

**A Comparison Study:
How the Rise of Shopping Malls in Istanbul Transformed Young Professional Women's
Self-Identification, Self-Representation and Self-Discipline under the Gaze of Others?**

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Abstract

Shopping malls, as being symbolic spaces of consumer society, constitute a major part of urban life in Istanbul in terms of consumption behaviours, leisure time activities and housing. Dated from the last decade of the 20th century, when the very first shopping malls opened their doors to Stambouliotes until today, the consumption and leisure time practices have been altered by the services, events and lifestyles were introduced by malls to customers. At that point, this study focuses on firstly, social control functions of horizontal surveillance during identity formation by consumption in consumer society, and argues the position of shopping malls as one of the physical spaces where horizontal surveillance processes between young professional women by the motivation of being accepted by the society, that create the gaze of others as a self-discipline mechanism to shape and ensure the activity of consumption. Secondly, this study aims to explore how Stambouliot young professional women perceive/used to perceive the concepts of consumption, identity construction and representation, and the horizontal surveillance within the shopping malls of Istanbul.

Keywords: Panopticon, horizontal surveillance, postfeminism, homo-economicus, shopping malls, consumer society.

**Bir Karşılaştırma Çalışması:
İstanbul'da Alışveriş Merkezlerinin Yükselişi Genç Profesyonel Kadınların
Öz Tanımlama, Öz Temsil ve Öz Disiplinini Diğerlerinin Bakışları Altında Nasıl
Dönüştürdü?**

Özet

Tüketim toplumunun sembolik mekânları olan alışveriş merkezleri; tüketim davranışları, boş zaman etkinlikleri ve barınma açısından İstanbul'da kentsel yaşamın önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmaktadır. İlk alışveriş merkezlerinin İstanbullulara kapılarını açtığı 20. yüzyılın son on yılından günümüze, alışveriş merkezleri tarafından müşterilere sunulan hizmetler tüketicilerin tüketim davranışlarını ve boş zaman etkinliklerini değiştirmiş ve şekillendirmiştir. Bu bağlamda, araştırma, öncelikle tüketim toplumunda, tüketim temelli kimlik oluşumunda yatay gözetimin (horizontal surveillance) sosyal kontrol işlevlerine odaklanmaktadır ve alışveriş merkezlerini Foucault'nun Panoptikon metaforu dahilinde ele alarak, kadınların birbiri üzerindeki gözetimi ile oluşan öz denetimlerini feminist bir bakış açısıyla değerlendirmiştir. Çalışma AVM'lerin tüketim faaliyetlerini artırma, neoliberal söylemleri yayma ve tüketim kültürü üzerinden neoliberal öznelerin disipline edilmesi misyonlarını, Türkiye'de tüketim toplumuna geçiş süreci içinde değerlendirmiş ve AVM'lerin yarattıkları tüketim alışkanlıkları,

bireyler arasında rekabetin ve öz denetimin yatay gözetim üzerinden gerçekleştirilmesi, tüketimin içselleştirilmesi yönünden iki kuşak arasındaki farkları değerlendirmek amacıyla 90'lı yıllarda İstanbul'da yaşayan genç profesyonel kadınlar ve günümüzde İstanbul'da yaşayan genç profesyonel kadınlar olmak üzere dörder katılımcıdan oluşan iki farklı katılımcı grubuyla derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Panoptikon, yatay gözetim, post-feminizm, homo-economicus, AVM, tüketim toplumu

Introduction

Shopping malls are privately owned public spaces where every aspect of our consumer lifestyles represented and realized by various consumption activities. As malls are open spaces to all, that feature of them provides a demonstration of consumer lifestyles and identities through subjects' consumption activities (van Eeden, 2006), and their preferences within, around and towards mall. At that point, the gaze of others becomes a system of discipline and self-discipline for individuals, exercised through the consumption of certain identities and lifestyles. Thus, the shopping mall is one of the key spaces of the consumer society, where consumers manifest their identities and participate in social interaction. Therefore, this study focuses on social control functions of horizontal surveillance during identity formation by consumption in consumer society and argues the position of shopping malls as a physical space where horizontal surveillance processes between young professional women by the motivations of being approved, admired; to compete with female peers.

Turkish society and Istanbul, as sample, bare a high potential for qualitative research in terms of understanding disciplinary power and horizontal surveillance as a mechanism of self-policing. This potential originates in Turkish society's complicated process of transformation to consumer society and its position between western and eastern cultures considering women's status in Istanbul. Therefore, this study intends to interrogate how "others' gaze" works, by positioning it as a discipline and self-policing mechanism, exercised on and exercised by young professional women as a necessity of post-feminist identity; as it is realised in shopping malls where consumption is practised as a spectacular daily miraculous activity (Baudrillard, 1998). Secondly, this research aims to compare the narratives of two different generations to understand the role of the shopping malls in the process of Turkish society's transformation to the consumer society, as being the arena of the consumer culture.

Discipline in Consumer Society

Throughout history, different economic and power dynamics has been necessitated different systems of control to provide the continuity of the system. Foucault's historical scope of Power comprises various institutions and apparatuses that function by espousing the same

objectives based on different economic systems. Foucault (1990, 1991) conceptualises “Power” as a complicated strategic situation in a particular society, omnipresent because of its production and reproduction in every moment and relation.

In this context, after the end of the eighteenth century, by the transformations in the mechanisms of power (Foucault, 1991), the primary role of power became to reproduce and regulate life. That new regulation function over life generated two new forms: “*anatomo-politics*” which is “*the discipline of bodies*”; and “*biopolitics of the population*” (Foucault, 1990) comprised the regulation and control of demographic and biological processes. Those two new forms provided the discipline, as a type of Power, on both qualitative and quantitative adequacy of the population, and human body (Foucault, 1991). This is an effort to sustain the actions that will ensure continuity of the economic system such as production in modern society and consumption in consumer society.

Foucault (1990, 1991) conceptualised disciplinary power as the dominant type of Power in modern times and discussed bio-power in relation to the development of capitalism, as an indispensable element by providing dominance on subjects’ bodies. Thus, in accordance with the capitalist economic system, bio-power disciplined subjects to be productive and work hard. Besides, the discourse of the period that blessed “working” as a moral value (Weber, 1985) was produced by power, transmitted and surveilled by panoptic institutions like school, church and became society’s norms that every individual should follow to be a part of the society. The disciplining and transformative effects of bio-power on human body, demographic variables, and society (Foucault, 1990) ensured production, and hence, the economic structure in the interest of capitalism and the power.

During the postmodern period, economic system depends on consumption as Biopower disciplined subjects within the consumer culture. The accumulation of commodities caused surrounding of humans by objects and that abundance led to the “*fundamental mutation in the ecology of human species*” (Baudrillard, 1998, p.32). In this context, Baudrillard identified “*profusion*” and “*piling*” as characteristic features of post-industrial society. Moreover, consumption realizes not as a mundane and ordinary action as the result of production but as a miracle. Baudrillard (1998) refers to this “*primitive*” and collective consumer mentality as “*the miraculous status of consumption*”, as daily life is managed by a magical mentality. According to that mentality, “*affluence*” that manifests itself in the accumulation of commodities, in other words: “*signs of happiness*”. Thus, what Baudrillard defined as “*consumer mentality*” and “*miraculous status of consumption*” because of attributed magical signs to commodities, also may be elaborated in relationship with “*commodity fetishism*” of Marx (1918) since commodity

fetishism is rooted in the non-physical relationship between commodities and human. Therefore, the relationship between commodities and the process of their production by labour remains obscure since some special powers are attributed to commodities as magical objects. Accordingly, Baudrillard (1998) indicated consumer society as an order of manipulation of signs to manipulate individuals to consume. Thus, in consumer society, individuals' main task is to consume since discipline mechanisms process to provide the maximization and continuity of consumption.

At that point, we introduce two mechanisms within power relations, two types of surveillance that contribute to disciplining of neoliberal subjects for consumption. First, “*synopticon*” (Sarigül, 2018) which comprises surveillance of elements of popular culture on mass media, a surveillance mechanism that let the masses (many) surveil celebrities (few) on media which perform to convey disciplinary power's discourses. Therefore, as a global scale surveillance mechanism compared to Panopticon (Sarigül, 2018), synopticon comprises a vital mission in terms of infusing commodity-signs, persistently changing new norms and secure identities of the consumer society into neoliberal subjects.

As all conceptualizations of surveillance mechanisms were based on Foucault's (1991) concept of surveillance constructed on the metaphor of Panopticon that he defined as a mechanism of disciplinary power in the form of “hierarchical observation” in modern society. However, surveillance did not remain limited in a direction towards superior to subordinate and every individual became the subject and at the same time object of the surveillance (Foucault, 1991).

Secondly, “horizontal surveillance” comprises the scrutiny mechanism between neoliberal subjects, driven by the competition and desire to conform. Therefore, the gaze of others operates as a disciplining mechanism as Gill (2019) emphasizes that horizontal surveillance was an already existing mechanism of control within society. Moreover, Ergur (2014) refers to the subject's voluntarily participation to horizontal surveillance as a result of the rapid development in communication technologies that allowed individuals to obtain detailed information about others and also inclined subjects to monitor others in the urban. Thus, horizontal surveillance is a mechanism of surveillance in which many scrutinize many in physical and virtual realms of life to internalize safe identities and norms within the fluidity of the consumer culture and police themselves by comparing with others.

Thus, by technological progress and the information revolution, surveillance has gained a new dimension. Interpersonal or horizontal surveillance, as the surveillance between ordinary and non-authority individuals, realized in social networking sites (SNS) where people

voluntarily share their personal and daily details and is theorized as “interpersonal electronic surveillance” (Tokunaga, 2011), “*omniopticon*” (Sarigül, 2018), “*social surveillance*” (Marwick, 2012). Accordingly, surveillance realized between individuals within physical life is interpreted as it spread throughout society by “the internalization of surveilled gaze” (Marwick, 2012) and perpetual investigation of others in SNS’s that has generated panoptic-type effects. On the other hand, surveilling others in the physical life is akin to the *omniopticon* in terms of the oppression to show off an acceptable identity that is visible by the appearances of neoliberal subjects and competing with other subjects, based on voluntary participation.

Therefore, horizontal surveillance is reciprocal as its two different dimensions: being gazed by others and gazing others. The first one processes as the oppression of the idea of being surveilled like in Foucault’s metaphor of Panopticon and its one of the contemporary version is CCTV (Koskela, 2003) led subjects to self-policing. Moreover, the existence of hierarchical surveillance in every realm of daily life, its proliferation in different levels in private, social, and professional life, led subjects to internalize the surveillance not only as the objects of the surveillance but also as the “viewers” (Haggerty, 2006). Thereby, the second dimension of surveillance is “surveilling others”, as a social control mechanism that seeks for following norms, safe identity patterns of the consumer society by monitoring peers, since surveillance is also a way of construction/adoption of the acceptable identities (Haggerty, 2006).

Thus, “conformity” is one of the key concepts of others’ gaze in order to ensure social acceptance (Los, 2006). Accordingly, to be able to conform and to be accepted by the rest of the society, it is safe to interpret horizontal surveillance and self-policing by horizontal surveillance as the ways to construct the identity as the project of the homo-economicus.

Identity, Women and Surveillance

According to Foucault (1982), individuals’ transformation into subject realizes by Power’s intervention in daily-life. However, Power does not destroy “the individuality”, but shape them to discipline in accordance with its intentions. Secondly, in order to render Power be able to discipline, individuals should be free (Foucault, 1982) as neoliberal subjects are destined for adapting themselves to the changes in such a system. Kalan (2014) assessed that adaptation as the neoliberal subjects’ “camouflage” to the new biopolitics that resulted from new economic conditions. Foucault names that neoliberal subject “homo-economicus” that he referred as its own “entrepreneur” (2008, p.226) because homo-economicus is consumer but also producer since it produces itself. Thus, the qualifications of “homo-economicus” are “human capitals” those consisted of innate and acquired elements. Innate elements were seen

as the capital of a homo-economicus, and it consumes to acquiring the best-acquired elements as the reason for being.

Thus, every consumption activity is realised to construct an identity, as self-creation project (Wattanasuwan, 2005) that lead individuals to represent and create (Bondi & Davidson, 2005) the best. Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998) define the creation of consumer identity by the consumption of products, services and media while Knights and Morgan (1993) defines the relationship between identity and consumption by individuals' transformation into subjects through consumption as they internalise attributed meanings, identities to the commodities.

As many scholars as Shankar et al. (2009) assert that this postmodern environment offers freedom to “make up” a competitive and discursive identity and have “too much agency” by over-individualising consumption because of the abundance of choices and the facility to access them (Baudrillard, 1998). Those models and meanings of commodities are transmitted to neoliberal subjects by numerous messages that contain the symbols of popular culture within synopticon (Langman, 1992; Giddens, 1991). Thus, every element of popular culture presents safe identities for homo-economicus within synopticon to adopt biopower discourse within the liquidity of consumer society. This constant change creates a spiral of consumption because of homo-economicus' competitiveness and need for social approval. That situation reveals the reciprocal relationship between surveillance and identity construction within biopower discourse. At that point, the mission of consumption is assigned to women by postfeminist discourse that situates “shopping as an empowering activity for women” (Gill, 2008) or defining women by their “desire for shopping” in order to discipline them to represent themselves by consumption.

Representation of women portrayed as a means of marketing (Winch, 2012) by mass media and within synopticon. Female celebrities have always been the subject of the surveillance by masses in terms of their bodies, lifestyles. Apart from ordinary women's surveillance by patriarchal Power and society, by the development of omnipticon and horizontal surveillance in postmodern society, surveillance of women and surveillance between women is realised within consumer culture. Gill (2019) defines surveillance as a feminist issue in terms of the male gaze on women, surveillance between women, and synoptic surveillance of women in media, and women's self-surveillance/self-policing and body surveillance (Elias & Gill, 2018) in order to fit in biopower discourses. Gill (2019) elaborates that current surveillance on women as an “extraordinarily powerful regulatory gaze” that stems from the combination of new digital and media cultures and “postfeminist modalities of subjecthood” as a “gendered version of neoliberalism”. She also emphasises the “individualism” that plays a

central role in both postfeminism and neoliberalism, besides, the importance of body and the discourses of popular culture that pressure women. Woman as a neoliberal subject aims to invest her self-entrepreneur project which is her appearance that signifies “her brand and her gateway to freedom and empowerment in a neoliberal market economy” (Winch, 2015, p.233) by producing it akin to best examples presented in the popular culture. Thus, within this neoliberal system, control is ensured by “market values” that are internalised by women in the form of “the regulation of normative femininities” and the competitive mechanism of a gendered and neoliberal variation panopticon: “gynaeopticon” where women “*look to their peers to secure appropriate behaviour and looks*” (Winch, 2015, p.231) and conform to both popular culture discourse and each other to achieve that value.

The gaze surveilling women may be investigated in three different but interrelated ways in horizontal level: male gaze, other women’s gaze and self-surveillance. According to Gill (2007), owner and the context of the disciplining gaze has shifted from the objectifying, external male gaze since women internalised it as Winch elaborates this situation by the obfuscation of the male gaze (2012) and patriarchy (2015) within the popular culture. Therefore, women internalise the disciplinary gaze and subjectify themselves within the neoliberal/postfeminist identity and beauty discourses; conform under the pressure of new disciplinary regime “postfeminist gaze” (Riley et al., 2016) in the form of the surveillance between women.

Thus, by following the discourse of neoliberal system, women consume in order to construct an acceptable self-project, as a “*continuous work that is put into struggling and consuming towards an ideal*” (Winch, 2015, p.234). At that point, it is also important how the relationship between women and shopping idealised and represented in popular culture and how women experience shopping spaces like shopping malls where women are both “*the spectator and the object of another’s gaze*” (Johnstone & Conroy, 2005, p.243).

Identification of Women as Shopper and Shopping Mall as a Female Space

Ergur (2014) elaborates cities of postmodern times in terms of its three different fields (Gated communities, closed offices and shopping malls) where “network-type surveillance” realised by neoliberal subjects as shopping malls are also studied by scholars within the scope of surveillance studies. At that point, shopping malls were seen as one of the institutions of postmodern society that function to maintain consumption as the major economic activity. Malls, as they started to open during the second half of the 20th century, incorporated all features and functions of the consumer society within themselves. Since Baudrillard defined consumption as a social and disciplining process; “whole system of values”, “group integration” and “social control function” (1998, p.79); shopping malls are the places that reproduce, convey

all values and commodity-signs; where mass consumption is realised. Thus, neoliberal subjects create/recreate their identities in malls by consuming, and manifest to others. Thereby, mall becomes a space where homo-economicus surveil and be surveilled by others as their competitive characteristic and need for approval in fluid consumer culture operates the machine of horizontal surveillance.

Malls offer the perfect world, perfect climate, decoration, and aesthetic pleasure to their consumers (Baudrillard, 1998; Langman, 1992) as shopping malls contain all the symbols of abundance and happiness. They offer numerous type of identities and lifestyles (Langman, 1992) to consumers. That feature refers to them as an indispensable part of popular culture as they function as the bridge between consumers and consumer culture. Those identities and lifestyles represented within the shopping mall mostly characterised in relationship with femininity as shopping also identified with women by consumer culture. Within the last decades, popular media identified women by “desire of consumption”, especially, women from metropolis were portrayed by their desire for shopping, fashion and sometimes by their spending money “weakness”. However, women’s portrayal in the city has changed over time.

Until the opening of department stores, women were identified by “the spaces of domesticity” (van Eeden, 2006, p.71). Advertising targeted women by the products of domestic life and femininity until the World Wars (Wolf, 1991). After women entitled to “browse in” the department stores, by representation of them as “feminine places” where women could wander more freely because of their more “secure” architecture, identifying women only as consumers: the subject and the object of the consumption. Thus women excluded from the world of work and political life that was privileged to only men and, “leisure was feminised” (van Eeden, 2006, p.69). Consumer role was attributed to women because shopping’s classification as a part of domestic labour (van Eeden, 2006), and patriarchal capitalism targeted women in terms of their division of work in society and the beauty of their body. Shopping had gendered and the only appropriate public (semi-public) space for women limited with consumption space.

Even women’s temporarily participation in work-life during World War I and permanent participation after World War II (Wolf, 1991) did not change their portrayal as consumers. As postmodern capitalism could not target women in terms of their domestic mission, biopower discourse addressed them diverse patterns of beauty to discipline them to consume. Concordantly, shopping malls, after the second half of 20th century, also contributed to that process by offering women another semi-private space that provides safety but at the same time, an enormous place contains diverse commodities and lifestyles that let them identify themselves within the current biopower discourse. Popular media discourses that convey

postfeminist (Gill, 2007) and neoliberal images of women supported central role of consumption for the new image of empowered, feminine, and heterosexual women. Thus, since shopping was promoted as a liberating and empowering activity for women and the purchase of commodities signified women's power and independence from men (Gill, 2008), shopping mall became the space where women shop, consume to develop and manifest their identity (Adriaens & Van Bauwel, 2011), as a fun activity.

Shopping Malls in the Era of the Construction of Consumer Society in Turkey

While the transformation of the power relations and the economic system shifted their focus from production to consumption in Western societies, Turkish society witnessed serious politic, economic and social turmoil. During the 40s and 50s, American aid and foreign investments (Boratav, 2018) fuelled the industrialization in Turkey, and also stimulated the social and economic change. Until the '80s, Turkey did not adopt neoliberal economic policies, embarked on import-submission policy and consumption was restricted. In January 1980, the government introduced a neoliberal policy package which was also supported by a new regime after military coup d'état in September 1980. Turkey followed liberalization and globalization policies as the economic agenda. By those policies, corporate power, foreign capital and brands' investments started to develop in different markets in Turkey. Consequently, those supplies required "new consumer demand" (Erkip, 2005). Therefore, urban population's consumption showed an appreciable increase through the new ways of financial support like credit cards, consumer credit, and instalment options (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2005). Those new economic policies spread their own political and ideological discourses systematically. The discourse that exalted economic liberty and the import of consumer goods was also conveyed by capitalists and media that was recently privatised.

In this context, the new economic system took the side of capitalists by supporting them with new policies. While the inequality between higher and lower-income groups increased drastically, upper-middle and upper classes determined and experienced consumer culture on a global scale by new mobilities, travelling abroad, consuming global brands (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2005), "in shopping malls, as they have seen in Hollywood movies and in foreign countries" (Erkip, 2005, p.90). Thus, conspicuous consumption became widespread as "the main venue of symbolic expression" (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2002), by also the support of the media by propagating the consumer discourse that manipulated individuals to competitively and selfishly consume (Aydoğan, 2009).

According to Özbudun and Keyman (2002), the change that Turkish society experienced through the transition to the consumer society should also be studied regarding the dynamics of

different socio-cultural groups and their interpretations of new values. As Özbudun and Keyman (2002) stressed the importance of globalization as the main factor for the construction of consumer society in Turkey, Büken (2000) addressed to the Americanization of Turks by the spread of American pop-culture. Concordantly, all socio-cultural groups reacted to the globalization and the Americanization in terms of their different perceptions and experiences of religion and ideologies. Therefore, Turkish consumptionscape included “both polarity and plurality” (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2005) those were not only driven by economic class but also by different socio-cultural structures that seek different meanings of “modern” identities. Those individuals consumed within the patterns of modern identities and according to Sandıkçı and Ger (2005), the notions of the “good life” and “modernity” and the aim of “to be accepted by one’s social circle” fuelled the consumption. In this regard, Sandıkçı and Ger (2002) conceptualised spectacularist consumption as it comprises the highly fashion-conscious consumption of upper-middle and wealthy class members who desired to consume what they scrutinise on synopticon.

Within this economic and cultural atmosphere from 1980s, the abundance of commodities, media discourses the rise of advertisement and the contents that includes the monitorization of celebrities’ lives and ordinary people’s life by reality shows; blurring between public and private space transformed the private life to a subject of interest (Gürbilek, 1992). By the opening of shopping malls, visiting and watching commodities in the shop window became a lifestyle activity, and identities became available to be purchased from shopping malls. Shop window became more than the symbol of abundance but a place where people display their identity as they lived in the shop window. Thus, identities became commodities, promoted by media, and the material of the competition between individuals (Ergur, 2014) since consumption became a way of existing.

At that point, Erkip (2005) refers to shopping mall as space that created social and cultural transformations and as the reason for the construction of new de-centred Turkish urban lifestyle. As Erkip (2005) define the opening of shopping malls in big cities of Turkey as an example of “*spatial transformations under the influence of global forces*” (2005, p.89), the opening of malls fuelled the transformation process to consumer society and globalization in Turkey. Besides, Louargand (2011) argued shopping malls as a vital element of the modernization of Turkey in terms of urbanization, suburbanization, income increase, female labour force entry, and the globalization.

Therefore, by the opening of the first shopping mall in Istanbul “Galleria” in 1988 (Ozorhon & Ozorhon, 2014), upper-middle and higher-income groups (Erkip, 2003) constituted

the group who tries to adapt themselves to the new consumer society and the global culture. Erkip (2005) interpreted that adaptation as “eager”, because of the charming, comfortable and practical atmosphere, and magical new experience that offered to consumers. Moreover, the consumption habits, leisure time activities, and what they mean to the people had started to change. Mall became the central place of leisure activities because of the cinemas, restaurants, and playgrounds for children and shopping became a leisure activity. The consumer society and postmodern-subjects started to be apparent by the stand out of the hedonistic consumption instead of utilitarian and the commodity-signs gained importance instead of the use-value of the commodities. Regardless of the income status or political polarisation within the society, shopping malls started to offer all consumers a space to make use of the opportunities of the consumer culture and globalization (Erkip, 2003; Turkan, 2014). Thus, the reason for going to the shopping mall was more than only fulfilling needs.

As Turkan (2014) defined the neoliberal subject living in the urban by the desire of to seeing others and being seen in order to support their identities, shopping malls also became the place to exist and socialize. Socio-cultural symbols became available in that (semi) public space by the consumption of commodity-signs. Therefore, what Sandıkçı and Ger (2002) defined as spectacularist consumption became prominent as a way to exist within the society and to be accepted by the rest of the social circle. Neoliberal subjects started to fulfil their needs to prove their individualism, identity, and existence within the society by going to the shopping malls.

During that transformation process, women’s approach to consumption and their activities of shopping also changed as women’s labour force participation rate and urban changed. Therefore, shopping has been gendered also in Turkey, as in Western countries, and the emergence of shopping places like department stores and especially shopping malls created the feminization of the shopping. Traditional shopping places like bazaars were defined as “masculine world” by Durakbaşa and Cindoğlu (2002), and also streets seemed insecure for women, while semi-public shopping malls are secure spaces (Erkip, 2005). Firstly, the opening of European retailers during the second half of the nineteenth-century, like Bon Marché, offered new ways of shopping for customers in terms of purchasing goods “not only for their utility but also to cater for the aesthetic needs of customers” (Durakbaşa & Cindoğlu, 2002, p.76). Therefore, shopping started to become a “leisure time activity” by window shopping during the last decades of the Ottoman. Secondly, in the mid-twentieth century, passages were built in some districts of Istanbul and department stores “were the first venues for window shopping for middle and upper-class women in Istanbul” (Durakbaşa & Cindoğlu, 2002, p.76).

However, during the end of the 20th century, by the increase of the female labour force entry and the opening of shopping malls, women became the primary shopper in Turkey too. At that point, in Turkey too, the concept of mall provides an exceptional environment for women in terms of saving the reputation of women by supplying an indoor place to them and secondly a secure, protected space (Durakbaşı & Cindoğlu, 2002). So that, according to JJJ's (2019) "Commercial Real Estate Market View" rapport covering the first quarter of 2019, the number of shopping malls in Istanbul reached 126.

Thus, shopping mall offered a place where women construct their identities as their entrepreneurial projects and exist within the social group where the mall is located. Therefore, shopping malls in Istanbul comprise a potential to understand how middle and upper-middle-class women construct their identities, position themselves according to other women within the social competition and how to discipline themselves within the mechanism of horizontal surveillance as every activity in mall realizes under the gaze of other consumers.

Research

This section includes the discussion of the methodology used in the research and the thematic analysis of the findings collected by the in-depth interviews conducted with two different groups of samples (young professional women during 90s in Istanbul; young professional women in Istanbul today) and the discussion of findings.

Methodology

The literature review combined of different theories and disciplines were conducted to create a theoretical background; interpret and analyze the findings. Considering the explorative aims of research, in-depth interview is performed to acquire detailed narratives of participants and to find out hidden (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) or unconscious motives that may be driven from the "life stories" (Chase, 2003, p.274). Therefore, this study aims to obtain an explorative mission regarding limited studies and findings in the existing literature, by benefiting explorative and adaptive structure of in-depth interview method (Tracy, 2013) which enables to reforming questions during interviews following interviewee's perspective, also leads participants to think about the concepts and tell their self-narratives within the limits of the research.

Thus, as the studies on consumer society comprise a wide range of daily activities of consumption, and secondly the extensive scope of the surveillance studies (Lyon, 2006; 2007) that involve different power dynamics and mechanisms; several theoretical limitations were determined for this research. During interviews and analysis, "consumption" is studied as a way to manifest a socially acceptable identity by the activity of "shopping" and its relationship with

"gaze of others" that operates in physical life is investigated. Despite the effectuation of others' gaze as a mechanism of horizontal surveillance within different spaces/realms of urban life (Ergur, 2014; Gill, 2019; Marwick, 2012; Sarigül, 2018; Tokunaga, 2011), this study was also limited by shopping malls as they created fundamental changes in socio-cultural and economic structure (Erkip, 2005; Louargand, 2011) of Turkey throughout the process of transformation to consumer society. Above all, shopping malls are chosen as limit and field of this study because of being the space where postmodern consumer identities are produced/reproduced, scrutinised and manifested to/by others to be approved.

Secondly, women were identified as the sample of this study since their representations within consumer culture as "primary shoppers" and diverse motives those were attributed them for shopping. Moreover, being women in Turkey contains different social roles and different situations to overcome because of the polarity and plurality (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2005) of social, political and cultural life. Thus, for his study, two participant groups (table 1) were targeted for in-depth interviews to be able to compare the changes; first, women were young professionals during 90s, secondly young professional women. Both group participants are secular, from middle and upper-middle-class, living in Istanbul, because of opportunities and the level of adaptation to consumer lifestyle of the metropolis. Interviewees were recruited by snowball sampling strategy and four women for each group were interviewed.

The narratives of the participants were interpreted and evaluated according to two initial themes regarding the literature review. Themes were defined regarding women's ideas and practices about their appearances/identities, and the concept of surveillance as a self-discipline mechanism. Despite the limited number of samples and the fact that the results cannot be generalized, certain types of intense and widespread emotions, discourses and behaviour patterns were observed from the collected data.

Group	Participant	Profession	Age
Group 1	1A	Doctor	57
Group 1	1B	Architect	55
Group 1	1C	Dentist	55
Group 1	1D	Dentist	54

Group 2	2A	Marketing Intern	23
Group 2	2B	Analyst	25
Group 2	2C	Category specialist	25
Group 2	2D	Pharmacist	24

Table 1: Participants**Shopping Appearance as a Way to Represent Identity**

Shopping is not only purchasing commodities but also for participants, allocating an appearance and buying commodity-signs to represent a safe identity. Thus, participant's ideas and cultural background about the concept of consumption and shopping reflect on their ideas of appearance and how should they look conformably. According to the interviews, while first group participants define shopping as a "guilty pleasure", second group comprehend it as a natural right. First group stated that they used to love shopping during the 90s and experienced "hedonistic shopping" as an emotional activity (Cal and Adams, 2014; Birol, 2014) since they used to feel "happiness" and "excitement". Today, they criticize their shopping behaviours as they feel guilty when they shop, attempt to adopt "reasonable" motives.

"As a woman, shopping makes me feel good. But sometimes I get angry at myself, why did I buy this? I regret that I buy." (1C)

According to Başfirıncı (2011) because of the cognitive dissonance caused by the clash between the values that they interiorised while growing and the bombardment of consumption, they tend to have conflicting ideas and practices and as a consequence they try to legitimize their consumption and reason it as a solution for unexpected needs and as an action to be able to conform to society:

"I have too many unworn clothes in my wardrobe, tags still on. When I need something, I don't need to go and shop, I can always find something from my wardrobe." (1A)

However, for the second group, the status of consumption is clear as it is perceived as a culture they born into. They experience "hedonic shopping" as it is realized not only as an enjoyable activity (Kırcı, 2014) but also as a spiral of consumption that requires constancy to acquire short-term pleasure. Besides, according to second group, consumption is genuinely taken for granted, a primary element of daily life as Baudrillard (1998, p.38) interpreted "the cargo cult" in terms of the heirship of younger generations to interiorize consumer culture as "the natural right to abundance".

“It is kind of a fun activity for me. I feel excited about shopping and trying on my new clothes.” (2B)

“I feel excited when I buy new clothes.” (2C)

“I love shopping... I love buying new clothes. I am insatiable about shopping. When I buy some clothes, I feel like I want to shop more... I feel better after buying them.” (2D)

Moreover, shopping is a “skill” and a “hobby” for second group participants that shows the level of their knowledge about their own body and their ability to create an acceptable and successful appearance.

“Shopping is a hobby for me... I used to spend hours shopping, but I don’t do it anymore because ... I know the stores that I browse... It’s about knowing your style and appealing brands to your style I know my style, myself, my body. It’s kind of skill...” (2A)

Even though both groups define appearance as a way to reflect a conforming identity; their concerns about their appearances and identities differ as it may be interpreted as they interiorised different values. Accordingly, participants’ purposes regarding their appearance differ as “modernism” (Sandıkçı & Ger, 2002) for the first group, and “being trendy”, “attracting attention” and “being able to compete with others” for the second group.

Since first group participants do not seem to wholly interiorize the ideology of the consumer society, they still defend utilitarian consumption to some extent. Therefore, the reflection of the modernist founding values of Turkish Republic and the ideal of westernism manifest clearly in the narratives of first group about their appearances and clothing styles as a way to represent their identity. Since, first group define themselves western, modern, independent and secular individuals; their way of representing their identity by appearance also includes the modern identity goal of the Turkish Republic. The values they follow as a guide to be a part of the society commonly include the conformity in terms of adjusting their appearance (clothes, makeup) according to the place where they go; secondly not looking marginal, absurd and remarkably different; and thirdly, to be clean, stylish and attentive to represent the respect to other people. It is safe to interpret first group’s narratives as their insights on their appearances to stem from the institutions of the Republic, as Foucault (1991) also positioned the institutions of modern society as the places where disciplinary mechanism functions in the form of the hierarchical disciplinary surveillance.

“I had been always attentive and chic at work. This is something necessary to show that you’re respecting your colleagues and patients. It is important what people wear. It is about respect. Also about being modern and western. We are modern people, open-minded. Not traditional. We may try new and beautiful things we see.” (1D)

At that point for first group, following fashion trends does not stand as a necessity but sometimes as a pattern to conform and not to look “absurd”. Despite everything, to be liked and appreciated in terms of their appearance and clothing styles is still crucial for them. It is not possible to define first group participants only by modern identity patterns or postindustrial identities. Their background culture, insights about consumption and practices overlap controversially and include both modern and postmodern patterns. Their styles, preferences and tendencies do not aim to change dramatically.

“I want to be noticed but not in an absurd style.” (1A)

“I don’t want to attract attention.” (1B)

Contrary, for the second group, adjusting themselves by the new trends and being up to date is important as they are highly motivated to attract attention and to compete with others. As they are children of the consumer society, their postmodern identities tend to conform to constant changes (Tekin, 2012) of consumer society to be able to stay in competition. According to them, people represent their identities by their appearances as also identity defined as a self project (Giddens, 1991; Wattanasuwan, 2005) as homo-economicus (Foucault, 2008, p.226) and they internalize the constantly changing discourses that they perceive in the form of fashion, trends; purchase up-to-date appearances by avoiding being fixed (Bauman, 1996) to adopt an identity (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). Therefore, even if they said that they “know their style very well”, they always follow brands, some influencers or celebrities who are certainly approved by the majority in the form of “synopticon” (Sarigül, 2018) and their peers in the form of “gynaeopticon” (Winch, 2015). At that point, brand obsession does not exist as a desire to construct a social class based identity but exists as a way to reflect a style and an identity based on the latest trends that are envied by the majority. Their style is essential for them as it represents an exchange value, as also shopping and being stylish accepted as skills for them even all of the second group participants prefer global and popular brands. Instagram celebrities, trends in the stores and some “stylish” people around second group participants feature as secure styles and appearances to adopt when participants feel insecure about new trends. In this context, while some (2A, 2B) of the second group participants state that they “dare to be different”, one (2C) of the participants stated that she does not want to look absurd. Thus, it should be noted that (2C) and (2D) are insecure about their appearances as they tend to be affected by other women’s style around and as (2D) observes other women constantly.

“I want to attract attention. I wear sport-chic, but I also like to be chic, to be ‘wow!’ with my style and clothes. I feel like I ... don’t want to be passed unnoticed. Feels better when I

look different and remarkable [...] Yes, looking beautiful is important but women spend hours for it. I can be both fast and beautiful. I think this is a ... kind of talent, knowing yourself.” (2A)

“I don’t like to wear what everybody wears [...] My friend told me that I could wear and combine some clothes that are risky for most women.” (2B)

“I don’t have a different style. I’d like to be more different and prettier [...] Being different... I don’t want to be absurd, but I’d like to dress not like everybody does.” (2C)

“I feel sad when I go out without makeup, making my hair and dressing properly. I feel bad if people look beautiful, but I don’t.” (2D)

Moreover, others' positive reactions about participants' style and appearance also motivate them to shop more expensive and stylish clothes to be able to construct a more approved identity. Thus, all statements of the second group include self-discipline by self-monitoring (Gill, 2007) and scrutiny of other women, since the neoliberal subjects feel the ambition for competition, and as the neoliberal and consumer culture promise them the individualization and the opportunity to differentiate oneself from the others (Baudrillard, 1998), being different, attracting attention, and also the desire of looking beautiful is essential for participants.

Horizontal Surveillance in the Shopping Mall

Constructing and reflecting an identity is realized mostly in relation to observing others. As second group affected by the appearances of the other women around them as guaranteed samples and by the opinions of others as motivation, their interactions within shopping mall contain importance since shopping mall is the space where subjects observe acceptable identities, purchase them and show off to others as the *“identity and place bound together”* (Miller et al., 1998, p.24).

During the interviews, participants indicated the keywords those shaped this theme by expressing their ideas and their approaches to the concept of “the gaze of others”: “attracting attention”, “being different”, “jealousy”, “competition” and “women dress for other women”. Both groups emphasized “the gaze of other women” as Winch (2012) also stated that male gaze mostly stays outside of the anxiety of being looked, but only when participants are in some specific shopping malls, those are preferred by people from participants' socio-cultural group. On the other hand, they also acknowledged the abusive and judgemental conservative gaze at public transportation on the way to the mall.

While emphasizing female gaze, approaches of two group differ in terms of their participation in the activity of gazing and being looked. For the first group, while the three (1A, 1B, 1C) of them acknowledged that women observe each other in the shopping mall (mostly

young women), two (1B, 1D) of them stated that they do not observe other women. However first group expound the scrutiny of other women with negative intentions (jealousy and competition) as a new thing that is realized mostly between younger women. They defined “looking” as people used to realize as a positive activity that contained admiration and cooperation. Moreover, they defined “showing off” and trying to attract attention by demonstrating luxurious and spectacular lifestyles as “problematic behaviours”, also as reasons for going to specific luxury malls for young women and identified the “new” concept of mall as “showing off” to others.

“People observe each other a lot during shopping. I know this because when I go shopping with my daughter, other girls always observe the clothes that she tries on. They want to try them too. I don’t know why they are looking. Maybe they think that if someone like a shirt then it must be chic or maybe because of competition. I only focus on products.” (1B)

“People stare at each other, observe each other now. It is not new, but the way that people look at each other has changed. People used to look at each other with admiration, appreciation and positive feelings.” (1A)

“People try to show off now [...] Some women use luxury brands just to be able to attract others’ attention.” (1C)

“Women wants to be looked in branded spaces within the shopping mall [...]They get dressed and go there to show off themselves.” (1D)

Second group participants mostly admit that they observe their peers and concern about their position within the competition with others. However, (2A) assessed that she does not observe others because she mostly focused on her shopping and herself besides positioned herself as a woman who is observed by female peers. As her account infers her narcissistic point of view, by her judgements of her peers and herself, the level of expertise that she attributed to herself also reveals that she observe other women compare them with herself and see if they are gazing her or not. Her practice of surveillance includes both the subjectification of herself in terms of self-policing (Riley et al., 2016) and her self-project as a woman who is a winner of the competition with her peers and an example for them to be admired.

“Women observe each other a lot while shopping. They observe what others are wearing. I don’t do it because I focus on the products ... I don’t tend to like what others are browsing. I just browse when I like something.” (2A)

At that point, women’s jealousy of each other emphasized by all participants of the second group as they judge this feeling but also acknowledge that they also judge others. Thus,

as it is stated by first group participants, second group participants also identified shopping mall as a “runway” where every woman are observed by and observe others.

“Some styles or some specific clothes become trendy just because women see them on each other ... Sometimes, women buy some clothes just because they are jealous of another woman [...] Women observe each other. There is a little bit shaming. We say ‘she shouldn’t combine that top with those pants. I don’t know why I am looking.’” (2B)

“Women are jealous of each other.” (2C)

“(Women observe each other) mostly in luxury shopping malls... Istinye Park, Zorlu ... Their only job is getting dressed and going to the shopping malls. If I didn’t have another job, I would be like them. I would observe too [...] Shopping mall is a kind of runway. The competition to be the chicer women in there [...] I don’t want to let people say ‘inattentive’ about me. Because I do. I think this way about people, but I don’t know why [...] (In shopping mall) Women wants to show off only.” (2D)

Focusing on the participants' narratives about the gaze of the other women on them also reveal their judgements of other women. While they are motivated to attract attention, this reciprocal scrutiny indicates judgement which is consumption-oriented (Riley et al., 2016) in order to see “what is accepted as beautiful”. This also may be interpreted as “the beauty surveillance” (Elias & Gill, 2018), to labour constantly to be beautiful as Elias et al. (cited in Elias and Gill 2018) defined the aesthetic labour on the body as a normative necessity, also defined by the limits of the postfeminist and neoliberalist discourses as the dominant discourses of the contemporary society. Thus, participants are familiar to the discourses of the judgement and the intentions of the other women and commonly define “to make others jealous” and “to be looked at” as positive and desired positions.

“When girls like your style, they stare at you but at the same time because of jealousy they always judge. I feel good when I feel their eyes on me. All women like it, I think, to be looked at... If people are looking at me, that means that I am beautiful. When this happens, I feel like it's worth getting ready.” (2A)

“I liked to be looked at. I can compete with other women for being stylish.” (2D)

Therefore, participants’ motivation to attract attention and to be able to compete includes surveillance as the way it processes. The goal is to be approved as beautiful; and thus consumption and surveillance practised as a labour of consumption and aesthetics (Elias & Gill, 2018) in shopping malls as its exact spaces, and in a world where postfeminist culture and neoliberalism defined women as autonomous and entrepreneur subjects (Elias & Gill, 2018) within “the regulatory and self-disciplining technology of postfeminist feminist sensibility”

(Riley et al., 2016). Concordantly, for participants of the second group, being noticed and being different is vital within their labour of shopping and being beautiful in order to meet the aesthetic labour. Thus, participants of the second group commodify their bodies, to circulate in the shopping mall as the most admired and envied women by other women. They create a brand image for themselves as if they are commodities browsing in a neoliberal market economy (Winch, 2015) by adopting secure appearances as their “self projects”. Their value and success are measured by the gaze of other women and their level of jealousy.

“It is important for Turkish women to be liked and to look beautiful... In Turkey, women are jealous of each other ... Women in our age observe each other a lot, because of the competition and jealousy.” (2A)

“Sometimes, I realize that a woman glances at me; then I say ‘yes, she liked my style’.” (2B)

“I mostly realize that women observe me from their reflection on the mirror. I can even guess what they are thinking about. ‘Where did she find this top?’, ‘Does it look good on me like that?’, ‘she looks good or not’...” (2D)

Other women’s opinions and the way participants interpret them to form their opinions about themselves. While some of the participants interpret other women’s reactions or compartments within the shopping mall positively in a narcissistic way, others tend to feel insecure about their appearances and their position within the competition. As two (2A, 2B) of the second group participants interpret the gaze of other women as the admirer and jealous, also the belief of one of them on her impact on others’ purchase preferences and judgemental approach to others’ “pretentiousness”, and effort to show off, generated a narcissistic look to themselves and their position in the competition with other women. However, other two participants are profoundly affected by other women’s appearances and choices in mall. As they affirmed their insecurities about their choices and appearances before, their answers were interpreted as they seek for the others’ gaze differently than other participants.

“I especially look and observe which clothes other women liked and tried on. I search and find clothes like that.” (2C)

“People are too confident in the shopping mall. I know that they want to be looked at. That is why I don’t look at them, just not to make them happy.” (2D)

While (2A) stated that she is not influenced by other women, contrary, others imitate her because of the jealousy; another participant stated that she is inspired by other women and their choices are vital for her as she mostly browses the clothes that other women tried on in the fitting room.

Beyond being personal problems, according to Riley et al. (2016), those insecurities and the lack of self-confidence are the consequences of the sophisticated beauty-oriented consumer culture, the lack of set standards; and according to Niinimäki (2010) and Tekin (2012) the constant change of trends and identities of the consumer society and neoliberal subjects' concern to adapt themselves to that fluidity. Therefore, the risk of failing in the labour of consumption and aesthetic, not to be approved create "the postfeminist gaze" (Riley et al., 2016) that processes as a mechanism of self-control to recreate continuously an acceptable identity and "successful femininity". By this way, woman discipline herself and her consumption activities by comparing herself to others and trying to see herself from other women's eyes. At that point, the shopping mall is present as a place where young women feel others' gaze on each other and discipline themselves to consume in a way that they suppose to fit within the limits of identity, a lifestyle that is approved by mass media discourse and interiorised by society.

Conclusion

Shopping was classified as an important way of consumption for this study in terms of participants' insights about consumer society, and as a way to exist within society securely. According to all participants, "shopping" mostly perceived as shopping for clothes, and as it is stated by first group, shopping for clothes were positioned as the very activity that introduced consumer society to modern and secular Turkish women. On the other hand, as Baudrillard (1998) and Sandıkçı and Ger (2002) assessed consumption as a way to differentiate oneself from others by purchasing different commodity-signs of different identities; shopping for clothes is a way to differentiate as modern for the first group and seeking for others' gaze as a way of being socially accepted and to prevail in the competition between women for second group. At that point, as the control process starts with the shopping of acceptable and secure identities; secondly appearance and the appearance during shopping are substantially relevant to surveillance mechanism in terms of self-policing with explicitly different motivations for two generations. Thus, all themes were generated by the collected data includes the concept of self-discipline in terms of its construction (shopping), representation (appearance/style) and approval/control (horizontal surveillance and self-policing).

At that point, for both groups, surveillance embodies self-policing; however, in different ways, creates different concerns. For the first group, surveillance exists because they feel the pressure to be normal and to conform even though they do not point at any surveillant scrutinizing themselves. For second group, attracting attention, to be admired and envied by other women mean the approval of the society and at the same time the production of the successful femininity (Riley et al., 2016) within a disciplinary power system in which women

are both the subject and the object of the horizontal surveillance, consumption-oriented postfeminist gaze. They perceive their identities as a part of their appearances, as popular culture discourse positioned the female body as a self-project and self-brand to invest (Winch, 2013), tend to concern about being different and attracting the attention of other women. Thus, the surveillance of others and the desire to be the best create the neoliberal forms of surveillance mechanism that also appear as “feminist issue” (Gill, 2019) because of the definition of the postfeminist discourse as the gendered neoliberalism.

In this context, according to this study, for young professional women living in Istanbul, consumption is a competitive activity itself and besides, the way they construct their identities through creating a fashionable, trendy, attention-grabbing, capable of competing with others and enviable appearances, as their products. They commodify themselves and create a sign-value by obtaining and representing the sign-values of the commodities they consume and circulate within the shopping mall to compete with others and be approved by others’ competitive and disciplining surveillance.

Thus, the way both generations consume, reflect their identities and concern about the level of their conformity to the rest of society differ by the ideologies they interiorised and how disciplinary power is exercised upon them. As it is argued and expected before the conduction of the research, for the young professional women living in Istanbul, shopping mall is the place where horizontal surveillance is practised in the form of “gynaeopticon” where they observe peers compare with themselves, to learn acceptable identities and adjust themselves by feeling the pressure of the scrutiny and the judgement of peers. Within this system, according to the research, for the young-professional women, being envied by peers and being looked are desired positions ensuring their success within the competition with others.

In essence, consumption and aesthetic labour stand as the results of the postfeminist discourse for the young professional women as they try to exist and invest themselves by shopping and obtaining fashionable identities to show off on the runway of the shopping mall and commodify their bodies by reducing their identities to their appearances and their tastes. By adopting an acceptable appearance that they interiorize by synopticon and gynaeopticon, they discipline themselves within the panoptic structure of the shopping mall. It showed that according to the findings, shopping malls in Istanbul are the crucial spaces for the construction of an acceptable identity by the appearance and surveilling other women to self-policing for young professional women. However, it needs to be stressed that because of this research limited by secular women, the concluding thoughts of this research cannot incorporate all socio-cultural groups of young professional women living in Istanbul. However, by stressing the

plurality and the polarization of Turkish consumer and participants concerns about the judgemental conservative gaze, this research addresses the “problem of the conservative gaze” for secular Turkish young professional women as a problematic topic and another restricting and disciplinary dynamic within the Turkish society for further research.

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