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## Tradwife Influencers in the U.S. and Türkiye: A Comparison of Traditional Womanhood and Family Roles on Social Media

### *Amerika ve Türkiye'deki Geleneksel Eş Fenomenleri: Sosyal Medyada Geleneksel Kadınlık ve Aile Rollerinin Karşılaştırılması*

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#### Abstract

The depiction of gender roles has been persistently revised in reaction to cultural changes, significantly influencing the organization of social life. In contemporary society, social media has intensified this influence through evolving and increasingly powerful viewing practices, making it even more impactful. Consequently, gender-related stereotypes continue to be produced and transmitted, while at times undergoing change and transformation. This study aims to comparatively analyze the representation of the traditional wife movement—an emerging phenomenon in the post-COVID-19 era, often argued to be a product of right-wing ideology—by examining the three most-viewed Reels videos of two prominent Instagram influencers, one from the United States and the other from Türkiye, through the method of thematic analysis. The selected Instagram accounts, Ballerina Farm and Ozden.Ozdogan, constitute the sample of this study. Their videos were subjected to thematic analysis, focusing on recurring themes such as traditional gender roles, family life, and the emphasis on raising multiple children. The findings indicate that Ballerina Farm's content romanticizes traditional domestic life and labor, portraying femininity, motherhood, and wifely duties within a modern aesthetic of rural living. In contrast, Ozden.Ozdogan's content underscores the traditional family structure with more modern elements, emphasizing women's gender roles, particularly in the context of motherhood. The study concludes that the traditional wife identity, shaped by distinct cultural contexts, is being reconstructed as a new digital identity on social media platforms. This digital identity not only recontextualizes an existing concept but also serves as an instrument of patriarchal dominance, commodifying female identity and transforming it into a commercial object. Both accounts construct a complex and multifaceted digital identity for the traditional wife, re-contextualizing feminine roles in response to changing social and cultural expectations.

**Keywords:** Tradwife, influencer, traditional gender roles, social media, identity

#### Öz

Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin temsili, kültürel değişimlere yanıt olarak sürekli olarak yenilenmekte ve toplumsal yaşamın örgütlenmesini önemli ölçüde etkilemektedir. Günümüzde ise sosyal medya bu etkiyi değişen ve daha da güçlenen izlenme pratikleri yoluyla daha da etkili hale getirmiş böylece toplumsal cinsiyete dair kalıp yargılar üretilmeye, aktarılmaya kimi zaman ise değişip dönüşmeye devam etmektedir. Bu çalışma, Covid-19 dönemi sonrası tanımlanmaya başlanan ve sağ ideolojinin bir ürünü olduğu iddia edilen geleneksel eş hareketinin ABD'den ve Türkiye'den birer Instagram fenomeni seçilerek en çok izlenen üç Reels videosu üzerinden kavramı nasıl temsil ettiklerini içerik analizi yöntemiyle karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturan Ballerina Farm ve Ozden.Ozdogan hesaplarından seçilen videolara tematik analiz tekniği kullanılmış ve geleneksel kadınlık rolleri, aile yaşamı, çok çocuklu hayat vurgusu gibi temalar incelenmiştir. Elde edilen bulgulara Ballerina Farm'ın içeriklerinde geleneksel yaşamın ve ev içi emeğin romantize edildiği; kadınlık, annelik ve eş olma gibi kavramların kırsal yaşamda modern bir estetikle harmanlanmış toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini vurguladığı tespit edilirken, Ozden.Ozdogan hesabının içeriklerinde daha modern vurgularla geleneksel aile yapısının paylaşıldığı, başta annelik olmak üzere kadının toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine odaklandığı tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, farklı kültürlerde farklı kültürel bağlamlara göre inşa edilen geleneksel eş kimliğinin sosyal medya platformlarında yeni bir dijital kimlik olarak sunulduğunu göstermektedir. Bu dijital kimliğin yalnızca eski bir kavramı yeniden anlamlandırma sürecine sokmakla kalmadığını, eril tahakkümüne aracılık ettiği ve kadın kimliğinin metalaştırılarak ticari bir nesneye dönüştürdüğü sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Her iki hesap da geleneksel eş kimliğini dijital platformlarda çok katmanlı ve karmaşık bir şekilde inşa etmektedir, toplumsal ve kültürel beklentilere paralel olarak kadınlık rollerini yeniden anlamlandırmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Geleneksel eş, fenomen, geleneksel cinsiyet rolleri, sosyal medya, kimlik

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## Introduction

Gender roles refer to the set of behaviors, duties, roles, and responsibilities attributed to individuals by society based on their biological sex. Butler (2014) argues that gender is transformed into performative roles through cultural, social, and linguistic practices. Connell (2005, p. 71), on the other hand, conceptualizes gender as a way of structuring social practices within a particular framework. In this context, gender processes shape daily life practices in relation to a reproductive domain, which is defined by the bodily structures and functions associated with human reproduction. Erdal Aytakin (2018, p. 450) highlights that definitions of gender reveal a differentiation between sexes in social perception; however, the existence of biological and physiological differences between the sexes does not necessarily require social segregation. She emphasizes that such distinctions are essentially a product of classification created by cultures and human communities, which, in many societies, may lead to social differentiation under certain conditions or at specific periods.

Traditional gender roles have played a significant role in shaping societal structures throughout human history. While hunter-gatherer communities exhibited a more equitable distribution of social roles between genders, the transition to agricultural societies introduced concepts leading to shifts in gender role distributions. Berktaş (2012, p. 51) argues that the advent of agriculture was initially perceived as a positive development for women during the Neolithic period; however, by the end of this era, it had resulted in adverse consequences, with women's social status closely linked to their roles in economic production and distribution.

Chodorow (1978) highlights that with the rise of capitalism and the acceleration of industrialization, the separation of home and workplace led to an increase in external production and a decline in domestic production, resulting in significant changes to the institutional functions of the family. In early capitalist America, the ideology of the "moral mother" emerged, which encouraged women across all social classes to maintain moral behavior within the household and provide their working husbands, often exposed to immoral environments, with a clean and nurturing home (Chodorow, 1978). Consequently, it is crucial to emphasize that the family serves as a fundamental mechanism of socialization, shaping societal transformations, which, according to Castells (2008, p. 256), stem from the relationship between the power of identity and the network society.

Feminist movements in the 1980s introduced the concept of "gender" as a broader framework instead of the "woman" category, leading to an expansion of the topic as "the cultural definition of behaviors assumed to be appropriate for sexes in a given society at a given time" (Berktaş, 2018, p. 28). Thus, the category of "woman" has increasingly been associated with social and cultural constructs. Connell (1998) further asserts that gender, as a structure of power, is constructed in relation to authoritarian/hegemonic masculinity. Consequently, even in its existing form, the imagery shaped by gender norms is further reinforced and intensified through media. The media's tendency to simplify, schematize, and moralize these images contributes to the creation of a structured and easily comprehensible order (Connell, 1998). "Media are perceived as the main instruments in conveying respectively stereotypical, patriarchal and hegemonic values about women and femininity" (Van Zoonen, 1991).

The social revolutions experienced by different cultures over varying periods have led to evolving roles, which have been reinterpreted in the context of modernization and globalization. Nonetheless, these transitions have been significantly amplified in the digital era, when media—particularly social media—plays a vital role in both contesting and upholding traditional gender norms. In this context, gender dynamics are not solely influenced by overarching societal frameworks but are also perpetuated through diverse media modalities, which function as essential arenas for the propagation of cultural norms and ideological constructs (Connell, 2005). Connell (2005) conceptualizes the notion of gender as a mechanism for organizing social practices within a specific contextual framework, wherein media operates as an instrument that influences daily life practices concerning reproductive spheres. The tradwife (traditional wife) movement, which gained prominence in the post-COVID-19 period, actively reproduces traditional gender roles on social media and provides a space to analyze their contemporary manifestations. This movement promotes a revival of traditional gender roles, highlighting domesticity, femininity, and subservience within the familial framework. The movement, grounded in conservative principles, advocates the notion that a woman's principal role is as a homemaker and caretaker, frequently opposing contemporary feminist ideas.

This study aims to comparatively examine how the concepts of the traditional wife, gender roles, and family are represented under the tradwife theme through two social media influencers from the United States and Türkiye. The study seeks to uncover the perspectives these roles bring to perceptions of womanhood while reproducing traditional values, considering the cultural, historical, and societal contexts of each country.

By analyzing the traditional wife influencers in these two countries, the research aims to offer insights into how social media supports and reshapes traditional wife roles. In this context, the study will explore how perceptions of gender roles differ across cultural settings and how the digital era influences these transformations.

### 1. The Concept of the Tradwife Movement

The etymological origin of the term "tradwife" is based on the combination of "trad," an abbreviation of the English word "traditional," and "wife." Although its first use on social media dates back to 2013, the movement gained significant attention in the post-COVID-19 period through influencers (Bower, 2024, p. 1; Di Sabato & Hughes, 2020, p. 28; Proctor, 2022, p. 7; Sykes, 2024, p. 1). The increased attention during this period can be attributed to women who, having been confined to their homes during the pandemic, shared their domestic responsibilities such as cooking, baking, cleaning, organization, and motherhood via social media. This emerging "momosphere" (a network created by mothers through social media platforms, forums, and websites) provided the foundation for the online domesticated persona of the tradwife (Proctor, 2022, p. 7; Simpson, 2024, p. 20).

The tradwife movement, which has experienced an increase in prominence in contemporary discourse, systematically perpetuates traditional gender roles and the established norms of domestic labor within the framework of modern societal structures. This movement has been criticized for legitimizing labor division rooted in gender inequity, while advocates contend that these roles are essential due to systemic circumstances. Such material legitimizes the allocation of tasks between males and females predicated on gender disparities, utilizing the rationale that structural circumstances require this arrangement, consequently obscuring patriarchal dynamics within the domestic sphere (Bektaş Ata et al., 2023, p. 190). The COVID-

19 pandemic, remote work, and rising living costs have drawn greater attention to domestic labor, emphasizing the time, expense, and effort required to manage a household and care for its members (Sykes, 2024, p. 2). Proponents of the tradwife movement claim that dedicating themselves to their husbands, homes, and families brings them happiness, thereby rejecting modernity and feminism by opposing women's presence in the public sphere and their economic independence. In this social structure, where men dominate the public sphere and women are confined to the private sphere, cultural and political authority is exercised by men over women (Chodorow, 1978).

Tradwife influencers frequently perpetuate traditional gender roles by accepting duties like motherhood and domestic chores, while claiming that men are responsible for external employment and family income. From a theoretical standpoint, Bourdieu's concept of internalized domination provides a crucial lens for understanding how tradwives accept these positions as "natural". As Bourdieu (2001, p. 35) explains the categories of domination are formulated from the perspective of the dominant, rendering the relations of domination seems natural. In this case, tradwives internalize the myths imposed upon them by society, feeling compelled to validate the natural basis of their socially assigned roles. As Bourdieu further discusses (2001, pp. 99-100), this internalization reinforces the patriarchal norms that confine women to the domestic sphere.

For a generation of women who witnessed their mothers' struggles under exhausting neoliberal working conditions and were raised to be ambitious, household tasks are romanticized as an aesthetically pleasing self-care practice (Sykes, 2024, p. 1). From a Bourdieusian perspective, most of these tradwives are socially conditioned to perceive themselves as aesthetic objects and to focus on beauty-related concerns. This tendency extends to domestic responsibilities, making women responsible for the aesthetic and social perception of their households (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 126). In this context, the primary distinction between tradwives and housewives lies in their ability to market their idealized lifestyle through social media. However, Proctor (2022, p. 7) argues that tradwives should not be viewed merely as a passing aesthetic trend or a temporary pandemic fad; rather, the movement's representatives perceive it as a form of identity.

In international literature, it is suggested that the tradwife identity represents gender roles and class distinctions primarily associated with white women, aligning the desires of the bourgeoisie with traditional wife roles. These women, often from privileged backgrounds, frequently adopt right-wing rhetoric (Proctor, 2022; Sitler-Elbel, 2021; Simpson, 2024). All identities, especially gender identities, bear the traces of patriarchal power relations and are shaped and constrained by them (Berkday, 2012, p. 113). The increased visibility of the tradwife identity during the last U.S. presidential election highlights its use as an ideological tool to reinforce conservative values and target a specific voter base amid heightened societal and political polarization. The tradwife movement has predominantly been studied within a U.S.-centric socio-political framework, however its adaptation and reception in diverse cultural contexts, such as Türkiye, require a detailed analysis. Traditional gender roles are developed, negotiated, and performed differently across communities, shaped by historical, religious, and socio-economic influences. In Türkiye, following the proclamation of the Republic, women were declared the new face of modernity as an identity. However, alongside the steps taken toward women's emancipation, they were also defined within the framework of an *enlightened* motherhood image and the mission of raising ideal children for the republic (Kandiyoti, 2015).

At the time of this study, no research on the tradwife concept was found in national literature. In international literature, studies on the rise of this concept on social media began around 2020. The findings of these studies are presented below.

### 1.1. Literature Review

The tradwife identity is based on an ideological framework that transcends simple nostalgia for the 1950s. This movement relies on traditional gender norms that were solidified post-World War II, highlighting domesticity, motherhood, and obedience as exemplary feminine characteristics (Alexander, 2023; Proctor, 2022; Sitler-Elbel, 2021). The 1950s housewife ideal in the United States was both a gender construct and a reaction to wider social and economic influences, including the reintegration of men into the labor and the endorsement of pronatalist policies (Simpson, 2024). It is essential to recognize that the archetypal 1950s housewife in the U.S. mostly arose as a conservative response to women's labor involvement during WWII and the wider emancipation movements. Although they are based on different historical processes, similarly, in Türkiye, the early Republican era romanticized women predominantly as spouses and mothers, defining their responsibilities through media representations from a male-centric viewpoint (Saktanber, as cited in Bektaş Ata et al., 2023, p. 135). Conversely, early Republican reforms in Türkiye aimed to enhance women's public visibility and participation, but frequently through state-defined positions such as the republican mother or educated wife. These historical trajectories establish the basis for modern tradwife influencers who perpetuate and recontextualize these traditional beliefs via digital media.

Despite its associations with the 1950s, scholars argue that the tradwife movement has deeper historical roots. Welter (1966, as cited in Cooper, 2024) identified piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity as the four cardinal virtues of womanhood in the 19th-century U.S., while Patmore (1897) in Victorian England described the "Angel in the House" archetype. These characteristics remain fundamental to the preaching of current tradwife influencers, which is frequently framed around religious dedication and moral responsibility. According to Çeler (2019), capitalism led to the re-establishment of women's home responsibilities to meet labor demands. As a result, capitalism continues to sustain itself based on power and profit opportunities, functioning in favor of patriarchy and men, and is shaped by gender relations (Connell, 1998, p. 147). Thus, women's identity as a gendered subject has shifted from its meaning within religious narratives to an economically driven capitalist framework.

#### 1.1.1. The Portrayal of Domestic Labor, Motherhood, and Femininity

One of the fundamental components of the tradwife movement is its representation of domestic labor as a gratifying and revered obligation. Zahay (2022) identified that femininity within tradwife narratives functions both as an aesthetic and ideological instrument, wherein domestic labor is idealized rather than depicted merely as a category of unpaid labor. Deem (2023) further posited that tradwife influencers craft an alternative reality in which domesticity is framed as a pathway to emancipation, notwithstanding its historical associations with patriarchal dominance.

Motherhood represents a pivotal theme within the discourse surrounding tradwives. Alexander (2023) conducted a comparative analysis of the tradwife movement and the Birthstrike movement, observing that the former advocates for procreation as a moral



obligation to society, whereas the latter repudiates childbearing because of ecological and economic apprehensions. This contrast highlights the politicization of motherhood within the rhetoric of tradwives, which aligns with nationalist and conservative ideologies.

Simpson (2024) investigated the ways in which tradwife influencers shape the perceptions of gender roles among young women, particularly during electoral cycles when conservative ideologies become increasingly prominent. By framing homemaking as a viable alternative to the pressures associated with professional careers, tradwife influencers effectively address the anxieties of women who grapple with the challenges of balancing work and personal commitments. Nevertheless, scholars such as Sykes (2024) warn that this movement, despite its seemingly innocuous façade, insidiously perpetuates regressive gender norms that may constrain women's socio-economic autonomy.

Traditional wives do not merely use social media to showcase their happy domestic lives but also to spread ideological narratives and convince others of their idealized way of life. Given that ideology is a means of meaning-making with social and political dimensions (Fiske, 2003, p. 221), the traditional wife movement contributes to the political meaning production of a particular societal segment. Studies in international literature have found that prominent traditional wives adopt right-wing ideologies and shape their content accordingly (Di Sabato & Hughes, 2020; Soer, 2024; Sykes & Hopner, 2024; Sykes, 2024). For instance, some foreign traditional wife influencers frame their content around responsibilities towards their husbands, obedience, and family guidance by referencing sacred texts.

In her research, Zahay (2022) found that femininity is frequently used as an anti-feminist tool, highlighting the simultaneous presence of both feminine aesthetics and anti-feminist populist discourses in the content. Similarly, Stotzer & Nelson's (2025) thematic analysis of the tradwife movement identifies four dominant anti-feminist narratives: the notion that feminism opposes femininity, the belief that feminism harms women, the rejection of capitalist labor demands, and opposition to gender diversity. These themes manifest in how tradwives construct their digital personas, idealizing domesticity while positioning themselves in contrast to feminist principles.

### 1.1.2. Representations of Family and Womanhood in Different Cultural Contexts

The portrayal of family and womanhood by tradwife influencers demonstrates both cultural differences and ideological overlaps. In the U.S., traditional wives frame their domestic roles as a counter-response to feminism, positioning marriage and homemaking as acts of empowerment (Proctor, 2022). To persuade women and society, the most effective rhetoric centers on the naturalness of motherhood. Additionally, the neo-conservative ideology of the 1980s sought to discipline women by emphasizing the challenges of working outside the home and the joy of caring for children at home (Çeler, 2019, p. 177). These contrasting frameworks shape how influencers shape their messages: American tradwives typically highlight free choice and personal fulfillment, while their Turkish counterparts emphasize communal responsibilities. These differences affirm Fiske's (2003, p. 205) argument that gender relations are politically determined by social forces rather than nature, rendering women's labor invisible and reducing their work to supporting men in managing the family (Fiske, 2003, p. 229).

According to studies, tradwife influencers approach race and class issues differently. Tradwives, reflecting Western beauty ideals, are fair skinned, with their hair meticulously styled and makeup always applied. The emphasis on such distinct physical standards and fair

skin has led to the movement being associated with racism (Alexander, 2023; Bower, 2024; Proctor, 2022; Sitler-Elbel, 2021). Additionally, these physical attributes have been observed to align with the housewives of the 1950s. Bower (2024) emphasized that the Western tradwife movement, primarily driven by white women, has been linked to racial exclusion because it romanticizes a 1950s-era family structure that disadvantaged Black women. However, in their study, Stotzer and Nelson (2025) found that the identity of tradwives is multifaceted, encompassing a diverse range of beliefs and backgrounds. While many participants identified as white, a significant portion were women of color, challenging the notion that tradwife culture is exclusively linked to white supremacy. This diversity indicates that the tradwife phenomenon cannot be easily categorized and requires a nuanced understanding of its participants. In contrast, within the context of Türkiye, the traditional wife narrative does not overtly address racial considerations; rather, it frequently perpetuates distinctions of social class, depicting an idealized conception of femininity that remains unattainable for women of lower socioeconomic status who lack the financial means to remain at home. This indicates that the movement transcends a mere yearning for the past, functioning instead as an ideological discourse that seeks to reconstitute a specific social structure, delineated by class distinctions.

### 1.1.3. Content Strategies and Messaging in Tradwife Influencer Culture

The growing number of tradwife influencers on social media reflects a digital transformation of traditional gender roles. As stated by studies, these influencers employ strategic messaging to publicize their ideological perspective. For instance, Di Sabato & Hughes (2020) investigated 3,500 tradwife-related hashtags on Twitter and discovered that these tags facilitated in the transmission of right-wing and anti-feminist propaganda. Similarly, Sitler-Elbel (2021) and Sykes & Hopner (2024) found that tradwife influencers romanticize domesticity through aesthetically selected content while integrating ideological messages which promote submission and traditional family structures.

When comparing content strategies across cultural contexts, Sykes (2024) noted that the #stayathomegirlfriend trend on TikTok resembles the tradwife movement by glamorizing domestic labor, appealing to younger audiences who may be disillusioned with career-focused feminism. In Türkiye, traditional gender roles are often intertwined with religious and nationalist narratives, as indicated by the representation of women as the moral and emotional backbone of the family. Unlike their Western counterparts, Turkish tradwife influencers may highlight mother sacrifice and familial duty as culturally significant themes.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Purpose of the Research

This study aims to examine how the traditional wife movement, which has gained popularity on social media, is represented through influencers in the United States and Türkiye via a comparative content analysis. The study seeks to understand how cultural and social contexts in both countries influence the narratives, visual representations, and gender roles associated with the tradwife movement. To achieve this aim, the following research questions have been formulated:

R.Q.1: What are the similarities and differences between the content strategies and messages of traditional wife influencers in the United States and Türkiye?

R.Q.2: In what ways do the representations of family and womanhood presented by traditional wife influencers differ and overlap across different cultural contexts?

R.Q.3: How are aspects such as domestic labor, motherhood, and femininity portrayed?

### 3.2. Population and Sample of the Research and Research Method

This research utilizes qualitative content analysis as the principal methodological approach, augmented by thematic analysis to explore the representation of tradwife roles by influencers on Instagram across two disparate cultural settings—the United States and Türkiye. The current investigation employs qualitative content analysis, a methodological framework intended for the scrutiny of textual or visual data to discern patterns, themes, and significances (Creswell, 2013, p. 185). This methodological approach empowers researchers to delve into the fundamental dynamics of social phenomena and interpret the way content articulates specific messages (Creswell, 2014, p. 60). The primary objective of this study is to examine the Instagram content produced by tradwife influencers, and qualitative content analysis offers a systematic methodology for identifying themes and narratives inherent within the social media posts (Creswell, 2014, p. 74).

Qualitative content analysis is distinguished from quantitative content analysis in that it strives to comprehend the meanings embedded within the content, as opposed to solely quantifying or categorizing data (Creswell, 2013, p. 181). This differentiation holds significant relevance as the study is concentrated on discerning how particular themes such as domestic roles, femininity, and womanhood are represented by influencers within varying cultural contexts (Creswell, 2014, p. 62).

The design of the study was meticulously crafted to guarantee methodological rigor by integrating both content analysis and thematic analysis. As posited by Creswell (2014, p. 75), thematic analysis is indispensable for recognizing patterns across diverse data sets, and this study employs it to ensure that the content is not only systematically coded but also interpreted in conjunction with the broader socio-cultural context surrounding the traditional wife movement.

In order to analyze the Instagram content, the researcher formulated a coding scheme that encapsulates visual and thematic components pertinent to tradwife roles. Notable themes such as family dynamics, femininity, motherhood, and domestic labor were identified (Creswell, 2013, p. 191).

#### 3.2.1. Selection of Accounts

The Instagram accounts selected for analysis in this research were deliberately chosen to encapsulate influencers who significantly exemplify the archetype of the tradwife. The investigation centers on two prominent figures: Ballerina Farm, the most-followed influencer within the tradwife category in the United States, and Ozden Ozdogan, a notable influencer from Türkiye. At the time of data acquisition, Ballerina Farm boasted 10.1 million followers and had published 968 posts, whereas Ozden Ozdogan had garnered 1.8 million followers with a total of 1,311 posts. These influencers were identified for their substantial engagement levels and their effective representation of traditional wife ideals within their content, thereby rendering them appropriate for comparative analysis across divergent cultural frameworks. Three of the most-viewed reels from each account were selected to investigate the way these traditional roles are articulated through visual media and messaging.



### 3.2.1. Analysis Framework

The unit of analysis for this research comprises Instagram reels that illustrate tradwife roles. The primary objective of the content analysis is to systematically discern salient concepts, themes, and elements associated with traditional roles, including womanhood, motherhood, and domestic responsibilities. Within this framework, the study scrutinizes various facets of the reels, encompassing visuals, messages, attire, linguistic choices, and the depiction of domestic tasks.

A coding schema was devised to classify these elements, with particular emphasis on the roles depicted, the activities engaged in, and the levels of audience interaction. This methodological approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how traditional wife roles are constructed and represented through Instagram content. Moreover, the research juxtaposes the similarities and distinctions between the two influencers concerning their portrayals of traditional wife identities, highlighting the cultural and social contexts that inform these representations.

### 3.2.2. Incorporating Thematic Analysis

In addition to qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis was utilized to discern recurring themes and overarching patterns within the content. Thematic analysis constitutes a methodological approach for identifying, scrutinizing, and documenting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. It furnishes a holistic perspective on how particular ideas are articulated and structured within the content, thereby providing insights into the way traditional wife roles are conceptualized in the posts of these influencers. Thematic analysis holds particular significance for this investigation as it facilitates an in-depth examination of the ideological, cultural, and social significances embedded in both the visual and verbal content, especially in relation to the tradwife movement.

The thematic analysis was executed by pinpointing key themes pertinent to tradwife roles, encompassing gender dynamics, familial structures, domestic labor, and feminine identity. These themes were systematically categorized under broad classifications derived from the research inquiries, which sought to investigate the representation of womanhood, motherhood, and domesticity across varying cultural frameworks. Each theme underwent analysis for its prevalence and relevance within the posts, with particular emphasis placed on the narratives that either conform to or contest traditional gender roles. Through this integrated methodology, the study delivers a thorough examination of how traditional wife roles are constructed and articulated on social media platforms.

### 3.3. Limitations of the Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the content analysis focuses solely on the most viewed three reels videos from Hannah Neelman and Özden Özdoğan's Instagram accounts. While this strategy ensures an evaluation of the most influential content, it does not consider the full scope of their social media presence or audience engagement beyond these selected posts.

Secondly, the study depends heavily on qualitative content analysis, which, despite its richness, is fundamentally interpretative. The subjective nature of coding and theme categorization may result in researcher bias. While attempts have been taken to assure rigor and consistency, future research may benefit from triangulation using audience reception analysis or quantitative engagement indicators.

Another limitation concerns the cultural and contextual differences between Ballerina Farm and Ozden.Ozdoğan. The study does not provide an in-depth examination of the socio-political and economic factors that influence traditional femininity in the U.S. and Türkiye. While it identifies key distinctions in content presentation, a more comprehensive ethnographic or discourse analysis could yield deeper insights into these differences.

Additionally, Instagram's algorithmic influence on content exposure and interaction is not thoroughly examined in this study. Algorithmic curation may influence whether videos gain popularity and modify audience perceptions, adding a degree of complexity to the research findings.

Lastly, this study looks at Instagram as a venue for promoting tradwife narratives. Other social media platforms such as TikTok or YouTube, where similar content might be presented differently, are beyond the scope of this study. Future research could explore cross-platform comparisons to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the digital performance of tradwives.

Despite these limitations, this study offers valuable insights into the mediated construction of traditional femininity on social media and provides a foundation for further research in this area.

## 4. Research Findings

### 4.1. Theme-Based Findings of Ballerina Farm's Most Viewed Reels Videos

In this section, instead of concentrating exclusively on the two content creators, the results are articulated through thematic categories derived from both qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. The predominant themes discerned from the reels of Ballerina Farm were categorized under the overarching concepts of traditional femininity, domestic life, natural living, and motherhood. These themes were consistently present throughout the selected videos, illuminating various dimensions of the tradwife movement.

The video with the highest viewership from Ballerina Farm revolved around the themes of natural living and traditional cooking. Hannah's activities, which include baking bread and preparing meals using ingredients sourced from the farm, are depicted within the context of an idealized traditional lifestyle. The visual appeal of the rustic kitchen, in conjunction with the maternal figure actively participating in domestic responsibilities, corresponds with the theme of traditional femininity, wherein womanhood is portrayed as fundamentally anchored in homemaking, caregiving, and self-sufficiency. The portrayal of motherhood surfaces as a pivotal component, with children occasionally appearing in the frame, thereby reinforcing the mother's role as the nurturing agent within the domestic sphere.

**Table 1.** Ballerina Farm's Most Viewed Reels Videos

	Video 1	Video 2	Video 3
<b>Views</b>	133 mn	109 mn	73,4 mn
<b>Likes</b>	4.8 mn	4.4 mn	3.1 mn
<b>Comments</b>	22.2 k	15.5 k	12.4 k

As Williamson (1983, p. 128) states, the natural refers to the interpretation or meaning that culture assigns to nature. Natural is used to signify diverse qualities such as *perfectibility*, and

this quality is perceived as desirable when associated with nature. She points out that romanticism embraces the concept of perfectibility, viewing true forms not as abstract ideals but as inherent in nature; society perceives only their reflections (Williamson, 1983, p. 125). If the perspective that associates women with nature due to their biological characteristics is taken as a theoretical basis (Bora, 2010, p. 61; Demir, 2019, p. 18), it can be argued that women are perceived as representations of naturalness. Traditional wives aestheticize and idealize their lifestyle by perfecting homemaking, motherhood, and femininity while simultaneously linking their practices to notions of naturalness. Consequently, as Williamson (1983, p. 125) asserts, naturalness is equated with virtue, and despite only a partial reflection of this lifestyle being projected, it becomes a desirable ideal within society. In this regard, the traditional wife movement can be seen as contributing to romanticism through its engagement with naturalness, aesthetics, and the pursuit of perfection. Hannah picks thyme from a pot, bakes her own bread, and prepares the dish using a traditional wood-burning stove rather than a modern oven. Throughout the videos, all movements are aestheticized, while the setting and the products used are presented with an emphasis on naturalness in the background.

All three of Ballerina Farm's most viewed reels videos revolve around bread and food preparation. These videos reflect the trend of bread-making content that gained popularity during and after the COVID-19 pandemic within the momosphere. Notably, the kitchen setting remains consistent across all the videos, reinforcing a cohesive and recognizable brand identity. Baking bread, producing butter, and preparing food from farm-grown products not only emphasizes traditional housewifery, but also creates an ideal lifestyle in which femininity is tied to nurturing via labor. This is consistent with the rhetoric of femininity, in which women view domesticity as an empowering and deliberate decision rather than a societal imposition. The glorification of natural and traditional practices in her content reflects a nostalgic longing for a past in which women's labor was predominantly domestic and family centered.

#### 4.2. Theme-Based Findings of Özden.Özdoğan's Most Viewed Reels Videos

The bio of Özden Özdoğan's account includes the phrase "strong woman = strong society", which may imply a traditional understanding of female empowerment, where strength is defined within the context of traditional gender roles. In this view, a woman's power is often associated with fulfilling roles like caregiving, motherhood, and support within the family. Thus, the concept of a "strong woman" could be seen as reinforcing traditional norms, rather than advocating for a broader, more inclusive definition of female empowerment. The emphasis might be on the idea that successfully fulfilling traditional roles for women is seen as essential for both individual and societal strength. This perspective may overlook the potential for gender equality and the expansion of women's roles beyond these prescribed societal expectations.

In a similar vein, an analytical examination of Özden Özdoğan's most widely viewed video content was conducted through various thematic categories including modern motherhood, family bonding, humor in domestic life, and gender roles within family dynamics. The predominant focus of these videos underscores themes of motherhood and family bonding, particularly accentuating the quotidian challenges associated with child-rearing in contemporary familial frameworks. The incorporation of humor within her narratives facilitates a more relaxed attitude towards the historically stringent roles of wife and mother, thereby offering a stark contrast to the romanticized portrayals featured in Ballerina Farm's productions.

Özdoğan's representation of modern motherhood is distinctly observable in one of her videos that chronicles late-night parenting responsibilities such as breastfeeding, diaper changing, and child soothing, all portrayed through a lens that is both realistic and emotionally resonant. The depiction of a mother fulfilling her duties—nursing, changing diapers, and caring for her children—reinforces the idea of a "strong woman," with strength defined by domestic and maternal roles. However, this is complicated by the expectation that she also maintains physical beauty and slimness after having six children. This ideal creates an unattainable standard where a woman must be both a selfless mother and an attractive, youthful figure, linking her worth to traditional notions of motherhood and appearance.

The infusion of humor and informality in her exchanges with family members cultivates an atmosphere of playfulness, rendering the conventional family dynamic more accessible and less idealized. Additionally, family bonding emerges as a pivotal theme, wherein the interactions among her children, spouse, and herself are depicted as both playful and supportive, thereby highlighting the transformative dynamics inherent in modern motherhood.

**Table 2.** Ozden.Ozdogan's Most Viewed Reels Videos

	Video 1	Video 2	Video 3
<b>Views</b>	124 mn	93.2 mn	40.8 mn
<b>Likes</b>	5.6 mn	2.7 mn	158 k
<b>Comments</b>	2628	1254	830

Her announcement of the latest pregnancy represents the idealization of the traditional family structure, the growth of the family, and the value of unity. From a gender and family norms perspective, the video reinforces the notion that motherhood and having multiple children are socially esteemed values. It implies that a strong family unit is not only built through shared experiences but also through adherence to traditional gender roles, particularly the portrayal of women within a large family model. Thus, the video both reflects and idealizes societal expectations regarding family roles, portraying traditional motherhood and family structures as foundational to social stability.

#### **4.3. Comparison of Themes in Ballerina Farm and Ozden.Ozdogan Accounts**

The thematic juxtaposition between Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan elucidates divergent methodologies in the representation of femininity, motherhood, and familial structures. Both narratives articulate conventional gender roles, yet they do so in markedly different manners that embody disparate perspectives regarding domesticity and maternal obligations.

##### **4.3.1. Traditional Femininity vs. Modern Feminism**

The examination of the two narratives uncovers a pronounced disparity in the representation of femininity. The content associated with Ballerina Farm conforms to a more conventional conception of femininity, wherein the female role is predominantly oriented around domestic tasks, culinary arts, and the nurturing of offspring. The focus is placed on crafting an idealized portrayal of a spouse and mother who derives purpose and satisfaction from domestic duties. The visual elements are meticulously curated to accentuate rustic, traditional environments such as the kitchen and the farm, thereby reinforcing the notion of femininity as intricately linked to nature and family existence. Conversely, Özden Özdoğan implements a more

contemporary and fluid depiction of femininity. Although she also esteems motherhood and domestic responsibilities, her content articulates these themes in a manner that is firmly rooted in the realities of modern life. There is a diminished degree of idealization and a heightened presence of humor, as evidenced by the frequent employment of parodies and informal settings, which imply a more adaptable approach to conventional roles.

#### **4.3.2. Motherhood and the Maternal Role**

Both creators underscore the significance of the maternal role, yet their methodologies exhibit considerable variation. In *Ballerina Farm*, motherhood is represented as an idealized, nearly romanticized role. The nurturing mother is depicted as an autonomous and organic figure who takes pride in homegrown produce, traditional culinary techniques, and an unwavering commitment to familial responsibilities. The videos portray motherhood as a harmonious and serene experience. Conversely, Özden Özdoğan's depiction of motherhood integrates a more pragmatic viewpoint. Her videos frequently illustrate the chaotic, exhausting, and humorous facets of motherhood, departing from the idealized narrative. Özden's utilization of humor, particularly within her parodic content, reveals a more forthright perspective on parenting, one that contests the conventional archetype of an impeccable mother.

#### **4.3.3. Family Dynamics and Gender Roles**

The theme of family life is a pivotal aspect in both narratives, yet each creator articulates it through distinct paradigms. In *Ballerina Farm*, the family is characterized as a cohesive, harmonious entity, with the mother positioned at the nucleus of the domestic sphere. The roles delineated within the family are explicitly defined, with the mother assuming the primary responsibilities of caregiver and homemaker, while the father's presence is subtly acknowledged but not as prominently featured in the content. This portrayal reinforces traditional gender roles wherein the mother serves as the moral and emotional cornerstone of the household. In contrast, Özden Özdoğan depicts a more collaborative family dynamic. Her videos frequently showcase her husband and children in equal proportions, highlighting the playful and shared dimensions of parenting. This perspective challenges the rigid delineation of roles and presents a more egalitarian interpretation of family life, wherein both parents are equally engaged in the upbringing of their children.

#### **4.3.4. Visual Aesthetics and Representation of Domesticity**

The visual aesthetics inherent in both accounts manifest thematic divergences in their depiction of domestic existence. *Ballerina Farm* is distinguished by its rustic, organic environments that accentuate traditional homemaking methodologies. The incorporation of wooden kitchens, natural illumination, and farm-to-table culinary practices reinforces the concept of an organic, self-sustaining familial life. Conversely, Özden Özdoğan's content showcases more contemporary and informal settings, characterized by modern interior spaces and casual attire. The playful and humorous essence of her videos, coupled with the utilization of modern environments, engenders a representation of family life that is more relatable and accessible.

#### **4.3.5. Emotional Expression and Social Commentary**

The emotional tenor of the content presented in both accounts also exhibits notable variation. *Ballerina Farm* elicits sentiments of warmth, tranquility, and nostalgia, placing considerable emphasis on traditional values and naturalistic living. The depiction of the mother as a serene,



composed individual reinforces the ideal of femininity as closely associated with emotional equilibrium and nurturing qualities. In contrast, Özden Özdoğan's emotional articulation is markedly more diverse, encompassing moments of joy, laughter, and even exasperation. The humor embedded within her content, particularly in her parodic segments, implies that motherhood and familial existence do not necessitate idealization to possess intrinsic worth. Özden's methodology allows for a more nuanced and less rigid representation of maternal emotions, thereby challenging the societal expectations imposed upon women to perpetually maintain composure.

In conclusion, while both Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan engage with themes pertinent to femininity, motherhood, and familial life, their methodologies exhibit significant divergence. Ballerina Farm adheres to a traditional, romanticized perspective of domestic life, accentuating a nostalgic return to antiquated gender roles and values. Conversely, Özden Özdoğan presents a more contemporary, adaptable, and humorous interpretation of these identical themes, thereby contesting traditional narratives and offering a more realistic and egalitarian perspective on family and motherhood. These distinctions underscore the evolving nature of gender roles within contemporary society, as digital media facilitates novel avenues for women to articulate and redefine their identities.

The codes embedded in the videos are provided below.

**Table 3.** Comparison of the Ballerina Farm and Ozden.Ozdogan Accounts

Video	Account	Visual Elements	Behaviours	Represented Roles	Emotional Expression	Thematic Commentary
1	Ballerina Farm	Rural home, traditional kitchen, simple clothes	Baking bread, cooking, spending time with children	Motherhood, housewifery	Warmth, naturalness, peace	Motherhood and housewifery are emphasized. Traditional life and housewifery are idealized.
2	Ozden.Ozdoğan	Indoor setting, bedroom, sleep routine, modern pajamas, natural face	Baby care	Motherhood, traditional roles	Love, compassion	Naturalness and motherhood are prioritized.
3	Ballerina Farm	Rural home, traditional kitchen, simple clothes	Baking bread, food preparation	Motherhood, housewifery	Warmth, peace	The ideal of a woman producing with her own labor is emphasized. Traditional cooking and family values are highlighted.

4	Ozden.Ozdoğan	Casual clothes, modern indoor setting	Parody with husband and children	Motherhood, traditional roles	Joy, family harmony	Family fun is emphasized through humorous content.
5	Ballerina Farm	Rural home, traditional kitchen, simple clothes	Making bread and butter	Housewifery, motherhood	Naturalness, peace	The focus is on domestic production with traditional methods and family harmony.
6	Ozden.Ozdoğan	Casual clothes, modern indoor setting	Parody with husband and children	Motherhood	Joy, family warmth	Family bonds and a large family life are romanticized.

## Conclusion

This study explores the cultural representations of the tradwife role as presented in the three most viewed Reels from the Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan Instagram accounts, employing thematic analysis. The content analysis revealed that both accounts emphasize traditional gender roles, motherhood, femininity, productivity, and family bonds. However, while these accounts share thematic similarities, their presentations reflect the cultural contexts in which they exist, underscoring significant differences between the American and Turkish representations of the traditional wife movement.

Ballerina Farm romanticizes femininity, rural life, and naturalness by focusing on themes of productivity, craftsmanship, and the preservation of tradition. Femininity is primarily associated with motherhood, housewifery, and, by extension, domestic labor, domestic production, naturalness, and tradition. The emphasis on naturalness, evident in video shooting techniques, lighting, clothing, and makeup, conveys the message that tradition is inherently linked to nature, presenting a vision of domesticity that idealizes the role of women as central to household labor. The message reinforces a gendered division of labor, with women depicted as responsible for child-rearing, feeding, and maintaining the household in the most natural way possible. Despite embracing traditional roles, the account utilizes the economy created through technologies brought by modernity to its advantage.

In contrast, Özden Özdoğan's content exemplifies a more contemporary interpretation of conventional familial values, integrating humor and intimacy into the portrayals of domestic life. While the concept of motherhood continues to occupy a central position, Özden's narrative is constructed around themes of sacrifice, emotion, and love, with an emphasis on modern parenting that highlights emotional dimensions. Unlike the Ballerina Farm's focus on rural traditions, Özden's representation synthesizes traditional values within a modern urban context, thereby producing a more relatable and accessible depiction of the traditional wife archetype. Özden's videos frequently illustrate humorous and emotionally resonant

interactions with her partner, offering a more egalitarian perspective on familial life in comparison to the American counterpart.

While both narratives exhibit traditional gender roles, the way they are contextualized reflects divergent cultural backgrounds. Ballerina Farm's representation is anchored in an idealized, nostalgic conception of rural existence, invoking a longing for the 1950s housewife archetype, which has been subject to critique for its racial and gender exclusivity. In contrast, Özden Özdoğan's representation, situated within a Turkish framework, emphasizes a more localized and contemporary interpretation of the traditional wife role, accentuating maternal affection, emotional connectivity, and familial ties. Unlike Ballerina Farm, Özden's content is less preoccupied with racial beauty standards and provides a more inclusive depiction of motherhood. These differences may suggest that the representation of traditional wife identities changes according to cultural context, and the representation of these movements varies based on local values. The digital platforms they use in presenting traditional wife representations not only contribute to the dissemination of traditional roles through digital means, reinforcing male dominance in the digital realm, but also commercialize the female identity.

Despite these cultural disparities, both narratives perpetuate traditional gender roles and exhibit an ideological resonance with conservative familial values. As previously elucidated in scholarly discourse, the 1950s housewife archetype, albeit nostalgic, retains significant political implications, reinforcing women's roles as caregivers and mothers within domestic spheres. Both Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan adhere to this traditionalist paradigm, leveraging social media platforms to propagate these ideals in a manner that transcends mere personal inclination and reinforces established gender norms. According to the tradwife movement they represent, the boundaries between the roles of women and men, both inside and outside the home, are sharply defined, and roles are strictly distributed. This movement, romanticized through 1950s nostalgia and, even further back in history, referencing the historical milestones of limiting women's existence to the domestic sphere, serves a societal construction that adapts to the digital age, evolving through different cultural contexts, reinforcing the rise of patriarchal societies. In other words, as Bourdieu (2001, p. 34) noted, structures of domination, in addition to individual actors and institutions, are presented today as "the product of an incessant (and therefore historical) labour of reproduction" by incorporating digital culture into the equation. Although they belong to different cultures, it can be said that there are commonalities in the way traditional roles idealized through patriarchal perspectives are presented with aesthetic and romantic concerns.

The structural challenges identified in this study emerge from the constrained scope of the comparative analysis between the American and Turkish iterations of the tradwife movement. The analysis does not engage in a profound exploration of the ideological foundations of the narratives advanced by the content creators. A more structural and comprehensive examination, contrasting the diverse discourses, values, and ideologies embedded in the representations of traditional wifehood, would significantly enrich this discourse. The limitations of the study are further compounded by its inability to address the ideological and political dimensions of the movement beyond a superficial juxtaposition of "modern-rural" discourses.

Furthermore, while both Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan exemplify traditional conceptions of womanhood, the distinct cultural frameworks within which they operate necessitate a more intricate examination of how these depictions correspond with or diverge from overarching political and ideological movements. As the traditional wife movement undergoes continual transformation, it remains profoundly intertwined with contemporary political narratives, particularly those exhibiting conservative and anti-feminist orientations. The engagement with social media within this framework not only fortifies gendered expectations but also commodifies female identity, thereby aligning with patriarchal constructs that have been historically sustained and continue to adapt in the context of the digital era.

In conclusion, both Ballerina Farm and Özden Özdoğan proficiently embody the tradwife movement, albeit through disparate cultural perspectives. While Ballerina Farm accentuates themes of traditionalism and naturalism, capitalizing on the romanticization of rural existence, Özden Özdoğan integrates traditional roles within a modern milieu, thus providing a portrayal of the tradwife that is more contemporary and accessible. These narratives contribute to the ongoing discourse regarding gender roles, familial values, and femininity, offering critical insights into the ways digital platforms both influence and commercialize cultural norms. Despite their distinctions, both narratives reinforce patriarchal ideologies, employing nostalgia and idealized representations of domestic life to advocate for a conservative interpretation of womanhood and family.

## Declarations

- \* *Ethics Committee Approval:* Since the study does not involve human factors, ethics committee approval is not required.
- \* *Publication Ethics:* This study has been prepared in accordance with the rules outlined in the "Guidelines for Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of Higher Education Institutions." Additionally, the article has been scanned using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software, and no instances of plagiarism have been detected.
- \* *Author Contribution Rate:* The authors' contributions to the study are 50% and 50%.
- \* *Author Competing Interests:* There is no direct or indirect financial, commercial, legal, or professional relationship or conflict of interest involved in the study.
- \* *Financial Support:* The study was not supported by any academic financial support organization.
- \* *Author Disclosure:* The study was neither produced from a thesis, nor presented at a congress, symposium, or conference.

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