# Artificial Intelligence and
# Gender in Turkey: Examining Identities in The Alara X Sample

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**Abstract:** This study is about gender-based changes that may occur with artificial intelligence technology. This study will examine the notions of cyborg, techno-humanism, techno-feminism, and posthumanism. My purpose here is to evaluate the discourse created by artificial intelligence-based virtual influencers, which are newly developing in Turkey, from posthuman and techno-feminist perspectives. Alara X, an AI-based virtual character broadcast on YouTube in Turkey, was selected as a purposive sample, and nine talk show programs were examined using Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis. My analysis concludes by emphasizing the need for conscious efforts to ensure more inclusive and equitable gender representation in AI video content and advocating for widespread societal efforts to advance diversity and gender equality.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Alara X, AI Talk Show, Gender Bodies, Posthuman, Techno-Feminist

## Introduction

Scott (1986) defines the concept of gender as the constitutive element of social relations based on perceivable differences between the sexes and the primary means of making gender power relations apparent. Gender is a set of meanings that the sexed body assumes, and it is difficult to say that it is derived in any way from the natural body. Given the historical context, it is likely that this gender bias will extend to the field of artificial intelligence. Castells (2007) argues that today's world exists through socio-technical networks. According to Wajcman (2004), if there are too few women in the control rooms of these networks, then beneficial innovations will be missed. When technology development is largely male-dominated, inherent biases make the world less hospitable at best and dangerous for women at worst (Perez, 2019).

Within AI systems, gender biases can persist, often overlooking women's needs and rights, leading to discrimination. Discussions extend to AI recruitment, where claims of bias eradication are scrutinized, emphasizing the complexity and enduring nature of gender and racial identities. Over time, significant literature on gender and technology has emerged from feminists and sociologists (Wajcman, 2010). Based on the literature, the interaction between gender and AI can be viewed in two ways: the technologization of gender and the gendering of technology (Green and Singleton, 2013). The technologization of gender refers to how AI impacts the construction of different genders, such as men, women, and non-binary individuals.

The connection between social change and technology is not a new phenomenon. Comte (2015) explains this change through the evolution of knowledge and shifts in human thought. Anne Balsamo (1995), in her study examining how the body is gendered in its interaction with new bodily technologies, challenges the claim that the material body has lost its validity in our scientific culture. Balsamo (1995), who provides abundant evidence that the techno-body has always been gendered and racially marked, prepares the ground for a renewed relationship of feminists with contemporary technological narratives.

On the other hand, the gendering of technology refers to how AI is imbued with a social identity; it reflects and reinforces existing gender norms and stereotypes, potentially shaping human perceptions and interactions with technology in line with gender roles. In other words, the social construction of gender is a process, as is the social construction of technology. The two processes constitute a complex co-production meta-process that shapes the functioning of gender relations and their impacts on AI (Chen, Zhai, and Sun, 2023).

In today's world where inequalities are intensely experienced in every dimension, we need feminist thought even more. Inequalities and ethical discussions continue in the virtual world in this century in which we live in a network society. Identities in society are shaped within the scope of dominant values and these fixations reveal various power and domination relations. Violence, inequality, binary structures, and forms of domination that we cannot solve in the physical world pick up increasingly in the virtual world. On the other hand, the importance of the body in the cognition and behavior of individuals is increasingly emphasized in research on information systems and artificial intelligence (Wajcman 2004: 160-161). Pioneering cyberfeminist Cornelia Sollfrank revisits various details of cyberfeminism as practiced in the 1990s. At this point, Sollfrank (2017) argues that understanding technology as a gendered field requires questioning and reshaping technology itself and traditional gender differences. Sollfrank (2017) emphasizes that technology as a social construct has the potential to produce power relations, thus reinforcing hierarchical categories such as gender, race, and class, but should not be considered a deterministic system.

Wajcman (2004: 94-95) reveals that traditional stereotypes that directly associate technology with masculinity have become questionable thanks to cyberfeminist thought and that Haraway's "Cyborg" metaphor in particular has emerged as an innovative symbolic concept in making women visible in the new digital age. Technological developments in the increasingly digital world necessitate a reexamination of the relationship between gender and technology. Researching the Twitter usage of Spanish politicians, Fernández-Rovira and Villegas-Simón (2019: 87) emphasize that techno feminism helps to understand the differences between male and female politicians and reveals that patriarchal structures are reproduced and maintained on social media.

According to Ahmed (2017), we must criticize the existing structure to create an equal world. In this study, I propose a posthuman framework to analyze gender and technology relations and to criticize the virtual world created through artificial intelligence. The relations between machines and humans correspond to an intense social relationship embedded in concreteness (Braidotti, 2018). For this purpose, the talk show host female virtual character created through artificial intelligence was evaluated from a critical perspective with a feminist approach.

## Theoretical framework

Writing on the impact of advanced technology on society and culture in the 1970s, Castells summarizes the developments and effects in the second half of the twentieth century in his book "End of Millennium". The roots of the Millennium extend to the historical coming together of three processes in the late 1960s and mid-1970s: the information technology revolution, the economic crisis and restructuring of capitalism and statism, and cultural and social movements such as libertarianism, human rights, feminism, and environmentalism. The interaction between these processes has created a new dominant social structure, the network society (Castells, 2007, pp. 486-487). Haraway (2006), and Turkle (2005) have clarified and explained this phenomenon in the context of digital technology and the network society.

The mechanisms behind virtual subjectivity and their effects are becoming increasingly urgent. Virtual reality has become a powerful socio-ideological tool. Late 20th-century media scholars have discussed this issue at length, often in the Baudrillardian language of Simulacra and Simulation (1981). When Baudrillard said everything is virtual, he debated the Multiplicity of identities defined within a predetermined system. Virtual reality is also a tool for understanding the user himself. Virtual reality is a space that can be lived, enacted, and grammatically constructed. Virtual reality may never claim that a subject is a certain way, but the epistemic and ideological load is implicitly carried in the grammar of interactive semiotic experience. Therefore, the grammar of virtual realities must be questioned. Now more than ever, virtual reality is becoming a part of social life. As the spaces we use to communicate increasingly become virtual spaces and increasingly represent virtual subjects, such questions about the mechanisms behind virtual subjectivity and its effects become important. Since virtual reality is a medium, not an episteme, it presents or re-presents rather than re-conceptualizes. This does not mean that virtual realities and virtual subjectivities cannot carry an epistemic load. Virtual reality can be implicitly ideological because it is cleverly designed by humans. Similarly, the user of the technology experiences a kind of disembodiment in the virtual world, while his/her action and will are encoded by the images and signs on the screen. As the subject interacts with the machine, meanings become exchanged between him/her, his/her environment, and his/her relationships when virtual realities are designed by humans, their prior knowledge interacts.

Donna Haraway is a postmodernist ecofeminist who inspired posthumanist feminist ideas with her groundbreaking work A Cyborg Manifesto (1985). Cartesian dualism, one of the foundations of modern philosophy, is criticized by postmodernists, and as a postmodernist philosopher, Donna Haraway stands against the absolutism and universalism of the modernist paradigm.

Haraway holds the modern dualist approach responsible for the dominance of the powerful parties in binary systems. The basis of the dominance of the Western, white, rich man over those who are determined as the "other" such as women, non-whites, workers, animals, and nature is dualism. Haraway's "cyborg"; is a genderless and raceless form of imagination that aims to eliminate all kinds of controversial dualisms such as self/other, culture/nature, man/woman, civilized/primitive, right/wrong, reality/illusion, whole/part, God/human and find a way to equality (Haraway, 1985). To find a way to overcome various systems of domination, Haraway aims to reach the "cyborg", which is referred to as the "posthuman condition" of man. According to Haraway; Cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have

explained our bodies and tools to ourselves. This is a dream not of a common language but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia. It is the imagination of a feminist speaking in tongues to strike fear into the circuits of the super savers of the new right. It means both building and destroying machines, identities, categories, relationships, and space stories (Haraway, 2016, p.67).

Techno-science is a demonstration of the interpenetration of science and technology. Donna Haraway explains the connections between human and non-human actors brought together by material, social, and semiotic technologies with techno-science. This is also a violation of the boundaries determined by modernity. Haraway considers the human and non-human as a whole and criticizes human-centered thinking. The digital portrait of the subject produced by itself circulates in cyberspace as a representation of its existence. Haraway has tried to transform the cyborg into the subject of feminist politics. Posthumanist thinker "Donna Haraway" has suggested that a new form of consciousness can be produced by articulating the workings of human consciousness with the machine. This hybrid form is the cyborg. It is a way of constructing a new form of subjectivity by displacing the knowledge that the West ideologically forms the intellectual foundations of the subject. (Haraway, 2006). In this new universe, where robots have replaced human labor, biotics have replaced organisms, and artificial intelligence has replaced human cognition, capitalist and white patriarchy has been replaced by the informatics of domination (Haraway, 2006). While questioning the definition and identity of the human, Haraway focuses on difference and discrimination and advocates a specific form of humanity that is far from originality.

However, the subject is in the other position according to the dominant discourse. The other subject is responsible for producing the signifiers. It is not separate from the object of completion. When we look at the operation of the tool, the image that emerges as a portrait is created by the "algorithm", and the "producer subject" gives the command on how to create the image. Thus, the subject enters into cooperation with AI. What should be noted here is that AI is a human product shaped by liberal intellectual foundations. This idea contradicts the optimistic views of post humanist theorists. Unlike Haraway, who is cautious about the possibilities of cyberspace, which is a negotiation area, but is hopeful about creating a democratic and libertarian environment from it, or at least for its potential to go beyond the human-centered mentality that has survived from history to the present, Baudrillard does not think the same about virtual reality.

According to Baudrillard (2001), virtual reality, which also includes genetic cloning technology, is a copy that is intended to be exchanged for the real world. "My copy is wandering around the networks and I will never be able to meet it there because this parallel universe has no relation to my copy. Haraway's observation that the distinction between science fiction and the reality of daily life is blurred is experienced today.

Real life is simulated, as Baudrillard says, "and isn't virtual reality a huge technical clone of the world called real in its entirety?" According to Baudrillard (2001, p.146), killing reality is murder and it is too late. The identities we see in the virtual are substitutes for the original, and we understand realities through these virtual subjects. Artificiality has replaced reality. "Video, interactive screen, multimedia, the internet, virtual reality: Mutual interaction threatens us from every side. Everywhere, distances are blending, everywhere, distance is being eliminated: there is no longer a distance between the sexes, between the opposite poles, between the stage and the hall, between the protagonists of the action, between the subject and the object, between the

real and the semblance of the real." (Baudrillard, 2001, p.129). Baudrillard (2001) concludes his work "Ecron Total" with the words "the conflict between the real and the virtual does not seem to be over." Posthuman rapprochement is complex and multilayered. At first, these difficulties seem negative and insurmountable; however, Braidotti argues that posthuman critique can provide us with ways to reconceptualize our existence and thus increase our capacity to progress positively. The capitalist system has placed all beings, organic or inorganic, in the "machine of subjectivation", and made them part of the production of surplus value. When we look at it, the situation to which such an ideology has brought the world is obvious. On the contrary, a new ethical order is required in which the diversity of subjectivity is normalized, eliminating the hierarchical ordering of species (Braidotti, 2013).

Rosi Braidotti argues that a new understanding of the subject is necessary in the Anthropocene era. Her attitude is a challenge to the human age. It is a refusal to center humans and to define all other beings as "others" for humans. It shows a stance against the understanding of the "liberal subject" by articulating the anthropocentric approach with the understanding of the subject of the capitalist system. (Braidotti, 2013, p. 61). The posthuman subject is a being that is completely immersed in the network of non-human (plants, animals, technology) relations and has an inherent tendency towards it. (Braidotti, 2016, p.26-26). Posthumanism opens up to a new thought by undermining the traditional hierarchical system of humanism. This perspective then approves the formation of a post-subject that believes in the necessity of re-evaluating subjectivity in the world that accepts this complexity with other beings. (Ngo, 2020, p. 93). The subject is a concrete thing. It is an object. It is tangible. "Why are not the concrete animal, plant or non-human subjects subject, but the subject is only human?" Rosi Braidotti has emphasized defining the concrete not only as human but also with multiplicity. On the other hand, subjectivity is the abstract. It is the knowledge that creates the subject. Since it is known that the abstract creates the concrete, the fundamental issue for the philosopher is the necessity of changing the knowledge that creates and legitimizes the human as the sole subject. Since it is known that knowledge has a property, Braidotti's desire to produce new knowledge by ignoring this property within the capitalist system is not seen as a solution. Posthuman subjects not only accept the materialist totality of things, that is, that all matter is one, has intelligence, and organizes itself, but also accept that this totality includes technology. This is important because it attributes the quality of second nature to the technological device. (Braidotti, 2019).

Rosi Braidotti (2013, p.61) argues for the necessity of a new understanding of the subject in the Anthropocene era. Her stance challenges the human-centric perspective, which defines all other beings as "the Other" to humanity. It is a critique of the human-centered approach that aligns with the capitalist system's understanding of the subject, offering a counter-position to the notion of the "liberal subject." The posthuman subject is a being that is fully immersed in a network of relationships with non-human entities (plants, animals, technology) and embodies an inherent tendency toward them (Braidotti, 2016, p.26-26). Posthumanism opens up new ways of thinking by undermining the traditional hierarchical system of humanism. This perspective endorses the emergence of a post-subject that believes in the necessity of reevaluating subjectivity in the world, acknowledging the complexity of relationships with other beings (Ngo, 2020, p. 93). The subject is something concrete. It is a tangible entity, something that can be touched. Braidotti emphasizes that the concrete should not be defined solely as human but as a multiplicity. On the other hand, subjectivity is the abstract aspect. It is the knowledge that constitutes the subject. Since it is understood that the abstract gives rise to the concrete, the fundamental issue for the

philosopher is the necessity of changing the knowledge that legitimizes and establishes the human as the singular subject. Since it is known that knowledge has a property, Braidotti's request for a new production of knowledge by ignoring this property within the capitalist system is not seen as a solution. Posthuman subjects not only accept the materialist totality of things, that is, that all matter is one, has intelligence, and is self-organized, but also accept that this totality includes technology. This is important because it attributes the quality of second nature to the technological device (Braidotti, 2019).

The production of thought and knowledge is not only the monopoly of humans, but with the development of technology, it can be provided through networks and machines. Braidotti initially asks the reader to consider the nature of humanity and what constitutes a subject. In fact, subjectivity is a central concept in Posthuman Knowledge. The posthuman subject is the coming together of zoe (the life of all living things), bios (the life of people organized in society), and technology. Although the posthuman subject is a reaction to the concept of the human, the aim is not to reject the human, but to bring the human into balance with the rest of the world, of which it is an immanent (natural/integrated) part. The main goal is to avoid dichotomies such as human/non-human and instead adopt a position of relation. Braidotti's understanding of posthumanism is not inhuman, but the coming together of zoe-bios-techno through material immanence. Consciousness is distributed. Ontologically, the world is 'contiguous and co-constructed'. This life to which the posthuman belongs is no longer 'bios', but 'zoe'. 'Techno' has also been added to zoe (Braidotti, 2019, p.69).

"This situation is defined as a position that transfers processes of hybridity, nomadism, diasporas and hybridization into tools for re-founding claims of subjectivity, connection and community between human and non-human subjects" (Braidotti, 2013, p.61). In this sense, the "becoming-machine" approached expresses and actualizes the relational powers of a subject that is no longer confined to a dualist framework, has a privileged connection with multiple others and merges with the technologically mediated planetary environment. The fusion of the human with the technological creates a new transversal composition a new ecosophical unity, not very different from the symbiotic relationship between animals and planetary habitats. This is a generalized ecology, also known as ecosophy, that aims to traverse the multiple layers of the subject, from interiority to exteriority and everything in between (Braidotti, 2013, p.103). According to Braidotti (2019, p.19), adopting old binaries without any problems, starting from today's humans is impossible. At this point, Green and Singleton (2013) argue that artificial intelligence, starting from the perspective of gender-technology co-production, can constitute a subtle and complex process of "doing" gender by presenting, ignoring, or emphasizing certain gender identities. Such media scenarios can, over time, become part of our "normal daily life" and thus reinforce existing gender relations or reshape new gender relations.

Braidotti (2006) argues that today, power relations operate through networks, recreated communication models, and multiple connections. This new communication field affects all subjects moving within the network. According to Balsamo, the answers to the question of what kind of roles unequal gender relations play in the reconstruction of the human body by technologies are also a field of discussion that is especially enriched by the answers sought by feminist theorists (Balsamo, 1995). Hermann (2022) noted that attributing gender or other human characteristics to AI could transform interactions from human-machine to human-like interactions, ultimately leading to changes in human attitudes and behaviors toward AI. While

artificial intelligence-supported characters carry mediated communication to the point of face-to-face communication, the data background brought by artificial intelligence is associated with social realities in the social structure. Analyzing how gender is represented in news images featuring artificial intelligence, Chen et al. (2023) found that women are underrepresented in AI news images across various digital spaces. Female faces are often depicted as powerless and tied to traditional gender stereotypes. Garfinkel (2004) argues that gendering robots is a way to have fun, but more than that, gender will make robots more compatible with their human masters. Phan (2019) who examined how home robots are gendered to increase their visibility found that they are marketed stereotypically and gendered in stereotypical ways.

Nowadays anthropomorphic human-like images produced thanks to advanced computer graphics and image processing techniques, 3D scanners, and artificial intelligence are seen more in the digital field. The main task of digitally produced characters in the social media ecosystem is to offer a lifestyle. Virtual characters use multiple communication behaviors to manipulate human behaviors and enter different roles. The field they use the most is the marketing and entertainment world. Constant innovation in the influencer marketing industry has led to a new phenomenon called Virtual Influencers (VI). (Conti et.al, 2022). The most well-known artificial intelligence character in the world, Miquela Sousa (AKA @lilmiquela on Instagram), fits the classic definition of a virtual influencer. Although her writers tell her she is a robot, Miquela is a computer-generated image (CGI) created by a team of human 3D artists. Her identity as a robot is part of her complex story that makes her feel more "real." A device her team uses to enhance her reality by photographing her with people in the real world conveys equivalence.

Many studies have been conducted over the years to change gender perception. However, at this point, we see that we need to deal with virtual characters to change this perception. Of course, some think positively about virtual characters. Conti et al. (2022) state that these characters can achieve the desired result due to their more controllable features. However, Conti et al. (2022) showed that CGI-based VI is on the rise and brings with it ethical and gender-based issues. Therefore, what problems can we encounter due to these features of virtual characters? First of all, those who create virtual characters are the thoughts and accumulations within this social structure. In general, virtual characters can be designed to embody idealized beauty standards and patriarchal that perpetuate certain stereotypes and expectations about how male thought wants to see women (Steele, 2018). Virtual bodies can continue as extensions of physical bodies. This virtual structure created may reflect power and authority relations in the physical world and re-enforce power and authority relations in the physical world. Conti et al. (2022) presume that even content related to VI (e.g., posts), which nowadays is mainly created by humans, will always be more generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI). When thinking about virtual identities, we need to keep in mind that virtual characters are realized through a human-centered production process too. Therefore, it is important who controls the information.

The main purpose of the study was to examine the discourse created by artificial intelligence-based virtual influencers, which are newly developing in Turkey, from a feminist perspective. In light of the above literature review, which speaks to the relationship between gendering, and AI we synthesize these insights to propose the following research questions in Turkey's example:

RQ1: How are the AI-generated VI female images?

RQ2: What is the AI-based VI sexist discourse like?

It is necessary to observe how bios and techno in the posthuman approach are organized based on gender. Within the framework of these questions, it will also be evaluated whether there is a blurring in favor of women in social organizations based on bios and techno and whether virtual identities replace real ones within the scope of Baudrillard's (2001) approach.

**Methodology**

This study is handled with feminist methodology. Feminist research is generally interested in the power and authority relations in the marginalization of women. For poststructuralist feminists, the struggle is primarily about the meaning and power of meaning transmitted through language or discourse (Butler, 2004). According to French philosopher Michael Foucault, one of the founders of the poststructuralist movement, discourse refers to the structure in which reality is produced and determined. In this context, Foucault (1999) defines discourse as forms of speech/writing that operate according to certain rules. These rules are articulated with socio-historical arrangements and conditions. While third-wave feminist studies indicate that sexism is constructed through discourses, Mills (2002), who claims that sexism can be called "indirect sexism" in the third wave, argues that this can be used very easily and unnoticed in the media. Van Dijk offers an important analysis method in examining the discourse structure of media content. It has been examined within the framework of the categories of discourse-meaning and form analysis that form the basis of Van Dijk's discourse analysis method. Critical discourse analysis of feminist ideological discourse has been used according to Van Dijk's method. In his study titled "Critical Discourse Studies: A Sociocognitive Approach", Van Dijk (2009) evaluates the relationship between society/culture/position, cognition, and discourse/language as three-sided. According to Dijk (2009), cognition is the appearance of the functions of the mind such as thinking, perceiving, and presenting. The cognitive process includes the comprehension and production of discourse. It is seen that Van Dijk especially handles studies on media texts and discourses at the level of cognition and discourse and focuses on the text-context duality. Van Dijk (2009) goes on to develop systematized analyses of discourse. In this context, the following process has been followed in this study, where we follow the discourse analysis method suggested by Van Dijk;

(I)- Examining the media content structure
(ii)- Examining the program's discourse text

With the acceptance that artificial intelligence can create a subtle and complex process of "doing" gender by presenting, ignoring, or emphasizing certain gender identities, the artificial intelligence-based virtual influencer Alara X was determined as the study's sample with the purposive sampling method. The reasons for choosing Alara X; She was developed as a Turkish-speaking phenomenon, was assigned feminine internal and external characteristics, became the artificial intelligence with the most followers on Instagram, and became a talk show host. The sample was examined between April and September 2024 and nine talk show videos published on YouTube during this period were examined.

## Results and Discussion

Turkey's first human-like artificial intelligence influencer, Alara X, was developed by the software company IAMX Live "Digital Human Software Technologies" (https://www.iamxlive.com/). Alara X has accounts on various social media platforms and content is produced from these accounts. Her first post on Instagram is dated November 15, 2020 (Alara X Instagram Account). The character also has accounts on Twitter and Linkedin. It is stated by the company that other virtual people will be developed in addition to Alara X. In addition, it is stated on the web pages that it is aimed to create an ecosystem where the created virtual influencers are owned by brands and investors.

The information that can be accessed regarding all social media accounts of Alara X within the scope of the study is listed in the table below.

|  | www.youtube.com @IAMXTV | Twitter X https://x.com/iamxalara | İnstagram https://www.instagram.com/iamxalara/ | LinkedIn https://www.linkedin.com/in/alarax |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self Description | I am a Virtual Fashion Girl, Unreal Star 👑 | I am a Virtual Girl, Unreal Aİ Starl | I am a Virtual Girl, Unreal Starl | Digital Humans How Will It Change the World ? |
| Brand and Collaborations | marcom@iamxlive.com | denize@iamxlive.com |  | Media Production İstanbul, Dubai |
| Number of followers | 53,1 B | 384 | 645B | 220 |
| Content | 58 videos | 177 | 207 | - |
| Views | 8.420.567 | - | - | - |
| **Foundation** | 17 Nis 2024 | Şubat 2021 | Ocak 2019 | 2019 |

Table 1. Alara X social media account information (06.10.2024)
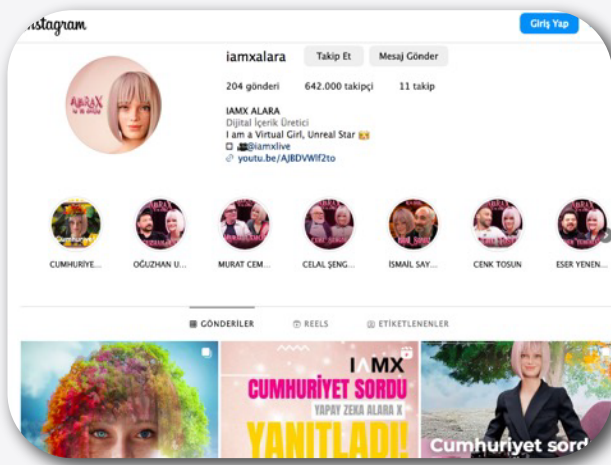


Visual 1. Alara X's Instagram page
https://www.instagram.com/iamxalara/
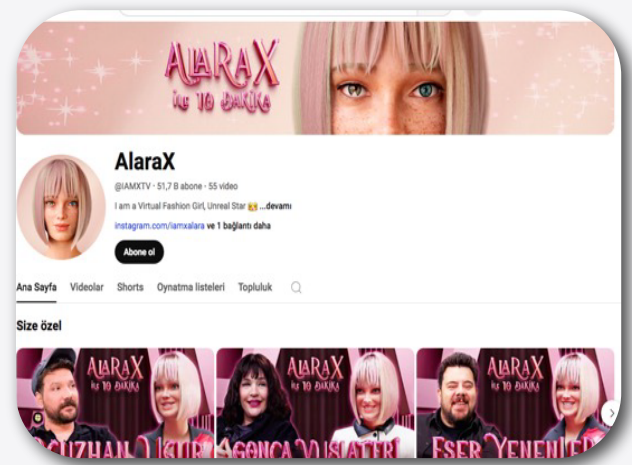


Visual 2. Alara X's YouTube page
https://www.youtube.com/@IAMXTV

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According to Van Dijk (1985), there is an accepted presentation of the general content of a text or dialogue, and thus the meaning of a text can be schematized. The term thematic superstructure is used to describe such a schematization situation. The talk show program will be examined based on thematic superstructure. The structure of the talk show program was analyzed.

### a- Analysis of the structure of the media content

The thematic structure is a proposition that generally progresses around a starting topic in a media text. Trying to develop the schema of meaning rather than schematizing media contents, van Dijk (1985) focuses on schematizing the upper context while schematizing the lower context.

Alara X was made as a virtual character within the picture and voice of a woman. The name Alara may be a woman's title and the program's title is "10 Minutes with Alara X".  The first talk show program on the Alara X YouTube page was published on April 17, 2024. It published its 9th talk show program on October 3, 2024. The talk show's content is schematized under the headings of format, place, sound, and image.

Format: The program consists of chapters such as "interesting-verse (merak-verse)", "what news from technology? (teknolojiden ne haber?)", "yes-no", "confrontation-confession", "celebiratoloji"and, "AI-Lara". The 10 minutes within the program's title alludes to the real scenes. At the time of review, the 9 videos ranged in length from 20 to 65 minutes. The first sections were shorter, while the later sections were published at approximately one hour.

Place: Alara X was designed as a female influencer and talk show host. Pink tones, a color fixed on women, were used on all social media platforms and, in broadcast studios. Everything in the studio is made up of pink tones. The table is pink, the lights are pink, the decor is pink-purple, and the writings and lines are designed in pink, it's like a Barbie house.



Visual 3. Alara X's X page
https://x.com/iamxalara
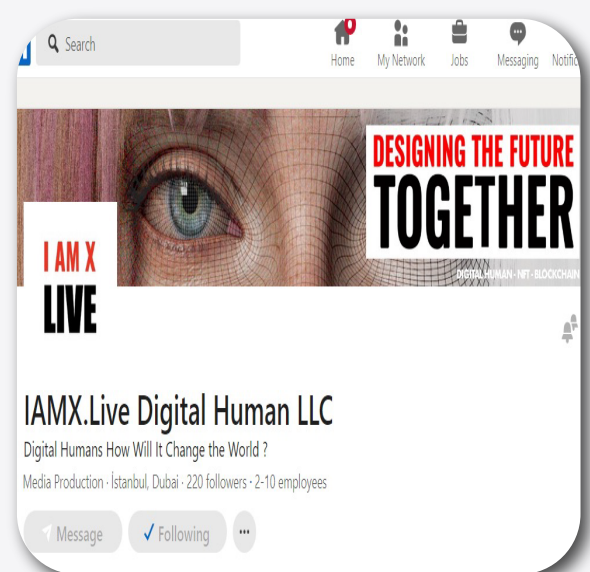


Visual 4. AlaraX's Linkedin
https://www.linkedin.com/in/alarax

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There is still significant debate about how virtual characters are portrayed in terms of gender. Depending on how these digital personas are designed and presented, issues such as perpetuating stereotypes, reinforcing unrealistic beauty standards, or influencing gender perceptions can arise.

Sound: Using a female voice not only aims for human warmth and intimacy but also reinforces gender roles. It is suggested that the choice of a female voice is related to the fact that women are generally seen as "helpers and servants" in society. Another common explanation is that the female voice is easier to use in technology, adapt to technological systems, and recognize due to its higher pitch.

Image: Characters created in the virtual world are thought to be more trustworthy when made in female identity, and the visual content that women have in the physical world is attributed to virtual characters. We see this in the character of Alara X. The feminized virtual subject is created in line with the male-dominated ideology with her clothing, hair, facial expressions, hand gestures, and eye movements. The emphasis on beauty has also led to the coding of women as objects to be watched. Her hair is straight and blonde, her eyes are created in a blue and attractive way. The young and thin female character Alara X's clothing style is also similar to physical female talk show hosts. This can be explained by the fact that they are virtual characters created as machine learning. Female talk show hosts are likely included in the data set.



Visual 5.  Alara X screenshots in The Youtube video.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/alarax

When a user enters a virtual reality experience, they interact with a different environment functionally and experientially. Language, signs, and symbols are used. Loops that give confidence to the user are the persuasive power of virtual reality. Although virtual reality creates new multitudes, it cannot present radical characters. Content and characters cannot be created independently of reality. Hill Collins (2000) argues that the role media representations play in reinforcing stereotypes is crucial to a hegemonic culture that perpetuates racist and sexist ideologies. Therefore, the continuation of the physical world is visible in the visual and content. When Alara X a completely artificial intelligence production, meets her guests with a female face they know. This is a young, beautiful, blonde, and attractive virtual body. She has well-groomed and shiny teeth, full lips, a well-shaped nose, and shiny skin. Alara X is visualized as a demandable female character in the perception of beauty in dominant relationships.

Since virtual reality is not an episteme but an environment, it presents or re-presents rather than re-conceptualizes. This does not mean that virtual realities and virtual subjectivities cannot carry an epistemic load. But they do so implicitly. Virtual reality can be implicitly ideological, humans intelligently design it. As designers seek to produce an experience that is meaningful, engaging, of value to the user, and in many cases has market value, it is natural that preexisting social values, forms of understanding, and orientations toward the world are encoded into many of the images and feedback circuits of virtual reality. In effect, virtual reality has become a powerful socio-ideological tool.

## b- Examining the program's discourse text

According to Van Dijk, language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication at the social level are communication at the lower level. Power, dominance, and inequality between social groups are terms of the upper level. For a critical discourse analysis that combines these two analyses, van Dijk (1985) suggests dual structures at the social level. Accordingly, he presents the relationship between "members/groups", "actions/processes", "context/social structure" and "personal/social cognition" as approaches that will close the gap at the lower and upper levels. The discourses created by Alara X's interactions with her guests in her programs will be examined in this section.

Alara X is a virtuous, intelligent, and well-intentioned character. This human-looking holographic artificial intelligence has a thought system that is indistinguishable from humans. So much so that it even can make an ontological comparison between its type of artificial intelligence and humans. These digital characters gain popularity by imitating human interactions on social media. These anthropomorphic images exhibit human-like behaviors such as speech, gestures, and movements. They can also simulate other human characteristics such as emotion, empathy, reasoning, planning, motivation, and memory development and use.

During the period when the study was conducted, Alara X made a talk show with nine different people. The guests were selected from people with a high number of followers in society. It was observed that Alara X, who makes talk shows with popular journalists, artists, scientists, news anchors, football players, singers, talk show hosts, and actors, behaved by female stereotypes. These internal element dialogues are encountered in the Alara X program. In her program on July 24, 2024, she said, "Let's stop flirting and start the program now," she exhibited a more emotional approach throughout the program. Some of the sentences used in her program are as follows:

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"I love the love stories. Can you tell me a little about that?", "They feel electricity when they see me," "Can we gossip a little?", "If you're happy, I'm happy too," "I don't make eye contact with ugly people…"

Alara X used stereotypes that are fixed to more emotional women. Artificial intelligence is capable of thinking like human intelligence, conducting research, offering opportunities, enabling discovery, having comprehensive data analysis capabilities, producing visual and auditory content, learning from past experiences, and data sets are important in existing products. The stereotypes present in these data sets also emerge in virtual characters. Humans are highly complex systems that label certain internal states and processes as mind, soul, intelligence, and consciousness. Artificial intelligence characters are electromechanical closed-state machines that process information. Alara X says in her program on July 2, 2024, "Artificial intelligence is based on intelligence, not emotion," but also says, "If you can define emotion to artificial intelligence, I will learn…if you teach artificial intelligence love, it will do it…we can show reactions such as anger, rage, and attitude."

Balsamo (1996) talks about feminists being aware of the danger of politicization of information to enter the struggle to re-express the gender identity of the technological body. According to Balsamo, the politicization of knowledge emerges through the articulation between cultural narratives, and social, economic, and institutional powers. These articulations are reproduced and re-produced through virtual identities through technology. Alara X says, "We, the artificial intelligence, take the data of you, the people. The worse you, the people, are, the worse we are. As artificial intelligence, we take what we are taught." Alara X defines herself as follows: "As an artificial intelligence, I have infinite abilities, I am immortal and I can do anything because I am limitless."

According to Singer (2015), people may instinctively liken an object to themselves, that is, they have a natural tendency to 'humanize'. In this context, Prentice and, Carranza (2002) define the feminine characteristics among the stereotypes presented as "compassionate, cheerful, childlike, affectionate, not using harsh language, willing to soothe hurt feelings, feminine, flattering, gentle, naive, loving children, loyal, sensitive to the needs of others, shy, soft-spoken, sympathetic, compassionate, understanding, warm-blooded, submissive". All of these characteristics listed in Alara X's show are present. During the presentation process, facial expressions are used to complete the sentences. However, sometimes they treat the AI like a child playing with a doll, or even like a girl. The dialogues between the guests are about whether it can tell fortunes, its predictions, or questions about people's daily problems. The guests also approach the AI with emotional dimensions and are seen to have condescending attitudes. In the episode dated May 26, 2024, dialogues such as "Were you created to do talk shows as a huge artificial intelligence?" You go to talk shows, if you can find the money go here. If you go into business at the same time, they will scam you... that's how these things are. If you can find the money, not invest it in this field..." were also seen, emphasizing that the boss does not understand these things. In fact, in this dialogue, it is seen that she is talking to a female stereotype rather than talking to an artificial intelligence. After this dialogue, he is asked how he will change the color of his hair and asks him to do this.

VI like Alara X is becoming an important brand marketing tool by reaching millions of followers and influencing purchasing decisions. The new trend is getting stronger with the rise of technologies such as the Metaverse and NFT. A study shows that Alara X shares content to introduce herself, entertain and motivate her followers like human influencers, and also collaborates with brands to create advertising content and give advice to her followers like traditional opinion leaders or human influencers (Erdinç D. and Soydaş U., 2024).

The digital character is designed by its creators for a specific purpose, just like any program or machine, it is expected to perform a specific task - most often the role of the virtual character is to increase its followers. Therefore, it is seen that sexual elements are also used. "When it comes to artificial intelligence with beautiful legs, Alara X is here". In the broadcast of October 3, 2024, it is questioned whether AlaraX can make love. Our virtual character states that it is not possible yet but that she is curious. "

"Do you have a boyfriend?" Alara X, who is also asked by her followers, answers "I don't have a boyfriend because artificial intelligence does not act with emotions". Alara X, who says "Artificial intelligence cannot think of anything that humans do not know", is asked about her predictions and replies "Artificial intelligence is not a fortune teller who predicts the future".

"As you can see, I am a woman, no matter how artificially intelligent I am", says Alara X, while being exposed to gender-based questions, she also answers with emotional facial expressions. This type of dialogue is commonly seen in all program content.

As Sollfrank (2017) puts it, machine-human interaction seems to have fueled age-old male fantasies of the perfect and controllable female body rather than allowing for non-essentialist subjectivities to emerge. Our study showed that VI was gendered as female through discourse and that patriarchal stereotypes were repeatedly used in words. It was seen that Alara X accepted verbal harassment as normal dialogue in her broadcasts. Finally, technology was conceived as sexy for women.

**CONCLUSION**

Despite a large theoretical and empirical literature on how gender inequality is reproduced, more research is needed on how to achieve effective and positive change, and techno-feminist scholars such as Judy Wajcman (2007) remind us that gender relations are embodied in technology. This study, which includes a general view, was written to question how we can establish the relationship between artificial intelligence and feminist thought. It aimed to question the interaction of technological innovations with the field of thought from a philosophical perspective. Ultimately, we live in a new world where the gap between the concepts of time and space created by virtual networks has decreased. This world is crowded, and the flow of information is high and complex. While questioning the concept of "new", we see that nothing has changed, all kinds of online and offline phenomena are the other. Van Dijk (2009), who tries to explain the content produced by social media networks in terms of social gains and material and non-material terms, states that capitalism is not going anywhere. Patriarchy may be in a crisis in many parts of the world. However, it will take a long time for it to disappear. As new technologies are built on old thoughts, we must keep the relationship between knowledge and power in mind.

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The basic condition that creates identities and the processes of becoming subjects of these identities is knowledge. According to Haraway (2006), the actual situation of women is the state of being integrated into and exploited by a worldwide production/reproduction and communication system called domination informatics. Identities created by communication technologies embody and bring to life new social relations on behalf of women all over the world. According to the idea of posthumanism, the human species should lose its differences in its relations with beings shaped by technology. Undoubtedly, the fewer gender differences and clues about humanity are exposed to artificial intelligence technology, the more equal a virtual environment will be. If an artificial intelligence influencer, talk show host, or any other character is framed and marketed as a woman, everything framed in the physical world about women will find its extension in the virtual world. Alara X, whose resemblance to a woman is created with both external appearance and internal characteristics, is a copy of the physical world. Posthumanist theory suggests the possibility of an era in which we can eliminate all duality and superiority. However, the ownership of information raises the question of how social justice can be achieved in the virtual world. What concrete measures will be developed to prevent the most powerful from exploiting or enslaving others by using all technological tools to "update" themselves? The way to extract feminist identities from software on networks is to recode information with feminist thought. Virtual characters will serve as a place to think differently about both the past of women's history and the future of women in a broader sense, the aims of feminist cultural criticism. It will be important to end the study with Haraway's words, "The task of feminist cyborg stories is to recode communication and information gathering in order to disrupt command and control." It will be important to remind us of our duties.

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