The Representation of the "Other" in the Turkish TV Advertisements

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Abstract

Turkey, which has a rich cultural mosaic, consists of the combination of many 'Others', including cultural, religious and ethnic the 'Others'; the 'Other' as a gender role; as refugees, emigrants, etc. In such a multicultural climate, our research aim is to identify the stereotypes that represent the 'Other' in TV advertisements on Turkey's mainstream channels. For this purpose, we examined 101 prime-time TV commercials that were broadcast on the five most watched mainstream TV channels between September and December 2020.

Having conducted the quantitative and qualitative content analysis of TV commercials, we revealed the symbolic annihilation of the 'Others' in the Turkish advertising environment, which is accordance with the conservative perception of the country. In line with the international research, we came to the conclusion that the white Turkish men with medium-high socioeconomic status were heavily represented in the prime-time Turkish TV advertising. Nevertheless, it was also revealed that gendered visibility of the others as well as women portrayals were considered only as the 'Other' in the Turkish TV ads. Besides, our research findings overwhelmingly reflect the hegemonic culture and highly traditional views on gender roles.

Keywords

Advertising Communication; Otherness; Gender; Stereotypes; Representation; Television Advertisements; Content Analysis

Репрезентация образа Другого / Чужого в рекламных видеороликах на турецком телевидении

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Аннотация

Турция, как страна с богатым разнообразием культур и традиций, включает в себя сочетание различных видов репрезентаций «Другого», в том числе культурный, религиозный и этнический «Другой»; «Другой» как гендерная роль, а также как беженцы, эмигранты и т. д.. Целью настоящей работы является выявление в данной поликультурной среде стереотипов репрезентации «Другого» в телевизионной рекламе, транслируемой по основным телеканалам Турции. В ходе исследования было проанализировано 101 рекламных видеороликов, которые транслировались в прайм-тайм по пяти наиболее популярным основным телеканалам в период с сентября по декабрь 2020 года.

В результате количественного и качественного контент-анализа видеороликов была выявлена символическая аннигиляция образа «Других» в турецкой рекламной среде, что соответствует консервативному восприятию Турции. Вслед за рядом международных исследований, в статье мы пришли к выводу, что светлокожие турецкие мужчины с социально-экономическим статусом выше среднего уровня широко представлены в рекламе на турецком телевидении в прайм-тайм. Однако, гендерная идентичность остальных людей, а также образы женщин репрезентируются в турецкой телерекламе исключительно как «Другие». Кроме того, результаты данного исследования всесторонне отражают культурную гегемонию и весьма традиционные взгляды на гендерные роли в Турции.

Ключевые слова

рекламная коммуникация; инаковость; пол; стереотипы; репрезентация; телевизионная реклама; контент-анализ

Introduction

As Walter Lippmann explained in his milestone book "Public Opinion", we more than ever rely on media, from news to cinema and advertising to explore and define the world around us to construct and to form "our realities" (1922, p. 18). Race refers to "a category of people who share biologically transmitted traits that members of society deem socially significant" and ethnicity is a categorization that relies on understanding cultural heritage (Macionis & Plummer, 2005). According to Liu, Volcic and Gallois, "ethnicity can be based on national origin, race or religion (...) However, race is based on biological characteristics, while ethnicity is based on cultural characteristics shared by people of a particular race, national origin, religion or language" (2019, p. 146). Similarly, Neuliep says that (2015, p. 209) "Racist ideology is a belief in the moral or intellectual superiority of one race over the others. This superiority is biologically based. Because such superiority is biological, rather than social, it cannot be conditioned by culture or education". Racism is a belief that one racial category is innately superior or inferior to another. In this perspective, representing race and ethnicity are the muddled concepts and mostly used interchangeably. Globally, the pattern of inequality and conflict based on colour, ethnicity and culture become even more pronounced and more subtle information in the media texts, visuals and other contents.

Similar to race and ethnicity, we have another basic muddled concept such as gender. The term 'gender' refers to the social aspect of differences and hierarchies between male and female and it is evident throughout the social world including media's representations as well (Macionis & Plummer, 2005, p. 309). The concept of gender shapes how we think about ourselves, guiding our interaction with others and influencing our work, family, and all socio-cultural settings. Gender also involves power and hierarchy, which results in disproportionate sharing of most resources in favour of males. Since the first public presentation in the 1950s, males are placed as the dominant segment of population on TV and in the ads. However, there is an evident change in society that is coming most slowly in advertising which sells products by conforming to the widely established cultural norms. Thus, women in the Turkish ads are still shown serving foods or modeling clothing, whereas men are shown predominantly in car or travel commercials as well as ads for industrial companies.

Besides gender, social class is also an important stratification in the society, which is necessary to identify the 'otherness' in the ads. Social class is defined as a social form of stratification, resulting from unequal distribution of wealth, power, and prestige (Macionis & Plummer, 2005, p. 195).

In this research we mainly focus on the Turkish prime-time TV advertisements and search for the representation of the 'Other' in the Turkish advertising content. Our research is primarily aimed at finding out whether there is a prejudice which refers to a rigid and irrational generalization about an entire category of people

in Turkey's TV commercials. "A prejudice is an attitude - a prejudgment - that one applies indiscriminately and inflexibly to some category with little regard for the facts about individuals of a particular social class, sex, sexual orientation, age, political affiliation, race or ethnicity" (Macionis & Plummer, 2005, p. 277). Prejudices can be positive with exaggerating the virtues of people like ourselves or negative with condemning those who differ from us. Negative prejudices and attitudes are rooted in culture and run along a continuum, ranging from mild aversion to outright hostility. The reason to choose advertising from the media environment is that advertising discourses are made of symbols, stereotypes, and myths, that is why analyzing cultural identities provides information on how to see and think of a society. Furthermore, we intend to trace the cultural identity through ads and its representation of other cultures, races and ethnicities. "Advertising appears as a cultural mirror which gives brands symbolic values and a narrative identity" (Yücel, 2019) and Stuart Hall (1996) defines the narration of cultural identity as "discursive strategies" presented in all kinds of national narratives - literature, media etc.- which helps to represent shared experiences and concerns of a community. Advertising is considered to be one of those ways. Therefore, finding out the representations of others will give us an important perspective to analyze the Turkish culture as well.

Turkey in Global Scale

According to the UNDP, inequalities in human development are defined as a bottleneck in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which weakens social cohesion in a society and causes the distrust in all political and societal institutions. "They defined, wastefully preventing people from reaching their full potential at work and in life" (UNDP, 2019). "The 'Other' is a key concept in Western philosophy. It refers to that which is 'Other' than the concept being considered" (Shaw, 2008, p. 27). According to Craciunescu (2016, p. 59), gender, racial, ethnic or economic issues shape the discourses of 'otherness'. The growing number of researches address these varied inequalities in race, gender, social status and occupation which create the 'Others' within a society. These social categories have stimulated much debate in the world. The aim of this research is to examine and understand the representation of the existing social categories, which helps to maintain axes of inequality in society.

After the 600-year Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923. Turkey with its over 84 million population, being an upper-middle-income country, will celebrate its centenary in 2023. Currently it is at 17th position in the global economic setting with a GDP of 754.41 billion US dollars in 2019 and a growth rate of 6.7% in 2020 despite the novel coronavirus outbreak. It adopted the pro-Western policies since its establishment, joined the Council of Europe in 1949, NATO in 1951, OECD 1961, and OSCE in 1973. It became an associate member of the European Union in 1963, member of the Customs Union in 1995 and a negoti-

ating country for the full membership to EU since 2005. In sum, Turkey, being a dramatically urbanized country after 1980s with strong macroeconomic and fiscal indicators, having opened its doors to foreign trade and finance and harmonized its laws with the standards of European Union, has a strong and stable position which bridges Asia and Europe in the world.

While the economic indicators are, on balance, quite solid, even impressive, the social indicators are far lagging behind in this framework. Turkey ranks 59th out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI), which places the country in the "very high human development" category for the first time ever.

However, the country does not have bright gender development rates. It ranks 66th among 162 countries for Gender Development Index (GDI), which reveals the loss in human development due to the inequalities between female and male achievements. According to the World Economic Forum's "Gender Gap Calculator," a 30-year-old woman in Turkey will be 196 years old when the country achieves complete equality. For every single US dollar the woman earns, a man earns more than twice as much with 2.27 dollars. Moreover, the law internet penetration with national coverage of 45%, high unemployment level, especially up to 25% among the youth and educated population which is more than twice the world average, makes Turkey's economic gains less sustainable for the future (UNDP, 2019).

Additional gender sensitive statistics showed that the country "ranked 136th in economic participation and opportunity, 13th in educational attainment, 106th in the wage gap, 64th in health and survival, and 109th in political empowerment" in the 2020 UNDP index. In fact, Turkey is only better than 19 of 149 countries in gender equality index of UNDP. 17.4% of parliamentary seats are held by women and 44.3% of adult women have reached at least the secondary level of education compared to 66.0% of their male counterparts in the country. Gender inequality is, therefore, an evident feature of the Turkish society.

Besides the gender-based inequalities in Turkey, however, race is not an underlined division. Ethnic and faith-based 'Others' do exist. "There are nearly 40 ethnic groups in Turkey, but not every one of them is recognized by the society at large" (Bikmen & Sunar, 2010, p. 203). About 80% of the population is Turkish. The major ethnic and religious minorities are the Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, Circassians, Greeks, Roma people, the Alevis, the Lazs and others account for a small percentage of the population (Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2020). "Today, there are around 60,000 Armenian Orthodox Christians living in the country. While the Jews, the Greeks, and the Armenians are recognized by Turkish authorities as religious minorities, the myriad of other ethnic, national, linguistic and religious minority groups in Turkey are not formally recognized" (IHF, 2006). According to the ethnic policy of the country, Turkish identity is the macro identification frame or "melting pot"[1] of all ethnic groups in the country (Robbins, 1996) rather than promoting

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1   The term *melting pot* was popularized in a 1908 is used as a descriptor of the makeup of the citizenry of many countries around the world, including US. The term defines the mainstream culture and identity would melt the diverse population and they become homogenized. Today, the term is referring to melt or fuse of different na-

multiculturalism. "The Turkish national identity was intended to encompass all citizens who would define themselves as Turks, including all ethnic groups" (Bikmen & Sunar, 2010, p. 204). Moreover, the country hosts more than 5 million Syrian and other refugee and migrant population since 2011, which is a highly political issue and still invisible in any cultural products of the country.

Literature review

Advertising as an artefact of popular culture can provide additional information about a society's socio-cultural characteristics and transformations (Fiske, 2010; Neuhaus, 1999). Advertising which is a stubborn reflector of the "prevailing values, traditions and stereotypes of a society, reinforces and reshapes society's norms and beliefs" (Karamullaoglu & Sandikci, 2020). It has a macro impact on societal attitudes which enable to affect the socio-cultural beliefs and values even at international level (Leiss et al., 2005). The audience, observing the representation of racial and ethnic groups, may learn about appropriate behavior and roles for the respective racial and ethnic communities. In the long run, these distorted representations might affect the knowledge and perceptions of these groups. In the similar vein, Cultivation Theory of Gerbner, (1998) support the view that television created a distorted view of reality which may affect a change of behaviour or values in a certain society in the long run. As a result, the audience may gain negative feelings about this group. The audience reception studies in the field of media claim that advertising content is a process of shared and negotiated content (Hall, 1973), therefore, ads should be accepted as the 'blurred' reflections of real-life scenarios (Paxson, 2018, p. 17). In conclusion, a bunch of theories emphasize the media influence the way how the 'Others' perceive themselves and affect how they are perceived by others (Mastro et al., 2008; Tukachinsky et al., 2017). This research tracks the Gerbner's Cultivation Theory in terms of the representation of the 'Other' in TV advertisements.

Research in the field of advertising and its social representation mostly dealt with gender as the main axis. A recent research of quantitative review of 64 studies in the meta-analysis on the effects of gender stereotypes in advertising reveals that varying degree of stereotyping still persists, especially it is related to occupied women all over the world, despite the strong transformation of women's educational, occupational and status changes in the world. The studies on gender representation (Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Paltzer, 2010) and the gender role in mass communication research on television started in the 1970s in US and followed in Great Britain in Europe 1980s and recently in Asia in 1990s (McArthur & Resko, 1975; Paek et al., 2011; Uray & Burnaz 2003; Cheng 1997; Luyt, 2011; Matthes, Prieler & Adam, 2016). Generally, these researches frequently analyzed similar variables such as gender and age of the primary character, the gender of the voiceover, and the setting of the ads. They found out that advertisers create and perpetuate gender

tionalities and ethnic groups to make up the diversity of our country (Sheehan, 2014, p. 112).

stereotypes, which is an important obstacle on gender equality. In the long run it may harm society at large (Oppliger, 2007). The findings overwhelmingly confirmed a traditional and a conservative and stereotypical gendered role portrayal in television advertising (Arima, 2003; Bresnahan et al., 2001; Furnham & Spencer-Bowdage, 2002). More recent studies examine the gender representations which is an important signifier that intersects with other social constructs, such as race in media, especially in TV advertising (Coltrane & Messineo, 2000; Mastro & Stern, 2003). In this framework, Coltrane & Messineo (2000) adopted a social constructionist framework and show us how these social constructs intersect with each other on the representation of the "Others", revealing "gender differences in representations of racial groups in the US where Asians and Hispanics were predominantly women and whites and blacks were predominantly men" (Prieler, Ivanov & Hagiwara, 2020). Similarly, Licata and Biswas (1993) reported that blacks were predominantly men. However, US based studies were much more visible in the field with a few studies done in Asia (Prieler, Ivanov & Hagiwara, 2020). The recent Asian comparative study of 442 TV advertisements in Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea aimed at determining their representations of the 'Others', revealed that, contrary to the US studies, mostly noncelebrities were overrepresented and depicted in the major roles. The first TV advertisement study was done in 1972 by Dominick and Rauch. Like other non-Western part of the world, no systematic study has been done in Turkey until 1989. Cagli and Durukan (1989) did the first extensive research in Turkey and analyzed gender role portrayals in the Turkish TV advertising from 1978 to 1988. Their major finding was the portrayal of women in home/store environments, mostly in the background, not engaged in the voiceover. A similar macro analysis was done by Uray and Burnaz in 2003 and confirmed the underrepresentation and gendered stereotyping of women in the Turkish TV commerials. The researchers did not find any study related to the representation of the 'Others' in the TV ads in Turkey. To conclude, in order to grasp the overall workings of representation better and to develop more inclusive theories, more research needs to be done in the non-Western countries, including Turkey (Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012). The research of the 'Others' in the advertisements will indicate their value in society through the audience (Harwood & Anderson, 2002).

Ethnicity is more obvious in the multicultural European countries such as Germany. By the end of 2020, a television advertisement of Edeka – a German supermarket corporation – was broadcast and made an enormous impact. A Turkish family, representing ethnic minorities, was at the core of the advertisement's creative idea. In the first scene, we see an old man named Mr. Schmidt, eating alone in his house. He gets angry as he hears the voices of children, playing outside. Getting up and coming out in anger, he gets nervous as he crushes the tin box that the children use as a soccer ball. The next day, while the man decorates his door with Christmas decorations, the neighbour children run down the stairs. The man scolds and screams behind them. Another day, when Mr. Schmidt decorates

the pine tree outside, his neighbors are also dining in the garden. A Turkish woman brings him a plate of baklava (a traditional Turkish dessert), but the old man refuses. This time, the man meets the members of the Turkish family in front of his house. His neighbour understands that Mr. Schmidt, who is talking on the phone, has received bad news. One of the children that he is angry with in the first scene sees the Corona positive report and the warning to stay away from his door as he climbs the apartment stairs. While the family is drinking tea in the evening, the child sees another family in the opposite apartment who were decorating a tree. He returns home shopping for groceries, then the family members cook together cheerfully in the kitchen. In the last scene, there comes a knocking on the old man's door. When the man opens the door with a mask on his face, he sees a tray of beautiful traditional German food decorated with pine branches and red candles. The baklava on the tray draws his attention. Meanwhile, the two brothers, whom he is constantly angry with, appear slowly on the stairs and wish the man a Merry Christmas. We hear the jingle singing "Ein Freund in dieses Zeit / Dünyada en güzel şey dost edinmek" ("The most beautiful thing in the world is to make friends"). Mr. Schmidt smiles sadly and regretfully. Finally, as the packshot, all the lights of the apartment are seen to be lit, while the slogan "Mutlu ve neşeli olalım" ("Let us be happy and cheerful") and the logo of Edeka appears on the screen.
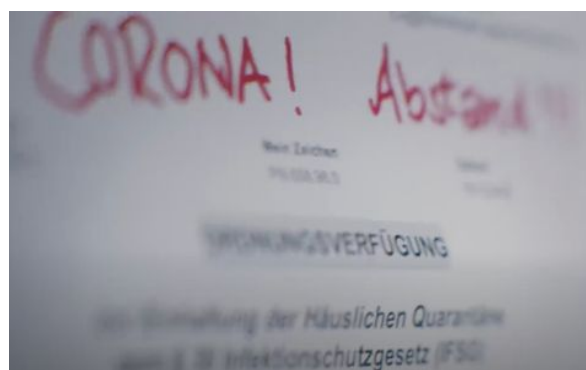
Figure 1. Edeka Television Advertisement. Source:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sjo5ue9ZTuw

Methodology

The Anatolian lands have hosted many cultures for thousands of years. Therefore, this is the main reason for Turkey to have a rich cultural mosaic. Due to this cultural mosaic, variables that are used in the methodologies of the existing literature on 'otherness' in advertising is incompatible with Turkey which consists of the combination of many 'Others' such as cultural, religious, ethnic 'Others'; the 'Other' as a gender role; refugees, emigrants, etc. In such a multicultural climate, our research aim is detecting the stereotypes which represent the 'Other' in TV advertisements broadcast on the mainstream channels. In this context, some research questions were defined:

RQ1: How do advertisements reflect the gender, racial, ethnic or economic 'Other'?

RQ2: Are the 'Others' overrepresented or underrepresented in the Turkish TV commercials?

To answer the formulated research questions, the prime-time TV advertisements broadcast on the five most watched mainstream television channels between September – December 2020 were examined. According to Speed Pulse's weekly media reports (December 23, 2020), TV channels that have the highest ratings in prime-time are ATV, FOX TV, TV8, TRT1, Show TV, Kanal D, and Star TV, so these television channels were selected as the providers of the samples. The mentioned channels are watched by almost every family in Turkey. Moreover, the most watched programs of these channels include domestic TV series, game shows, FOX prime-time news, and national football competitions. By oversampling advertisements within four-month period, 101 advertisements were analyzed using the content analysis method. All the analyzed advertisements were broadcast during the prime-time television programming. At this point, only the advertisements that tell a story in a setting were selected. Moreover, in order not to manipulate the results, repetitive advertisements were avoided to be included into the

research. In other words, the sample was created in such a way that the same content was represented only once. Therefore, duplicated spots were excluded.

The sample of 101 advertisements were chosen as the unit of analysis. Each advertisement was coded for specific characteristics, such as the date of the advertisement, product categories, gender of the voice-over, location of the advertisement, roles, type of otherness, social classes and portrayal of actors. Starting from 31 August 2020 the ten most watched programs and top 20 advertisers were listed each week from Speed Pulse weekly media reports. The advertisements broadcast in the pods of the mentioned programs were watched and videos were recorded from the official brand accounts on Youtube. After the quantification the findings were interpreted qualitatively. To achieve the research aim and gain systematic research results, the content categories were formed after the prior examination of the data (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014), while complementary quantitative and qualitative content analyses were conducted (Berelson, 1952, p. 18).

The coding scheme was developed, regarding the two main studies. Thereby, the categories used in the content analysis were developed by considering the studies of Prieler et al. (2020) and Luyt (2011). In the view of these studies, the following categories were formed:

CATEGORIES	EXPLANATION
Brand Name	The names of the advertised brands
Product Category	Refers to the advertised products: • Body care/toiletries/cosmetic/beauty products • Foods&snacks • Finance/insurance/legal • Automotive/vehicles/transportation • Mobile phones/providers • Home entertainment • Non-alcoholic drinks • Fashion/clothing/accessories • Household appliances/furniture • Restaurants/coffee shops • Pharmaceuticals/health care products/food supplements • Retail outlets • Cleaning products/kitchenware • Online shopping sites • Real estate/housing • Others
Primary Narrator/ Voice-Over	Refers to the gender of the voice-over: • Male • Female • Unclear

Setting/ Location	Refers to the location and surrounding where the advertisement takes place: • Away from home • Outdoors at home • Indoors at home • Other (artificial, unclear)
Actors	Refers to the actors appeared in the advertisements: • Male adult(s) • Female adult(s) • Child(ren) • Female and male adults • Male adult(s) with child(ren) • Female adult(s) with child(ren) • Female and male adults with child(ren) • None
Gender	Refers to the roles attributed to males and females: • Male • Female • Both
Role/Primary Visual Actors' Attributes	Refers to the roles of the actors involved in the advertisements: • Major • Minor • Background
Social Class	Refers to the individual's status based on the economic factors: • Lower-/working-class • Upper-middle class • Unclear • None
Portrayal	Refers to the way in which the primary actor was portrayed: 1) Negative 2) Positive 3) Neutral 4) None

Table 1. Determinated Categories and Their Explanations

Whereas the categories were created based on the studies mentioned, some variables had to be omitted. For example, due to the legal restrictions in Turkey, medicine and alcoholic drinks categories were excluded. In spite of that, the "online shopping sites" variable was added as a product category. Moreover, after a prelimi-

nary pilot study on a half of the sample of the research we excluded race, age and ethnicity categories since we did not find them in the sample. However, the invisibility of these categories were evaluated during the qualitative analysis of the research.

Findings and Results

Only the 98-year-old Republic of Turkey, although it carries the Ottoman culture and historical heritage of 600 years, is still an evolving country which represents a geographical and cultural bridge between the Western and Eastern part of the world. The country is still moving through the process of transition which we witness in every practices of the cultural life from media consumption to the traditional role of women and men. Advertising as a cultural product of a country, is the most stubborn media output which always represents conservative values in a society. In line with this framework, 101 television advertising were analyzed in order to understand the representation of the 'otherness' in Turkey. In spite the fact that the economical variables are promising in the country, the research shows that cultural processes are lagging far beyond it. Table 2 shows the product categories of the advertisements examined. According to the table, it is clear that the most advertised product categories are body&care and food&snacks, which is followed by finance/insurance/legal, mobile phones/providers and cleaning products/kitchenware. Online shopping sites takes the third place. As it is well-known, global pandemic conditions have changed the purchasing and consumption behaviors of individuals as well as changing many things in their lives. Hence, applied restrictions and curfews in Turkey, has led people to shop online.

The coronavirus has caused an explosion in the sale of hygiene products and personal protective items, while bringing trade to a halt in most industries. While the sales of products such as cologne, disinfectant products, masks and gloves increased up to 300 times, the manufacturers started to work at full capacity by increasing the number of shifts to keep up with the increasing demand (Karadeniz, 2020). When considering the category of hygienic products, it is obviuos that the increase in the hygiene category was 137 percent compared to the same period of the previous year, while cologne and disinfectants were among the top-selling products with an increase of 1095 percent (Cumhuriyet, 2021).

All the variables and their frequency of usage can be seen in Table 3. First of all, it can be said that more than half of the voiceovers is done by male. On the other hand, there is an apparent increase in comparison with a research conducted in 2018. According to this research named "Research on 10-Year Gender Equality Report of Effie Award Winning Turkish Television Commercials", which was conducted by Association of Advertisers and Bahçeşehir University, 35% of main characters in the Turkish TV commercials are played by women, while only 10% of

voiceovers are done by female (World Federation of Advertisers, 2018). In this study, it is seen that female voice-overs comprise 29.7 % of the sample.

Product Category	Advertisements (N)	Frequency (%)
Body care/ toiletries/cosmetic/beauty products	14	13.8
Food & snacks	14	13.8
Finance/insurance/legal	11	10.8
Automotive/vehicles/transportation	0	0
Mobile phones/providers	11	10.8
Non-alcoholic drinks	5	4.9
Fashion/clothing/accessories	4	3.9
Household appliances/furniture	7	6.9
Restaurants/coffee shops	0	0
Pharmaceuticals/health care products/food supplements	4	3.9
Retail outlets	5	4.9
Cleaning products/kitchenware	11	10.8
Online shopping sites	10	9.9
Real estate/housing	0	0
Home entertainment	1	0.9
Others	4	3.9
Total	101	100

Table 2. Product Categories of Advertising

		Advertisements (N)	Frequency (%)
Primary Narrator/ Voice-Over			
	Male	59	58.4
	Female	30	29.7
	Background	12	11.8
	Unclear	0	0
	Total	101	100

		Advertisements (N)	Frequency (%)
Setting/Location			
	Away from home	40	39.6
	Indoors at home	28	27.7
	Outdoors at home	8	7.9
	Other	25	24.7
	Total	101	100

Actors			
	Male adult(s)	26	25.7
	Female adult(s)	16	15.8
	Child(ren)	2	1.9
	Female and male adults	24	23.7
	Male adult(s) with child(ren)	1	0.9
	Female adult(s) with child(ren)	7	6.9
	Female and male adults with child(ren)	25	24.7
	Total	101	100

Gender of the Actors			
	Male	39	38.6
	Female	32	31.6
	Both	30	29.7
	Total	101	100

Role of the Primary Actor			
	Major	84	83.1
	Minor	13	12.8
	Background	4	3.9
	Total	101	100

Social Class			
	Lower-/working-class	5	4.9
	Upper-middle class	22	21.7
	Unclear	44	43.5
	None	30	29.7
	Total	101	100

Portrayal			
	Negative	4	3.9
	Positive	82	81.1
	Neutral	12	11.8
	None	3	2.9
	Total	101	100

Table 3: Numbers and Frequency of Variables

An artificial setting was used in almost a quarter of the advertisements examined (24.7%) in terms of location/setting. Although there are many advertisements shot outside (39.6%), there are a lot of stories that take place indoors (27.7) and outdoors at home (such as garden or balcony – 7.9%). Advertising spots that encourage individuals to stay at home during the pandemic process also have an effect on the increase in the number of advertisements shot at home.

In the third category, the actors who played the leading role in advertising spots, conveying the message to target audience, were examined. Considering frequency, it can be indicated that the advertising messages were narrated by male adults (25.7%). Female and male adults with a child(ren) (24.7%) are also represented afterwards. Turkish people are keen on the extended families, so advertisers tend to make up stories based on happy heterosexual families with children. Female and male adults take the third place (23.7%) as elementary families, partners, friends or colleagues.

Although there are slightly more male actors, the gender of the actors' ratio is very close to one another. Furthermore, the peripheral actors accounted for only 3.9%, whilst 83.1% of actors were in the focus of the advertisement. In other words, major roles were excessive.

In terms of social class, only 26.6% of advertisements were identified. Due to the negative effects of economic conditions on purchasing behaviour, the representation of social class is rarely included in advertisements.

Finally, when portrayals were examined, it was revealed that advertisements consisted mostly of positive representations (81.1%). The aforementioned situation can be explained due to several reasons. One of them is an advertisement that shows the "ideal", handsome men, beautiful women, leading characters, and a happy family. It also glosses creative stories that are set up by advertising executives. In addition, it helps the target audience to feel a little better about the effect of the pandemic. Thereof, the positive portrayals in advertisements help individuals to feel better if they consume the advertised product/service.

Discussion

In the light of the findings, it can be inferred that the most advertised product categories are body&care and food&snacks. The increase in disinfectant and cologne consumption during the pandemic is one of the reasons affecting the results. Another reason for the increase in the number of advertisements for the top three product categories is the New Year. Despite the prohibitions, the tradition of buying and giving New Year gifts is not broken. Besides, started with Black Friday sale in November and continued with the New Year-themed spots in December, an increase was observed in the number of advertisements given in these product categories.

Another process affected by the pandemic is the advertising film production process. Unlike the previous years, it is clear that the advertisements' shot in the artificial settings increased during this period.

A recent research points out that 17 percent of all employees in Turkey are paid below the minimum wage. Nevertheless, 64 percent of all wage earners earn either less than a minimum wage or one and a half times the minimum wage (https://www.dw.com/tr/disk-türkiye-asgari-ücretliler-toplumuna-dönüşüyor/a-55844537, 14.01.2021). Despite the high percentage, it is obvious that the lower-working class

is underrepresented as a social class in the society. As a way of storytelling, advertisements are based on the ideal and beautiful lives. From this point of view, it can be concluded that social class representations blended by economic realities were mostly not used or the social class to which the actors belong remained unclear. Of course, lifestyles promised in the advertisements affects the ambiguity of social class.

In many cultures, microcultural group status is determined by one's membership in sex, racial, ethnic, or religious groups (Neuliep, 2015, p, 99). In this research, it is clearly seen that microcultural groups were not represented in Turkey's TV advertisements, except gender portrayals. However, the recent studies underline the changing demographic segmentation which can be defined as a practice of appealing to audiences that have varying personal and social characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, economic level etc. Within the framework of this research, we could not identify these changes in the Turkish ads. Thus, we tend to claim that psychographic segmentation - that is appealing to consumer groups with similar lifestyles, attitudes, values, and behavior patterns (Baran, 2008, p. 399) - is still the case in the Turkish ad context. As a homogeneous society, Turkey is not the country that receives much immigration. Although the country received more than 5 million Syrian and other (Afghan, Iraqi, etc.) refugees and migrants since 2011, we could not find and impact of these demographic changes in the Turkish ads. Yet, as a multicultural society, Turkey has formed its cultural structure with stratification of cultures of many ethnic groups so far. Despite these facts, there is no representation in TV advertisements of Syrian immigrants or any other microcultural groups, except 'otherness' that is based on gender inequality. In this context, it is inferred that Turkish society is not ready for any representation of 'otherness' that is accepted other than conservative gendered 'otherness' which heavily depends on the traditional roles and behaviours.

Conclusion

As a form of communication, advertising means more than just selling a product or service to a specific target audience. Advertising conveys cultural messages at the same time. It functions as a mirror of a particular society. According to Uray and Burnaz (2003, p. 77), "advertising is not only a communication tool between companies and their customers, but also a social actor and a cultural artifact".

"Media and popular culture serve as primary channels through which we learn about groups who are different from ourselves as well as make sense of who we are" (Sorrells, 2013, p. 138). Herein, advertising plays an important role in terms of representations. By getting to know the differences, individuals can learn to adapt how to live in diversity.

Within the specified period, corporate advertisements were broadcast more due to special days such as October 29 Republic Day, November 10 Atatürk Memo-

rial Day and November 24 Teachers' Day. Consequently, banks and online shopping sites' ad spots increased because of the New Year. Major roles were excessive because of the leading actors who are both in the focus of the advertisement and give the ad message by drawing the attention to it, including celebrities. The examined advertisements still reflect traditional gender portrayals. In the fashion brand advertisements, although female and male groups are shown together, men are chatting at the barbecue, while women are both setting the table and trying to take care of the children.

Figure 2. Traditional Gender Portrayals in Advertisements – LC Waikiki
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6L21UXXS_E

Likewise, Aptamil's advertisement shows that mother is responsible for all the baby-care, while father only plays with him/her. Apart from that, racial, ethnic, religious or economic 'Others' cannot be seen as different representations.

As a part of a collectivist culture, Turkish people tend to prefer watching extended families on TV. Therefore, advertisements reflect stories that include male and female adults with children. However, male dominance is seen in terms of actors and voiceovers, too. "It should be noted here that the change in gender roles with respect to femininity and masculinity is not being represented enough in advertisements. The advertisements which are said to reflect life and society fall behind in reflecting the diversity in daily life." (Kaya, 2019). Generally happy, not financially troubled, white-collar males and females are represented predomi-

nantly. Traditional gender role stereotypes are still used in advertisements. To change this perspective, the Association of Advertisers and Association of Advertising Agencies launched a campaign with the slogan "Ads Change, Society Change". The outdoor advertising campaign, which aimed to break the stereotypical gender roles included the cliches observed in the advertisements. The campaign with the titles "A female voice-over dubs a bank's 100th anniversary", "A man deals with stubborn stains", "A woman who returns home from work is welcomed by her husband with their baby" was launched with the coordination of UN Women.

Figure 3. Traditional Gender Portrayals in Advertisements – Aptamil
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Wz2U36bosc
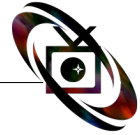
Figure 4. "Ads Change, Society Change" Outdoor Advertisements. Source:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sjo5ue9ZTuw

After this campaign, advertising executives tried to create gender-free stories in advertising. The reflection of this campaign was seen in the sample in terms of stereotypes broken by a few ad copies.
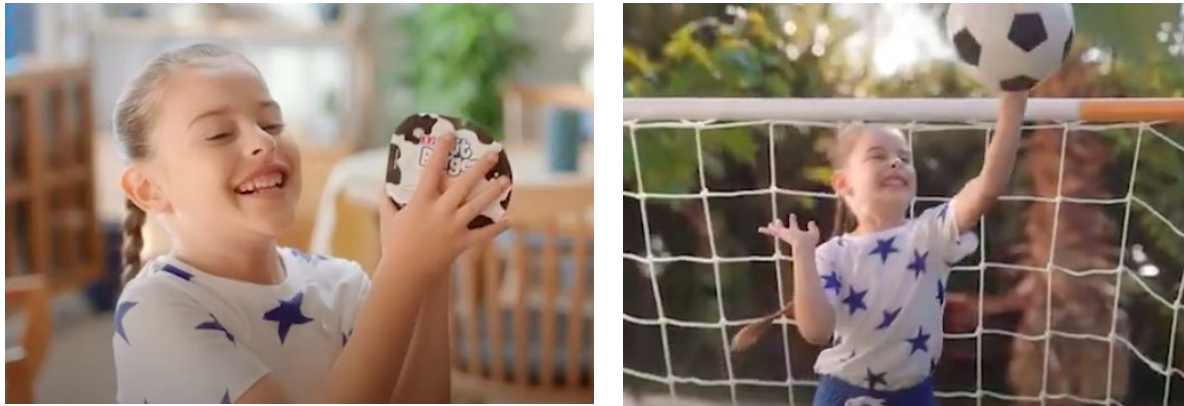
Figure 5. Breaking the Stereotypes in Advertisements – Eti Sütburger
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVyWr0ReB2Q

Traditional gender roles are questioned, especially in the advertisements, featuring girls. For example, in the Eti Sütburger advertisement, a girl asks her mother, "Mom, can't I be a goalkeeper?". After eating Sütburger, she saves a goal, while playing football with her friends.

Figure 6. Broken Stereotypes in Advertisements – OMO
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TIYR6vmDQ4

Similarly, in the liquid detergent advertisement of OMO, which has been using the slogan "Dirt is good" for years, it is seen that girls play football. Unlike countries like Norway or the UK, playing or watching football by women is still not considered as a common behaviour in Turkey. The conservative values in Turkey try to digest these representations of women as neglected, however, other social, ethnic and religious categories are not under the consideration of media spotlight so far.

The sample group of this study was limited to top 20 advertisers' spots. Thus, only 101 advertisements were examined. For further studies, it is suggested to extend the sample group by not considering advertisers. Thus, ads from all product categories can be analyzed. Also, advertising copies are complied with the pandemic. Positive portrayals, indoor scenes and family portrayals increased within this period. Examining different periods would be another scope for researchers.

In conclusion, 'otherness' and portrayals considered as the 'Other' are under-represented in the Turkish TV advertisements. Our findings overwhelmingly support the hegemonic culture and traditional gender roles. Multicultural, rich and diverse advertising representations, which include all the ethnic, cultural, religious 'Others' in the sample of this research, were not identified. Gaye Tuchman (1978) once coined the term 'symbolic annihilation of 'Others''. Unfortunately, it is clear that this phenomenon is still heavily embedded in the advertising environment in Turkey. The 'Others' were excluded without referring to them in the ads. The worst of the issue is that neither media researchers nor the society discuss it as a challenge in the country.

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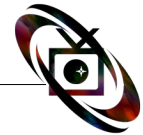
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