# CONFLICTS BETWEEN CONSUMERS' ACTUAL AND IDEAL SELF-IMAGE: A PROTEST APPROACH TO STEREOTYPED COSMETIC BRAND MESSAGES THROUGH DOVE'S REAL BEAUTY CAMPAIGN AND SELF-ESTEEM PROGRAM

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study focuses on consumers' conflict between their actual and ideal self-images, and the reflection of this conflict on definition of 'beauty'. The study assumes that cosmetic brands transfer messages similar to the ideal self, apart from the actual self; and cosmetic brand messages depend on consumers' ideal self. In addition, the study declares the facts that beauty promising brand messages are composed of analogical stereotyped models; and product and beauty messages repeat themselves number of times. In protest against this collective trend Dove initiated a campaign called 'Real Beauty Campaign' which emphasizes 'actual self'. This campaign continued to exist under the project: 'Self-Esteem Program' with the ultimate aim of raising awareness of being at peace with one's appearance especially among young women. This study not only analyzes the beauty promises of cosmetic industry and the stereotypes that is made; but also discusses, from a critical point of view, the brand messages and related communication efforts by taking into account the background of the brand structure. At the same time it examines the debates within the scope of sustainable brand identity, and concentrates on the campaign themes.*

**Key words:** Stereotype Beauty, Cosmetic Industry, Dove.

## TÜKETİCİNİN GERÇEK VE İDEAL BENLİKLERİ ARASINDAKİ ÇATIŞMA: DOVE GERÇEK GÜZELLİK KAMPANYASI VE ÖZ SAYGI PROGRAMI İLE STEREOTİP KOZMETİK MARKA MESAJLARINA KARŞI PROTEST BİR YAKLAŞIM

**ÖZ**

*Bu çalışma tüketicilerin gerçek ve ideal benlik imajları arasındaki çatışmaya ve bu çatışmanın 'güzellik' tanımındaki yansımasına odaklanmaktadır. Çalışma, kozmetik markaların gerçek benlikten ayrı olarak ideal benlikle benzeşen mesajlar ilettiğini ve kozmetik marka mesajlarının tüketicilerin ideal benliklerine bağlı olduğunu varsaymakla birlikte, güzellik vadeden marka mesajlarının analojik basmakalıp modellerden oluştuğuna, ürün ve güzellik mesajlarının defalarca kendilerini tekrar etmelerine ilişkin bir perspektif sunmaktadır. Bu kolektif trende protest olarak Dove tarafından gerçekleştirilen ve 'gerçek benlik' vurgusunu temel alan 'Campaign for Real Beauty' adlı kampanya, 'movement for self-esteem' projesi ile devam ederek, özellikle genç kadınları dış görünüşleriyle barışık olma konusunda bilinçlendirmeyi hedeflemektedir. Çalışma, kozmetik endüstrisinin sunduğu güzellik vaatleri ve yarattığı stereotipi değerlendirmenin yanı sıra, bu akıma eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla karşı duruşa dayandırılan marka mesajlarını ve ilgili iletişim çabalarını, geri planlarındaki marka yapısını dikkate alarak tartışmaktadır. Aynı zamanda, bu tartışmaları sürdürülebilir marka kimliği ekseninde değerlendirerek kampanya temaları konusuna yorum geliştirmektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Stereotip Güzellik, Kozmetik Endüstrisi, Dove.

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## INTRODUCTION

Thanks to global settlements and the effect of consumption culture the tendency to develop 'self' is becoming more and more powerful. The following arguments provide important and clear perspectives to describe today's consumer; that in recent years repeated definition of 'need' regarding consumption has been changed and artificial values have become to be considered as 'needs' As is known today's consumers consume with respect to their emotional needs and structure their 'self' in accordance with variable social trends. There is a parallel relationship between consumers' actualized efforts and brand messages. In actualization of symbolic consumption, as presumed by the consumption culture, brand phenomenon has integrative and complementary qualifications for consumers. Mass communication tools, which transfer symbolic promises of brand marks to the target groups, also have decisive and effective role in this communication process. Consumer receives brand marks' messages via media and attaches the inferred meaning to his/her self structuring process. At this point, marketing and advertisement efforts that strengthen consumption are noteworthy. Considering especially women consumers, fashion and cosmetic industries' tendency to transfer actual trends through advertisement activities have promoted consumption over woman's body. Regarding cosmetic brands' commercial context/visuals, woman consumers receive 'stereotyped' models and it is observed that this fact distorts the meaning/phenomenon of 'beauty' Brand marks (particularly cosmetics) give their promises regarding their products and services by messages, i.e. to be thin and aesthetic, through woman's body. Accordingly, these stereotypes offered by brand marks to women consumers lead to a certain conflict between existing and desired selves. Several campaign-style activities starting from the late 90's and continuing in 2000's have developed opposed approaches against these 'classical' strategies. Among others Nike, The Body Shop and Dove are the most preeminent brand marks that conduct similar campaigns. In early 2000's Dove conducted a campaign called: *Dove the Real Beauty Campaign* within this activity a global level research was done and women' opinions and thoughts were collected on the phenomenon of beauty. Research results were published in 2004 in the form of a report. Defending the fact that the phenomenon of beauty has been artificialized and standardized, this campaign aimed to raise awareness of the redefinition of *beauty* within the framework of *real beauty* theme. This point of view, which was supported by Dove brand mark, has continued to exist in 'Dove Self-Esteem Program'. The main target of this program was to encourage young girls and women to be comfortable in their skins. Analyzing the undertaken projects and campaigns along with the characteristics of Dove brand mark, there is a complementary, overlapping and synchronized relationship between brand marks' identities and the campaigns' main ideas. This study discusses this relationship along with this brand's protest campaigns and with respect to sustainable brand mark strategies. In this study, 'Real Beauty Campaign' and 'Self-Esteem Program' were analyzed in details and they were examined in a relational manner with Dove brand mark's major promises and characteristics within qualitative framework. This study follows a complete statement by; discussing hackneyed beauty understandings of cosmetic industry, and communication activities stand against this understanding within the context of identity conflicts; and conducting reviews regarding brand communication strategies.

**The Phenomenon of Consumption and Consumer's Effort For Self-Creation**

Generally speaking, consumption is described as: seeking out, purchasing and using an item or service to satisfy certain needs. However, looking last 20- year period it can be observed that the phenomenon of consumption has lost its pragmatic basis or this 'pragmatic' basis has been elaborated in a way that received wide acceptance. The consumption act is not performed according to the consumer demand theory; rather, it is done so as to actualize an identity building process. For this reason considering today's consumer and his/her needs, it becomes necessary to include this description the role of consumption as an identity image reflective. Today's consumers go beyond providing basic needs. They perceive consumption within the framework of consumed product and service as an activity field in itself. They understand consumption as a real-ideal identity teller and one of the basic factors that represents individual. In other words, the phenomenon of consumption takes place in communication processes as a certain way of expression within specific fields of interest, values that build identity, social status; and sign and code systems that provide interaction with social environment. In this formation the effects of postmodern trend are extremely strong. In this trend, the facts that consumer has a fragmented identity and puts himself at the center of consumption process caused his 'link value' to become prominent and started a symbolic presentation/expression process. The main reason to consume indicators and symbols can be explained as the desire to use the product which has an attributed indicator value; all these arguments can also be discussed regarding the symbolic consumption concept. Accordingly, 'object, status, prestige and fashion can resemble to an object determined by a certain brand mark, which implies their differences and attributes connotations. This is the consumption object itself. This can be a fridge, vase or anything' (Baudrillard, 2009:58). Considering the absence of functionality in this process, emphasis on meaning and dominance of consumer's involved nature, it is seen satisfaction of an intellectual fantasy in background and instrumental use of consumption in building of a unique meaning. These codes, which that obtained through instrumental positioning, provide message transmission. In theoretic sense, Odabaşı (2004) explains the way how individuals transfer out their values, which they desire to have or already have, in the form of message as 'extended self' or 'symbolic self definition'. As a result, delivered symbolic messages within such a composition can tell 'who the consumer is and who is not'. Because related symbols are described as a wide and overall completness of signs, they can either represent a condition or phenomenon, or indicate a relationship. In this relationship satisfaction of desires and emotional preferences, rather than need and necessities, play dominant role. 'In this way, the concept of consumer goes further from the following definition; 'a person who consumes product and service to meet his needs' and becomes an individual who structures his identity by materialistic entities that he consumes or owns' (Bostancı, 1995:197). Another thinker Kellner (2010:26) elaborates the image transfer by using the concept of 'media show' and explains dominant role models as 'fame culture offering fashion, image and personality symbols'. For him media, with its entire content and by using daily life elements, has the ability and effect to change the habits. These habits generally refer to global life styles and stereotypes. Especially global brand marks need to convey themselves as well as their promised identity images

in global channels. Brands' link values and indicators, especially identity images within brands' messages should be transferred to the consumers by different media.

Obviously using role models as instruments feeds consumer's self actualization process and strengthens consumer's emotions like control and dominance. Consumer, then, reaches a self-confidence point that he can determine the limits of his image and self. At this point differentiation as one of the emerging elements catches the attention. Considering last couple of years it is observed that commercials densely emphasize on 'being different'. It is such a natural pattern for consumers, who are open to this stimulant emphasis, to develop efforts to be 'different'. According to Odabaşı (2006) this situation can be explained as; in a class-divided society we, as human beings; on the one hand try to decrease the differences so as not to fall apart from the superior group, while on the other hand, within our groups, we desire to draw attention of others, we want to be 'noticed' and to be superior.  Hereunder; we tend to evoke admiration around us though products reflecting beauty, success and power. It is possible to argue that this effort, which shows continuity, results in dissociation by brand factor or differentiation by the 'use' of a collective product. No doubt, variation and qualities of these results can be discussed, in a most effective way, in 'life-styles' functions as a kind of self-showcase that consumer creates himself. As is known, with respect to economic, political and social structure life style is motivating for individuals; it is a certain phenomenon that can stimulate, can be learned and subject to change. Discussing an individual's life style within the phenomenon of consumption; it can be obtained a collection of data regarding the 'consumer identity'. Certainly the phenomenon of consumption is not a determinant separately; it gives more qualified results as long as evaluated with other variables as the extensions of daily life. Life style is the reflection of the concept of 'self'; and, activities, interests and demographic features are the main features that can be described as life style's main variables. From this perspective 'life style is the concept that helps to explain how people spend their lives, time and money; and what kind of differences they create between themselves and others. People, who believe that they develop their identities and exhibit them through consumption as much as possible, try to prove this by an artificial happiness' (Odabaşı, 2006:151). In our day, products and services do not integrate to consumers' life styles through their content, quality and functionality features; but, through brand marks that function as symbolic indicators.  Featherstone (1996) argues that:

> (…) without deliberating and embracing a life style through tradition or by habit, new heroes of consumption culture reduce life style into a life project and exhibit their individualism and understandings of style in a way that compose a life style through the particularity of their products, clothes practices, experiences, appearances and physical features. In consumption culture modern individual is told to become conscious not only of his clothes, but also of whether he has a taste or devoid of it; he is also told to be aware of how he talks about the items such as  house, furniture, decoration, car and other activities that would be interpreted and classified (146-147). No doubt at this level, once more, mass media tools become prominent. 'All kinds of communication forms; such as the commercials, celebrity shows and soap operas, include both new life style forms and life style descriptions ' (Odabaşı, 2006:152). Today's consumer does shopping or interests in doing so in order to get rid of daily

life problems mainly caused by financial factors, and to feel the satisfaction that will be created by actualization at least some of the surreal fantasies. There is no rational plan, aim or reason behind this gain and consume act. Even so, consumer, who is imposed to the messages of 'differentiation, being yourself' through mass communication instruments, situates these reasons in a logical base as required by consumption trends. 'As a result, the skill to develop identity and personality that can be formulized as in the message: "you are no longer who you are, you are now ......." in order to make consumers to fill the blanks, recommends and teaches them the most convenient life styles' (Odabaşı, 2006:152). At that point it is reasonable to argue that, in order to transform this into a certain social competition situation, mass communication tools work meticulously to present the class differences within the form, quality and quantity of consumption. To illustrate, while for a person from one of the two opposite poles, astronomic expense potential, opportunity to limitless experience, and material and spiritual freedom are possible and natural; on the other hand, as mentioned before for other group financial insufficiency related daily life problems are dominant. At that point, strategies of mass communication instruments for this situation are all consumption oriented. Odabaşı (2006) claims that these kinds of situations are embodied life styles and impulsions for those who want to eliminate the difference. For him it is not necessary for this to be absolute and complete. 'It can be in dreams, for its ephemeral characteristic is not a problem at all. The difference between dream and reality is at the same time the determinant, approbatory and indicator of the difference between social classes' (Odabaşı, 2006:153).

Baudrillard (2008: 67-68) puts the consumer at the center and discusses that consumption process can be analyzed from two main points. Accordingly:

1.  As an 'interpretation' and 'communication process' based on a code that consumption practices get lost and gain meaning

2.  As a 'social classification and differentiation process' arranged in a way that objects/indicators are not only sense-making differences within a code, but also status related values within a hierarchy.

Baudrillard, at this point, underlines the fact that the phenomenon of consumption can be the object of a strategic analysis that determines specific weight in the distribution of status related values. For him the principle of this analysis is that, object will not be consumed within the usage value. With regards to his interpretation, objects as differentiating indicators are always manipulated either by associating the consumer with his group as ideal referent, or by referring to a higher status group by disintegrating the consumer from his existing group.

The function of quality and usage of an object in determining the status and revealing the value is an important and commonly used act for the current consumers. As is known, status in social context can be described as: 'a reputation, position and a place in the ranking that determines an individual's social situation' (Odabaşı, 2006:153). Also, 'Status implies an individual's position within society and in the narrow sense determines individual's value and the importance of this value in the eyes of the world' (De Botton, 2005:8-12,

in Odabaşı, 2006:153). Based on these meanings; status in present conditions, in which consumers extremely care about their status form the eye of the 'other'; the pressure of the necessity of the acceptance or approval of consumer's image which was based upon consumption; and the existence of competitive atmosphere of which limits are not certain; it is possible to argue that there is a consumption based structuring in the formation of status related values. According to Odabaşı (2006:154), in daily life, consumer finds the created symbols of status, hopes to own them and keeps the 'social distance' between him and others, who are inferior to him. Consumer actualizes his uniquely planned identity by adapting the consumption habits, of the social group that he wants to be a part, to his own life style. Once he actualizes this, he can be accepted as one of them. As a result, the image-status relationship and all products and brands that reveal this relationship may serve to determine the social class, status and prestige.

### 'Body' As Cosmetic Industry's Dominant Discourse and Consumption Object

As many scholars have already discussed, the power of the phenomenon of consumption in recent years has been based on mass marketing applications and advertisement activities. Especially the persistence of the transfer of actual information about fashion industry through mass media, and commercials' presentation of these phenomena as eye-pleasing performances lead women to consider more on their bodies; and by reminding women consistently the necessity of 'approaching with care' made many of them to develop related behavior patterns. Within this context, it is likely to argue that the phenomenon of consumption not only has economic or cultural dimensions, but also has psychological and social dimensions. In addition to globalization's social and individual outcomes, sometimes there are also aesthetic perspectives that change according to the cultures. Consumption desires are the most important factors in formation of aesthetic judgments. As modern capitalist approach presumes, consumption is no more actualized depend upon the concept of need but on desires, and at this step, no the concrete object but symbolic values come to the fore. Based on current consumption acts' symbolic and pretentious tendency, it is remarkable that 'body' is accepted as a 'phenomenon' by most of the thinkers. With respect to body's prominence Baudrillard (2008:163) mentions that:

> Among all other things subject to consumption there is one object that is more beautiful, precious and unique than other objects –a thing that is even more filled with connotations although cars summarize all other objects- this object is: BODY. After millennial Puritanism period, today under the form of physical and sexual liberty, 're-discovery' and the absolute existence of body in fashion and mass culture-health surrounding the body, diet, treatment cult, youth, exquisiteness, femininity/masculinity obsession, body cares, diets, sacrificing applications, Desire discourse surrounding the body- is the witness of body's transformation into *salvation object.* In this moral and ideological function, body has exactly displaced with the soul.

According to Baudrillard's (2008) point of view body status is a cultural phenomenon. In this sense, the relation with body reflects the way how individuals organize themselves through objects and social relationships; it also reflects how in capitalist cultures the gen-

eral status of private property is adapted to body, social practice and its representative in mind. As an opposite example, for a villager individual of traditional order the view of body is not associated with narcissist enclosure of body and performance-oriented perception; rather, there is an instrumental vision of body that was attained through labor process and nature. At this juncture according to Baudrillard, today the structures of production and consumption performances that are desired to be on display lead the subject to have a double act based on his own body's fragmented representation in mind. Within this frameowrk Baudrillard defines this situation as: '*body practice* as 'CAPITAL' and *body practice* as 'FETISH'; and emphasizes that in either cases body is consciously surrounded in economic and psychic manners' (Baudrillard, 2008: 163-164).

Popularity of defining the phenomena like beauty, health, aesthetic and elegance within homogenous frameworks and developing stereotyped statements addressing these phenomena are increasing day by day thanks to the supports of global theories and cosmetic brands' messages. Mass communication has a vital role at the settlement of these phenomena. Using the channels like: print/mass media, social media and cinema in brands' advertisement and publicity activities, has accelerator and facilitator effects on spreading and assimilating the idealized model trends and forms globally. Followed by women carefully, Hollywood culture and its magazine side that particularly take part in western media, support and develop the formation of universal statements regarding aesthetic, body and beauty phenomenon. Doğan (2010) mentions that, at this point there is an anecdote contradiction. In relation to body, the showy presentation of food consumption in global media creates a 'struggle for preference' especially among women consumers. Accordingly, women, who receive messages on universal body and beauty forms through media, are also exposed to calorie rich, delicious consumption products presented through the same media channels; in other words, women are forced to choose between options like: the pleasure of eating, and social reward and applause by having good shaped body. Doğan refers to Baudrillard's (2001) 'idea of 'call for joy' and argues that it is almost indispensible to comply with that invitation' (Doğan, 2010:53).

Within today's capitalist atmosphere, consumption culture delivers certain messages to women about gaining acceptance and admiration in all circumstances in case of transformation of body into a demonstration object. Therefore, it is possible to put forward that women, from a very young age, embrace the necessity of admirableness in all circumstances, the joy of watching even one's self and not to refrain from any financial sacrifice in order to stay thin. Christiner (2008) argues that vast majority of women associate their self-respect and self-perception with their body images (Doğan, 2010:53). Likewise İnceoğlu and Kar mention that women are unhappier to the extent that the difference between their body perception and ideal body image is bigger (Doğan, 2010:53). In a study conducted in Turkey, the findings verify these arguments. Pınar (2002) determined that there was a positive relationship between self-respect and body images; also, he found that fat individuals, majorly composed of women, have significantly low self-respect (Doğan, 2010:53). From a broader view, as stipulated by the consumption culture, the necessity of being thin and having an aesthetical look is embraced by women consumers in many societies, and a certain tendency to spend towards this necessity has been developed.

Identity phenomenon becomes prominent regarding 're-producing' the body, which is instructive in terms of discussing the perception that woman consumers developed towards universally exposed 'selves' and 'images'. According to Arnould and Price (2000: 140): 'while authenticating acts are related to individuals' 'real' self building or demonstrating behaviors, authoritative performances are collective presentment behaviors aimed to discover or re-design the cultural traditions' (Dedeoğlu and Savaşçı, 2005:78). At this point 'real self' is the unity of actions not for the 'other' at the opposite side, but for one's own self. For Arnould and Price authenticating acts, which Elliot (1997) mentions at self-symbolism, occur in two ways:

1. Consumer creatively works on products or consumption experiences in order to build his 'self'

2. Consumer converts into a product or experience so as to contextualize his self-narrative (in Dedeoğlu and Savaşçı: 2005:78).

Authoritative performances are productive consumptions that individual develops with the aim of establishing a relationship between himself and the society/social group that he is part of. Through these performances, consumer tries to integrate and harmonize with the society or social groups and strives to actualize his membership purposes (Dedeoğlu and Savaşçı, 2005).

Baudrillard (2008:166) describes 'body' 'as the most beautiful object among other psychically owned, manipulated and consumed'. Behind this, there is a narcissistic motivation for individual to liberation and self-completion. For him this narcissistic re-enclosure is effective, competitive and economic-type investment. Baudrillard further claims that:

> (…) 're-adopted' body is already an investment based upon the 'capitalist' aims: in other words, if it is invested in body, then, this is for the sake of the body. This body is adopted not from the perspective of object's autonomous teleology but according to a normative pleasure, hedonic efficiency principle, a code of an oriented production-consumption society and the force of an instrumentalism oriented directly to its norms. So to say, body is managed like a cultural asset; it is ordered and manipulated as one the countless *social status indicators*.

At demonstration/presentation phase of body, which is transformed into a consumption object or formulized as a tool to any case 'consume'; 'beauty' and its extension 'eroticism' become prominent. Even though on all occasions these concepts are discussed to be 'relative', within the contexts of modern consumption practices and global media perspective, it is seen that it is offered as a necessity. No doubt, advertisements are the most powerful instruments at delivering messages including the global trends about beauty. Considering cosmetic products, which can always be called 'weaknesses' especially of women, the planned impact can be bigger and spectacular. Baudrillard (2008:167) claims that in this long sacralization period, 'beauty and eroticism are two main leitmotivs of body, which is dealt as a narcissistic cult object, a social strategy and a ritual element'. For him beauty and eroticism cannot be divided and they altogether constitute *the new ethics of this relationship* with body. Although in recent years, notably through the con-

sumption messages targeting metropolis, new practices have been planned and applied for 'male' consumers; still, it is possible to mention that in modern consumption ethics 'female' model is superior to the 'male'. From this perspective it is observed that modern civilization requires always being 'beautiful' and 'young'. Within this framework Baudrillard (2008:168-169) argues that:

> Beauty converted into an absolute, religious command for woman. Being beautiful is neither a natural gift, nor an addition to moral qualities. It is the basic and commanding quality of those who care for their face and lines as well as their souls. Be beautiful, like success in business, is the indicator for being chosen at body level. In addition, in magazines devoted to beauty and success the same *mysterious base* is attributed: in the case of woman it is her sensitivity that discovers and associates all parts of her body "from within" and in the case of an investor it is the complete *intuition* of market's all potentialities (...) Beauty ethics, which is the very same of fashion ethics, can be described as reduction of all concrete values of body, all 'usage values' (energy, movement, sex) to a single functional 'exchange value'; this exchange value abstractly collects magnanimous and complete *idea* of body, and collects the *idea* of desire and pleasure (...). Beauty functions as an indicator/value. For this reason, it is possible to argue that beauty command is one of the forms of functional command (this is valid for objects as well as for women and men); a woman who is the beauty expert of herself is of the same kind of designator and stylist of the business life.

Thompson and Hirschman (1995) mention that body is a social phenomenon that in consumption culture on the one hand it is normalized, but on the other hand, because it is different from ideals, it is forced to struggle with the consumption of the products like: diet, cosmetics, care etc. With respect to this opinion it is reasonable to argue that 'ideal body' messages that are specially delivered by cosmetic industry, lead the consumers to establish a 'thin body' desire. To illustrate, Dedeoğlu and Savaşçı's (2005:82) study on 'women' eating pleasures' revealed the 'other body' concept. Accordingly subjects expressed that: no matter what their weight is they want to have a thin body; they 'almost' like their body size; they are pleased to have such a body size that they can 'cover with clothes'; however, they said, it would be better if they had 'thinner bodies'. These statements show that 'other body' concept was established in subjects' minds. In this case 'other body' is the one that they do not own; in subjects' words, it is the one that has: 'thin waist', 'normal bust', 'normal measure of hip', 'bony face', 'beautiful leg' and 'tall stature'. The reason why the concept of 'other body' in question gained importance is, as mentioned before, the influence of brand marks' messages that transferred through mass media. As the subjects of this sample study mentioned, idealized details like: 'thin waist', 'tall stature' and 'beautiful leg'; and the way how brands' commercials present woman body in a spectacular way make woman body desirable. Accordingly, idealized 'body' in media channels is a preview of the brand mark's promised consumption result.

The advertisement samples presented below are the randomly chosen idealized stereotypes that cosmetic industry created:

In addition to cosmetic brands that target physical beauty; there are also some brands,

which offer products at health/hygiene segment, tend to present 'ideal forms' in their advertisements. Above mentioned examples represent this tendency.

Therefore, as can be seen in the pictures above, the advertisements that deliver messages about solutions for a problem at a particular part of body, and present daily care products at the same time recommend the 'form' of their model by giving promises through the advertisements.

Perfume brands, which have a special status within cosmetic industry's dominant beauty discourse, play an effective role at creating beauty stereotypes through their promises to the consumers and the visual effects that they use in their advertisements. On the other hand, brands in the perfume segments not only describe 'body' from beauty and aesthetical perspectives, but also put emphasis on 'sex appeal' phenomenon that most of the time promises to be desirable. Picture 6 shows an advertisement of Givenchy brand mark, what is remarkable is the bottle of perfume designed as woman's body. This bottle design presents formulized body sizes as an object of desire. The woman in advertisement increases the emphasis of bottle. This perfume bottle can effectively deliver the message of woman body, which has already been defined way before the visual advertisement. In visual advertisements generally bottle and woman as the constituent of the lines of bottle reinforce the perception that the design is aimed to deliver.

### 'Dove' Real Beauty Campaign and Self-Esteem

#### 'Dove' As a Brand Mark

As one of the strong brands in Unilever's personal care segment, Dove with Cream Bar was launched for the first time in 1957 in United States of America and in due course it has become one of the fast growing marks of Unilever. In 1991 it was launched globally and between the years 1991-1994 its launch was performed in 55 countries in the world. Today Dove as a brand, which underlines its quality difference, is the world's one of the leading personal care brands that determines standards of the personal care category. For most of the brand experts the success of Dove is based on its tendency to deliver realistic messages to consumer and its principle to steaily stand behind them. Dove entered to Turkish markets in 1993 with the launch of Dove Cream Bar. Subsequently, the shower gel in 1997, deodorant in 2001 and Body Silk Dove in 2001 joined to the Dove family. The launches regarding the Dove products have continued with: hair care products, hand and body lotion, firming lotion and gel crème, shaper and protective care complexes and personal care and hygiene products for male consumers in recent years. Today Dove offers, especially to women consumers, almost all kinds of basic personal care products that can be needed in hygienic cleaning.

The essence that Dove embraced can be defined as an artless beauty. The brand mission is 'to provide more women to feel more beautiful every passing day'. For this aim, as a brand, it prefers to establish long-term relations with the target consumers. Especially considering the TV commercials of Dove, as emphasized through advertising copy, 'real-

ity' is at stake. In its advertisements there is no room for exaggeration, unreal and cliché elements, in contrast, the features of all its promises are acquirable and realistic. In other words, the main effort of Dove as a brand mark is to fall within consumer's routine preferences and to protect this place despite of all variables. What is spectacular is Dove's message includes an image of positive attitude towards life, it embraces a decent beauty understanding and it is independent from the stereotypes. In addition, it underlines the facts that it is the only personal care brand that does not apply digital systems on its visual advertisements and uses women from real life in its advertisements.

### Dove's Campaign For Real Beauty

The global research 'The Real Truth about Beauty, which was conducted in 10 countries (USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Britain, Italy, Germany, Japan, China and Saudi Arabia) with 3.300 young girls and women between the ages of 18-64, is accepted as the start point of Dove's (2004) 'The Campaign for Real Beauty'. This quantitative research was conducted by Dove and published to the public, below some of the results can be found; most women around the world think that this unrealistic beauty standard generally focuses on certain physical characteristics, however, their beauty includes much more than that. The results of the research included data towards the assumption that what women learn about beauty can affect their self-respect, what they feel about themselves and their lives either positively or negatively. Globally, almost all women mention that at some point in their lives they had been concerned about their physical appearances, weight and the shape of their bodies. Research result revealed that nine out of ten women want to change their appearances.

Through this research, Dove questioned the effect of society's beauty ideals on women and more importantly on young girls' essential values. This research is addressed to understand the extent to which feelings about beauty affect women' self-esteem and how they live as a result of this. As a result of the study it was revealed that today's beauty ideals can create an appearance-anxiety, especially on young girls between the ages of 15-17. In this study the relationship between appearance satisfaction and self-esteem was reviewed and it was found that globally, there is a significant relationship between women' satisfaction of their physical appearance, weight, body shape and self-esteem. The study also covered the details of the important role that girl friends (peers) and mothers have on the process of interference of beliefs about beauty and body image. Within this framework, it is observed that girl friends and mothers are the elements that strongly affect girls' feelings about beauty and body image at a very early age. It was determined that while mothers have positive effect on satisfaction of physical appearance and self-esteem, girl friends and media have negative effects. Globally, mothers are also concerned about the socialization phenomenon based on beauty. The study in general terms, assumes that current beauty ideals may create perfection desire for beauty and for many women around the world this desire creates concern and insufficiency about physical appearance, weight and body shape.

The objectives of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign" can be described as:

To determine the concept and standards of beauty in our society through discussions and forums in a way that all women can participate; to re-establish the definition of real beauty and recover it from cliché statements; to support women and society to understand the concept of beauty in a more different way and create thought-provoking publicity campaigns; to determine women' thoughts about beauty from academic studies conducted all over the world; to measure the effects of beauty on women' happiness and health, to enable young girls to feel beautiful and stop their obsession with their bodies; and aim at raising young girls as self-confident individuals. The study analyzes this campaign, which aims to establish a new point of view regarding the concept of 'beauty', and bases its assumptions on campaign's instruments to reach consumers (visuals of campaign, commercial film, advertisement tools and publicity tools of related activities), and elaborates it around the ideas that taken into consideration at theoretical part. The following parts include the interpretation of the preeminent visual and written messages of this study.

Above mentioned commercial film starts with a young and freckled girl, after several seconds of this girl's image it continues with other and very fast images changing in milliseconds. As can be seen in pictures selected from those images (Pictures 7:72; 8:72; 9:73; 10:73; 11:73; 12:73; 13:73; 14:73), the forms of body and beauty that are idealized by consumption culture are presented to very young girls as hostile and dominant visual attacks through alternative channels. Nowadays, it is unpreventable for children to be exposed to television messages; also, it is remarkable that hackneyed beauty understanding of cosmetic industry is delivered to children at early ages and it is engraved in children' subconscious. The advertisement message: 'Talk to your daughter before beauty industry does' focuses on raising awareness of cosmetic industry's direct effect on the creation of stereotyped beauty concepts and its influence over young girls. At the same time it aims to warn parents –specifically mother- about this worrying development. Through this written message that appears at last image the major aim of the campaign is described and an open call is made to take precautions.

Scenes in pictures 18:74 ; 19:74; 20:74; 21:74 show a boy who goes to take a girl named Amy from her house. However, as can be understood from the messages at the end of commercial film, Amy will not go outside because she does not feel comfortable with her outlook. What is understood from this message: 'Amy can name 12 things wrong with her appearance. He can't name one' is the boy who went to take Amy out does not have any negative idea about her physical appearance, and there is a wrong attitude especially among young women in their ways to judge themselves through beauty perceptions based on structuring that consumption culture imposes.

Similar to pictures (Pictures 22:74; 23:74; 24:74; 25:75) of Real Beauty Campaign's outdoor advertisements, commercial films and messages, most of the cosmetic product and brand mark want women to realize that in their messages many physical characteristics are described as 'unnecessary or need to be corrected'; and they present contents within the context of 'accept and embrace the natural one' theme that encourages to re-think about beauty.

### 'Dove' Self-Esteem Program

Dove's 'Self-Esteem Program' was structured subsequent to the 'Dove Real Beauty Campaign'. Considering the thematic concept it is a spin-off of Real Beauty Campaign, however it differs from it regarding the main idea. As mentioned in global research report of Real Beauty Campaign, it was based on the efforts to make people re-think about the phenomenon of 'beauty' and aimed to raise awareness of artificial and stereotyped forms imposed within the framework of consumption culture. Also, 'Dove Self-Esteem Program' objectifies the 'awareness of real beauty', through practices and implementations, created by the campaign. In the official website of Dove Self-Esteem Project, it is mentioned that this project imagines a world where every girl can grow up confidently, reach any potential and every woman can enjoy believing their own beauty. According to this imagination the project establishes a world that every woman can get inspired from each other. Through the Self-esteem project Dove educates and encourages next generations to make them establish positive relations with the concept of 'beauty'. This program supports women through online tools and workshops in order to prepare them to mentor and consult young girls. Dove mentions that through this program it supported millions of young girls to develop their abilities of critical media literacy and encouraged them about self-confidence in order to lead them to reach the optimum potential. Dove summarizes Self-Esteem Project's vision in one sentence: 'Imagine a world where beauty is a source of confidence, not anxiety'.

Dove believes that clichés, trends and etiquettes that engraved in women' subconscious deviate the meaning of beauty; and through the Real Beauty Campaign it retrieves 'beauty' from all stereotyped concepts and initiates to redefine its meaning; also, it continues to conduct the activities regarding Self-Esteem Project during the studies take place. As mentioned before the campaign had supported the fact that real beauty can exist in different ages, body sizes and shapes, in everybody; and as Unilever claimed from its official website the campaign had reached 24.317.713 people through media channel and pioneered them to re-establish the meaning of the concept of beauty. Visual advertisements below are Dove Self-Esteem Program's examples that appeared in various media channels. The composition in these visual advertisements reflects multidimensionality and presents a natural and simple depth; it is far from being artificial and fancy. As mentioned before, Dove brand particularly emphasizes on the 'principle of involving real people' to the advertisements, which becomes prominent as an identity harmonic element; and, this principle remains steady throughout Self-Esteem Program's visual advertisements. Furthermore, analyzing with respect to the project, the idea to involve real people constitutes more convenient and strong project background.

In Dove Canada's official website it is possible to find Self-Esteem Program related articles, forms, brochures and guidelines that aim to encourage young girls at the ages between 8-14 to be 'self-confident' and to explain visions integrated to Dove; also this website provides several materials in PDF format including information on 'Mother-Daughter Discussions Guide and Real Beauty Applied Training Program'. Mother-daughter pictures below can be references to the related activities.

Through Self-Esteem Project's applications in Turkey self-confidence trainings were conducted for a group of female students at elementary school between 4th and 8th grades; trainings were organized under the guidance of PREP (Psychological Rehabilitation Education Programs Association) and a group of volunteer psychologists and pedagogues; and aimed to train students, teachers and mothers. Through these trainings Dove Self-esteem Program performed as a direct supporter of women and young girls to be more confident and develop a better body perception. Between the years 2007-2008 within the framework of Dove Self-Esteem Program, which aims to lead young girls to retrieve from their obsession with their bodies and lead them to be self-confident individuals, 1500 mothers, daughters and teacher were trained. Furthermore, Dove Self-Esteem Program organized a photograph exhibition with respect to event management, in order to draw more attention on the issue. The exhibition was hold with the working title: 'because you the most beautiful girl I ever seen' and presented many pictures of famous and not-famous people's natural appearances.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As is known after the Industrial Revolution in18[th] century, societies had started to restructure the discourses of rational thinking, wealth, development, production and consumption increase, and economic growth. Population growth especially after the second half of the 20th century, imprudent use of food and energy resources and increasing continuity of consumption had led to the awareness of ecologic depredation and depletion of natural resources. Until the 1970's human being had only focused on increasing individuals' standard of living; at the beginning of 1970's he started raising awareness of environment and the process which starts in 1972 when the Club of Rome published the report: 'The Limits of Growth' gained speed in 1987 when 'the idea of sustainability included to the literature'(Hayta, 2009:144). In 1987 the Brundtland Report, prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development, described 'Sustainable Development' as: "a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Ortak Geleceğimiz, 1987:6). Brundtland Report importantly underlines the fact that sustainability focuses on 'social, economic and ecologic objectives' (Kaya and Bıçkı, 2006). In literature Daily and Erlich define the concept of sustainability as a process of protection for the elements that social, economic and ecologic systems need; also Macleren (1999) describe it as: 'the sustainability of a desired situation and maintenance of social equity through continuous conditions' (in Özbakır &Velioğlu, 2009:73).

Developments regarding the needs of the current social, economic and ecologic systems –or anxiety at present situation- put consumption act in front of the protection of related systems. More consumption develops wealth of the related systems; while on the other hand, it has the potential to deteriorate the nature of most processes. Sensitive attitudes, started with the environmental issues especially raising awareness of ecological balance and continued with social context, force the brand marks to stray from their sale oriented approach and endeavor to perform in those social responsibility issues. Developments

regarding the social responsibility/sensitivity had oriented brand marks towards social projects and led them to involve new phenomena like corporate citizenship to their marketing and management literature. All these formations had deepened the investigation of both production and consumption processes. The need to take responsibility was born within the framework of deterioration that production and consumption practices had caused; and corporate brands integrated this need to the projects that aim to find solution in many subfields of social structure. Apart from these developments, only a few brands had been able to take sustainable missions and reinforced these attempts within long-term initiatives. At this stage the main point of sustainability, which is the harmony between missions advocated and brand's dynamics and consistency with brand's sincere discourses, finds place within the basic values of the brand. Brands, instead of highlighting their products and services, have enhanced their brand's essence by delivering the messages that they support and exchanged values from mutual missions. The protest attitude and social responsibility advocacy; in Dove's Real Beauty Campaign and Self-Esteem Program overlap with brand's all characteristics, stands as the main idea to sustain the identity elements that brand had determined for itself and to provide exchange of values. Considering the main idea in a broader perspective, the essence of brand is entirely consistent with previous practices, products, and media and communication strategies.

The movement and activities around the brand identity values are generally in parallel with the perception occurred within target group and this is very important regarding the brand loyalty. So to say, the consumers loyal to the brand in question enter automatically in the process of codification and start questioning the position of identity of the brand stands within related initiation/activity in any case of the social responsibility initiation or implementation based on the social benefit. In such cases, with the aim of protecting and sustaining the value systems of brand mark in question, the discourse and stability of the brand during this process is as important as the theme selection of the project/activity. This process, considering the Dove brand; 'The Real Beauty Campaign' as mentioned before, includes messages designed to provide benefits to women and designed to be against the dominant discourse of the cosmetic industry. With respect to entirety of Dove brand this campaign and the subsequent communication attempts, regarding the expectation, are not worrisome complex and they do not cause any disappointment for consumer. Dove, as brand identity and personality, keeps its image in target consumer's mind and through the 'Real Beauty Campaign' it presents an advocacy role that supports and deepens its value systems as a brand mark.

In the final analysis, regarding current consumption theory it is accepted that consumer can cognitively elaborate marginal discourses within the limits of cosmetic industry. However, as described within the framework of postmodern movement 'new consumer has complex and unpredictable behavior pattern', new consumer is an individual who has the potential to embrace marginal messages at the same time.

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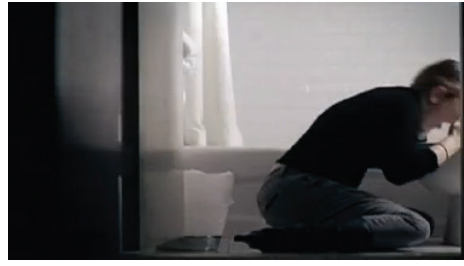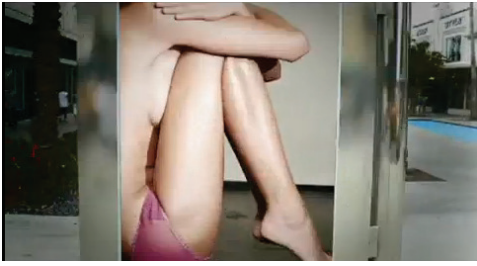
**PICTURES**



Picture 1.



Picture 2.

**Picture 3.**
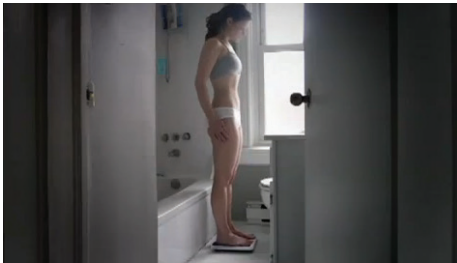


**Picture 4.**



**Picture 5.**



**Picture 6.**





**Pictures 7-8. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign"**

**Pictures 9-10. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign"**
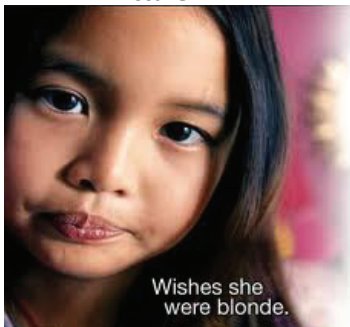


**Pictures 11-12. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign"**



**Pictures 13-14. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign"**



**Pictures 15-16. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign**

**Pictures 17-18. Visual Advertisements of Dove's "The Real Beauty Campaign**



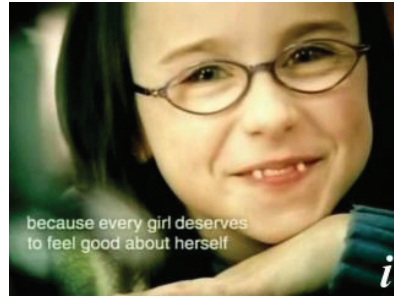**Picture 19.**



**Picture 20.**



**Picture 21.**



**Picture 22.**



**Picture 23.**



**Picture 24.**

**Picture 25.**

**Picture 26.**



**Picture 27.**



**Picture 28.**

**Picture 29.**