



## The Empowerment of Female TV Series Characters on Digital Platforms: An Analysis of the 2023 BLU TV Series

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**Ayşegül AKAYDIN AYDIN**

Assoc.Prof. Faculty of Communication, Istanbul Aydin University, Turkey

aakaydin@aydin.edu.tr

ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5772-4008

**Nur Emine KOÇ**

Assoc.Prof. Faculty of Communication, Istanbul Aydin University, Turkey

nurkoc@aydin.edu.tr

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3477-8019

### Abstract

*This study focuses on original Turkish TV series from 2023 on Blu TV, the most watched digital platform in Turkey. Blu TV, Turkey's first digital platform, ranked first as the most-watched platform in 2023 with a 38% viewership rate. It was followed by Netflix with 27% and Prime Video with 19%. In the study, the female characters of two series that started to be broadcast on Blu TV in 2023 are analyzed. These series are 'Magarsus' (2023) and 'How Do I Fill This Emptiness?' (2023). Female characters in Turkish TV series broadcast on digital platforms are structurally different from the characters that appear in traditional television series. Digital female series characters are at the forefront with their different professions, sexuality, and power. Whether they are ballerinas, writers, cleaners, or the head of a traditional family, these characters are framed as free and independent. The study is based on the argument that the serial content of digital platforms is more independent and the fiction of characters is more conflict-based. The female characters in these series are analyzed through Erving Goffman's theory of self-presentation, under the headings of performance, teams, regional behaviors, role strain, out-of-character, and the art of impression management. It is determined that the female characters analyzed emerge in the free environment of digital, their character development and conflicts about their identities due to their families and societies can easily be felt by the audience in the frontstage and backstage themes.*

**Keywords:** Turkish original series, Blu TV, Female Characters, Self-Presentation Theory

### 1. Introduction

Television broadcasting in Turkey has transformed from an analog era to a market dominated by digital broadcasting platforms. The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), a public broadcaster, was founded in 1964 and for a long time dominated the screens as a single channel. TRT, which has great importance in terms of Turkish television history, started broadcasting in Ankara in 1968. Nowadays, TRT broadcasts to the Balkans, the Middle

## **Ayşegül Akaydin-Aydin and Nur Emine Koc: The Empowerment of Female TV Series Characters on Digital Platforms: An Analysis of the 2023 BLU TV Series**

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East, and many parts of Europe. This public broadcaster, which has thematic channels in different languages, also has an internet broadcast and a newly established digital platform named 'Tabii'.

Turkey's television broadcasting adventure, which began in 1968, continues today with many national and international channels and digital broadcasting platforms. In 1997, the American internet broadcaster Netflix opened up to the world and entered the Turkish TV series and movie market, introducing different content to the audience in the digital space. Characters who could not find a place in traditional TV series came to life in the digital space. Thus, the audience had the opportunity to watch different characters and original content. Following Netflix's success with the Turkish audience, local digital platforms started broadcasting. According to 2023 data from Justwatch, a search engine for internet broadcasts, Blu TV, a domestic platform, was the most watched TV series-film platform with 38 percent. Blu TV is followed by Netflix with 27 percent. Amazon Prime Video ranks third in this ranking with a viewership rate of 19.

This study is based on the hypothesis that female characters in original Turkish TV series broadcast on digital platforms are designed more independent than female characters in traditional TV series and reflect themselves and inner conflicts more realistically. The motivation for this study is to identify that as digital platforms have transformed our daily viewing experiences, the construction of female characters in TV series has also changed. The character Duru in the series 'Fi', one of the popular series of its period, broadcast on Puhu TV, and the character Meryem in the series 'Bir Başkadır' broadcast on Netflix are strong female characters that have come to life in different aspects. Atiye, the main character of the series 'Atiye', also made for Netflix, is a woman in search of the meaning of her own life.

In this study, the original content on Turkey's most watched digital platform Blu TV is taken into consideration to explain that female characters in TV series broadcasted on digital platforms are presented as strong individuals. To limit the study, the leading female characters in the original Turkish TV series that started to be broadcast on Blu TV in 2023 are analyzed.

These character analyses are based on sociologist Erving Goffman's theory of dramaturgy. At the center of Goffman's ideas is the concept of self. Asserting that the individual's self is active in daily life, Goffman (2009) applied this idea to daily life. According to him, individuals act in everyday life. Everyday life is a stage. This idea of Goffman is used in the analysis of characters in movies and TV series. The method of this study is character analysis by applying the elements used in Goffman's theory to the female characters in the selected series.

In the first part of the study, a summary of digital platforms in Turkey is presented. In the second part, Erving Goffman's theory of self and dramaturgy is explained. In the third and final part of the study, the leading female character of the series 'Magarsus' and 'How Do I Fill This Emptiness?', which started to be broadcast on Blu TV in 2023, are analyzed.

## **2. Local Digital platforms in Turkey and Turkish Series on BLU TV in 2023**

Turkish TV series are known to be successful in foreign TV markets (Ruiz-Cabrera and Gürkan, 2023). Along with these successes, digital platforms have a widespread audience in Turkey and original content has started to be produced for these platforms. With Netflix's entry into the Turkish TV series-film market in 2016, different foreign content on this platform broke viewership records and domestic producers' interest in digital increased. Netflix's first original Turkish series was '*Hakan: Muhafız*' (*The Protector*). This series, which contains mystical historical elements.

In 2016, Turkish audiences were introduced to Blu TV, a local digital platform. Promoting itself as 'Turkey's internet television', Blu TV was founded by Doğan Holding, which is involved in many production areas (automotive, finance, tourism etc.). However, in 2018, the holding withdrew from the media sector and left its place in this field to Demirören Holding. In 2021, Blu TV was acquired by Warner Bros. Discovery (Dikkol, 2020: 486).

The first Turkish series of this local digital platform, which stands out with its different series and movies, is 'Innocent'. Later on, Turkish series with different themes such as '*Zero One*', '*The Living Ones*', '*Dudullu Postası*', '*Bozkır*', '*Yeşilçam*' were streaming on Blu TV. This platform, which operates on a subscription system, allows viewers to consume uninterrupted content without ads.

Another platform that continues to broadcast only local productions without a subscription is Puhu TV. The most popular original Turkish production of this platform is the 'Fi' series based on Azra Kohen's famous novel. Starring Serenay Sarıkaya, Ozan Güven, and Mehmet Günsür, the series is a thriller-drama. A rerun of the series was later broadcast on Show TV. However, the audience did not show as much interest in this series as on the digital platform.

Exxen has made a name for itself with its football broadcasts and was founded by Acun Medya in 2021 (Biga, 2023). In addition, the platform also broadcasts names that broadcast on YouTube and become social media phenomena. Gain, another local digital platform, broadcasts news content and documentaries unlike the aforementioned platforms (marketingturkiye, 2021).

Netflix's popularity among Turkish viewers has been decreased as local digital platforms have started to take over the market. Each platform produced different content and created its fan base.

The Turkish series on the Blu TV platform, the subject of this study, features unique characters and different production types. In 2023, two new Turkish series started to be broadcast on the platform. One of these series, '*Magarsus*', tells the story of the internal conflicts within the Kurak family, who are citrus traders in Adana. The series takes its name from the ancient city of Magarsus, founded in the 7th century BC in the Sarıtaş area of Adana. In the series, the character transformations of family members are particularly striking.

Another series titled ‘How Do I Fill This Emptiness?’ tells the story of Derin, a character trying to get used to the death of his father. Derin is a writer in the 2023 series, which deals with the theme of death. In addition to this theme, this series also portrays a father-daughter relationship. In 2023, audiences watched different women’s stories on Blu TV. In these series, the struggle of women and the evolution of these characters during the series are watched.

### **3. Erving Goffman’s Theory of Dramaturgy and Character Analysis**

One of the 20th century’s most important sociologists, Erving Goffman was born in Canada in 1922. With his book ‘*Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*’, first published in 1956, he drew attention to the concepts of self, everyday life, and interaction (San Nicolas, 1997).

Goffman used the concept of symbolic interaction in his studies. Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead, prominent sociologists of the Chicago School, also worked on symbolic interaction. On the other hand, Cooley is also known for his ‘Looking-Glass Self’ theory. According to him, what other people in society think about an individual is related to how that individual feels about oneself (Aslan-Yilmaz, 2016: 83).

In this socio-psychological approach, Cooley argues that interpersonal interactions in society are predominant in the development of an individual’s self and identity. There are three main components of the ‘Looking Glass Self’ theory. These are,

- Imagining how we should appear in front of others,
- Imagining and reacting to judgments about our appearance,
- Developing ourselves by judging others (Siljanovska, Stojcevska, 2018: 63).

The individual develops self through verbal and non-verbal communication with other individuals in daily life (Gürkan et al., 2023). George Herbert Mead is another thinker of Cooley’s self-theories. According to Mead, the self is a constantly developing structure, which develops and transforms within another process, social experience (Longhofer, Winchester, 2023: 120). The events we encounter in daily life or the way we communicate form our experiences. Mead mentions two selves when individuals form these experiences. These are the ‘knowing self’ and the ‘known self’. Mead refers to these as the behaviors we exhibit in society and the behaviors of the individual when he/she is alone (Özbey, Tan, 2022: 1001).

Influenced by these theorists and ideas of the self, Goffman put forward the theory of dramaturgy. Analyzing the symbolic forms of interaction and communication between individuals in everyday life, Goffman used the concept of theater of ideas. Goffman’s theory is based on sociologist Anthony Giddens’ theory that there are two types of interaction: unfocused and focused. According to Giddens, people are in constant communication with their postures, gestures, and mimics on the streets, in cafes, in short, in the presence of others. This is called unfocused communication. Focused communication is communication in which one individual pays direct attention to what the other is saying about them. This interaction in everyday life is called an encounter (Giddens, 2016: 318).

Goffman states that our social experiences are formed through forms of communication in

everyday life. According to him, face-to-face communication is the most important form of communication in daily life. Later Goffman also focuses on the interaction with communication tools in his theory (Güngör, 2016: 342). In this theory, which Goffman explains with theatrical concepts, the concepts of frontstage and backstage are the main elements. On the theater stage and in social life, actors are concerned with their appearance, they wear costumes and use the space. On the other hand, there is a backstage where this performance is prepared. Here the actors can step out of their roles and be themselves. In this theory, Goffman states that all individuals are watching each other and that all people play their carefully constructed roles to sustain this theatrical play (Joshi, 2022). These roles are socially defined expectations that a person plays. There are societal expectations such as a woman taking on the role of a mother or a teacher behaving in certain patterns.

In this theatrical practice called everyday life, people use the impression method to shape other people's reactions to them. The way a student behaves at school according to certain rules and has different responsibilities towards their parents at home is a method of impression (Giddens, 2016: 320). These are different social selves. According to Goffman, there can be conflict between these selves.

In Goffman's theory of dramaturgy, in which he interprets everyday life, there are basic elements such as frontstage, backstage, performance, and conflict. When Goffman builds his theory on content producers and audiences, he states that these two components interact. Also, he emphasizes that content is not produced independently of the audience and that the expectations of the audience shape what is produced. He has researched gender representations in the media. According to his research on gender representations in advertisements, he explains that they apply the known norms in society (Güngör, 2016: 343-344).

According to Goffman, an individual's experiences shape their lives. At the same time, the content produced by the media comes to life through social norms. However, the characters on digital platforms can go beyond social norms. Female characters on digital platforms exhibit a strong and extraordinary transformation. Considering that the series is inspired by society and people, the sharp turns in the development of the characters in front of the stage and backstage are noteworthy, as Goffman states in his theory of dramaturgy.

Goffman's Self-presentation is the conscious and unconscious activities carried out to determine and shape others' impressions of a person. For self-presentation, individuals generally create an appropriate image of themselves and this image has a positive effect in creating a certain identity, facilitating social interaction, and gaining material and social rewards. The image created or revealed in self-presentation is frequently used in interpersonal relationships as well as in business life or social relations (Goffman, 1959: 56). It is not possible to draw a clear boundary between the concept of "self", which carries the basic characteristics of personality, and personality in terms of structure and development. Although personality and self are intertwined, the self has different characteristics from personality. The individuals may not be able to assimilate the external reflection of their personalities. However, the individuals have an opinion about their personalities. This conviction is called the way of recognizing and evaluating oneself. With the concept of self, the individual creates a special



space for themselves by separating from others (Gollwitzer, 1986: 46). For this reason, the individual makes efforts to position, develop, and protect this space in social interaction. When we look at the structure of the self, the way the individuals define themselves, their formation in the awareness of how others define them, and the personality they want to be in the future are important.

#### **4. Findings**

This study seeks to analyze two series on the Blu TV platform through the lens of Self Presentation Theory. This theory, detailed in the book “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,” is categorized under six headings: Performance, Teams, Regions and Regional Behaviours, Role Strain, Out of Character, and The Art of Impression Management. By applying these categories, the study will explore how characters in the series navigate and manage their self-presentation in various social contexts, offering insights into their interactions and the underlying psychological dynamics.

**Performances:** The first concept related to the presentation of the self is called “performance”, which is an activity that a person performs in front of certain observers during the time they are in front of them and influences them. The play is realized through performances. While performing, one can believe in one’s play, sincerely believe that the real one is staging, or one can exhibit a cynical approach, not believing in one’s play and not caring much about what others think (Paulhus, 1982: 839).

A fundamental concept related to performance is the showcase, which is defined as “standardized expressive equipment used intentionally or unintentionally by the performer during a performance”. A “set” is one of the standard elements of a showcase. It is used to describe the visual aspects of the means of expression. Goffman considers the “personal showcase” as the means of expression that is associated with the actor and continues to be a part of the actor at different times and places. Age, gender, origin, height, weight, image, gestures, and facial expressions are the components of the personal showcase. The personal showcase is “appearance” and “attitude”(Goffman, 1959: 70).

In “Magarsus” especially Beton character has a very nice performance when he has the speech to convince the audience about the election of the mayoralty. He has almost convinced people that he can manage Magarsus but the American firm does not let him win and makes him withdraw his candidacy by blackmailing him with his cousin. His acting reflects reality but it does not work because of his cousin, Turgut. He is a real performer when he is with his family playing the role of a leader being ready to take the place of his father’s kingdom, but this is just the tip of the iceberg. He has existential problems and conflicts about his place in his family, on the other hand, he shows himself as a strong character to society and his girlfriend Damla. Within six chapters, the audience sees the conflict of his inner self when his double personality is shown during the series. He has credible performances with his friends convincing all of them and showing off himself as a leader.

Tansu is also an important performance character that enables people to believe what she says. In reality, she is just acting what society wants her to be, but in reality, she rejects ever-

anything that both her family and her society believe. She is a lesbian but cannot tell anyone about it, afraid of her society and the family. She wants to be the new leader and has her performance on behalf of all the people in Magarsus. Although she has new ideas, because of being a woman, she is not accepted to be the new leader of Magarsus. That is why she has the burden that she will always act on a character that she does not believe, in as long as she wants to stay in her region.

Damla character is Turgut's girlfriend. First of all, we see her in the American firm which wants to get rid of the Kurak family and tries to get the kingdom. She is firstly closer to Tansu and then she meets Turgut and loves him. She has a very good performance in convincing people, especially Turgut. Her aim is never understood because she dies in chapter seven. In "How Do I Fill This Emptiness?", Derin character is the real performer convincing all the people writing a book about her family and upsetting every character in her family. All the family members give reactions except her father. Her mother and her sisters say that she writes a fake story about her family, never thinking about what the other family members feel about it. Yet she is so selfish that she never understands the reaction of her family and believes what she wants to believe. She is an actor, performing different kinds of characters inside her persona. The key point is she believes in what she performs. She believes that she is a good daughter, and is loved a lot by her father, but she rarely speaks with the mother and we see the mother scenes as not a woman not interested in her daughters, living with another man, leaving her daughters and the father because of her. It can obviously be said that Derin, the protagonist of the series has the Oedipus complex, loving the father and hating the mother. As we follow the series from her perspective, that hatred can be seen deeply as the series comes to the end of the season.

The father figure in the series is also a very important performer of the series. It should be remembered that we see the ghost and the memories of the father only from the perspective of Derin, which is a subjective one that can never be analyzed objectively. We only see the father figure as a ghost from the beginning of the series but the performance of the father is seen always from the eyes and memories of Derin, so we can never analyze the real character of the father. He just performs as a very understanding, polite, and extraordinary father to Derin, forgiving everything she does.

**Team:** The second concept related to the presentation of the self is "team". A performance usually aims to express the characteristics of the staged task, not the characteristics of the performer. The set of individuals performing a performance is called a performance team. There is a mutual dependence between members of the same team and obligations of trust (Greenberg, 1983: 44). Teammates are bound together by familiarity and camaraderie does not have to be something that is built up over time, it is a formal relationship that develops automatically as soon as a person joins the team and involves secrets that must be kept secret within the team members. At the same time, there is a dependence on cooperation (Goffman, 1959: 75).

As Teams in "Magarsus", all the brothers/cousins and sisters become a part of a team against their enemies to get revenge for their fathers' dead and having the municipality's mayor.

## **Ayşegül Akaydin-Aydin and Nur Emine Koc: The Empowerment of Female TV Series Characters on Digital Platforms: An Analysis of the 2023 BLU TV Series**

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Even though they do not want Beton to be their leader, for the sake of Yellow Garden, the children behave as a team and show Beton as a candidate for mayor.

In “How Do I Fill This Emptiness?”, we can never see the family as a team but Derin and his boyfriend Mete have unique team soulmate activities together, understanding and seeing the dark sides of each other. Mete says he only takes drugs when he feels safe and from the first moment they meet with Derin, they take drugs together.

**Region Behaviour/ Authenticity of the series:** The third concept related to the presentation of the self is “region and regional behaviors”. A region is defined as an area surrounded by barriers to perception. When we talk about a particular performance, the place where it is presented is called the showcase zone. The standards for a performance in the showcase zone relate to how the person behaves to the audience with gestures and facial expressions when speaking. The rules of decorum are divided into two subgroups: moral and instrumental. Moral ones are the goal and include rules such as non-interference with others, sexual decency, and respect for sacred places, while instrumental conditions are not the goal (Goffman, 1959: 80).

“*Magarsus*” is the name that symbolizes the ancient city of Magarsus, located in the Dört Direkli area, in the west of Karataş District, closer to Adana. The history of Magarsus Ancient City dates back to the 5th to 4th centuries BC. In inscriptions, coins, and other official documents from the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods, the city’s name is always mentioned as Mallos.

In “*Magarsus*”, authenticity is seen very clearly. Citrus activities in Yellow Garden, the coastal district of the ancient city of Magarsus are famous for that region, so the producer of the series, Ozan Korkut uses oranges and other traditional food, fruits, diner tables, and drinks so as to give this authenticity. From the first scene, till the end, we see the Yellow Garden and the regional customs and traditions of that area, even the natural disaster that the Magarsus region experienced in 1998, a big earthquake happened around 7 magnitude and the effects on people remains. The deep impact on people, we see in the eyes of Beton character. He gets trapped in the wreckage for hours when he is a small boy, so he has trauma about getting inside the apartments. Because of his trauma, he cannot save his uncle and this also causes a new trauma for him.

In “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, from the beginning of the first chapter, we can see the funeral of Derin’s father and till the end of the last chapter, we can observe the regional traditions like wearing black, serving food, praying in the funeral house and the cemetery. Although there is always a denial of Derin to these traditional routines, in the last chapter, we see her praying in front of her father’s grave.



**Distinctive Roles:** The fourth concept related to the presentation of the self is “distinctive roles”. This concept is about the secrets of a team and the privileges of those who are aware of these secrets. A team aims to conform to its performance and this conformity can be achieved by emphasizing or suppressing certain facts depending on the situation. In other words, a team has secrets and their disclosure negatively affects performance. These are dark, strategic, internal, and escrow secrets (Goffman, 1959: 83).

In “*Magarsus*”, Damla character wants to work with both the opposing vendors and the Kurak family. She observes both sides, realizes the shortcomings of both sides, and ensures that the Kurak family suffers. But then she falls in love with Turgut and passes on the secrets of the American company to the Kurak family. This situation results in her death. In “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, Derin and Mete as a team know their secrets of each other. Using drugs can be given as an important example of what negatively affects each other with this habit.

**Out-of-Character Communication:** The fifth concept related to the presentation of the self is “out-of-character communication”. It includes types of communication in which the actor participates and which contain information that is inconsistent with the official impression maintained during the interaction (Goffman, 1959: 89).

In “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, Derin draws attention to her inconsistencies and recklessness from the very beginning of the series. At the funeral of her beloved father, she constantly plays with her false fingernails in contrast to her reckless behavior. She knows that her clothes do not fit the funeral at all. She deliberately sings loudly and takes drugs on the way to the funeral. This shows that she is aware of her incongruity. With her timid glances around, her hand gestures trying to get rid of her nail polish, and the black sweater she wears over her mismatched outfit, it is as if she has accepted her nonconformity. The indifference in her character, and the social pressures she sees as rules are her taboos that she cannot get rid of. Trying not to show her sadness to people when she is sad, and not being able to mourn during the death process shows that she behaves out of character and even the opposite of her character. In the last episode of the series, she reads “Surah Yasin”, which she could not pray after her death, at her father’s grave in the last scene. Since the serial is also about Derin’s inner journey, realizing her character, and how she will get out of her father’s protection is also seen. The sentences in the series show how a female character is caught between tradition and modernity. When analyzed according to Freud, Derin is unable to find the balance between her id and superego. She repeats the words: “I have decided to be traditional”, “I couldn’t manage to be traditional”, and “I have decided to get engaged to you” to Mete. By using these words, she departs from her character and confesses both to herself.

## **Ayşegül Akaydin-Aydin and Nur Emine Koc: The Empowerment of Female TV Series Characters on Digital Platforms: An Analysis of the 2023 BLU TV Series**

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In “*Magarsus*”, we observe that Tansu character is lesbian, but since she cannot reflect this to her society, she has to act like a person she is not. That becomes a huge burden for her. Their younger sister Fatoş, on the other hand, is running away from marrying her cousin, whom she loves, and gets into a relationship she does not want. It has been observed that the Kurak family members feel obliged to hide their selves as.

**Art of Impression Control:** The sixth concept related to the presentation of the self is the “art of impression control”. An actor must possess the necessary qualities to successfully portray a character. The actor must have a sense of expressive responsibility (Goffman, 1959: 92).

Derin in “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, always has a defense mechanism for what she does. She even creates a ghost for her father to approve her thoughts. In “*Magarsus*”, the father is a very dominant and rough character, causing irreversible damage to his children. He has control of everything and defends this attitude by protecting his children but when he dies, they do not know what to do and how to defend themselves, like in “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”.

**Similarities of the two series:** Both in “*Magarsus*” and in “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, the father dies in the early episodes. In both series, the mothers are less mentioned and loved. In “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*”, the mother leaves the family for another man and has suicidal attacks like all the women in the series.

Both protagonists of the series, Derin and Tansu are seen as strong characters but have family issues inside and feel themselves alone and incomprehensible.

Excessive use of drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol can be seen through “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*” whereas “*Magarsus*” has less. Every time the characters feel insecure, they use drugs. In both series, although there is too much usage of drugs and alcohol, they both give the idea of quitting drugs, and struggling against it is also issued. Furthermore, there is excessive use of sexuality especially in “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness?*” from the first moments of the series.

Both in two series, the important female characters, Tansu and Derin live the lives that they do not want to live and cannot find a way to fill this gap inside their souls. They try to fill their family love emptiness with sexual relationships and define them as love. Derin tries to fill her father’s gap first with drugs, then with Mete, and always tells him that he has to protect himself from her because he is older than Derin. In the series, she repeats this five times. Tansu tries to fulfill the father’s love by replacing herself in the place of her father. She wants to prove to her father; even if he is dead; and her society that she can be a good leader to *Magarsus*.

**Symbolizms in series:** In “*Magarsus*”, the first chapter begins with the blooded oranges scene, warning the audience about what will happen in the series from the beginning. Orange or citrus fruits symbolize the power of that region. Who holds possession of the oranges the most, owns the kingdom. The brothers and sisters of the Kurak family fight to be the new king/queen of Magarsus, even before their father is in charge. There is always a quarrel between the despot father who is one of the most powerful citrus sellers in the region and the children, the Kurak family, and the other citrus sellers. Oranges during the series play an important role in emphasizing the power of nature connecting with money. Especially when the American citrus seller puts drugs in oranges, the innocence of the natural fruit collapses. Citrus also symbolizes the original fruit and by putting drugs in the original fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, humans are again defeated by Satan like in the original sin and fall from the Garden of Eden, which can be taken as Magarsus, Yellow Garden, and never become the same like they used to be in the past again.

The father of the Kurak family also can be taken as a guide and a trusted leader and when he is murdered in front of all the people in Yellow Garden, it is easily understandable that the king is dead and the new king has to be selected. That scene also can be taken as Julius Ceasar’s “You, too Brutus?” scene, without any hesitation accepting all the presents in a celebration, the Kurak father is stabbed behind and every citrus seller and people see his death. This is both a warning, a threat, and a show-off to all the other people. Later the children of the Kurak family fight for the Kingdomship of Magarsus, believing that they will run the Kingdom as their father does. However like in Shakespearean stories, when the important powerful character dies suddenly, his/her place cannot be fulfilled easily and everything turns upside down as if there is a deus-ex-machina balancing the justice.

In “*How Do I Fill This Emptiness*”, again the father figure is a powerful figure gathering all the family with the symbolism of justice, love, and trust. The series is about how to heal their souls without their father. Without him, all three daughters are lost and cannot find their ways to move on. They try different ways to survive, waiting for a reason to value their existence; or else Derin always talks about committing suicide and how miserable her life is after the death of her father.

## **Conclusion**

Digital platform series have become very popular nowadays. Both the less censored nature, the bold and confident portrayal of the characters have attracted the attention of viewers. In this study, the female characters of two remarkable series of Blu TV, Turkey’s most popular digital platform in 2023, are analyzed under the six headings of Goffman’s theory of self-presentation. As a result of the analysis, it is observed that both female and male characters on digital platforms exhibit themselves in a bolder, more realistic framework. It has been observed that family problems and the oppressive attitude of the social environment have an impact on the formation of the self and that this situation is broadcast more independently and visible on digital platforms. In both series, it is observed that strong women characters are used in digital platforms leading their ways while interpreting their life journeys.

It is an undeniable fact that the series on digital platforms are prepared with a libertarian understanding. However, considering that Turkish TV series are largely inspired by real life, the place of women should be strengthened in every field. In mainstream media dramas, women are largely portrayed as subordinate, powerless and dependent on masculine ideology.

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