

From Homemaker to Influencer: Tradwife Aesthetics, Digital Femininity, and the Commodification of Domestic Labor among Turkish Food Influencers

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Abstract

The emergence of food influencers on Instagram has transformed domestic work into a visually appealing and commercially lucrative type of digital entertainment. Turkish female food influencers embody idealized femininities through curated depictions of cooking, homemaking, motherhood, and family life, aligning with contemporary study on tradwife aesthetics. This study reframes tradwife aesthetics as a digital visual culture that idealizes domesticity, venerates homemaking, and reinterprets unpaid household labor as aspirational lifestyle material, rather than adhering to traditional gender politics.

This article examines the creation of digital femininity via Instagram food content and the conversion of domestic work into symbolic and commercial value within influencer culture. This study examines the convergence of gender performance, platform economics, and the commodification of everyday household behaviors through Butler's theory of gender performativity, Gill's idea of postfeminist media culture, and Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital.

The paper used qualitative content analysis to examine the Instagram posts of five prominent Turkish food-related influencers. The analysis investigates reoccurring visual and literary motifs, including domestic labor, motherhood, familial values, emotional labor, aesthetic domesticity, authenticity, economic partnerships, and the enactment of ideal femininity. We are intrigued by the inversion of established gender norms via sophisticated visual narratives and platform-specific interactions.

The study argues that Instagram sustains traditional femininity and reshapes it into an ideal digital lifestyle. Influencer culture makes household labor visible, stylized, and commercialized, while also preserving an illusion of authenticity and personal autonomy. In this sense, tradwife aesthetics signify not a resurgence of traditional gender roles but a contemporary digital enactment shaped by platform capitalism, self-promotion, and attention economics.

This study analyzes Turkish food influencers from the perspectives of gender studies and digital media, thereby enhancing the ongoing conversation about digital femininity, influencer culture, and the commercialization of domestic life. This study contributes to the growing worldwide literature on tradwife aesthetics by providing empirical evidence from the Turkish sociocultural setting, where the interaction of culinary content, domestic work, and gender performance has been inadequately explored.

Keywords

Tradwife Aesthetics, Digital Femininity, Gender Studies, Instagram, Food Influencers, Domestic Labor, Influencer Culture, Türkiye.