

Book Review

Gender and Diversity Representation in Mass Media Book Review

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Gender and Diversity Representation in Media Studies

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Section 1 of the book is organized under the title “Gender and Diversity Representation in Media Studies,” and Section 2, “Gender and Diversity Representation in Film Studies.” The book mainly deals with Turkish media and film studies as its subject. One of the authors in the book is from Singapore, three are from Pakistan, and the others are Turkish. The strength of the book is its main theme, because gender and diversity are among today’s most important topics.

When the main theme, purpose, and scope of the book are evaluated together, a significant inconsistency becomes apparent. Emphasis is placed on gender, gender roles, gender politics, transmedia, and masculinity in the book’s explanations to the readers. The book’s focus on media and film studies under the title of mass media causes it to overlook other mass media. This is a significant limitation. The majority of the chapters, on the other hand, are related to Turkey. Although the title of the book is related to a general subject, the chapters’ focus on Turkish culture creates an imbalance between the title and the content.

Gender and diversity are among today’s most important issues. Mass media gains an even more important position through IT and the IoT. The chapters and the content of the book ignore technology and digital issues. Virtual apps and social media are excluded from the general framework stated at the beginning of the book. Feminism, violence against women, and the effects of culture on gender and diversity are not sufficiently highlighted. On the other hand, virtual communication elements should be emphasized by considering today’s digital developments.

The first and second chapters exclude diversity representation and put emphasis on gender. The exclusion of diversity representation from the scope is an important limitation of the book. On the other hand, there are many grammatical errors in the book chapters.

The first chapter, a “gender overview,” offers examples in Turkish media to explain concepts. The chapter emphasizes that women are reflected as objects in Turkish media and are valued less than men. The main theme, to reveal the current situation of women in feminism and gender concepts, is successful. However, problems of paragraph transitions and grammatical errors are important detractions for readers.

The second chapter is titled “Social Gender Representation in the Context of the Representation Problem in the Media.” Besides information about the inspiration points of the study, the Introduction section presents an explanation about the qualitative research method: The study is carried out through content analysis. There are important problems in subject headings and transitions between paragraphs. However, this chapter, which is strong in the context of the findings, reveals that the woman is associated with the concepts of sexual objects, badness, and murder in the media.

The third chapter on “politico-poetic representation” is crucial in terms of the ways women are emphasized in poetic and political expressions and the ways women are depicted in intergenerational communication. In particular, this chapter reveals the power of poetic narrative, which has an active role in communication, in depicting women. The theoretical framework and context could be enriched with regard to intergenerational communication, ideological conceptualization in poetry, and cultural influences. Communication is also highlighted in the fourth chapter. It emphasizes the roles of women in the family and the language of communication.

This is followed by fairy tale narratives and fifth and sixth chapters about cartoons. The seventh chapter, which emphasizes the description and gender perception of men and women, lacks some information regarding sample selection and deals with the metallization of the female body. The eighth chapter, titled “Gender Representation in SMS Jokes,” reveals the role of gender jokes in communication and representation in today’s technology. This chapter emphasizes the importance of SMS and stereotype jokes in revealing biases and tendencies. The ninth and tenth chapters address masculinity.

Transsexuality in gender and diversity representation is not emphasized adequately in this book. The only chapter that focuses on this subject is the twelfth chapter about “gay characters.” The conclusion section of this chapter is very short. Whereas one would expect that inferences about the characteristics of gay characters would be mentioned in the conclusion, this subject is not addressed. Especially in the context of the purpose and scope of the book, the expectation of evaluating gay characters in terms of gender representation and diversity is not met in this chapter.

Whereas the book mainly examines Turkish culture and gender and women issues in Turkish media, the fourteenth chapter deals with the female character in Iranian cinema. The volume would have benefitted significantly from including examples from European, American, and Asian cultures and sections on the representation of transsexuality in the media, diversity, discrimination in race, language, religion, and ageism. Besides these limitations, the authors should perform more research on gender and diversity, as described above.

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