in the consumer society and. it is the symbol of dreams about a good life. It is believed that the use of the advertised product by the well-known sportsmen increases the image of the product and creates a sense of confidence in the product. In this study, a literature review method is used for the inclusion of the sportive male narrative in advertisements.

Keywords: Male body, sport, hero, media, advertisement.

Reklamda Sportif Erkek Anlatısı

Özet

Hayatımızın anlamını tükettiğimiz şeylerde bulacağımızı söyleyen reklamcıların ilgi alanlarından birisi de sportif erkek bedenidir. Bu nedenle; reklamlarda ön plana çıkan sporcular, giyimleri ve yaşam tarzlarıyla topluma rol model olarak gösterilmekte, pek çok ürün üzerlerinden pazarlanmaktadır. Ayrıca bedeni üzerinden reklam anlatılarına konu olan spor kahramanları, tüketici toplumun en varlıklı kişileridir ve iyi bir hayata dair kurulan hayallerin de simgesi konumundadır. Reklamı yapılacak ürünün tanınan sporcular tarafından kullanılmasının, ürünün imajını arttırdığı ve ürüne güven duygusu yarattığı düşünülmektedir. Çalışmada; sportif erkek anlatısının reklamlarda yer almasına ilişkin literatür taraması yöntemi kullanılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erkek bedeni, spor, kahraman, medya, reklam.

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1. Introduction

One of the new discoveries of the advertisers who say that we will find the meaning of our lives in the things we consume is the sportive male body. The form of expression in which the strong, dynamic, invincible and sporty features of men brought into the forefront has been frequently seen in advertising content.

Sport is the demonstration area of the male body. Sports heroes with a strong and healthy body are the highest paid and wealthiest people in the consumer society. For this reason, it is the symbol of dreams about a good life. Sports consumers are associated with these values while consuming sporting competitions.

Sportsmen, who come to the fore in sportive activities, are shown as role models to the society with their clothing and lifestyles and many products are marketed through them. It is believed that the use of the advertised product by the well-known sportsmen increases the image of the product and creates a sense of confidence in the product.

Especially, football games, in which many products are displayed, are the interest areas of advertisers. The uniforms, shoes, bags, socks, hair bands, water bottles of football players carry the logo of the products advertised. That's why they're advertising areas.

2. The Narrative Of Male Body

“The narrative is set up in the framework of a story and a narrator. A narrative includes the structure that should take part within the communication process of a “transmitter” and a “receiver”. The narrative takes its shape around the desire of people to express themselves being one of the basic human needs and the desire of readers or audience to understand the world” (Bolat, 2017:189). Among the things consumed, the only object that is more beautiful, precious and unique than other objects and the only object that has more connotations even than the automobile is the body (Baudrillard, 2013: 149). The body is the most powerful element of narratives. This is because the human body is the only area where the signifier and signified are shown simultaneously. The body strengthens the narrative, provides identification. In this context, physical attraction is a highlighted feature as it is attention-grabbing (Walters, 1994: 286). Male and female bodies have been used since the first practices of advertising due to their physical attractiveness. The marketing is done through the idealized body by featuring the ideal body in product and service promotions. Thus, the social construction process of the ideal body is assisted. In this context, men's and women's bodies are used in different ways.

The male body is shown as a symbol of strength and solidity. The images of the muscular body, which are constantly emphasized, provide how the ideal male body should be, which cannot be easily reached. The hardness and tension of the body, by excluding all curves and cavities, and by making us feel that they are composed of only straight lines and surfaces, endeavor to introduce the body as completely masculine (Zoonen, 2007: 101).

Advertising is one of the areas where masculinity is built, produced and reproduced. Male characters in advertising represent the ideal image of masculinity (Kilinc, 2015: 6409). The male body first started with some football players' taking part in the advertisement of products containing cigarette and male cosmetics in the 1930s (Aydin et al., 2008: 296). Since the mid-1970s, the muscular and sexy male body has been used in advertising narratives. The reason for the use of baseball player Jim Palmer in men's underwear advertisements in these years was that 70% of men's underwear was purchased by women and at the same time Palmer was found attractive and sexy (Parlak, 02.01.2019).

The ideal body in advertisements is presented in a form identified with power and sexuality. The male images in which these two features are shown in the same body are brought into the forefront. Sexuality is a concept associated with personality. It is an area in which the audience find their projections and identify themselves and their characters (Walters, 1994: 286). Sexuality and attractiveness have an important place in the presentation of the male body and the construction process of its social role. The character in the advertisement is best defined by the erotic male expression (Kilinc, 2015).

3. The Narrative Of Sportive Male Body

In capitalism, the celebration of the beautiful body by sports becomes the depoliticized ideological blessing of physical labor. The body of a sportive male is ultimately an effective hegemonic actor (Fiske, 2012: 122). For this reason, the orientation of man, who wants to have power, towards his body gains meaning. As a result, all men want to have a strong body and power. The male figure, which had been depicted as warrior, strong and invincible ever since the early ages, is now presented to the consumer with adonis muscles, long body height and wide shoulders (Parlak, 02.01.2019).

Today, the discourse of "a healthy mind in a healthy body" is abandoned. Because there is no longer a need for a healthy mind. The period in which individual thinking had been blessed came to an end, and it was replaced by the body which starves for any kind of pleasure. With the help of technology, bodies are being transformed into cyborgs (Attack, 2013: 181). As the body grows stronger, it becomes emptied and is transformed into a meaningless commodity, and a body fetishism where the appearance is at the center is headed towards (Mutlu, 2005: 340).

The narrative of the male body, which has been turned into a center of attention with the blessing of sports, envisions being constantly on the move. The male body tolerates being transformed into a visual object of pleasure only when it is in motion (Zoonen, 2007: 101).

In addition, the violence experienced in the stadiums is secretly supported for the construction of masculine identity. There is a link between violence and eroticism, which should be kept in mind. As far as sexuality has an aggressive and tyrannous dimension, violence has a sexual dimension (Berger, 1993: 130).

Men follow men's muscular and strong male body to identify it with themselves. Therefore, sports-related productions are among the most watched programs. Audiences choose the way to satisfy the need for superiority by putting themselves in the place of the sportsmen or by imitating them (Voigt, 1998: 208). This situation is explained in the same way in the advertisements of sports narratives. Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) stated that the fact that an individual tends to compare himself to the sportsman he watched in the commercials and that he might be like the sportsman involved in the advertisement if he does what is shown in the advertisement, causes the individual to increase his interest in the advertisement and the product (Özgen, vs. 2018).

The masculinity established by what man consumes has a narrative in itself (Kilinc, 2015: 6408). The person who wants to buy adopts the lifestyle of the sportsman whom he likes and appreciates with the products. In this sense, some sportsmen are highlighted by advertisers as the symbol of the sportive male. In the media, attention is paid to the issue of the wages received by the sportsmen taking part in the advertisement narratives.

It is stated on the website of CNN Turk that boxer Floyd Mayweather has been added to the list of the most winning sportsmen ever:

Floyd Mayweather (boxing): \$ 285 million,

Lionel Messi (football): \$ 111 million,

Cristiano Ronaldo (football): \$ 108 million,

Conor McGregor (mixed martial arts): \$ 99 million,

Neymar (football): \$ 90 million,

LeBron James (basketball): \$ 85.5 million,

Roger Federer (tennis): \$ 77.2 million,

Stephen Curry (basketball): \$ 76.9 million,

Matt Ryan (American football): \$ 67.3 million,

Matthew Stafford (American football): \$ 59.5 million (CNN Turk, 01.01.2019).

In the light of these data, it is observed that football players have gained more than other branches in the last period.

4. The Narrative Of Sportive Footballer Body

Television has been the instrument of bringing the body to the forefront. While a football match is being played, on the one hand, a picture of a muscular male with TV close-ups focusing on the strong and nimble body of the players is presented (Kellner, 2010; 140), while on the other hand, the scene, in which the opposite sex is positioned, is completed with a beautiful, charming female image on the grandstand. All these emphasize the underlying erotic orientation of television (Esslin, 2001: 67). The muscular and sexy body he sees on TV is quite impressive for the audience who internalized football. Advertising narrative is also built upon this positioning.

For example, the reason why David Beckham has become the face of advertising is the erotic emphasis he reflects on the television screen. The naked body of Beckham is shown to be a role model for the promotion of the product and consumers are tried to be affected. This person, who is a brand in the field of football being a common interest for men in many parts of the world, is already seen as an example by a great number of men in this respect and this demonstration of muscular and desirable men can also be seen as quite impressive points, especially for male consumers (Parlak, 02.01.2019).

It is seen that football players are used not only in the football field but also in advertisements out of their own contexts. Another name highlighted by advertisers is Cristiano Ronaldo. The media keeps the footballer Cristiano Ronaldo constantly in the public eye; he is an important advertising figure with his muscles shown frequently on the screen. Many products are marketed through his body by advertisers. In the news titled "Cristiano Ronaldo has re-written the history of advertising" which appeared in the website of Fanatik, it is stated that Ronaldo advertised his watch jeweled with diamonds that he wore on his left arm, constantly showing it throughout a significant press conference before a game where dozens of images are taken. "Cristiano Ronaldo participated in the press conference held before the Manchester United game with his 9 million-pound Tourbillon brand watch. CR7 has re-written the history of advertising" (Fanatik, 24.10.2018).

5. Conclusion

Uluslararası Advertising narratives are formed through the examples that the individuals who make up the society can identify with themselves and take as models. In this context, the male is presented as a warrior and durable figure, and shown as the man whose symbol of strength is his muscles and who is an object of desire. This new form of masculinity built with this image has revealed the concept of "branded masculinity" in a consumer-centered economy. Therefore, advertisers also associate their products with ideal masculinity images represented by male characters as a tool for sale (Shaw and Tan, 2014: 118).

Sports is one of the most widely used items in advertising. Sports is the people's leisure of their spare time and creates a positive perception in people. Sports perception in consumer society means watching sports activities rather than doing exercise. Considering that the meaning of life is in what is consumed, it seems impossible to evaluate the popular and chosen sports activities apart from advertising. Although the use of sports items in advertisements varies according to different periods, sports always used.

Presentation of male as an object of desire is in cooperation with actions, as are his heroic acts in sports, or in any other act traditionally attributed to him. In advertisements targeting men, romantic roles are associated with physical activity and courage. The fact that these figures are chosen from the names that have been recognized by the societies and which have become popular with their personal accomplishments, supports this argument.

Advertising narratives are built on the general knowledge in people's minds. In this sense, football is a very well known instrument. Because all areas of life can be associated with football. Football players' uniforms, shoes, bags, socks, hair bands, even bottles of water they drink carry the logo of the products advertised. It is seen that football fans who want to identify themselves with their favorite footballers are demanding these products. The most important product in football games is the uniform. Just before the start of a football season, the uniforms of the teams that are going to be worn in that season are introduced by the teams' popular football players. Undoubtedly, the best-selling uniforms are the ones of the scorer football players. In this context, football players' pointing to their

uniforms during their joy of scoring or the fact that they take off the uniforms (despite the fact that it is forbidden) and show their muscles are eye-catching practices towards the sales of uniforms. Again, the fact that the players tie their shoes at the time the football competition is being played is one of the things done to show the brand of shoes.

In this context; the advertisers to use the figure of footballers or sportsmen and to be included in the essence of the event takes place. The person who identifies with his favorite sportsman feels close to the advertised product and service. In the sense of advertisers, the promotion of the advertised product by a well-known sportsman increases the image of the product and reinforces the confidence in the product.

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