

**WOMEN'S MAGAZINES, GENDER IDEOLOGY AND FEMALE IDENTITY****Mina FURAT¹****Özlem ALTUNSU SÖNMEZ²****ABSTRACT**

Women's magazines are printed materials which entertain and inform women from different social backgrounds. They represent differing gender roles and female identity and create and flourish consumer culture for women. This study aims to depict how female identity and gender roles are represented in the advertisements, interviews with famous people and other pages. It is observed that all women's magazines present an ideal women identity with an emphasis on slim and beautiful women bodies through their advertisements of clothes and cosmetics, diets, physical exercise alternatives etc... In this study, it is also observed that the magazines present the ideal female identity according to their regular customer's socio-economic, and cultural characteristics. In this sense, while the Cosmopolitan portrays an ideal woman who is sexually active, independent and have a career, Seda Magazine portrays a woman who is a mother but also carries for her beauty, diet and being fashionable with a limited budget.

Keywords: Women's Magazines, Female Identity and Gender Ideology

KADIN DERGİLERİ, TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET İDEOLOJİSİ VE KADIN KİMLİĞİ**ÖZET**

Kadın dergileri, farklı sosyal alt yapılardan gelen kadınları eğlendiren ve bilgilendiren basılı materyallerdir. Bu dergiler, farklılaşan toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve kadın kimliklerini temsil eder. Bu çalışma, kadın kimliğinin ve toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin, reklam, ünlülere mülakatlar ve diğer sayfalarda nasıl temsil edildiğini göstermeyi amaçlıyor. Bütün kadın dergilerinde, ideal kadın kimliğinin, giysi ve kozmetik reklamları, diyetler, fiziksel egzersiz alternatifleri yoluyla zayıf ve güzel kadın bedenlerine bir vurgu yapılarak, sunulduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bu çalışmada, ayrıca, dergilerin, ideal kadın kimliğini, düzenli okurlarının sosyo-ekonomik ve kültürel özelliklerine göre sundukları da gözlenmiştir. Bu anlamda, Cosmopolitan dergisi ideal kadın kadını, cinsel olarak aktif, bağımsız ve bir kariyeri olan biri olarak betimlerken; Seda dergisi, hem anne olan hem de kısıtlı bir bütçeyle; güzelliğine, beslenmesine ve moda dikkat eden bir kadını betimliyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın Dergileri, Kadın kimliği ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet İdeolojisi

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INTRODUCTION

The representation of women and female selfhood in the women's magazines is both an important issue for illuminating gender relations and the growth and extension of capitalism through consumption culture in the media. The main aim of this project is to understand how the gender identity is constructed in the women's magazines and how the female identity is represented and constructed through the advertisements, interviews, and other parts of the women's magazines. Thus, an important question in this study is "what are the characteristics of gender identity construction in women's magazines? Are there any differences between Turkish national women's magazines such as Hülya and Seda (April 2006) and national versions of international women's magazines (Elle, Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire, Madame Figaro, Elele in April 2006) regarding the construction of female identity?"

Some general theoretical remarks can be made about the problem of gender identity representation and construction in the women's magazines:

Women's magazines address their readers as a homogenous community of women who have the same gender identity and similar social roles of womanhood especially with reference to men and heterosexual relationships. Magazines are commodities themselves offering entertainment and advices to women.

The magazines provide recipes, models and patterns of self necessary to be a "perfect" woman through presenting life styles, consumption patterns and role models. Thus, the magazines are commodities marketing and advertising other commodities through encouraging life styles based on consumption patterns and presenting ways of being perfect women

Magazines do not present the common problems of women in a political manner. Moreover, if the problems of womanhood are mentioned in some columns of the magazine, the problems of some women are showed with personification and individualization without political implications or views about the women's issues.

Women's magazines are constructed with symbolic meanings and visualized material (mainly women's photos) based on the different ideological perspectives of female identity. The gaze of women over other women who are generally thin and tall with perfect body features and beautiful with cosmetics and style is a part of the entertaining function of the magazine.

The female identity in the magazines includes the construction of controversial ideal models for women such as; being a compassionate mother, having a successful carrier, being beautiful and sexually attractive. These different role models are also symbolically referring to the different and actually conflicting discourses of gender. However, these conflicting messages about gender that are represented in the different pages of the same magazine are not emphasized but ignored by the magazine. In this sense, it is also important to analyze the probable problematic areas of gender identity such as; female sexuality, motherhood, business life, personal life.

Gender identity in the magazines is not situated in a stable form but subject to conflict and negotiation. In this regard, the images and texts of magazines are discursive materials which construct a fragmented, heterogeneous and complex gender identity for its readers. The construction of gender identities is in accordance with a formulation of a heterogeneous gender ideology which is based on the negotiation and convention of conflicting gender identities and roles. As a media text, the women's magazines became a cultural commodity for constructing and presenting different gender ideologies which are not always in harmony. This research paper will be aimed to distinguish these different ideologies through analyzing the symbolic representations and constructions of gender identities in the texts and visual material of magazines. With this theoretical assumption the women's magazines will be analyzed with semiological analysis and content analysis in three sections with reference to analyzing the construction of female identity, life style constructions and gender ideology. The first section is the analysis of the men-women relationship and problems mentioned in the sections of sexual and emotional relations and personal stories. The second section is to analyze the integration of consumption patterns with female identity in the sections of advertisements, health, beauty and fashion. The third section is the portrayal of media celebrities in the sections of interviews in regard to identity issue. Finally, an analysis of the political and social issues that were presented in the magazines will be made.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first element of the gender discourse evident in the magazines is the assumption that the readers of the magazine are women. According to Beetham (1996: 12), identification of the magazine with the women identity situates the magazine with specific content, price, style and tone of language which were assumed to be proper for women. Moreover, the author (1886: 1-4) mentioned that being a woman means being a difficult project, for which the magazine has characteristically provided recipes, patterns, and models of self. In this sense, magazine has the duty to transform women into perfect models of womanhood with the predetermined codes of femininity described in the magazines. However, these predetermined codes of femininity are fractured and heterogeneous because of the fact that women have complex social roles such as; sexual woman, successful individual, thrifty housekeeper, and mother.

An important way of constructing a homogenous female identity including all the readers was mentioned by the authors Ballaster, R., Beetham, M., Frazer, E. and Hebron, S. (1991: 9). According to their claim, one of the main ways of constructing female identity in women magazines is to situate women in reference to and in contrast with the "natural opposite" of women that is men. Moreover, the relationship between men and women is constructed on the basis of the social reality that men are both central and desirable for women's lives and also a problematic element and threat to women. This construction of female identity in reference to men assumes all readers are heterosexual.

Beentham (1996: 2) also clearly describe the magazines as a commodity selling other commodities in the sense that magazines are products of the print industry, becoming a crucial domain for advertising and sale of other products and involved in capitalist production and consumption. But she rejected the idea that magazines are tools of domestic ideology and regime of sexual repression even if she mentioned that magazines creates collective meanings and constructing an identity for the individual reader as gendered and sexual being with presenting a set of values about the gender. Because she claims that the readers can still accept or resist meanings the writer produces and the magazines produce feminized spaces which have the potential to challenge oppressive and repressive models of feminine through recognizing the inconsistency between the feminine worlds of women's magazine and the historical conditions

of women. In addition to the author's views, it can be mentioned that the personification of the women's problems in the magazines can partly be seen as responsible for the lack of politicization of the personal lives' of the women and thus for the lack of challenge to the pre-established oppressive models of femininity.

Moreover, Beentham also argued that (1996: 4) sexuality of women are in a continuous and dynamic construction process in the magazines because the female body is always center of attention and defined in relation to its visualization in advertisements of corsets, medicines, hairstyles and other products which are necessary for the survival of the magazine. The instability and ambiguity of female sexuality is limited by the construction of female identity in contradiction and difference with male identity, by the lack of power of the femininity, by the creation of meaning in a contest and negotiation process.

Ballaster, R., Beetham, M., Frazer, E. and Hebron, S. (1991: 9) stated that the gender ideology in the magazines can not be separated from the economic function of the magazines. Their main role is to be a commodity which is a medium for advertisements of other commodities. So gender ideology in the advertisements could only be constructed considering the reality that women would be promoted to continue to buy and consume commodities, not only for themselves, but also for their families. In this sense, the advertisements can not formulate feminist analyses of gender relations in their text. To state claims and beliefs which are critical to system of patriarchy and/ or capitalist system are not suitable for a women's magazine. In order to promote women to buy magazines and the advertised products, femininity should have been given a particular positive content. This content is given through constructing gender identity with reference to certain life styles; such as being a mother and having a carrier, etc...

For Beentham (1996: 8) it is also important to note that the magazines are the spaces for consumption. In the consumption process through the advertisements of the magazine, the image, desire and shopping activity become linked. Together with the advertorials, the female identity became strongly linked with consumption patterns and life style issue. Thus, female identity is constructed by the appearance of any woman and the magazine reading and shopping related with the activity of looking. Moreover, the author mentioned that the magazines could

only address middle and upper classes of women who have the necessary levels for literacy, income, leisure time and space for reading magazines.

Ballaster, R., Beetham, M., Frazer, E. and Hebron, S. (1991: 25-26) mainly claim that the magazines are a space in which a plenty of discourses about the female identity are constructed. In their understanding magazines do not reproduce or represent a one unique dominant gender discourse but employ and carry elements of a variety of discourses such as; psychotherapy, medicine, fiction, photography, humanism. This complexity and mobility enables magazines to maintain its hegemonic function in women's lives. In order to elucidate the way these complex relation of variety of discourses to construct a hegemonic understanding, the authors make quotations of Barthes. Barthes pointed out the concept of "connotation" with which a second order system of meaning is encoded by the readers of the "text". Connotations are the alternative meanings for the texts with which the linguistic sign (the conjunction of signifier and signified) itself becomes a signifier and symbolizing other 'mythic' concepts or signifieds (status, civilization, love, etc...). In this sense, the alternative meanings could infinitely be inferred from the text. The concept of "intertextuality" was presented by Barthes to claim that the readers always comprehend any text in reference to prior understanding and use of other texts. The authors claimed that there is no pure reader and their activity of reading the women's magazine is pre-structured by the previous readings of other texts such as; tabloids, romance fiction, etc...

Regarding the pleasures that are gained through reading the magazines, Ballaster, R., Beetham, M., Frazer, E. and Hebron, S. (1991: 30) claimed that the cyclical and open-ended form of magazines are established to refer to the culturally learned distinction of gender. Moreover, magazines were designed as repetitive and open-ended in order to sustain their commercial success of the magazine in accordance with the kinds of pleasures it offers to the readers. The striking characteristics of the magazine which were mentioned by the authors are heterogeneity, juxtaposing different genres, mixing print and photography, offering a range of characterized voices. One of the unique characteristics of the magazines is that it does not require to be read from front to back, nor in any particular order. For the authors the fragmentary nature of magazines is convenient to the impossibility of sustaining women's

concentrated attention for the magazines in the daily routine of women. Moreover, magazine's periodicity allows for both open-endedness and routinisation which conforms to reader's way of life where leisure like work is regulated in time.

Fung's research (2002: 321) on the women's magazines in Hong Kong examines how the women's cultural consumption creates, constructs and circulates women's identities. For the author, the results of the study expose that the processes of identification can be constructed on three corresponding consumption levels. Firstly, women readers identify themselves with certain "imaginary communities" through reading the magazines and through modeling the behaviors and styles of the communities they feel they are sustaining their relationship with the magazines. In the author's point of view (2002: 333), readers' identification of being "smart," "intelligent," "modern," "stylish," and "independent" career women is acquired by imagining communal relationships with the models and the editors.

Secondly, women readers identify themselves with an idealized community-constructed beauty and search for the commodities which collectively recommend this idealized beauty for them. For the author (2002:333), at the second level, women's identity is reinforced and actualized through identification with the commodities prescribed by the members of the community. The commodities are perceived by the readers to acquire the enabling power to transform them from the "ordinaries" to the "glamorous." The materialistic consumption of goods, which symbolizes a collective consumption act, in particular, the very act of consuming beauty products, foregrounds female readers' desire to gain recognition among their imagined peer group, and theoretically re-connect themselves to the capitalistic society while being cautious about the various social forces they are subject to. Thirdly, women consider the "communities" as constructing a space for understanding and comfort from the emotional and relational problems of real life. According to the author's point of view, structured identification-consumption has shaped working class women into an identity, which conforms to society's dominant capitalist logic. However, the author also mentioned that there are always a few women who challenge to search for alternative lifestyles.

The author tried to employ an interpretive approach to examine how reading magazines and shopping, as consumption practices, serve the function of creating, constructing and

circulating women's identities. In particular, the author (2002: 323) attempts to answer three specific research questions. Firstly, what is the relationship between magazine consumption and materialistic consumption? Secondly, how is a woman's identity constructed in this process and how is it related to consumption? Finally, will the magazine and the identity constructed transform, confront or comply with capitalistic logic? Such questions not only elucidate the consumption and materialistic culture of female working classes in Hong Kong, but also investigate process of values, culture and identities formation of women.

In this sense, Fung also (2002: 333) stated that female readers make use of the cultural space to share their consumption decision, feelings, ideas, thoughts, emotions, love affairs, work pressure and the like with the editors and other members typically in the form of "girls' talk" in accordance with the specific nature of the magazine. The intimate support of the editors and other members become reinforcement and guarantee to the readers' values and succeeding consumption patterns. Because there are extensive means of identification with the magazine as a reference point, readers can easily internalize consumption in their daily life. For the author, the theoretical significance lies in the reality that mass media is a strong power for producing, constructing, and reinforcing the identity of a specific group, particularly an inferior one in society through promoting consumption. Although this power of media texts is highly slight through the normalized use of the media without direct awareness of the people in general. Thus, magazine consumption becomes symbolic and ideological since magazines are introduced with cultural and psychological appeal and impose a sense of identity and orientation to the female readers'. In addition, the act of magazine consumption indicates a relationship between consumption of the goods and the abstract concepts of "beauty," "comfort," and "status" without the consciousness of the readers.

Fung declared that (2002: 333) female readers of the so-called modern women's magazines attempt to perform a cosmopolitan identity through cultural consumption. The significant value of cultural consumption in identity formation is grounded in the socio-cultural and economic nature of a capitalistic society, in which consumption is regarded as the indicator of social modernity and prosperity. This capitalistic logic reinforces materialistic consumption among women, even to the extent that "shopping" is seen as a major women's-activity. For the

author, Hong Kong women's dependence on materialistic consumption to build their identities reflects a certain degree of fragility, superficiality and compliance to patriarchal dominance in that because of four reasons. Firstly, the emphasis on the materialistic consumption patterns functions to formulate a significant segment of their identity. Secondly, their identities, and consumption behaviors are constructed on standards were decided by others (media). Thirdly, their identities are constructed or reformed through materialistic consumption which is a socially and traditionally acceptable way in the male-dominant society. Finally, they did not show any awareness of the paradoxical connotation in the meaning of "beauty" defined and shared within their imagined community. Although the author (2002: 334) is not optimistic about the awareness of women the paradoxical character of adopting a gender identity based on consumption on the basis of an imagined community, he also stated that the recognition of alternative lifestyles and values also can also be a promising potential for women in Hong Kong to redefine their roles, status and the values of femininities in this patriarchal society.

Machin and Leeuwen (2005: 578) make a research about the linguistic style of the cosmopolitan magazine and the analysis of the discourse of style in the magazine. For them the importance of Cosmopolitan magazines is its ability to disperse globally lifestyle models for women, not just through its magazines, but also through its television programs, lines of cosmetic products and cafés. In this way the magazine enables women across the world to designate their commitment to the Cosmo lifestyle of the 'fun fearless female' through the way they dress and tidy up, and through their expressions, postures and actions. The authors claim that the cosmopolitan presents new identities and something different for its readers. For them, the global impact and dispensation of the Cosmo identity and life style is the most important distinguishing characteristic of this magazine. The cosmopolitan presents a model of the self and related personal characteristics which can be gained through commitment to consumer lifestyle models. For understanding the process whereby the Cosmopolitan achieve this aim, the authors made linguistic discourse analysis of US, Dutch, Spanish, Indian and Chinese versions of Cosmopolitan magazine. They claim that language style can itself be an important carrier of meaning and the way of speaking or writing about the world through choosing specific phonological, lexicon and grammar structures present a different world view.

Leeuwen and Machin (2005: 582) mainly focused on the concept of style and differentiated three types of style, individualistic style, social style and life style. While individual style is artistic and unique, social style which express the social position of its holders rather than individual characteristics and designate who the person in terms of class, gender, age, social relations, and what the person do in terms of the socially regulated activities she/he engages in and the roles that are played. The social style is externally motivated and determined by the social factors that are outside the individuals' control. According to their argument (2005: 583- 585), life style concept is the integration of the social and individual style. The life style is a group style in the sense that, geographically dispersed, scattered across the cities of the world individuals became group not based on their identities of class, gender, age, or occupations but based on their shared consumer behaviours (shared taste), shared patterns of leisure time activities and shared attitudes toward key social issues (environmental problems, gender issues etc..). The authors claimed that life styles are social because they are signified by appearances such as styles of dress and adornment, decoration of the places. Thus, through their appearances people can announce their 'interpretations' of the world, their affiliation with certain values and attitudes. On the same basis they can also recognize others, across the globe, as members of the same 'interpretive community', as announcing the same taste, the same values and the same ideas.

Machin and Leeuwen (2005: 585) also claimed that the consumer goods they use to do so, meanwhile, are increasingly homogeneous, for reasons of economies of scale. Therefore their producers have begun to elaborate symbolic systems to transform them into lifestyle signifiers, to differentiate them in terms of the kinds of expressive meanings that were traditionally associated with individual styles: feelings, attitudes, personality traits. Finally, 'lifestyle' is social because of the role it plays in marketing, where traditional social indicators such as class, gender, age, etc., have been replaced by lifestyle market segmentation techniques, which classify consumers through a mixture of consumption patterns and attitudes. Yet, lifestyles are also individual. Unlike traditional 'social style', lifestyle is diverse. It diminishes homogeneity, increases choice and does away with the requirement to dress according to your age, gender, class, occupation and even nationality suggesting distinct styles for men and

women. In this system, difference between social classes and occupations may not have disappeared, but they are gradually becoming less important. And although individuals can be made aware of the fact that their choices are also the choices of millions of 'people like them', across the globe, they nevertheless feel that their style is primarily individual and personal, and that they are making creative use of the wide range of semiotic resources made available to them by the culture industries. This is further enhanced by the fact that 'lifestyle' identities are unstable and can be discarded and re-made any time.

Another issue after the concept of life style is the representation and construction of sexual relationships in the women's magazines. According to Machin and Thornborrow (2006: 173) sex has been used a great deal in women's magazines and other mass media to signify central values of power and freedom due to its connotations of being dangerousness and the non-traditional. The authors claim that In these magazines women are shown to be assertive, powerful and independent through the way that they seduce men and behave sexually rather than being powerful and independent through the political views that they hold or through the way that they act upon society. Their research aim is to illustrate that a fantasy space, where real-world obstacles and meanings are erased has to be created in the magazines a space, in order to allow for a repertoire of theatrical sexual play to operate. For the authors, this creation of fantasy space is a typical characteristic of the lifestyle society in which we live in and define ourselves in terms of what we do and the values we hold rather than on the basis of who we are in respect to gender or social class. Moreover, as they claim, the ways for communicating these values is often through our use of consumer products, which allows us to support ourselves with the core values and meanings with which the products have been overloaded. According to the authors, even if lifestyles can be chosen, the prevalent choices of lifestyles that are available are often created to serve the interests and needs of large corporations and the ideology of consumerism.

For the authors (2006: 187), even if it is reasonable to argue that sexual liberation has brought some advantageous achievements for women and increased resources with which to understand and think about their desires, the control of sexual behaviour is done now by the mass media and in cooperation with the implementation of lifestyle concept. In this sense,

magazines, advertisements and movies suggest staged state of affairs in which certain social practices, which can not take place in the real world precisely, are signified in the magazines through the process of consumption. Magazines, then function in a process of signification through codes of dress and lifestyle that are drawn from consumer culture. The kind of freedom and power that is suggested in the women's magazines is in this sense, is the freedom and power to play with the right toys which should have been bought by readers. So, consumption merge with the connoting values of challenges to the social order, freedom and power in the act of lifestyle marketing. As a final comment, the authors claimed that reinforcing the idea that women can become powerful through taking on a theatrically signified sexuality, women will be less able to address the things that leave them powerless in their real lives.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE COSMOPOLITAN, MADAME FIGARO, MARIE CLAIRE, ELELE, HÜLYA AND SEDA MAGAZINES

This analysis mainly centered on fourth sections. Firstly, the discourse of the personal relations especially with men will be analyzed. Secondly, the relation of female identity and consumption patterns and life styles, thirdly, the interviews with celebrities will be analyzed. Finally, the social and political matters mentioned in the women's magazines will be analyzed.

A. Men-Women Relationship And Problems In Personal Relationships Including Sexual Relationships And Personal Stories

As previously mentioned, the women's identities in the magazines are strongly related with their sexual relationships with men. These magazines always assume that men are necessary elements for a woman's life. Cosmpolitan magazine especially constructs a perfect female identity who knows the tricks of being successful in sex. There is more than one page showing the ways to sexually attract men even in one copy of a cosmopolitan. The relationship and sex pages of the Cosmopolitan magazine include different types of advices for woman. At one end, the magazine gave sexual advices and at the other end it shows the ways to be happy with loneliness. Also formulates discussion issues such as; if the child or the husband is important in marriages. These different type of approaches to the relationships and men is

mainly because the magazine's aim to address with different attitudes towards relationships, marriage and sex. It can be sensed from the confession page of the readers while one of the readers confess that she has twelve different male partners and cannot decide on any of them, another mentions that she still loves her ex-boyfriend. In relation with the presentation of relationships to men, Cosmopolitan remains to hold the most sexually liberal views among all the women's magazines that were examined.

The contradictory nature of this emphasizing the sexuality of women lies in the fact that while women are shown as powerful, having careers and do not suppress their sexual identities, they still do want to and need to sexually attract men. Can this emphasis on the sexual character of women identity be based on the fact that women are enforced to compete with each other to attract men? Other magazines (Elele, Madam Figaro, Marie Claire; Hülya) mainly gave examples of problematic areas with men in relations such as the relations of a woman to her boyfriend's or her husband's ex-wife or the why men could not establish strong emotional and sexual relationships with women who have successful careers or the relation between love and sex. But even the emphasis over the sexuality of women is loosened in the other women's magazines; women are always pursuing strong love and sex relationships with men, trying to make themselves more competent for relationships.

Another element which was related with the relationships is the issue of motherhood and the idea of having a child and/ or being pregnant. As an interesting issue, Elele and Marie Claire mentioned the personal life experiences of two types of queer identities. First of them is a transvestite who became a woman with an operation and made an interview with a Marie Claire a journalist. The second is the hidden homosexuals who have at the same time families with children which were pictured in the magazine of Elele. While the problems of transvestite were mentioned with sympathy and compassion together with emphasizing the problems of being neither men nor women in the process of trying to become a woman, the hidden homosexuals issue was tried to be mentioned with an objective and cool attitude.

Another observation worth mentioning is that the magazines of Cosmopolitan, Madam Figaro, Marie Claire and Elele are structured to give a female identity which have more sexually

liberal views. Perhaps, the Hülya is somewhere between the more conservative views of womanhood and more liberal ones, Seda is more likely a womens magazine for middle class and lower middle class Turkish women and its thematic center is about the family life, gossips about Turkish celebrities, fashion, handiwork done by women and motherhood.

B. The Integration Of Consumption Patterns With Female Identity In The Advertisements, Health, Beauty And Fashion Pages Of The Magazines

It can be observed that in all the magazines woman identity is constructed with emphasis to be beautiful, sexually attractive, interested with trends in fashion. Moreover, in the magazines, the plastic surgery and other varied methods of preserving youthfulness, slim bodies are presented in the health and beauty sections of the magazines. All the magazines include sections for cosmetics and make-up tricks and fashionable trends in make up and hair style. Mainly, the magazines teach women how to use and apply cosmetics and make-up. In addition, together with the objectification of female body, male body is also objectified in the magazines in reference to advertisements and columns for fashion and style.

Another trend in the health sections of the magazines is the natural products of herbals, the trends for eastern methods for avoiding stress and life styles based on positive thinking, and mediation techniques. Moreover, mostly all the magazines suggest diets for being slim and "healthy". Cosmopolitan even shows some physical exercises that can be done without going to a gym. The diets are general diets which do not consider the unique conditions of individuals but rather presented as magical solutions to the problems of overweight in women and strictly construct the idea that women must be slim in order to be beautiful.

Furthermore, the advertisement pages of the magazines and the advertorial pages giving information about new fashion products of the well known brands use visualized material with texts full of symbolic meaning such as the small title "returning to the innocence" while advertising a white dress.

C. Portrayal Of Media Celebrities In The Sections Of Interviews In Regard To Identity Issue

All the magazines include three to six interviews with the celebrities many of whom are Turkish singers and actors/ actresses that play in television serials. The main characteristic of these celebrities is that the women are having the physical bodies of models and men are charismatic and/ or handsome. The questions asked to them includes their expectations from a partner and from relationship with a lover, questions about their already known scandals or relationships, their goals in their carrier, their views about their performance and the art branch (cinema or music or both of them) they are performing in. Moreover, questions regarding the life style of the celebrities are also common. Life style questions includes mainly the ways the celebrities (especially women) continue to preserve physical form of their bodies and daily care techniques for preserving their beauty. Additional questions are about their attitudes toward marriage and having children. Overall, nearly all the celebrities present themselves as searching for love, affection and peace in their relationships. Only one of them Sibel Kekili who is a ex-porno star becoming an actress with international prizes, mentioned that she does not believe in religion, marriage and does not want to be married with kids. She mentioned even that she does not emotionally open herself to her lovers and not trust anyone easily. Thus, the ideal portrayal of celebrities show beautiful/ handsome, sexually attractive people who holds conventional views about the values and beliefs of society who want a family with children one day even they are now committed to their carrier. However, the celebrities usually are not described in detail in regarding to their character and preferences. They are only presented as they are presented in television with their perfect smile and appearances.

There are of course some other interviews in the magazines which are not fit in this generalized model. But these interviews are made with half-celebrities such as authors or common people who have done extraordinary things. One example is the female caricaturists (Ramize Erer, Gülay Batur, Feyhan Güver and Meral Onat) who define themselves with the things they draw and their critical point of view towards society and social relations including gender inequality. Another example is a Turkish women scientist who was rewarded for funds for her research in protein-protein relations in human body by the organization of L'Oreal-

Unesco. She was described as one of the contemporary Madam Cruie's. When she was asked about her targets she mentioned that her biggest target is to continue her career and family life with a balance. It is interesting that the magazine mentioned that she is a mother of a very young child and married and being a successful scientist at the same time but do not really mention the problems in continuing a successful carrier with a children in a critical perspective. There are other women who were portrayed in the magazines, having successful carriers in different sectors but always having the problem of organizing time for private life and work life in a balanced manner. But the articles do not propose any solutions to these problems of professional women or emphasize or show the parallel problems the working women live through in a critical manner.

D. Political And Social Matters That Were Mentioned In The Advertisements

As a global problem, Cosmopolitan magazine mentioned the problems of global warming and the threats of it to the life on earth. This ecological problem was mentioned with the explanations of male experts in the issue. It is structured to inform the women readers about the serious problem of global warming. Another magazine which mentioned social problems and moreover civil initiation is Marie Claire. The magazine declared that there are several poor countries lacking proper education conditions for girls and Marie Claire organize the sell of roses for creating the funds to educate girls especially in Africa. Another social problem, the magazine mentioned is the abuse of children. The problem was described with personal histories of some victim children and announcement of a telephone system for anonymous denouncements of children abuse. The magazine strictly claims the idea that denouncement of the guilty person is the most important step to prevent the abuse of children. Although these issues are important social problems, these problems could be represented in a way which could activate women's involvement with these social issues in a more deeper and political way.

CONCLUSION

The main controversies regarding the representation and construction of female identity in the magazines can be mentioned firstly as the tension between the roles of women being professional women having a successful carrier and being mothers. Although women's magazines prize the women's involvement in professional life, they did not really suggest solutions for the tensions of women trying to hold the responsibilities of home and professional life at the same time. Secondly, the tension of being successful in job, having economic power to stand on your feet and socially active and but still have to find and not loose a handsome/ attractive man. Moreover, to maintain a men at hand includes many skills like being able to satisfy him sexually and be beautiful and sexy in the size of model, being compassionate, not demanding, being not to successful or ambitious in order not to frighten him. These messages show a picture of womanhood which is meaningless without the existence of men as a lover or husband and a secretly reinforces the idea of competing with other women to attract the attention of men and to continue the relationships with men. Perhaps, the pleasure to read the women's magazines partly based on the idea to learn the tactics to attract the attention of men and to know the ways to compete with other women. Thirdly, the women's magazines did not present problematic issues of womanhood such as; sexual harassment, violence against women, legal rights of women, equal opportunities for women in the working environment. The magazines generally visualize and show a picture of womanhood only including the activities of self-care based on consumption patterns and life style models. This construction of female identity shows a community of women without serious problems of inequality or oppression by patriarchy.

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