

BLURRING WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES IN THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH AND
WEALTH: THE CASE OF NETWORK MARKETING IN TURKEY

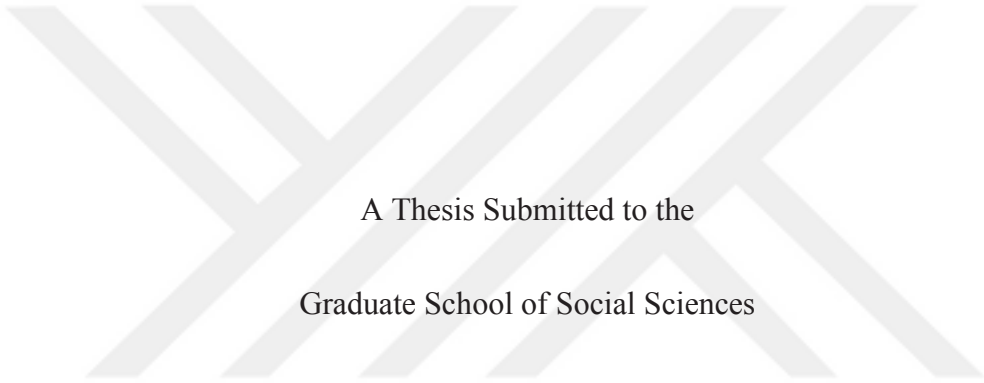


KOÇ UNIVERSITY

2017

BLURRING WORK-LIFE BOUNDARIES IN THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH AND
WEALTH: THE CASE OF NETWORK MARKETING IN TURKEY

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A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate School of Social Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Comparative Studies in History and Society

Koç University

June 2017

Koc University
Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

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This thesis focuses on a qualitative analysis of a network direct selling organization (DSO) – a form of multilevel marketing which sells its products through a network of distributors. Through a case study of a DSO in Turkey marketing nutritional supplements and weight management products, this thesis explores the labor process, forms of labor control, and formation of distributors' subjectivities. Firstly, by looking at the practices of consuming, advertising, selling and recruiting, it demonstrates that social relations and bodies of the DSO employees are integrated into the capital accumulation process to a very significant extent. Secondly, it investigates how direct sellers reconstitute themselves as neoliberal, autonomous and desiring subjects. Finally, this study scrutinizes self-control and network surveillance mechanisms, which help to keep direct sellers active in the labor process.

Keywords: Direct selling organization, network marketing, dietary supplements, weight management, productive consumption, labor process, labor control, neoliberal subjectivity.

SAĞLIK VE VARLIK ARAYIŞINDA İŞ-YAŞAM SINIRININ BULANIKLAŞMASI:

TÜRKİYE'DE AĞ PAZARLAMA ÖRNEĞİ

TUĞÇE BİDAV

Bu tez, çok katlı pazarlamanın bir biçimi olarak ürünlerini bir distribütör ağı aracılığıyla satan bir doğrudan satış organizasyonunun (DSO) niteliksel bir analizine odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de gıda takviyeleri ve kilo kontrol ürünleri pazarlayan bir firmada faaliyette bulunun distribütörlerin emek sürecini, öznelliklerinin oluşumunu ve emeklerinin kontrol biçimlerini incelemektedir. İlk olarak, tüketim, reklamcılık, satış ve yeni üye yapma pratiklerini inceleyerek, DSO çalışanlarının sosyal ilişkilerinin ve bedenlerinin önemli ölçüde sermaye birikim sürecine entegre olduklarını göstermektedir. İkincisi, distribütörlerin kendilerini neoliberal, otonom ve arzulayan özneler olarak nasıl yeniden kurduklarını incelemektedir. Son olarak, bu çalışma distribütörleri emek sürecinde aktif tutmaya yardımcı olan öz-denetim ve ağ gözetim gibi emek kontrol yöntemlerini analiz etmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Doğrudan satış organizasyonları, ağ pazarlama, gıda takviyesi, kilo kontrolü, üretken tüketim, emek süreci, emek kontrolü, neoliberal öznellik.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis could not have been completed without the advice and support of many people. First, I want to thank my thesis adviser Assistant Professor Burak Gürel for his encouragement and invaluable comments while thinking on and writing this thesis. His support motivated me a lot during the processes of writing this thesis and applying to PhD programs. I also owe much to Assistant Professor Erdem Yörük, not only for his support as a member of my thesis committee, but also for accepting me in his research project on the politics of welfare in emerging market economies. I am also thankful to Assistant Professor Murat Koyuncu who kindly agreed to participate in my thesis committee.

I am grateful to the interviewees of this study who kindly participated in my research and shared their stories, which helped me to build my thesis. Without their participation, writing this thesis would not be possible.

I want to thank Seçkin Göksoy for his emotional and intellectual support during both my undergraduate and graduate studies. Without his encouragement and inspiring comments, completing this thesis would be harder.

I also thank my friends at CSHS, Balacan, İzem, Ceren, Fulya, Elif, Betül and Kerem for motivating me and making my life more enjoyable throughout my studies at Koç University and writing this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my family Mevlüt, Neşe, and Mustafa Bidav for their love, constant support, and standing behind every decision I make.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DSO	Direct Selling Organization
GET	Global Expansion Team
HFF	Herbalife Family Foundation
MLM	Multi-Level Marketing
WFDSA	World Federation of Direct Selling Associations



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Health comes first, then comes wealth” is an ingrained saying in public discourse. That is, there is a common perception of a sequential relationship between health and wealth. Practices of people aiming to increase their health and wealth become observable from various perspectives. However, the pursuit of health and wealth cannot be understood without considering a network of capitalist relations which pervades into the modern society. On the one hand, people have become consumers of products promising to make them healthier as a result of commodification of health in the capitalist economy. On the other hand, people have been interested and involved in acquiring wealth through flexible employment relations developed under the neoliberal economy.

Jean Baudrillard (1998) analyze the consumer society as a structured social field in which needs and desires for consumable goods are shaped, and people consume specific products to acquire certain signs and values. In contemporary societies, health is also seen as a commodity, and accordingly people are considered as consumers of health (Henderson & Peterson, 2002, p. 1). Commodification of health transforms the relationship between the state and its citizens, while at the same time marketization of health products and health care services results in the proliferation of culture of health consumerism. As Nikolas Rose (2007) argues, people have turned into active consumers of health who consume not only health care services but also consume alternative medicines such as herbal medicines and nutritional supplements.

With regard to gaining wealth, people want to increase their economic status by seeking alternative ways to generate income (which is also not immune from the ideals of consumer society) because acquiring wealth is not possible by working with a standardized wage. Therefore, people are searching for easier and alternative ways even

if making high amount money is barely possible. Capitalism is quite successful in creating alternative lines of work. With the rise of neoliberalism, flexibilisation of the labor market has created precarious employment relations in which laborers work under more flexible and unsecure conditions (Standing, 2011; Belet, 2013; Hewison & Tularak, 2013; Shin, 2013). “Network marketing” operates through such precarious employment relations and promises people the possibility of generating high income.

This thesis focuses on network direct selling organizations (DSOs) – a form of multilevel marketing which sells its products through a network of independent sellers. Some network DSOs even integrate both health and wealth into their system by creating a network of health consumers and sellers of such health products. In relation to this, the worker’s body is integrated into the market both as a labor force and as a health consumer (Ferreira et. al., 2015). The aim of this thesis is to explore the blurring boundaries between work and life in the pursuit of health and wealth by focusing on a direct selling company, *Herbalife* which sells nutritional supplements and weight management products.

My major research questions are: 1. How does the labor process in network DSOs be delineated based on their organizational culture? 2. What are the mechanisms of labor control that mask the DSOs’ overriding profit motives? 2. How do distributors reconstitute their subjectivities as an agent spreading DSOs’ commercial objectives and organizational culture? This thesis, therefore, comprises three lines of inquiry: An exploration of labor process, forms of labor control in network DSOs, and reconstitution of distributors’ subjectivities in network DSOs.

1.1. Literature Review

The literature that I reviewed includes ethnographic and quantitative studies in different parts of the world including the United States, Mexico, England, Costa Rica, Taiwan, Hawaii and Turkey. These studies focus on different aspects of DSOs. Regarding the

labor process in network DSOs, the literature mainly tries to examine the organizational structure of companies, motivations of distributors, and selling and recruiting processes.

Biggart (1989) provides a Weberian approach to direct selling in terms of its qualities such as being less bureaucratic, less rational and more emotional, discouraging competition in networks and using charismatic authority to ensure commitment of people. Similar to Biggart (1989), Weierter (2001) discusses how charismatic authority established in direct selling, and its effect on distributors. Bone (2006) stresses the flexible employment relations in DSOs, while Wilson (1999) and Cahn (2006; 2008) analyze such organizations by looking at how they adopt the neoliberal logic and their distributors internalize neoliberal principles.

Commodification of social and kin relations via creating business networks out of people's existing social networks is addressed by many scholars such as Biggart (1989), Lan (2002), Özerkmen & Tekbaş (2007), and Tekbaş (2010). In relation to this, the process of network construction, and upline – downline relationships are under investigation. Lan (2002) questions how distributors maintain trust-based relationships with their customers and downlines in the process of networking. According to Lan, distributors maintain trust in weak ties by transforming the act of selling into an act of believing and creating a quasi-family community by using metaphorical expression of kinship terms to describe positions in the network. Gabbay and Leenders (2003), on the other hand, provide a rational perspective to explain the operation of trust in direct selling. By rationalizing trust relations, they ignore what critics say about establishing quasi-religious and quasi-family community in direct selling. Bobalca (2014) focuses on the importance of trust in customer loyalty but he does not consider how trust is established between customers and distributors.

Isa et. al (2012) look at how upline support affects job satisfaction and sales performance of distributors, and find that there is a positive correlation between upline support and job satisfaction. Bhattacharha and Mehta (2000), on the other hand, argue that people's involvement in direct selling is a rational choice due to socialization aspect of network marketing. Tyre (2015) describes politics in direct selling as balancing the conflict between the personal success of the distributors and that of their downlines. Moreover, Duffy (2005) looks from the perspective of companies by comparing three DSOs strategies, and he focuses on how DSOs make novelties in their marketing strategies to increase motivations of their distributors such as enabling distributors to organize online parties to sell the products.

Due to women's high level of participation, feminized nature of direct selling is also addressed in the literature. For example, Vincent (2003) analyzes the reproduction of gendered domestic roles in network DSOs and Moura (2015) examines gendered practices in direct selling by looking at how local gender norms are integrated in the operation of a foreign company at the local level. However, gendered practices in direct selling are better observable in the companies selling cosmetics or home improvement products. Since this thesis focuses on a company selling nutrition products, the gendered side of direct selling is less visible in it.

Furthermore, Ferrell and collaborators (Ferrell et. al., 2010; Ferrell and Ferrell, 2012) focus on the use of social media tools in direct selling by looking at how such tools are integrated in direct selling to connect different actors such as companies, direct sellers and customers. However, they do not pay enough attention to the content of social media usage in direct selling. This thesis focuses on the distributors' use of social media for advertising purposes and analyzes prominent themes in the contents.

Formation of subjectivity is an overlooked dimension in the literature. Though Cahn (2008) discusses how distributors internalize neoliberal principles, he does not relate this to subjectivity formation. Question of identity is rather addressed more. Dixon (2003), Preston-Werner (2007) and Cahn (2008) link distributors' consumption of the products to acquiring a middle class or professional identity. Pratt (2000) provides a different perspective about the issue of identity by considering distributors' identification with the company as a dynamic process. He discusses the dream building process after joining the company, which causes an identity crisis since people want to achieve their ideal selves. This gap between the reality and the ideal motivates the distributors to sell and consume their companies' products.

Another important aspect of direct selling is that selling and consuming practices coexist. However, existing literature underestimates the consumption side of direct selling. Preston-Werner (2007) argues that individuals acquire a professional identity as independent business owners via consumption. With regard to consumption, Cahn (2008) lays stress on how DSOs consume individuals' class positions by encouraging consumption practices since distributors believe that they acquire a middle class identity through consuming and gaining profits from their sales. Dixon (2003) also locates the direct selling in broader concepts such as the commodification of health and consumption of dietary supplements. She integrates the consumption of dietary supplements with identity construction of distributors, and desire of wealth. Although these studies contributed to the literature on direct selling, they do not see consumption *as part of the labor process* in network marketing. By scrutinizing the integration of the consumption of distributors into the labor process, this thesis fills this important gap in the literature.

In the existing literature, studies focusing on the operation of DSOs in Turkey are rather scarce. Özerkmen and Tekbaş (2007) conducted a small-scale qualitative study with current and former *Herbalife* distributors in Turkey, and then Tekbaş's doctoral

thesis (2010) extended this previous fieldwork by interviewing with a large number of distributors. Tekbaş (2010) focuses on emotional management of distributors, and how DSOs affect social relations of distributors. Since he integrates former distributors into his research, he finds out personal problems emerging out of the emotional management of distributors and financialization of their social relations, and distributors' strategies to solve those problems. Although he put an emphasis on consumption, he does not focus on how distributors' bodies are reproduced in relation to certain discourses and consumption practices.

There are other DSO studies conducted in Turkey. Işık (2001) investigated how distributors' attitudes towards DSOs change according to their demographic characteristics by conducting a quantitative research with *Avon* distributors. Paşalı (2006) explored the effects of communication strategies on customer loyalty and job satisfaction of distributors based a quantitative research with *Herbalife* distributors. Gurağaç (2006) tried to find out people's involvement in network marketing by making a quantitative study in Kütahya. Based on a quantitative research with Oriflame distributors, Argan (1997) revealed the tendencies of distributors in terms of their consumption of company products, job satisfaction, and the reasons behind doing this job. Kara and Çiçek (2016) examined attitudes and expectations of Tupperware distributors in Yozgat. All of these studies portray the DSOs in Turkey very positively, as job providers to women and less educated people in a context of widespread unemployment. Also, due to lack of qualitative research, these studies provide only a limited perspective on the exercises of DSO distributors in Turkey.

All in all, this thesis contributors to the literature by taking consumption practices as a starting point to the labor process in direct selling, and integrating distributors' bodies which are re-created via consuming the products into the labor process. Focusing on advertising activities in a virtual space is another contribution of this thesis. Furthermore,

analyzing formation of distributor's subjectivities in relation to making neoliberal, autonomous and desiring subjects is also a contribution to the literature.

1.2. Field and Method

This research is based on a qualitative analysis of direct sellers working for *Herbalife* Company in Istanbul and Izmir. To answer the research questions of this study, the data is collected through in-depth interviews and observations. I reached *Herbalife* distributors via snowball sampling. First, I made a contact with distributors I have got acquainted with before in both cities. Then, these distributors helped me to recruit other distributors. Only active distributors of the company were interviewed based on voluntary participation. Though I wanted to recruit former distributors who left the company (due to various reasons) in order to broaden the scope of my analysis, I could not accomplish this goal because former distributors I am familiar with refused to interview, and I could not reach any others. Lastly, I should note that I use pseudonyms in order to protect the confidentiality of my research participants.

Semi-structured interviews appear as the best method for the purposes of this research because I have been able to learn personal experiences and life stories of distributors. Between May 2015 and February 2016, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with 11 *Herbalife* distributors face-to-face, and interviewed with a direct selling consultant. The interviews covered multiple themes such as their *Herbalife* stories, relations with upline and downline distributors and with customers, participation in company events, and other job related activities and experiences. I stopped conducting new interviews when ideas and concepts introduced by the interviewees became repetitive. By interviewing 6 female and 5 male distributors, I sustained the gender balance of the research. The reason for sustaining gender balance is to expand the scope of analysis, and move beyond the arguments seeing direct sellers as a part of a feminized

labor force. Reaching male distributors is not a hard task because the company sells health products for both men and women.

In addition to interviews, I made observations in different occasions: Herbalife meetings in Taksim and Kadıköy in İstanbul, a small meeting organized by distributors in the home of a network leader in İzmir, and in three nutrition clubs in which I interviewed with the *Herbalife* distributors who are also the owner of these clubs. These observations enabled me to become familiar with distributor's working environment, the atmosphere created to attract newcomers, and their relations with other distributors.

The company organizes meetings in İstanbul twice a week (one week in Kadıköy and another week in Taksim). During the interview with Selin, she invited me to the company meeting in Kadıköy. In company with Selin, I attended the meeting which was organized at DoubleTree by Hilton Istanbul Moda in February 2016. I was there from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., which is from the beginning to the end of the meeting. The meeting had two parts including a session for supervisors to inform them about marketing strategies and network development, and a session for newcomers to introduce the company and the products. I was not allowed to listen the first session; thus, I waited until the second session starts. In that time, there are some newcomers waiting in the lounge to listen the second part, and I have found a chance to have a conversation with them about why and how they come the meeting. I attended the second meeting in Taksim organized at Elite World Hotel in the following week. Both meetings followed the same structure: It started with introducing the company and its products. Then, consumers of *Herbalife* products were invited to the stage to talk about their product results. Following this, business opportunity of *Herbalife* was explained, and then distributors got on the stage to tell how much they generate an income by selling the products. In the last section, a guest speaker told his/her success story to the audience.

1.3. Overview of Chapters

In this thesis, I examine labor process, formation of distributors' subjectivities, and forms of labor control by focusing on *Herbalife* Company which sells nutritional supplements and weight management products.

In the second chapter, I make a conceptual definition of direct selling by examining its distinguishing characteristics and historical background. Then, I discuss who is involved in direct selling by considering class formation of direct sellers and gendered nature of direct selling. Moreover, I give global and local statistical data on direct selling industry. Finally, I introduce *Herbalife* company investigated in this thesis.

In the third chapter, I describe the labor process of direct sellers in relation to their practices of consumption, advertising, selling, and recruiting. In doing so, I demonstrate how bodies and social relations of the DSO employees are integrated into the capital accumulation process to a very significant extent by blurring the boundaries between work and life.

In the fourth chapter, I examine how direct sellers reconstitute themselves as neoliberal, autonomous and desiring subjects through adopting the neoliberal ideal, and intensifying their desire for health and wealth. My aim in this chapter is to show how formation of distributors' subjectivities in this way facilitates the exercise of different forms of labor control.

In the fifth chapter, I scrutinize multiple forms of labor control in network marketing. This chapter demonstrates that labor control in direct selling is exercised through self-discipline through body, emotional and moral control, and network surveillance by constructing an intimate community and following the leadership of upline distributors.

The concluding chapter summarizes the main findings, limitations and contributions of this study.



CHAPTER 2

NETWORK DIRECT SELLING ORGANIZATIONS: DEFINITION & DESCRIPTION

Direct selling has emerged as an alternative line of work in the capitalist economy and constitutes a new type of working practice in order to exact more surplus value in a situation where market occupies more space and dominates the society. As labor practices in direct selling will be elaborated in this thesis, this chapter, firstly, provides a conceptual definition and historical background of direct selling. Secondly, class and gender formations of direct selling labor force are discussed. Thirdly, I give some statistical data on direct selling industry in Turkey and the world. Finally, I introduce Herbalife Company as this thesis focuses on its labor practices.

2.1. Conceptual Definition of Direct Selling

Direct selling is “a method of marketing and retailing consumer goods directly to the consumer. [...] Independent sales people call on consumers, mainly in their homes, to show and often to demonstrate products and to obtain orders” (Bone, 2006, p. 6). In direct selling, the interaction between sales people and customer should be face-to-face and outside of a fixed retail stores (Peterson & Wotruba, 1996). Therefore, an independent salesforce created by DSOs sell company products to customers in any place where sellers can reach potential customers to explain and demonstrate products.

Though direct selling method can be applied for any type of product, it is mostly used to sell specific type of products. As a direct selling consultant whom I interviewed with said, “you can sell any product by this way but some products have to be sold only by this way because they require to be explained very much.”¹ Thus, DSOs commonly

¹ Interview with a direct selling consultant (Male, early 50s, İstanbul).

sell home improvement products like domestic and cleaning products, cosmetics or nutritional supplements like weight management products, vitamins, and protein shakes, which are not sold directly in the market. Therefore, they create a new consumer culture emerging out specific and more intimate interaction between sellers and customers.

Direct selling is practiced in two different forms including single-level marketing and multi-level marketing (MLM). In single-level marketing, sellers generate an income through buying products from a company and selling them directly to consumers. On the other hand, in MLM which is also known as network marketing, sellers make money by way of selling products to customers and getting commissions, discounts or bonuses from sales of other direct sellers whom they recruited as their downlines (Tekbaş, 2010, pp. 50-51). This research focused on the latter type of direct selling, and it will be referred as network DSOs throughout the thesis.

2.1.1. Characteristics of Network Direct Selling

Podolny and Page (1998) define a network form of organization as “any collection of actors ($N > 2$) that pursue repeated, enduring exchange relations with one another and, at the same time, lack a legitimate organizational authority to arbitrate and resolve disputes that may arise during the exchange” (p. 59). The key point for the network form of organizations is the construction of long-term, repeated, and permanent economic relations among the participants of the network. This network form is applied to the direct selling that has certain distinguishing characteristics to create such exchange relations, which results in more deregulated and flexible employment practices in network DSOs.

Creation of an independent salesforce through self-employment is one of the main characteristics of network DSOs. “The industry recasts these salespeople as autonomous agents, entrepreneurs, even independent business owners, signaling this difference by renaming them ‘distributors,’ ‘representatives,’ or ‘consultants’” (Wilson, 1999, p. 404).

This renaming brings ‘fictitious self-employment’ practices into network DSOs, where workers are deprived of benefits of formal employment practices and dependent on certain contract terms determined by companies (Schienstock, 2001). Anyone who wants to be an independent contractor in network DSOs is welcomed, and they employ themselves. Without formal employment practices, they can establish their own businesses through fictitious self-employment, which prevents labor to being conscious of their exploitation in this work because they appropriate the business for themselves. Fictitious self-employment also pose an advantage for DSOs because it reduces the costs of formal employment like fixed wages, insurance, pension payments, and so on.

Secondly, the labor force of network DSOs based on independent contractors is self-expanding. Distributors try to create their own network of independent sellers. In other words, they construct sponsorship lines that can be understood as financial ties between distributors. This also helps the construction of intense and intimate social relations between distributors (Biggart, 1989, p. 16). This sponsorship lines are called “uplines” and “downlines,” which are economically and socially tied to each other because distributors earn money from both their own sales and sales volume of their downlines. Therefore, independent contractors try to recruit more people into their networks in order to expand their businesses while expanding the company’s labor force at the same time. This situation provides “an organizational flexibility for network DSOs by creating a self-expanding labor force recruited from the pool of consumers” (Lan, 2001, p. 92), thus the companies minimize their efforts on that field as well.

Another characteristic of network DSOs is the presence of “recognition levels” which demonstrate hierarchical relations among distributors (Biggart, 1989, p. 18). Although the network DSOs have a status hierarchy, it does not indicate that there is a hierarchical authority. Such recognition levels demonstrate the status of the distributors indicating how much success they gained through their sales and constructing networks;

which creates “a new system of social stratification based on achievement” (Dixon, 2003, p. 184). Distributors also familiarize these sponsorship lines by establishing fictive familial relations within their networks such as calling their uplines as “mother” and downlines as “sister” (Biggart, 1989; Lan, 2002). However, we should note that these status levels within network DSOs attribute a leadership role to higher-level distributors, which is explained in Chapter 5.

2.1.2. History of Direct Selling

Although direct selling is a modern marketing and retailing method which emerged to compete with traditional corporate marketing strategies, it has a longer history (Wilson, 1999). Biggart (1989) writes that the economic history of direct selling has their origins in the colonial economy in the United States where Yankee peddlers who vend consumable goods to customers (p. 20). However, the network DSO form took its current shape by the late 1950s with regard to its sponsorship lines, status hierarchies, and emotional and family-like character (*ibid.*, p. 47).

Despite the fact that direct selling has its origins in U.S., it became globalized with the emergence of neoliberal economic policies. Wilson (1999) explains globalization of direct selling by indicating that:

In the post-Fordist cum post-Cold-War world system, countries in the ‘Third’ and ‘Second’ World are first integrated as part of the ‘global factory’: as cheaper producers of goods. The globalization of direct sales, on the other hand, integrates such populations as cosmopolitan consumers and professional distributors, typically well before launching their manufacturing plants in those countries (p. 407).

Therefore; DSOs began to distribute their products globally, and adapted their corporate cultures to each country that they carry out marketing activities.

Direct selling preserves its specific characteristics described in the section 2.1.1, but it also acquired new strategies after the proliferation of new technologies that affect especially communication between people. Since direct selling is based on face-to-face interaction between sellers and customers, it faces the challenge of adapting new communication technologies into its marketing strategies (Ferrell et al., 2010; 2012). Such technological transformations such as increase in social media usage affect direct selling in two ways. It changes not only the way that direct selling companies interact with distributors, consumers and stakeholders (Ferrell et al., 2012) but also how distributors reach potential customers by utilizing social media tools. Both DSOs and distributors intensively use social media tools for promotional purposes and maintaining their relations with consumers.

2.2. Who are Direct Sellers?

Since labor force of network DSOs are self-employed through contracting and self-expanding through networking, there is not any prior condition to become a distributor in network DSOs. “Becoming a direct seller requires no previous experience, no formal education, and little startup capital, so it is particularly attractive when other forms of employment are scarce” (Cahn, 2008, p. 430). Therefore, they have a potential to include all people who are especially excluded from other employment practices into their labor force. “Direct sales’ populism lies in its recourse to ‘average’ people with no special training in sales or marketing, which in part explains its associations with white working-class or lower middle-class worlds” (Wilson, 1999, p. 404). However, distributors receive training through company seminars and leadership of their uplines in order to expand their businesses.

Additionally, network DSOs have ability to exploit people who are already a part of the labor force due to their flexible employment practices in terms of working hours and working place. People working in different sectors also become distributors of

network DSOs as part-time workers in order to generate an extra income. Therefore, direct selling companies welcome people regardless of their age, educational background, and economic and social status in order to exploit their labor and extract more surplus value.

2.2.1. Class Formation of Direct Sellers

Since ‘easiest way of earning money’ is a motto associated with direct selling as most of the companies publicize themselves by this way, direct selling is seen as a lower or middle class job. However, making this association limits the motivations of direct sellers as gaining money and experiencing upward class mobility because distributors accumulate different kinds of capital² in addition to the economic capital.

“Through their multi-level configuration, they (DSOs) penetrate markets quickly, selling not only consumer products but also “professional” jobs to people who may not have the social or economic resources to attain such a status within the pre-existing social structure” (Preston-Werner, 2007, p.23). A new type of work and consumption practices offered by DSOs provide a way to enhance people’s status in the existing structure. Through selling and consuming, they can easily take the status of a business owner and acquire a professional identity without formal education. That is, they invest in their symbolic capital.

Furthermore, direct sellers accumulate cultural capital through attending personal development seminars or meetings organized by the company where they find an opportunity to learn business development, personal development, advertising skills and information about the products. In addition to such occupational trainings, they also see

² Capital is used here based on Bourdieu’s conceptualization which does not restrict capital into the economic sphere. Bourdieu (1986) defines capital as “accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form) which enables agents to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (p. 241). Thus, there are different forms of capital including economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital.

trainers and guest speakers in these meetings and seminars as role models in terms of their style of speech, living or dressing, which makes a contribution to their cultural capital as well.

Besides, they invest in their social capital. Although they transform already existing social relations into commercial relations, they also establish new social relations that contribute their social capital. Meeting, seminars and vacations organized by companies open a social space for gathering distributors where they meet other people and learn their stories about direct selling.

Considering accumulation of different kinds of capital in direct selling, class formation of direct sellers cannot be determined based on their pre-existing position in the social structure or their economic motivations as direct sellers. They enter into a new network of relations shaped by organizational culture of DSOs where they accumulate different kinds of capital – which have a significant potential to be converted in direct selling. Hence, they enter into a new field that emphasizes the individual's position in a social space based on the accumulated capital one has in Bourdieu's analysis (Kirschbaum, 2012, p. 1).

2.2.2. Gendered Nature of Direct Selling

In 2015, females constitute 75,8 % whereas males constitute 24,2 % of global direct labor force in direct selling (WFDSA, 2016). Although percentages of females and males in the direct selling workforce vary by years, female participation in direct selling is always greater than males' participation. Besides lower rate of educated women and exclusion of women from other forms of paid labor practices, gendered nature of product range that are mostly sold through direct selling makes a significant contribution to women's participation to direct selling. For example, three leading product groups in direct selling in 2015 are wellness (33,6 % of total retail sales), cosmetic & personal care (31,5 % of

total retail sales) and household goods / home durables (11,4 % of total retail sales) that are marketed based on gendered consumption norms (*ibid.*).

Hence, direct selling companies such as Avon and Tupperware having a female workforce base their labor practices on gendered division of labor (Moura, 2015) and “casting the distributor’s role as feminine (even as the executive leadership remained predominantly male)” (Wilson, 1999, p. 405). Tupperware, for example, “sells the skills of domestic femininity” (Vincent, 2003, p. 186). Although participation of women into labor force somehow empower them and elevate their socio-economic status, organizational culture of such companies re-creates gender roles and gendered division of labor.

On the other hand, “companies which recruited men, such as Nutrilite and Amway recast this work as a family business, activating available narratives about self-made men and self-sufficient household enterprises in ways that allocated to the role a more patriarchal, hence gender-appropriate, cast” (Wilson, 1999, p. 405). Herbalife, the case investigated in this thesis, has also succeeded to incorporate males into its labor force because it sells health for all people – even for an unborn offspring.

2.3. Global & Local Statistics of Direct Selling Industry

Since “network marketing is part of the grey economy – a commercial activity which is not recorded in official statistics, but which is not actually illegal” (Dixon, 2003, p.12), annual statistics about direct selling are published by the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations (WFDSA). However, there are two important things that should be known about WFSDA statistics. Firstly, WFSDA either includes only Direct Selling Association (DSA) member companies’ records or the entire industry’s records – both DSA member and non-member companies – depending on availability of the data provided by the companies. Secondly, some people become members of more than one DSO, which inflates the statistics about the total number of sellers. Despite these

limitations, statistical data provided by WFDSA are useful to gauge the trajectory of the DSOs in Turkey and the world.

2.3.1. Global Statistics

Table 1 indicates global total sales and total number of sellers in direct selling industry from 2012 to 2015. Based on these numbers, both sales and the number of sellers show an increase in every year. As of 2015, DSOs integrate more than 100 million people into their labor force around the world.

Table 1 Global Statistics

Data Year	Global Total Sales (used to calculate regional totals)	Total Number of Sellers (used to calculate regional totals)
2012	\$149.263.394.077	90.520.786
2013	\$160.688.967.824	97.098.549
2014	\$170.623.822.112	98.939.412
2015	\$183.728.968.529	103.277.493

Note. World Federation Statistical Database (2012-2015) The official source for all WFDSA statistical data. Please note that Sales are expressed as Estimated Retail Sales excluding VAT and represent the entire industry unless otherwise stated.

Source: WFDSA, (2016).

2.3.2. Direct Selling Industry in Turkey

Direct selling has occupied a growing space in Turkish economy as well since the 1970s; however, the companies which are popular today entered the Turkish market in the 1990s. Neoliberal market policies pursued by the Turkish state since the 1980s paved the way for the rise of direct selling industry. *Avon, Oriflame, Tupperware, Amway* and *Herbalife* are some of foreign direct selling companies which are growing rapidly in Turkey.

Table 2 demonstrates annual retail sales and the total number of direct sellers in Turkey from 2010 to 2015. Direct selling industry in Turkey shows a similar pattern to the global case in terms increasing retail sales and the number of direct sellers.

Table 2 Direct Selling Industry in Turkey

Data Year	Annual Retail Sales in Local Currency – TRY (millions)	Total Number of Direct Sellers
2010**	1.651	1.047.163
2011*	1.942	1.190.331
2012	1.696	1.077.391
2013	1.738	1.122.518
2014	1.920	1.145.768
2015	2.074	1.306.176

Note. Source: WFDSA (2016) – World Federation Statistical Database (2012-2015) The official source for all WFDSA statistical data. Please note that Sales are expressed as Estimated Retail Sales excluding VAT and represent the entire industry unless otherwise stated.

*Source: WFDSA, (2012a).

**Source: WFDSA, (2012b).

2.4. Herbalife

This thesis particularly focuses on *Herbalife* which is a global nutrition company using the direct selling method to market its products since 1980. With the aim of increasing health and wellness, *Herbalife* sells a broad range of products including “weight management, healthy meals and snacks, sports and fitness, energy and targeted nutritional products as well as personal care products” (Herbalife, 2017). The company’s worldwide sales in 94 countries increased from \$4.5 billion in 2006 to \$4.9 billion in 2014 and \$4.4 billion in 2015 according to its annual reports (*ibid.*). Direct selling is represented as the best method suitable to sell Herbalife products by the company because ongoing personal relations and coaching for healthy life between distributors and customers increase consumer loyalty, and accordingly sales volume of the products.

Since Herbalife is based on network marketing form, distributors earn money through both selling products and constructing their own business networks by being sponsor of other people. Depending on their personal and organizational success, they receive specific titles which is called as “recognition levels.” These levels in Herbalife can be indicated respectively as Distributor, Senior Consultant, Success Builder, Qualified Producer, Supervisor, World Team, Global Expansion Team (GET),

Millionaire Team, President's Team, Chairman's Club and Founder's Circle (Herbalife, 2014). Benefits of distributors provided by the company are determined according to these hierarchical levels.

Herbalife provides its independent members income and incentives via seven different ways including retail profit, wholesale profit (commission), royalty overrides, monthly production bonus, promotions, vacation promotions and annual Mark Hughes bonus (Herbalife, 2014b). The large part of distributors earn money through retail profits since other types of income and incentives are available to higher level distributors.

2.4.1. Emphasis on Science

As a global nutrition company Herbalife puts strong emphasis on science. This emphasis clearly manifests itself in both promotions of the company and distributors' personal statements. Herbalife products are introduced as the products of a scientific process conducted by the world's best doctors who devote themselves to science and make people's lives better and healthy. In company meetings that I attend, they show a video explaining Herbalife's "Seed to Feed" philosophy by saying that:

Once we have identified the needs of our customers we bring in leading science. This comes from our very own doctors, scientists and nutritionists working with world-class vendors to develop our products from concept to feasibility and prototype to final formula.

Through elucidating that Herbalife products are produced at best quality for human health as a result of a scientific process, the company tries to overcome potential prejudices of customers.

Furthermore, one of the company products – Niteworks – is produced as a result of scientific research of Louis J. Ignarro who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry due to

his researches on nitric oxide in 1998. Since Ignarro is also a member of the Nutritional Advisory Board of Herbalife, every distributor refer to him while introducing the company and its products. In addition to these, they also cite other scientific experiments which show enormous decrease in nutritional values of foods, which legitimatizes the need for nutritional supplements and more specifically the need for Herbalife products which are the scientific results of “Seed to Feed” philosophy.

2.4.2. Herbalife in Turkey

Herbalife began to carry on a business in Turkey in 1998. By the end of 2015, Herbalife had 32.720 distributors in Turkey. Table 3 categorizes Herbalife distributors in three categories including single-level distributors who have no downline and generate an income through buying the products at wholesale price, non-sales leaders with a downline who have same economic rewards with single-level distributors, and sales leaders with a downline who get multi-level compensation on downline sales in addition to wholesale profits. As Table 3 shows, out of 32.720 distributors only 3.740 distributors are entitled to receive organizational bonuses and royalties from the company.

Table 3 Categorization of Herbalife Distributors in Turkey

Year	Single-level distributors (No Downline)		Non-Sales Leaders with a Downline		Sales Leaders with a Downline		Total Members
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
2013	22.945	72,6 %	4.955	15.7 %	3.705	11.7 %	31.605
2014	23.999	75.1 %	4.398	13.8 %	3.541	11.1 %	31.938
2015	28.736	76.4 %	5.130	13.6 %	3.740	9.9 %	32.720

Source: Herbalife (2014a; 2015; 2016)

Average gross compensation paid by Herbalife to distributors in Turkey in 2015 is demonstrated in the Table 4. Though 3.740 distributor receive compensation from the

company, how much they receive changes depending on their personal sales and organizational sales volumes. In 2015, 488 distributor did not get any compensation from the company because distributors can receive such organizational bonuses only if they sell certain amount of products themselves. That is, distributors have to continue selling the products even if they reach higher levels by establishing their network.

Table 4 Average Gross Compensation Paid By Herbalife to Distributors in Turkey in 2015

Average Payments from Herbalife (TRY)	All Sales Leaders with a Downline			This chart does not include amounts earned by Distributors on their sales of Herbalife products to others.
	Number of Distributors	% of Total Grouping	Average Gross Payments (TRY)	
> 100.000	47	1.3 %	234.969	
50.0001-100.000	33	0.9 %	71.445	
25.001-50.000	68	1.8 %	33.505	
10.001-25.000	148	4.0 %	15.906	
5.001-10.000	210	5.6 %	6.909	
1.001-5.000	1.038	27.8 %	2.224	
1-1.000	1.708	45.7 %	382	
0	488	13.0 %	0	
Total	3.740	100.0 %	6.002	

Source: Herbalife (2016)

2.5. Conclusion

Direct selling originated in peddling occupies a growing space in both the global economy and Turkish economy. Considering its specific characteristics that differentiate direct selling from other type of working practices, they create a network of independent sellers by certain ways such as commodifying their class positions or exploiting gendered division of labor. Therefore, it is valuable to look in detail at practices and experiences of independent sellers. As this chapter has established the framework of network DSOs and briefly introduced Herbalife, the next chapter will specifically focus on the labor process in Herbalife.

CHAPTER 3

LABOR PROCESS: USE, WEAR, TALK

I do not spare special time. Every time and everywhere.
They can call in the evening and in the morning. I am
available when they are available.³

This quotation is from Feride, who has been a full-time *Herbalife* distributor for eight years, I asked her how many hours she works in a day. Her answer indicates the changed nature of the labor process. More clearly, her job constitutes a different manner of employment practices in comparison to other types of organizations such as in modern bureaucratic organizations. Biggart (1989) explains how direct selling is radically different from the logic of modern bureaucratic organizations which encourages rationality and competition, has strict chains of command, rules and regulations, relatively impersonal relationships, fixed working hours, and separates work and personal lives of labors. On the other hand, there are no signs of these particularities in network DSOs since the labor process in network marketing is organized in a different way. A distributor of a network DSO does not have a workplace, fixed working hours, fixed wages or a separate work-personal life.

In a contemporary situation, this kind of labor process is not new and specific to network marketing. Several occupations are conducted beyond fixed working places and fixed working hours. Hardt and Negri (2000) pointed out that, “as labor moves outside the factory walls, it is increasingly difficult to maintain the fiction of any measure of the working day and thus separate the time of production from the time of reproduction, or work time from leisure time” (pp. 402-403). Accordingly, the entire social terrain is

³ Interview with Feride (Female, 45, İzmir).

integrated into value generation under the capitalist economy by blurring the boundaries between production and reproduction, production and consumption, or work time and free time. This is especially the case for service sector jobs which integrate emotions, bodies and communication practices of labors into an expanded capital accumulation process, and direct sellers of network marketing constitutes a part of the service sector. Although some of the *Herbalife* distributors open *Nutrition Clubs* or *Wellness Centers* – places in which distributors invite potential customers, share information about the products, and collectively consume the products – the time of production extends the walls of such *Nutrition Clubs* and *Wellness Centers*, and cannot be considered as the only working place of the distributors. That is, their work continues to produce an economic value to the company outside of these places as well.

Consequently, *Herbalife* distributors produce services everywhere and all the time. As distributors of the company, their job requires several activities including consuming the products, advertising, selling the products and expanding the labor force. I argue that their work expands to their whole lives and integrates their activities into capital accumulation of the company to a large extent since distributors have difficulty in defining their working hours, monthly wages and working places.

In this chapter, I delineate the labor process in *Herbalife* based on its organizational culture. I argue that the labor process manifests itself in three parts which are simplified as “Use, Wear, Talk”. “Use, Wear, Talk” is actually the slogan of the company, which I think well summarizes the labor process in *Herbalife*. As a remark, these three steps which I will describe in this chapter are not separately structured and fixed fields; rather they intertwine with each other in the labor process. I separate them under these headings for organizational purposes, and I will explain each process individually.

3.1. Consuming the Products

Consumption is the first step of the labor process in network DSOs. *Herbalife* distributors firstly use the company products, although why they use or how they start to use the products differs depending on the distributors' personal stories and their initial aims. Based on my fieldwork, I summarize the consumption practices in *Herbalife* in two ways. On the one hand, are distributors who consume the products in order to overcome their health related problems such as to lose or gain weight, or improve their skin. Such people are mostly affiliated with the company to benefit from 25% discount on the products, and consider themselves as faithful consumers. That is, they are pleased with the products and keep consuming them. When they get good product results, some of them also begin to distribute the products to earn income or extra income. These people are acquainted with *Herbalife* by way of their friends and relatives, or other advertising channels. Thus, their first objective is already to consume the products for a specific purpose.

On the other hand, there are distributors who become members of the company to acquire a professional identity. They are mostly acquainted with the company during their job search to generate an income or side income. The important thing is that they also consume the products in order to sell the products because the company strongly recommend its distributors to consume the products to develop convincing selling practices. Such distributors usually state why they use the products as to stay healthy or to improve their health quality, though they may not currently have any health problems. For instance, Erdinç explains his consumption of *Herbalife* products by saying that “You are healthy now, but it is not definite how you will be after 20, 30 or 50 years later. The purpose of this is making forward-looking investments in your body. That is why I am

using the products.”⁴ Therefore, the possibility of becoming sick in the future and staying healthy legitimatizes their consumption.

As one of my interviewees who is a direct selling consultant states, “There is not anyone doing this job without consuming the products. If there is, this is an exception because this is not recommended. It is a matter of ‘be a product of product’ or ‘living testimonial’.”⁵ Therefore, I will explain how consumption practices are integrated to the labor process by taking all *Herbalife* members who consume the products into consideration. Furthermore, the consumer’s body occupies a significant space in the labor process in relation to the consumption practices since *Herbalife* sells internal and outer nutritional supplements and weight management products which aim directly at transforming consumer’s body. I will also discuss how bodies of the direct sellers are a part of the labor process in relation to the consumption practices.

3.1.1. Productive Consumption

Cahn (2008) indicates that “Multilevel marketing, consistent with its roots in neoliberal capitalism, celebrates consumption and effaces production. [...] Even the work of multilevel marketing (MLM) downplays physical labor by reducing the business plan to an outgrowth of consumption” (p. 431). Cahn’s argument is right on the one hand because MLM is predicated on selling certain types of products to customers and creating a consumer-seller network out of such practices. On the other hand, the emphasis on creating a consumer network in MLM does not necessitate destroying production since production under the current capitalism is not restricted to factory production which requires physical labor. Rather, MLM creates a new production pattern out of such a networked consumption.

⁴ Interview with Erdinç (Male, 30, İzmir).

⁵ Interview with a direct selling consultant (Male, early 50s, İstanbul).

By looking at the activities of consumption in *Herbalife*, the practices of consumption and production become inseparable because consumption in itself turns into a productive act. Lazzarato (1996) explains that “the consumer is no longer limited to consuming commodities (destroying them in the act of consumption). On the contrary, his or her consumption should be productive in accordance to the necessary conditions and the new products” (p. 140). Confirming Lazzarato’s argument on consumption, consumption is not an outcome in the case of MLM as well since consumer-sellers of DSOs do not destroy the products via consuming; rather they turn their consumption into a productive act by producing certain discourses to sell the products or even by reproducing their bodies as in the case of *Herbalife*. That is why I will take consumption as a starting point to discuss the labor process.

Also as Baudrillard (1998) argues, once consumption is considered in relation to production, consumption is “like all material production, not an individual function, but an immediately and totally collective one” (p. 78). This collectivity emerging out of consumption practices is obviously seen in network DSOs since their grounding aim is networking consumers. Beyond creating networked consumers, *Herbalife* distributors literally consume the products collectively in wellness centers, nutrition clubs or homes. The owner of the center or home invites his/her downline distributors and potential customers to the center to give information about the products and teach new customers how to use the products. They organize breakfasts and skin care parties, which makes it easier for new customers to use the products. They organize a weeklong session, which also ensure gaining continuity for new customers.

Consequentially, this collectivity of consumption practices results in new relationalities among different agents including distributors, consumers and the company which produces bodies and discourses on healthy living. This process paves the way for selling and recruiting practices that I will explain later in this chapter. Now, I will

elucidate discourses and bodies as products emerging from the consumption practices in *Herbalife*.

3.1.2. Discourses on Health

Herbalife distributors produce a shared body of knowledge emerging out of the consumption practices. Although they gain knowledge about health and the products in regular company meetings and seminars through company provided videos and speeches of guest speakers, they also contribute to such discourses by reproducing and releasing them in circulation. Distributors share a body of knowledge about the products, their effects on one's body and why customers need to use the products to become healthy in nutrition clubs, company meetings or face to face meetings with customers. This collective reproduction of discourses results in "gradual homogenization of knowledge and beliefs about the product, natural products in general, and the causes of health and diseases" according to Dixon (2003, p. 185). Eventually, they believe the power of the products in terms of making people healthy, and keep consuming them.

In order to demonstrate why customers need *Herbalife* to become and stay healthy, they describe the world as a risky place. Fulya explains why *Herbalife* is the sole remedy to become healthy in today's risky world by saying that:

A person who says no today says yes tomorrow because make sure that there is no other choice. It is the case in Turkey and in the world as well. Look, we live in Urla. It is not possible to produce healthy food even in Urla because seeds are not good, soil is not good, water is not good, and even the rain is not good anymore.⁶

Relying on what she says in terms of the impossibility of producing nutritious food, they legitimize their consumption of the products.

⁶ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

In order to strengthen their argument, they also refer to scientific studies. Sevcan states that “I can observe the stages of deterioration of nutrition today or 10 years ago. I do not know whether you are aware of this or not. Foods are changed. I am not saying this. Science is saying this.”⁷ By referring to a scientific study, she shows a table which constitutes gradual changes in nutritional values of foods to convince people that they do not take enough nutrition from what they eat. She continues her speech by saying that:

Herbalife shake gives us exact amount of nutritional value as it should be daily. We are drinking a couple of glasses of milk but I wonder whether we can get calcium. Or, I do not know whether I can get exact amount when I eat some cheese, but scientists clearly state that I get exact amount of calcium at a meal when I drink a glass of *Herbalife* shake.⁸

As it is not possible to produce nutritious food due to environmental degradation and low-quality industrial agriculture, we do not get enough nutrition from foods that are produced in such a risky world. On the other hand, *Herbalife* products give sufficient amount of nutrition since the products are scientifically produced at best quality for one’s health.

Nalan even takes the issue of malnutrition or poor nutrition a step further by saying that:

Intolerance of people against each other is the result of malnutrition. All people are negative but they think positively when they get good nutrition. There will be no war neither between siblings nor between families. There is no need to die to see heaven. You will experience heaven while you are living.⁹

According to her statement, adequate and balanced nutrition have the power not only to transform people’s bodies, but also to create a better world. Her sole remedy for good

⁷ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy meeting – Sevcan (Female, 34, İstanbul).

⁸ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy meeting – Sevcan (Female, 34, İstanbul).

⁹ Interview with Nalan (Female, early 50s, İzmir).

nutrition is also *Herbalife* products which have the potential to make the world a better place.

Another issue is the creation of “panic bodies” or “risky bodies” which means panicking over one’s body all the time due to possible risks of being sick. In such a risky world, panicking over one’s body becomes an inevitable outcome, and paves the way for the creation of panic bodies. One of the concerns of biopolitics¹⁰ is now “the assessment and government of this risk, and the maintenance and optimization of the healthy body” (Rose, 2007, p. 10). Self-management and maintenance of a healthy body requires different consumption practices such as using medicines, nutritional supplements or alternative medicines.

In one of the meetings organized by a group of distributors that I attended in İzmir in 2014, the representative showed a picture of two women, the same age. One looks considerably younger than the other. Then, she said that “We want healthy aging.” One of them also said, by supporting this argument, that “I’m a healthy person, but I am using *Herbalife* since I do not want to get sick.” Discourses like turning one’s body into a risky body helps to increase the consumption of *Herbalife* products. Confirming Rose’s argument (2007), these findings clearly demonstrate that the exercise of power extended its scope over bodies by creating “pre-patients”.

Consumers become responsible in terms of being healthy people and taking necessary measures to prevent possible illnesses. Since people are responsible for their own health and have to acquaint themselves with useful knowledge about healthy life in

¹⁰ Here, biopolitics is used based on Foucault’s conceptualization. Biopolitics emerged as new technology of power which is exerted over a population with regard to operation of biopower which takes the population as the object of power. In other words, biopower operates in a way that manages a population’s health, birth rate, life expectancy and so on (Foucault, 1978, pp. 135-143). Politics becomes a matter of biology – life itself and began to interest the issues of fertility, mortality, birth control, health and so on in order to regulate population and make it predictable. Through this way, politics and power took a material form in the shape of bodies. The main concern is about the regulation of life itself, to make sure that no bodies are wasted and the population survives without creating any burden on the economy.

general, “they now become consumers who actively use a medicine, biosciences, pharmaceuticals, and ‘alternative medicine’ in order to maximize and enhance their own vitality” (Rose, 2007, p. 23). *Herbalife* distributors choose to consume *Herbalife* products as nutritional supplements to prevent possible illnesses and stay healthy.

Distributors’ consumption of the products produces information about products in terms of why we need them. Lazzarato (1996) argues that consumption is primarily related to consuming information because it is a social process which begins with communication (p. 140). By way of consuming information about the products in multiple social settings in which distributors gather with potential customers, they believe that *Herbalife* products are the only remedy for staying or reaching a healthy body. Through consumption, they reproduce these discourses and release into circulation via communicating with people, which eventually leads to increased consumption of the products as well.

3.1.3. Body as a Product of Products

Once a distributor begins to use the *Herbalife* products, his or her body becomes a product of the products. Shugart (2010) indicates that “The body functions as (and is a function of) materiality and discourse. That is, it is both materially compelled by as well as compelling of discourse, and it is simultaneously discursively compelled by and compelling of its materiality” (p. 123). By taking into consideration what she argues, the bodies of *Herbalife* distributors materialized through discourses on health. Also, their bodies as products of consumption practices serve for reconstitution of certain discourses.

As an “unfinished project, the body is not a closed and sealed entity, but a relational 'thing' that is created, bounded, sustained” (Harvey, 1998, p. 402). In other words, the body is constantly reproducing itself since it is subjected to specific discourses and practices. In relation to the consumption practices, the distributors’ bodies turn into

bearers of signs and signifiers of meanings that are collectively created through the discourse on the healthy body emerging out of the organizational culture of *Herbalife*. Therefore, laborers not only sell their physical labor but also their embodiment of specific symbolic images or messages in the case of direct selling (Lan, 2001, p. 88). Consequently, distributor's bodies embodied with these symbolic meanings also serve as a space like a corporation's advertisement board, which also enables corporations to reduce their advertisement costs.

In relation to embodiment of symbolic images, “the sign-bearing, sign-wearing body is also a producer of signs which are physically marked by the relationship to the body” (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 192). Sevcan, for example, states that:

I am sure that many male friends here want to shape their bodies such as having well rounded body, getting six-pack abs and having legs like Ronaldo. Dear friends, you will have spectacular muscles and an incredible body shape if you consume the products properly.¹¹

Through consuming *Herbalife*, one can have a perfectly shaped body with a balanced muscle and fat ratio. This kind of body for them becomes a signifier of a healthy body.

Furthermore, bodily testimonials of the distributors are also the products emerging out consumption practices. *Herbalife* distributors use the company products; however, they do not choose some of the supplements to meet the specific nutritional deficit in their bodies. The organizational culture of *Herbalife* rather encourages distributors to use all of its products even if their concern is just to lose or gain weight because *Herbalife* provides people a healthy way of living, thus distributors need these products to reach a healthy life. Though it is not compulsory to consume all the products, most of the distributors try to use as many of the products as possible to acquire bodily testimonials.

¹¹ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy meeting – Sevcan (Female, 34, İstanbul).

In this manner, they are able to tell other people the benefits of the products associated with their testimonies because it is hard to recommend the products without using them as the participants of this research testified during interviews.

Reproduction of distributors' bodies in relation to certain discourses and consumption practices is also related to seeing the body as a space in which power operates, relying on what Foucault (1995) wrote:

Political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination; but, on the other hand, its constitution as labor power is possible only if it is caught up in a system of subjection (in which need is also a political instrument meticulously prepared, calculated and used); the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body (pp. 25-26).

Therefore, network DSOs that especially sell cosmetics and nutritional supplements turn one's body into both a productive sales force as the distributors' bodies become the bearers of certain signs and also subject the body to a company's discourse like a healthy body and a risky body in the case of *Herbalife*. Power operates in the distributors' bodies, which helps them to transform their risky bodies into healthy bodies by consuming *Herbalife* products.

3.2. Advertise the Company Products and Brand Your Lifestyle

The second stage of the labor process is advertising or 'wearing' as the company calls it. Although network DSOs publish advertisements to promote their companies and commodities, they do not allocate substantial amount of money from the budget for advertising unlike other companies that sell their products in stores. Distributors as consumers who I interviewed also have another title in network marketing. That is, they

are also advertisers of the companies, “promoting them through speech acts, carrying company folders and product samples, DVDs, and magazines, as well as their ‘professional’ attire and demeanor” (Preston – Werner, 2007, p. 23). Since they consider distributorship as their own businesses, they promote the company products themselves to enhance their businesses by using different advertisement channels. Consequently, not only companies’ advertisement costs decrease but also distributors increase their sales volume via self-promoting labor force.

Distributors use multiple channels to reach potential customers and to attract their attention. First of all, they use classic methods to find customers. For instance, some of the distributors open a stand to reach more people and invite them to make free body analysis to estimate their body weight, body fat, body water, visceral fat, basal metabolic rate, metabolic age, physique rating and bone mass. According to the results of the analysis, they offer a special *Herbalife* nutrition program based on requirements of their bodies. Moreover, some of the distributors distribute brochures which include several slogans, information about free body analysis, and the address of their *nutrition clubs* or *wellness centers*.

Besides these classic methods, ‘wearing’ constitutes their main commercial activity. On the one hand, ‘wearing’ basically refers to wearing badges, t-shirts and bags or using glasses and water bottles that carries a *Herbalife* logo on them. On the other hand, I argue that ‘wearing’ moves beyond its potential meaning in the current digital society. That is, ‘wearing’ also refers to the activities of *Herbalife* distributors on the digital space which include their *Herbalife* related shares via their social media profiles. Therefore, I will take these two complementary activities into consideration while analyzing how *Herbalife* distributors advertise the company products to increase their sales volume, and how they concurrently try to create a brand out of their life styles.

3.2.1. Wearing

The easiest way of advertising is carrying a company logo. As *Herbalife* distributors purchase the products, they also buy several promotional materials from the company like badges, t-shirts, bags, glasses, water bottles, pens and notebooks that carry the company logo or slogans on them. Since the distributors supposedly try to grow their own businesses, they have to pay for promotional materials. Thus, the company also gain profits through selling promotional materials to the distributors.

Fulya explains why she wears *Herbalife* clothes by saying that “For example, there is always *Herbalife* on our clothes. I always wear *Herbalife* clothing. Some of my friends say to me that why you always wear *Herbalife* outfit but I always profit from wearing *Herbalife* clothing because people ask me when they saw it.”¹² Therefore, as Fulya stated, it is the first step to get a chance to talk other people because it enables people to make contact with customers, instead of using personal effort to talk to people. One of my interviewees also met *Herbalife* through a company logo that he saw on a distributor. Since he asked about *Herbalife*, the distributor invited him to a meeting to learn *Herbalife* products and business opportunity.

Some of these slogans that are written on promotional materials are ‘Lose Weight Now, Ask Me How’, ‘Ask About My 3 Day Weight Loss Trial’, ‘Improve Your Skin Quickly, Ask About My 7 Day Kit’, ‘Did You Have a Shake Today?’ and ‘Ask Me Why I Love My Job’. As it is obviously seen, most of the slogans use the phrase of ‘ask me’, which aims opening a space for communication with potential customers. They expect other people to make a contact with them. Through this way, they do not seem to be pushy and obnoxious on talking people about *Herbalife* and selling the products.

¹² Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

3.2.2. Sharing

As a second point for advertising, social media tools are highly used by both network DSOs and distributors in spite of their appropriation of face-to-face selling methods. They use such tools for various purposes. Based on L. Ferrell and O. Ferrell's research (2012), DSOs mostly use social media platforms as instruments to reach and communicate with their direct sellers and consumers. From the perspective of companies, social media enhances their communication with both customers and distributors. Also, they promote their companies and products via social media channels. Since my focus is on the labor process, I will elaborate the activities of distributors on social media as generating value for the companies.

Most of the *Herbalife* distributors use their social media accounts – especially Facebook and Instagram profiles – as a space in which they can promote the company products as well as their lifestyle as a member of the company in order to enlarge their business and consumer networks, and increase their sales volume. They represent themselves as *wellness coaches* or *Herbalife nutrition consultants*, and leave their contact information on their profiles. Their shares on social media can be divided into three different categories including product results (before-after photos), useful information about healthy way of living and promotions of the company, and photos from their daily lives.

First of all, the distributors post photos to demonstrate their bodily changes after using the products. “The improvement in a distributor's skin, health, figure, or sense of style serves as the best advertisement for DSO products such as skincare, vitamin, dieting products, or makeup” (Lan, 2002, p. 172). Therefore, *Herbalife* distributors need to display their own bodies via social media tools as a way of advertising. Since the distributors use the products and acquire positive bodily testimonials, they want to

demonstrate their changes in their bodies through sharing mostly exhibitionist before and after photos. This is especially the case when there is visible signs such as weight loss or gain, improvements in skin, increase in muscle rating, which explicitly show that the consumer's body has changed and become healthier after using *Herbalife* products. They do not only share their own body images but also their clients' body images as well in order to clarify how much they are good at coaching in terms of nutrition and wellness.

Related with the above discussion, they also show short term effects of the products on their bodies. For instance, they have periodical activities like '21 Day Shake Challenge'. Throughout 21 days, they drink *Herbalife* shake instead of having two meals and eat healthy food for the third meal. Before starting the program, they share their current body images and detailed body sizes. During these 21 days, they share photos of what they eat. After the challenge finishes, they share 'after challenge photos' in order to demonstrate what changed in their bodies and body sizes. Based on this challenge, they clearly demonstrate potential customers that they can achieve healthy bodies even in a very short period of time.

As another content of sharing, their informative posts can be elaborated. They share useful information about healthy way of living, announce promotions of the company and even some caricatures targeting obese body. In order to sell the products, the distributors also need to give information about why we need *Herbalife* and what our bodies need in terms of nutrition to become healthy. Thus, they post key information including human's daily need of vitamins, proteins and minerals, how much water should one drink in a day, what one can eat to have healthy nutrition, how one can balance blood sugar, benefits of exercising on people's body and so on. These informative posts set the agenda of them and their followers as healthy life and healthy diet. To reach such goals, they address *Herbalife* products.

Moreover, the distributors share photos that clearly demonstrate their lifestyles. “The company and its products project an image, the promise of a lifestyle that gives distributors the chance to create a new identity” (Dixon, 2003, p. 112). Accordingly, the distributors’ entire life actually become products as their body. Therefore, they need to display their constructed life styles via social media in order to corroborate how being *Herbalife* distributors transform their lives. They share photos from daily routines while they are having a meal or doing sports to the company activities such as meetings, seminars and holidays. On their posts, they always put an emphasis on how much they love their jobs, and extend their thanks to the company and their sponsors. That is, they not only advertise the products, but also their lifestyles, which enables them to attract other people’s attention from multiple ways.

3.3. Talk to Sell, Talk to Recruit: Tell a Marketable Story

‘Talking’ is the last step in the labor process that will be discussed in this chapter. After consuming and advertising the products, the distributors need to talk people who are considered as potential consumers and distributors of the products. Gizem remarks how she is doing her job by saying that: “I am living my job by providing health and telling healthy life to people with the help of health quality coming with good nutrition.”¹³ Fulya also states that “Although I am not qualified for anything, so many people’s lives changed by way of telling people the benefits of the products that I experienced – just by doing this because I do not produce them.”¹⁴ Though talking about a healthy life which is a result of *Herbalife* products and benefits of the products is not the only activity in the labor process, it constitutes a significant part of the labor process with regard to selling and recruiting practices.

¹³ Interview with Gizem (Female, 59, İstanbul).

¹⁴ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

The previous two steps – consuming and advertising that are discussed above enable the sellers to create marketable stories. *Herbalife* distributors not only sell the products but also their stories. Each *Herbalife* distributor try to create his/her own marketable story associated with bodily testimonials about the products and their changing life styles in terms of healthy living. However, it should be noted that ‘talking’ refers to two different activities including talking to sell and talking to recruit. Although, sales and recruitment requiere different contents of speech, both are helpful to sell their marketable stories to potential customers. This generated narrative can be considered as one of the commodities produced through labor of direct sellers, which helps them expand their organization. Now, I will elucidate talking and storytelling practices of the distributors.

3.3.1. Talk to Sell

Herbalife distributors derive income from multiple sources such as retail income, organizational bonuses, royalty income or qualifying for events and holidays. Retail income is the main earning of the distributors coming with selling the products to customers. Since the distributors gain 25% to 50% discount on the prices depending on their status level as an independent contractor in *Herbalife*, they make profits from selling the products based on their sales volume and discount rate. Therefore, they need to create a consumer network to sell the products by way of talking.

In the first stage, they transform their already existing networks which consist of their family members and friends into a consumer network. Then, they try to reach other customers through advertising practices that I mentioned previously. Thus, the act of selling paves the way for the commercialization of their social and kin relations. In order to avoid emotional burden of selling to friends and family members, Lan (2002) argues that they personalize sales through transforming act of selling into act of believing. They

believe that they share good things with good friends since they just recommend their friends and relatives to use the products which they already used and got good results. Therefore, as Gabbay and Leenders (2003) note, they replace the word of selling with other words like “teaching”, “sharing”, “helping” and “caring”.

During the meetings that I attended and in my interviews, the distributors frequently mentioned such words in their speeches. Fulya, for instance, says “If your badge or status increase, you should know that the number of people you have helped is high. These people truly believe in the products. They are using the products and get a favorable result from the products.”¹⁵ What she says is one of the statements that corresponds well to how they replace the word of selling with other words. They believe that advancing in the career is possible through helping other people or even humanity in general as Selin says; “You are doing something useful to people. You serve humanity. This is important for me. You become happy when you see changes after people use the products.”¹⁶

Since selling the products requires talking, contents of speech for selling practices is mostly informative like their informative social media posts. Since they “built a lifestyle that allayed their fears of aging, infection by germs, and unhealthy food even as they achieved success through selling products to people who shared those concerns” (Dixon, 2003, p. 140). Therefore, they talk about their concerns related with malnutrition and unhealthy lifestyle based on discourses emerging out consumption practices.

Also, they sell the products with their bodily testimonials that they acquire after consuming the products. Yasin told how he sell the products by saying that “if you ask me how I sell the products, it is easy for me. I sell through my result. This is me 4 years

¹⁵ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

¹⁶ Interview with Selin (Female, early 30s, İstanbul).

ago. This is my daughter. This is our current state. (While speaking, he shows their photos on the wall) It becomes more effective when they see the photos.”¹⁷ Like their before-after posts on social media, they hang photos on walls or screen photos with a projection in their nutrition clubs. As he said, seeing bodily transformations via before and after photos helps them to create a trust relation with the customer because visible changes that are seen in the photos help them to persuade people more easily. While showing photos, they talk about how their bodies changed and how they felt before and after using the products.

After selling the products to customers, they stay in touch with their counselees as their wellness coaches or nutrition consultants in order to maintain continuity of their consumption. They call their counselees or message each other in everyday, which helps them to monitor their consumption, motivate them to use the products, and appreciate their successes as they begin to transform their bodies. Establishing this kind of relation with counselees is significant because as Ömer says “a person who gets product results, feels good and whom you monitor well gives a fortune because he/she knows other people”.¹⁸ Therefore, their job does not finish after selling the products since product results of their counselees help them to reach other potential customers and construct their downlines.

3.3.2. Talk to Recruit

‘Talking’ also serves for the distributors’ recruitment practices. They need to recruit other people as their downlines in order to expand their business, so that they can get organizational and royalty bonuses from the company. Although they can raise their income through increasing their sales volume, it is easier to earn higher income by way of expanding their networks. As one of the speakers in *Herbalife* Taksim meeting that I

¹⁷ Interview with Yasin (Male, 50, İstanbul).

¹⁸ Interview with Ömer (Male, 30, İstanbul).

attended says, “We have a simple logic. Our job is to unite 1% effort of 100 people instead of 100% effort of a single person.”¹⁹ However, expanding the labor force of your business and controlling them is not an easy task that cannot be explained by 1% effort. I argue that the distributor’s effort exerted to this job does not diminish as the speaker tells because he/she has to reach certain amount of sales volume and also control his/her labor force at the same time. After the distributors’ business network enlarges, they gain new responsibilities instead of experiencing decrease in their efforts for this job.

As the distributors replace the word of selling with alternative ones, they also use other words for recruitment. “Alternative phrases for recruiting are ‘duplication’, ‘replication’, ‘sponsoring’, ‘showing the plan’, ‘giving them a chance’, or ‘offering them an opportunity’” (Gabbay & Leenders, 2003, p. 525). Using such alternative phrases give new meanings to a business activity by reconstructing it into a more friendship based activity because they already transform their social relations into commercial relations in the first stages.

When I asked Fulya how she became successful in *Herbalife*, she says that “frankly, I always spoke with my friends and people whom I love from morning till night. [...] There is such a work. There is serious unemployment in Turkey. Do this job. [...] I mean use the opportunity. This is an opportunity.”²⁰ As it can be seen, the motto of ‘sharing good things with good friends’ is strongly emphasized in a similar way to selling activities. In relation with this, declaring *Herbalife* distributorship as an opportunity give all responsibility to potential distributors because it is their choice whether they become a distributor or not and whether they reach healthy and wealthy life or not.

For recruitment, they use their consumer pool which is created through the act of selling. Since they begin to create a consumer network through selling the products, they

¹⁹ Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Hasan (Male, 46, İstanbul).

²⁰ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

transform their consumer network into a business network by sharing business opportunity with faithful customers. Lan (2002) made an argument that people are prone to recruit strangers to overcome personality risk (damaging their friendships with close friends or relatives). However, people that I interviewed recruit acquaintances at first stage, and they did not mention personality risk as Lan argued. Then, of course, they need strangers to recruit to extend their network. Even, they have downlines that they never meet because people in their network get out of control at later stages.

In the recruitment process, *Herbalife* has recently developed a new discourse that is called ‘Goodness ambassador’ (*İyilik elçisi*). Relying on this discourse, people become a distributor if they help two people (sell them products or introduce them to the company). Through this way, they already have two potential consumers when they become a distributor, which makes their downline construction easier. By this way, they *gain the right* to be a distributor as goodness ambassadors since they conduce to transform someone’s life, and get 25% discount on the prices from the company. Indeed, anyone who wants to be a distributor can be affiliated to the company. However, through this way, being a member of the company is demonstrated as vested rights of goodness ambassadors.

3.3.3. Storytelling

Herbalife distributors set their marketable stories based on a grand narrative which is the story of the founder of *Herbalife*, namely Mark Hughes. The foundation of the company is based on his personal tragic experiences associated with his mother, and eventually turns into a success story by distributing health and wealth into people’s lives. His story is known and told by every *Herbalife* distributor, and they also try to create their own salvation stories based on a similar structure that passes from tragedy or sadness to success and happiness. Such marketable stories consist before and after situation which

is similar to the photos in order to demonstrate how their lives, feelings, bodies and relationships changed after *Herbalife* come into their lives.

Although these tragic or sad situations differ depending on the distributors' personal experiences, being overweight or experiencing economic trouble constitutes common points in most stories since they become a part of *Herbalife* to gain both health and wealth. For instance, economic crisis in 2001 was a turning point for some of the people who are *Herbalife* distributors in Turkey during the last 15 years. In a meeting in Kadıköy, Zafer who is in a millionaire team stated that:

We lost everything in 2001 crisis. However, we pay all our debts in 4 years by virtue of this job. While I am in a situation in which I do not buy a house to my daughter, I send my daughter to Bilgi University which is one of the three most expensive schools in Turkey thanks to this job. Now, we reside in a mansion in Kanlıca which is the most privileged neighborhood in Istanbul.²¹

Similar to the grant story's structure, he mentioned a trouble in his life, and declared *Herbalife* business opportunity for salvation. Also, branding his current life style coming with *Herbalife* business opportunity, he tried to sell his story to listeners.

Storytelling occupies a prominent space both in direct encounters between direct sellers and customers, and in the company meetings. In the meetings, the distributors place a great emphasis on storytelling. Each speaker who either talk about the company profile or introduce the company products shortly tell his/her story in the beginning, and also give some details about his/her *Herbalife* story during his/her speech. During the meeting, the organization team invite current distributors to the stage to share their successes in terms of product results and their incomes. Moreover, in every company

²¹ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy meeting – Zafer (Male, early 60s, İstanbul).

meeting, there is a guest speaker who tell his/her success story at the end of the meetings, which takes about an hour.

In Taksim meeting, for example, Gizem announced the guest speaker by saying that: “At the end of the day, you will hear a great story here. If you leave here without listening this story, you are unfair to yourself.”²² Listening such stories at the end of the meeting is important because they leave a last impression on customers who will decide whether they use the products or not after the meeting. ‘Being unfair to oneself’ is a key phrase since one will miss the opportunity of being healthy and wealthy if he/she does not listen such stories. The speakers usually make an analogy by way of saying that “I was acquainted with Herbalife in the meeting like you”. Through this way, they also put an emphasis on guests’ decisions after the meeting since they gain a chance to acquire a way of life which is similar to the speakers’ lives.

The company organize seminars for current distributors in order to give clues about how they improve their business. In these seminars, there are also guest speakers who talk about how they succeed in improving their business. When I asked about what they are doing in the seminars, Ogün says that “We are actually going to the seminars to listen a story because each speaker has very different stories. It is beneficial even if we learn a single aspect from each story and each speaker. Even a single sentence can change your life”.²³ Each story has potential to affect someone in different ways. Listeners try to find a common ground between the storyteller and themselves, which affects their decision in terms of using the products, being a distributor or creating their business plan because they see storytellers as a role model who succeed in this job.

²² Interview with Gizem (Female, 59, İstanbul).

²³ Interview with Ogün (Male, 25, İstanbul).

Altan who came from Antalya to Kadıköy meeting as a guest speaker mentioned how the stories he listened affected his decision to become a distributor:

The main aspects that influenced me was stories. A housewife got on the stage, and said that she earn 4.000 Turkish Liras monthly and talked about the countries that she visited. If a housewife can do this, I said I can do ten times more. I got angry after seeing this, and I started this job with this anger. In the last section, a business man got on the stage, and said that “I closed four operations and do this job as sole job and sole income”. What I think is that it is a job as simple as a housewife or a student can do, and as prestigious as a businessman can do.²⁴

Listening such stories also enables listeners to make comparison with the storyteller in terms of lifestyle, health quality and income. If listeners realize that they want a life similar to that story, they motivate themselves to use the products and do this job since they believe that reaching this kind of life is possible through passing the same steps that the storyteller took.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter elaborated the labor process in network DSOs by specifically focusing on *Herbalife* Company. Considering what is discussed in this chapter, it is clear that labor process in network direct selling does not only comprise selling activities as it is evoked by its name. On the other hand, the labor process in network DSOs exceeds selling activities by giving other titles to their works. That is, the distributors of Herbalife acquire the status of consumers, advertisers and recruiters as well besides being direct sellers of the company.

²⁴ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy Meeting – Altan (Male, 22, Antalya).

First of all, they become consumers of the company in order to be able to sell the products. After acquiring bodily testimonials of the products, they need to advertise the products and their life style associated with discourses emerging out consumption practices. Through advertisement, they reach prospective customers and sell the products as a way of earning income. Then, they also become recruiters in order to enlarge their downline organizations so that they can get bonuses from the company and increase their income.

These different activities that are described in this chapter are not exclusive from one another. Rather, they interpenetrate with each other during the labor process. That is, the labor process in network marketing is organized through intertwining of consuming, advertising, selling and recruiting practices. Since these activities are not fixed and bounded by strict rules, they can differ from one distributor to another in terms of contents of the activities. Therefore, I explain the labor process based on similar patterns that I observe during my research.

Lastly, the labor process in network DSOs is not organized in certain working places and does not take place in a fixed labor time. By looking at the practices of consuming, advertising, selling and recruiting, it should be noted that the labor process is diffused entire lives and social relations of the distributors. This conception of employment practices creates a situation that Hardt and Negri (2000) describe well by arguing that:

On the one hand, the relations of capitalist exploitation are expanding everywhere, not limited to the factory but tending to occupy the entire social terrain. On the other hand, social relations completely invest the relations of production, making impossible any externality between social production and economic production (p. 209).

Confirming this argument, this chapter showed how Herbalife distributors' reproduction of their bodies, lives and social relations become a part of their labor process and a site for its exploitation by capital.



CHAPTER 4

FORMATION OF SUBJECTIVITY

As multiple practices of *Herbalife* distributors are integrated into an expanded capital accumulation process, production of their subjectivities as an agent of spreading the company's commercial objectives and organizational culture is a significant process. The importance of the formation of distributors' subjectivities stems from the fact that production in network DSOs is also the production of bodies, social relations, discourses, and basically, life itself. Hence, subjectivity is the "raw material" of their labor (Lazzarato, 1996, p. 142), which enables the company to invade the distributors' lives to generate an economic value.

'Subject' refers to the idea that "the self is not a separate and isolated entity, but one that operates at the intersection of general truths and shared principles" (Mansfield, 2000, p. 3). In other words, using the word 'subject' establishes a link between the self and outside of the self such as different ideas, practices and other subjects. Relying on Foucault's (1982) analysis on subject and power, the notion of subjectivity is used in this thesis as something that constitutes itself historically through practices and techniques, which indicates that it is not fully self-created. Also, it constitutes itself in specific ways at any given time because techniques and practices vary historically. That is, the way individuals constitute themselves changes in relation to the operation of power and truth at that time. Therefore, associated with selling, consuming, advertising and recruiting practices in the labor process, and different forms of labor control, *Herbalife* distributors reconstitute their subjectivities after involving in *Herbalife*.

Subjectivity as the "raw material" of distributors' labor (Lazzarato, 1996) is reproduced in line with the company's overriding profit motives, and utilized as a mechanism for labor control as well in order to maintain economic relations with the

distributors. In relation to this, “the production of subjectivity [...] becomes directly productive, because the goal of our postindustrial society is to construct the consumer/communicator — and to construct it as ‘active’.” (*ibid.*, p. 142). In the case of *Herbalife*, formation of distributors’ subjectivities reproduces subjects as sellers, consumers, advertisers as well as recruiters. This chapter focuses on how distributors reconstitute their subjectivities by taking into consideration how this process is in relation to broader concepts such as neoliberal governmentality.

4.1. Neoliberal Subjectivity

By providing the market with an opportunity to dominate various spheres of life (Polanyi, 2001) and leading to “the financialization of everything” (Harvey, 2006, p. 13), neoliberalism emerged as an antidote to crises of capitalism and a remedy for the reconstruction of the world economy after 1980s. Although it emerged an economic project, it is both a political project since it eliminates the institutions of welfare states and their redistributive mechanisms such as social insurance, public healthcare policies and public education (Centeno & Cohen, 2012) and a cultural project since it created a new socio-cultural space in which it produces new discourses. Drawing on Foucault’s analysis, Read (2009) explains the cultural project of neoliberalism by indicating that:

Foucault takes the neoliberal ideal to be a new regime of truth, and a new way in which people are made subjects: *homo economicus* is fundamentally different subject, structured by different motivations and governed by different principles, than *homo juridicus*, or the legal subject of the state. Neoliberalism constitutes a new mode of “governmentality,”²⁵ a manner, or a mentality, in which people are governed and govern themselves (pp. 28-29).

²⁵ “Foucault defines government as conduct, or, more precisely, as ‘the conduct of conduct’ and thus as a term that ranges from ‘governing the self’ to ‘governing others’” (Lemke, 2001, pp. 50-51). More clearly, “From the perspective of governmentality, government refers to a continuum, which extends from political

Considering a new regime of truth and set of practices provided by neoliberalism, neoliberal form of governmentality plays a crucial role in the formation of distributors' subjectivities because network DSOs incorporate the neoliberal ideal well into their system.

In neoliberalism whereby power is de-centered, individuals play an active role in their self-governing in favor of the market. In this form of governmentality, neoliberalism encourages people to give their lives a specific entrepreneurial form and turns them into subjects who assess cost and benefits of their own actions. Due to strong emphasis on the idea of individualization in neoliberal system, they are held the only responsible for their actions and mistakes as Rana says that "This is a job on our own responsibility."²⁶ This makes their exploitation by the capitalist organizations easier.

As subjects who "dedicate themselves to playing by the market rules" (Cahn, 2008, p. 447), they try to reach their imagined lives by carrying multiple practices.²⁷ In this section, formation of distributors' subjectivities in relation to the neoliberal ideal is discussed based on two points including how they invest themselves and how they struggle against obstacles in the process of reaching their imagined lives.

4.1.1. Investing Oneself

One of the prominent themes emerging out of my fieldwork in *Herbalife* is 'investing oneself'. Feride explains the importance of 'investing oneself' in this way: "We have given priority to personal development activities because you are together with people and there are various kinds of people. Therefore, you need to develop yourself in order to

government right through to forms of self-regulation namely 'technologies of the self' (*ibid.*, p. 59). Therefore; government cannot be reduced to repressive apparatuses, rather; it also creates indirect techniques that are internalized by individuals to control themselves and makes them responsible for every action that they take. This also minimizes the cost of the government in terms of manipulating and controlling people as well as constituting subjectivities which are in favor of government.

²⁶ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

²⁷ See Chapter 3 for the practices that are undertaken by *Herbalife* distributors.

understand them. You need to change yourself first.”²⁸ Personal development happens through seminars and workshops organized by the company in which successful direct sellers talk about business development, effective ways of communicating and positive thinking skills, and doctors working for the company give basic information about how *Herbalife* products effect one’s body.

Herbalife distributors enthusiastically attend the seminars and training workshops organized by the company, even though they need to pay a certain amount of money to attend some of these workshops. When I asked Yasin what he thinks about this policy of the company, he says that:

When we first started, for example, they said that there is training in Antalya, and if you come there, you earn more money. [...] There is no money in my pocket, I received loan and went to training in Antalya. My wife was very much against it. To make money you have to make an investment first [...] but the best part of the investment is doing it to yourself, not making it to a building.²⁹

According to his statement, he has taken the responsibility of his job by making necessary investments to grow his business. Now, he is quite happy about taking this risk at that time because he is financially better off now.

When I was talking about the same issue with a young couple, Sila said that: “We pay money but we see it as an investment in our work and ourselves because we do not only learn things related to work in these seminars but also there is personal development side of the seminars.”³⁰ Then, Oğün added as a complement to Sila’s argument that: “You will never be afraid of investing yourself in *Herbalife* because that investment is somehow returning to you. You are receiving a recompense for your investment. Thanks to the

²⁸ Interview with Feride (Female, 45, İzmir).

²⁹ Interview with Yasin (Male, 50, İstanbul).

³⁰ Interview with Sila (Female, 22, İstanbul).

information you learned, that investment returns to you better.”³¹ Hence, they consider attending to those seminars and workshops not only as business development, but also as acquiring certain skills that would be helpful them in their personal lives or for other future career possibilities.

Furthermore, making investment to oneself is not only for acquiring marketing and leadership skills, and learning healthy way of living with consuming *Herbalife* products to enhance their businesses or to personal development in terms of learning effective ways to communicate potential customers and being role models to their downlines. On the other hand, they also invest in their bodies by consuming the products.³² As neoliberal consumers who are actively involved in health consumption, they invest their bodies through taking good nutrition in order to increase their health or to eliminate possible health problems in the future.

4.1.2. Do not Give up the Fight

Another outstanding theme among *Herbalife* distributors demonstrating how they internalize the neoliberal ideal is that they ‘do not give up the fight’ when they face obstacles on the way to reaching their imagined lives. They talk about how they work hard relentlessly as a part of their stories, and advise new distributors to do the same in order to be successful. Since they believe that network marketing system is based on individual effort coupled with network cooperation, they try to use their individual effort to achieve their goals. They do not blame the network marketing system in the case of failure (Cahn, 2008) because they believe that their failure is the result of their inadequacy in communicating with customers, not allocating enough time and energy, and their

³¹ Interview with Ogün (Male, 25, İstanbul).

³² See Section 3.1. to find out how and why they consume the products in order to reach their imagined healthy lives.

ineffectiveness in advertising. Consequently, they stay in the system by motivating themselves and increasing their efforts to be successful.

In order to demonstrate the importance of deriving lessons from mistakes, Ömer says that “When you do not give up when you meet with an obstacle, [...] the time when you fight against this obstacle improves yourself after all.”³³ In relation to putting an individual effort in this business, Rana also states that:

You know that there are always ups and down in both one’s business life and personal life. However, make sure that you reach your goals very comfortably when you are able to be strong in the case of downs. Those who do not give up always win.³⁴

She establishes a relationship between challenges in personal life and business life. According to her statement, people should be strong in both cases by taking the responsibility of their failures because she believes that people can reach success sooner or later if they adopt this point of view. Hence, *Herbalife* distributors as self-employed entrepreneurs undertake both their success and failures, which makes stronger their belief in network marketing system as a business opportunity.

4.2. Making “Autonomous” Subjects

Internalizing the neoliberal ideal results in an illusion of being autonomous. Since DSOs reform direct sellers as independent contractors, business owners or consultants (Wilson, 1999), the idea of autonomy is prominent among *Herbalife* distributors as well. Kavak et al. (2007) argue that direct sellers are relatively autonomous compared to salespersons working in department stores because of exiguousness of control mechanism exercised by DSOs (p. 76). However, I argue that labor control is exercised through self-control and

³³ Interview with Ömer (Male, 30, İstanbul).

³⁴ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

network surveillance in network marketing.³⁵ In other words, the idea of autonomous subjects is not related to lower level of control mechanism. Rather; it is a result of the neoliberal form of governmentality which “governs without governing; that is, in order to function its subjects must have a great deal of freedom to act—to choose between competing strategies” (Read, 2009, p. 29).

Herbalife distributors consider themselves as autonomous subjects through establishing a link between autonomy and freedom provided by the act of direct selling. As freedom to act is carried out partially in DSOs, direct sellers rely on the idea of autonomy for multiple reasons. Oğün explains those reasons in this way:

The job is freedom in a word. First of all, you are the boss of your own work. In no way, you do not have to account for anything to anyone. There is no quota, lower limit or upper limit. You can completely determine the money you are going to earn.³⁶

The reasons mentioned by Oğün are valid in theoretical level since the organizational structure of network marketing is based on such ideas. Nevertheless, defining direct selling as freedom relying on those reasons disregards the multiple control mechanisms such as self-control and network control functioning without confuting distributors’ belief in their autonomy.

Furthermore, distributors mostly talk about how they are autonomous by comparing their current jobs to their previous jobs. Feride, for example, says that:

It is a free job that you do not work under someone. In this respect, it is very enjoyable. My previous job was also fine, but taking a vacation was a problem. I was alone. I spent 20 years between the four walls. There is always work in your

³⁵ See Chapter 5.

³⁶ Interview with Oğün (Male, 25, İstanbul).

mind even on holiday but there is no such thing in *Herbalife*. I mean you can do it everywhere. Therefore, the business part is also very enjoyable.³⁷

Distributors do not perceive direct selling as working, which stems from the fact that there is no four-walled workplace, and they can do direct selling everywhere. However, this perspective does not mask the activities undertaken in the labor process which requires integration of distributors' entire lives into the value generation process. In short, neoliberal governance operates in distributor's lives without governing, and by enabling them to feel autonomous.

4.3. Construction of a Desiring Labor Force

After discussing *Herbalife* distributors as neoliberal and "autonomous" subjects, I will focus on direct sellers as subjects who have desires in this section. Read (2009) argues that "As a mode of governmentality, neoliberalism operates on interests, desires, and aspirations rather than through rights and obligations" (p. 29). Network marketing working through the neoliberal ideal operate in direct sellers' desires as well. In the case of *Herbalife*, distributors are in pursuit of health and wealth. In other words, they dream about reaching a healthy and wealthy life by consuming the products and working in the company.

While Altan was saying that "You may have your pretexts, but throw your pretexts on aside. If you think your motives are really strong, then it is not even the case that you cannot succeed in this business"³⁸ during his speech in the meeting, he actually implied newcomers to think their imagined lives. Although people already desire health and wealth, *Herbalife* distributors' imagined lives are reshaped based on these two ideals. In

³⁷ Interview with Feride (Female, 45, İzmir).

³⁸ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy Meeting – Altan (Male, 22, Antalya).

Rana's words, "The company first gives health, then it gives wealth."³⁹ *Herbalife* incorporates such desires into its system by creating a desiring labor force.

Consumption as a part of the labor process is important for reaching their imagined lives. Consuming *Herbalife* products serves for both desires. Preston-Werner (2007) argues that direct sellers can raise their socio-economic status through consuming that brings them a professional identity (p. 23). Hence, distributors gain a professional identity as business owners by entering the labor process through consumption, and gain an opportunity to generate an income. Brooke Erin Duffy (2017) defines such consumption practices as "aspirational consumerism" which is "a projection of who the individual may become. The timeline for class mobility is therefore stretched out into an imagined future" (p. 23). *Herbalife* distributors' consumption of the products; therefore, serves their purpose of reaching healthy life at first and also raising their socio-economic status to live in higher standards.

By referring to the words of the founder of *Herbalife*, Rana well addressed how the distributors should focus on the imagined future in this way:

Make a struggle, be ambitious, and do not give up your decisions. It does not matter where we are right now as Mark Hughes, the founder of our company has said. What is important is where we will be in the future. Imagine, set the goal, and start as soon as possible.⁴⁰

Her statement indicates that staying focused on the future life that is imagined as healthy and wealthy makes the distributors successful. In addition to being neoliberal and "autonomous", making themselves as desiring subjects stands the company in good stead because the distributors work in a disciplined way to realize their dreams.

³⁹ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

⁴⁰ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

Distributors reach their desire for health easier than reaching a wealthy life because the company products targets to increase consumers' health. Associated with certain discourses to justify their consumption of the products⁴¹ and being neoliberal subjects who are responsible for their health, they use the products. Hasan explains the demand for well-being in this way:

Can you introduce a person who wants to feel wretched, be overweight, look ugly, be bald or unhealthy? The feeling of well-being creates a demand by itself. Dear friends, nobody wants to give up the feeling of well-being even in times of war. *Herbalife* is a fabulous proactive demand firm.⁴²

His statement demonstrates how the company succeed to integrate consumers desiring healthy life into its system.

The challenging part is reaching a wealthy life; however, it is easy to dream about. In the meetings I attended, the second parts were allocated to talk about wealth. Distributors earning money from the company – even if the amount of money they generate is 5 Turkish Liras – get on the stage, and talk about how much they earn from retail sales and organizational bonuses. Those with the least income start talking, and those earning the highest income talk at the end to create enthusiasm in the room. Hence, distributors who begin this job with the purpose of generating an income do not hesitate to declare their desire to wealth as Hamit said that:

One of my dreams and goals was a good and quality life. Of course you have to be healthy first in order to have a quality life. Secondly, it is necessary to have a good income. The income I had at that time was not enough to provide me a good life or the life I dream about. Hence, I was in search of better income. I have

⁴¹ See the section 3.1.2.

⁴² Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Hasan (Male, 46, İstanbul).

actually met the company with entirely emotional reasons – due to making money.⁴³

However, the aim of generating an income merges with the desire of being healthy as well.

Distributors' pursuit of wealth also arise from other desires such as traveling – mostly traveling around the world. Gizem; for instance, explained her purpose of doing this job by saying that:

After retirement, I was looking for \$1000 as an additional income because I love traveling and I like living comfortably. Actually, we did not generate low income. We already have a certain financial base but I wanted to spent money freely at my will.⁴⁴

As the company organizes some of its events and seminars such as “Kick Off” and “Extravaganza” in different countries, distributors grab a chance to see other countries or different cities in Turkey and stay in 5-star hotels if they are qualified to attend these events and pay the event fees. During those events, they participate opening and closing parties, special concerts organized for company distributors, and receive training from company doctors and high-level distributors. Hence, they somehow experience an upper-class lifestyle.

Before talking about his and his daughter's future dream of making a tour of Europe with a trailer, Yasin, for instance, explained this experience by saying that:

I was a sergeant for 23 years, and I have never entered through a 5-star hotel door.

I mean when I say holiday, it will be our cheap military camp. [...] In my mind,

⁴³ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy Meeting – Hamit (Male, early 40s, İstanbul).

⁴⁴ Interview with Gizem (Female, 59, İstanbul).

there was no such thing as spending money in a 5-star hotel, but now under favor of *Herbalife*, we have seen some life experiences.⁴⁵

Such experiences motivate distributors to work hard and earn more money. Since low-level distributors are not entitled to participate most of these events, upline distributors talk about their experiences in those seminars in order to motivate their network members as well.

Furthermore, Rana tells how she realized her husband's dream of traveling around the world:

One of the goals of my husband while supporting me is to take a holiday abroad because it is possible to have a holiday in a limited number of places with a civil servant salary. You cannot realize all your dreams [...] I worked hard to become entitled to get this holiday from the company and I gave a holiday gift on board to my husband. I have realized one of his dreams by working at this company.⁴⁶

Similar to Yasin's statement, Rana also talked about how they cannot afford all of their desired objects such as having a holiday on abroad. However, they are thankful for the company as providing these opportunities to them. They do not only realize their wishes, but they also support their families as Rana realizes one of her husband's dreams.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter investigates the ways in which *Herbalife* distributors form their subjectivities. I should note that the arguments in this chapter are raised based on active distributors' narratives and my observations during the meetings. Hence, formation of their subjectivities is in relation with their multiple practices conducted in the labor process, and their homogenized discourses on health and wealth. First, I argue that

⁴⁵ Interview with Yasin (Male, 50, İstanbul).

⁴⁶ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

distributors remake themselves as neoliberal subjects by internalizing the ideals of self-investment and struggling. Second, they consider themselves as “autonomous” subjects based on “flexible” work environment provided by the company. Lastly, they are desiring subjects who imagine a healthy and wealthy life.

All in all, making neoliberal, “autonomous” and desiring subjects is the “raw material” of their labor (Lazzarato, 1996, p. 142), which enables the exercise of different forms of labor control because as Hardt and Negri (2000) wrote that:

The exercise of discipline is absolutely immanent to the subjectivities under its command. In other words, discipline is not an external voice that dictates our practices from on high, overarching us, as Hobbes would say, but rather something like an inner compulsion indistinguishable from our will, immanent to and inseparable from our subjectivity itself” (p. 329).

Therefore, the following chapter delineates how Herbalife distributors – who adopt the neoliberal ideal, consider themselves as autonomous, and are in pursuit of health and wealth – are controlled in the labor process.

CHAPTER 5

LABOR CONTROL IN NETWORK MARKETING

You can rest assured that there is only one common ground at the heart of success stories: To really want, to work and to reach out to somebody.⁴⁷

Hilmi got on the stage where distributors tell their success stories to newcomers, and indicated three common aspects of all success stories mentioned in the quotation. Since he is a *Herbalife* distributor for sixteen years and a member of the millionaire team, he self-assuredly and pridefully said these words. How do labor force of the network DSOs adopt these three aspects in order to accomplish their goals? In other words, what are the mechanisms of labor control that mask the companies' overriding profit motives used in network DSOs?

Labor control generally refers to the ability of an employer to exert power over a workforce. However, provided with a new manner of work, labor control in network DSOs is exercised in a different way, compared to traditional employment practices that use repressive control mechanisms. Analyzing labor control enables us to see how laborers make sense of their work and they integrate their reconstructed subjectivities (explained in the chapter 4) into the labor process. Lan (2001) conceptualizes labor control, drawing on Foucault, "not merely as repressive violence that is related to capitalists' economic power, but as a productive and discursive exercise to produce workers as appropriated subjects" (p. 85). She also draws this idea of labor control based on Foucault's conceptualization of power. Foucault (1980) does not conceptualize power in negative or repressive terms; rather he defines modern power as productive – such as it produces subjectivities, bodies, truth and discourses. Her conceptualization of labor

⁴⁷ Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Hilmi (Male, 50, Istanbul).

control is useful while analyzing labor control in network DSOs because labor control produces new forms of relations, bodies, discourses and consumption practices. In this chapter, I will discuss labor control in *Herbalife* under two main headings: self-discipline and network control.

5.1. Self-disciplined Labor Force

As the labor force of direct sellers constructed in relation to desire for other things besides of money⁴⁸, discipline is the corner stone of their labor process in order to reach their imagined living standards. Rana put an emphasis on this aspect in her speech by saying that: “We need to learn to dream and to work in a disciplined way. Discipline is a bridge that connects you to realizing your dreams.”⁴⁹ Discipline as a bridge starts with self-discipline in network DSOs.

As neoliberal subjects who are responsible for their lives and their success in this job, distributors discipline themselves. I scrutinize self-discipline under three points: 1) Distributors discipline their bodies through subjecting their bodies to certain discourses, consuming and displaying their bodies in public and virtual spaces. 2) They manage their emotions by directing their emotional state to more positive feelings in order to keep their energy and motivation high. 3) They control themselves via attributing moral meanings to the act of direct selling. I will respectively elaborate these three ways of self-discipline in *Herbalife*.

5.1.1. Body Control

In the section 3.1., I argued that power operates in distributors’ bodies in terms of subjecting their bodies to certain discourses and reproducing their bodies as a result of consumption practices. As the labor process of direct sellers are not confined to a factory

⁴⁸ See the section 4.3.

⁴⁹ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

space, their bodies are not disciplined through repressive mechanisms. Rather, distributors conduct self-discipline by reproducing their bodies as a product of products. In the case of *Herbalife*, self-controlled bodies of distributors can only be understood in relation to constructed image of a healthy body. In order to acquire such idealized image of health body, they consume *Herbalife* products, and promote their bodily images through social media.

The healthy body is not only related with being disease-free but also it is directly related to its fitness in terms of how one's body has resemblance to idealized body image (Ettorre, 2010, p. 8). Hence, "the self-regulation required to achieve such an aesthetic disciplined body also becomes the body image of someone who is able to demonstrate self-discipline, healthy and virtuous behavior lifestyle" (Sutton, 2010, p. 67). *Herbalife* distributors periodically measure their body sizes by considering muscle-fat ratio of their bodies in order to reconstruct their bodies as signifiers of this perfect body image.⁵⁰ While disciplining their bodies, they also control bodies of their consumers through the same practice because customer satisfaction and idealization of customers' bodies may provide an opportunity for distributors to reach more people.

As they are in pursuit of a healthy body, they try to actualize this body image by transforming their consumption patterns. As an indicator of this argument, Fulya said that:

Did he intentionally become ill? Yes. Nobody tell me I have never wanted to be sick. You are sick because you wanted. You smoke, you get cancer. That is it.

Why do I had a cancer 20 years ago, and I have not now? What has changed?

⁵⁰ See the section 3.1.3.

Body is the same body. I did not change my body. I am walking around with the same body but what I did to my body has changed.⁵¹

She is actually taking about how she transformed her bodily practices by underlining individual response for having a healthy body. Firstly, they become active consumers of healthy products – *Herbalife* products in this case – since they believe that these products are the only alternative to have a healthy body. In addition to such consumption pattern, they also keep under control their daily water consumption, sleeping hours as well as physical exercises to transform their lifestyle into a healthy one.

Creating visible changes on one's body is important for using the image of healthy body as a signifier. Therefore, marking the obese body serves for this aim. Altan, for example, referred obese people during his speech in this way:

Those who are overweight are the happiest people. Do you agree? Obese people always flash a smile. They are content with their lives. Do you agree? What is the reason in your opinion? [...] The reason is that they are desperate. They said I leave no stone unturned [...] but I cannot lose weight. They have to accept themselves and be happy. [...] They are always happy because they are desperate. [...] What is the solution in your opinion? The solution is *Herbalife* because it is the best nutrition company in the world.⁵²

By stigmatizing the obese body as the bearer of fictive happiness and but real desperateness, he suggests *Herbalife* products as the salvation of obese people. Such reconfigurations of obese body in relation to certain cultural discourses aims at directing the obese people to consumption of *Herbalife* products.

⁵¹ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

⁵² Guest Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy Meeting – Altan (Male, 22, Antalya).

As it is reported in the annual report of the company, weight management products constitute 63.8% of net sales in 2016 (Herbalife, 2016, p. 5), which also indicates that how the company succeed in this aim. Furthermore, this suggests that most of its distributors are involved in the company due to weight management purposes. Through consuming the products, they learn to control their bodies in order to idealize their body images. On the other hand, if the distributors' aim is not weight management, they use the products for healthy aging, skincare or keeping their bodily energy high through good nutrition. These aims also require disciplining their bodies via consumption.

5.1.2. Emotional Control

Ömer explained about how *Herbalife* differs from other DSOs in this way: “The only purpose in other companies maybe to sell one product or another but this is not the case in this company. It will happen when you sell emotion.”⁵³ Related to this, in order to explain how *Herbalife* emotionally contributed to her life, Fulya also stated that “The detergent may not change a person's life”⁵⁴ while she was talking about why she failed to sell *Amway* products; but succeeded to sell *Herbalife* products. How do emotions operate and circulate between subjectivities in the company in which talking about how you feel is a common practice to sell their stories?

Labors in network DSOs are emotionally controlled, which is explained based on Arlie Russell Hochschild's emotional labor theory in the existing literature. Relying on Karl Marx's theory of wage labor, Hochschild (2003) conceptualizes emotional labor as “management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value” (p. 7). Though we all do emotional management in our private lives, such management results in emotional labor when it becomes part of a labor process in which publicly displaying and managing

⁵³ Interview with Ömer (Male, 30, İstanbul).

⁵⁴ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

one's emotions are commercialized and sold in exchange for a wage. Service sector jobs mostly require emotional labor since labors are in direct and face-to-face communication with customers.

In her conceptualization of emotional labor, Hochschild (2003) draws a distinction between private and public based on the assumption of separation of work and private lives of individuals. Hence, her emotional labor theory is insufficient to grasp emotional management of direct sellers because there is not clear separation between work and individual lives of direct sellers as it is argued in the Chapter 3. Distributors in network DSOs always control their emotions since their whole lives are integrated into the labor process (Lan, 2001; Cahn, 2006). Therefore, their emotional labor functions as a form of self-discipline that makes direct sellers eager to sell the products.

As Erving Goffman (1959) puts body at the center of emotions in order to see how body acts and creates a change while displaying the self in the everyday life, Hochschild (2003) argues that emotional labors do “surface acting” in order to properly demonstrate their outward appearance in terms of body language. However, companies require “deep acting” from their labors. Hochschild (2003) explains “deep acting” based on Konstantin Stanislavski's theatrical concept of “method acting” which indicates that “not simply the body, or immediately accessible feeling, but the entire world of fantasy, of subconscious and semiconscious memory, is conceived as a precious resource as an alternative to the direct prodding of feeling” (p. 40). Hence, service sector labors do not only control body language during the communication with customers, rather companies demand labors who know how they should feel and how they should manage their inner emotional energy.

Feride, for example, explained how she made a contact with the person sitting beside her on the subway in this way:

I was prejudiced against people. I was a person who could build a wall very quickly. I have removed those walls. I could not communicate very much with people. Now, I can communicate with everyone in any case and everywhere. [...] Even a smile can enable that communication. [...] With respect to destroying the walls, you can handle everything with a smile. It is that simple.⁵⁵

Her smile functions as a key to communication, and the badge she wears designates the content of the communication. Since she learned managing her emotions with the help of seminars and workshops organized by the company, she wears a warm and smiling face against people – even against people she does not familiar with. As she controls her outward appearance by “surface acting”, she also manages her inner emotional state in order to break down her prejudices against strangers.

Keeping their emotional state positive is significant for *Herbalife* distributors in order to make “surface acting” easier. They have several strategies for this such as placing the word “positive” into their discourses, unfollowing the news on TV (which are usually depressing), and staying away from people who are depressed and negative. During our interview, Fulya, for example, mentioned that “There will of course be negative events around us. I do not watch TV as far as possible, especially television news, but still you can encounter some news. At the time, you become stronger. That stress does not crush you.”⁵⁶ They try to situate themselves towards more joyful feelings, which actually functions as a control mechanism.

In the company meetings I attended, I observed that atmosphere in the meeting rooms also supports this flood of positive and joyful emotions among distributors. As a scholar who situate emotions in the center of capitalism, Eva Illouz (2014) defines emotions as “the energy-laden side of action” (p. 2). Benefiting from her definition, the

⁵⁵ Interview with Feride (Female, 45, İzmir).

⁵⁶ Interview with Fulya (Female, 55, İzmir).

use of upbeat songs in company meetings also targets this energetic side of people's actions. During the breaks, they turn up the volume, and some of them dance while others giving applause. Through this, they aim at creating positive energy in the saloon that helps newcomers to feel good within the company's work environment.

Beyond this kind of emotional management, there is also another role of emotions that helps to create an intimate community out of distributor networks, and enables distributors to identify themselves with the company. In relation to this, love is the most distinct emotion in *Herbalife*. For instance, Rana defines her path to success in *Herbalife* by saying that: "As long as we are bonded with our company and our products at the heart, [...] and do our work willingly and lovingly, you will be successful as a matter of fact."⁵⁷ If becoming a successful distributor is considered as a labor of "love", it is necessary to look at how love functions in this context.

Similar to Ahmed's (2014) arguments on how the nation is constructed as an ideal and people attach themselves to this ideal through love, distributors attach themselves to the company which can be thought as an ideal in this case. Benjamin argues that "The object becomes ideal only through approval by loved others; idealization creates both likeable subjects and lovable objects" (as cited in Ahmed, 2014, p. 129). *Herbalife* distributors idealized the company after consuming the products to acquire bodily testimonials, and listening the stories of successful distributors who changed their lives financially and health-wise.

The power of 'love' that the distributors feel the company unites them together and creates a sense of belonging to others who love the company in a way that they love. As Ahmed (2014) argues:

⁵⁷ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

It is clear from the extension of self in love, or the way in which love orients the subject towards some others (and away from other others), how easily love for another slides into love for a group, which is already imagined in terms of likeness (p. 129).

That is, ‘love’ for the ideal sticks others – the distributors – together and approximate them through their love of the ideal. This also helps them to create a sense of belonging to their intimate community which I will elaborate in the section 5.3.1. Nalan’s statement, for instance, demonstrates how she tends to spend time with people who share similar emotional state with her. She said that “You see the light, the positive energy in his/her eyes. You incline away from people who are negative. For example, I have now moved away from even my close friends because I felt sick when I was with them.”⁵⁸

Furthermore, loving the ideal has reciprocal demands. Winning the recognition of the company at the stage and being applauded by many people can be considered as a way of reciprocating distributors’ love to the company. Ogün⁵⁹ describes this as something that really makes people happy, and Selin also explains how this affects the distributors by saying that:

When you reach the statuses such as GET, presidential team and millionaire team, you are appreciated in front of people, you are given the certificates of merit. This affects people very much. People even take an oath to be included in this community.⁶⁰

“Even though love is a demand for reciprocity, it is also an emotion that lives with the failure of that demand often through an intensification of its affect” (*ibid.*, p. 130). Accordingly, distributors as neoliberal subjects continue to work hard as an indication of

⁵⁸ Interview with Nalan (Female, early 50s, İzmir).

⁵⁹ Interview with Ogün (Male, 25, İstanbul).

⁶⁰ Interview with Selin (Female, early 30s, İstanbul).

their love for the company. In this way, they want to be recognized in the future without losing their love even in the times of failure.

5.1.3. Moral Control

Network DSOs are interpreted as quasi-religious organizations (Biggart, 1989; Cahn, 2006; Özerkmen & Tekbaş, 2007; Tekbaş, 2010), suggesting that network DSOs rely on religious ethics in the formation of their organizational culture. In other words, they merge religious ethics with their capitalist structures. For example, references to Protestant ethic in the U.S. (Cahn, 2006) and Buddhism in Taiwan (Lan, 2002) can be seen in some network DSOs. Establishing the act of direct selling as a moral endeavor functions as a self-control mechanism.

Though *Herbalife* does not explicitly make reference to Islam, Christianity or any other religious beliefs as Tekbaş (2010, p. 175) indicates, attaching certain beliefs – such as belief in transformative effects of the products, changing the lives of other people by helping them, and making the world a better place to live – to the act of selling attributes a moral character to *Herbalife* as well.

Herbalife distributors participated in this research frequently stress the moral side of their jobs by comparison with other jobs or their previous jobs. Ogün, for example, mentioned the difference between distributing the *Herbalife* products and trade as such:

This job is slightly different from trade. Your clients, more precisely your counselees become happy, which also makes you happy. In trade, nobody becomes happy because everyone sees it as a business but in this job you can share the other's happiness and touch their lives.⁶¹

⁶¹ Interview with Ogün (Male, 25, İstanbul).

Hence, they produce moral justifications for selling the products, which conceals their economic motives. Rana also talked about her feelings about doing this job in this way: “I feel myself very happy spiritually as well because of bringing *Herbalife* to a lot of people’s lives and helping them to advance in their careers.”⁶² Besides material gain – which shows considerable variation depending on distributors’ and their downlines’ effort, they usually mention the moral satisfaction gained through “helping” other people both financially and health-wise.

Furthermore, *Herbalife* distributors’ moral satisfactions are also supported by the company that creates Herbalife Family Foundation (HFF) as a non-profit organization in 1998 with the aim of providing healthy nutrition to children around the globe.⁶³ Using the word of “family” in the foundation’s name is a purposeful choice, which enables the distributors to associate themselves with the company under the “family” roof. While introducing the company to newcomers in the meeting, Sevcan mentioned HFF in her speech to make an emphasis on moral satisfaction of her job. She said that:

Herbalife is not a selfish company. A certain portion of its earnings is allocated to children who are in need of help around the world. There is HFF in Turkey as well. I am incredibly delighted that a part of every purchase I make is allocated to children who need help. This is the spiritual part of the job.⁶⁴

Thus, “sharing” activity moves beyond the motto of “sharing good things with good friends in *Herbalife*. It is also sharing good things – healthy nutrition in this case – with children who are the most vulnerable part of world population. This helps them to increase the level of moral satisfaction from distributing the products, while masking the company’s profit-seeking motives at the same time.

⁶² Guest Speaker in Herbalife Taksim Meeting – Rana (Female, 53, İzmir).

⁶³ See <https://www.herbalifefamilyfoundation.org/home>

⁶⁴ Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy meeting – Sevcan (Female, 34, İstanbul).

5.2. Networking Labor Control: Be a Leader, Not a Boss

As it is explained in the section 3.3.2., in network DSOs, independent sellers construct their networks by means of commercialization and commodification of their social and kin relations. In other words, they transform their social networks into financial networks in order to enlarge their business and to generate more income. Therefore, constructed networks have a significant role in labor control in network DSOs. As a result, “social networks not only function as a facilitator of economic exchange but also become a less visible yet more powerful mechanism of labor control that permeates the public and private lives of distributors” (Lan, 2002, p. 165). This section elaborates how labor control is operated in constructed networks.

Lan (2002) conceptualizes network control as “the situation in which actors become the objects as well as the bearers of labor control in the process of networking” (p. 167). As the distributors discipline themselves which is explained in the section 5.2., they also keep their downline distributors’ activities under surveillance. Since they also earn money through sales volume of their downlines, distributors try to manipulate and control their downlines in order to make their downlines, and consequently their businesses more successful. Organizational structure of network DSOs which discourages the competition among distributors helps distributors to work as a team on the way to increase their sales and incomes. Construction of an intimate community among distributors and following in the network leader’s footsteps are two complementary aspects that ensure network control.

5.2.1. Construction of an Intimate Community

As the section 2.1.1. explains, the distributors familiarize the sponsorship lines by using family and kinship terms in their network relations. According to Lan (2002), “familiarizing sponsorship” helps the distributors in trust building within their networks.

Using a metaphor of family does not only helps them to familiarize their sponsorship lines, but also serves as a way of managing the network. Family metaphors refers not only to positional relations and activities, but also to the content of ties between distributors. “Family” establishes an ideal of loving, nurturing relations between distributors; the metaphor establishes normative expectations (Biggart, 1989, p. 86). Therefore, they feel responsible for their other network members in the similar way of feeling responsible for one’s family members. This situation enables them to keep other distributors under control through “consolidating consensus and loyalty within networks” (Lan, 2002, p. 175).

Nalan lives in Urla – the district of Izmir – and she regularly attends the local meetings in her “mother”’s office. She explains her relations with other distributors in her network by saying that: “It is fraternity, companionship, friendship. It is an utterly different lifestyle. It is such a family that supports each other.”⁶⁵ While talking about her relations with downline distributors, Feride also made a similar point: “You cannot see her/him as a customer in the store because the relationships have transformed into the style of friendship until things are put on the right track. She/He is your friend and you share your knowledge with your friend.”⁶⁶

Moreover, they believe that world will become a better place if people can access healthy nutrition and have a proper diet. Also, this job offers an opportunity to all people regardless of their educational and socio-economic background to become rich if they want and work hard enough. As “goodness ambassadors” carrying these aims, they believe that they have an energy to change the world, and begin this by touching people’s lives. Supporting this argument, Altan mentioned these words: “Together we can create a better world where people can live. If everyone does his/her best and if we reach more

⁶⁵ Interview with Nalan (Female, early 50s, Izmir).

⁶⁶ Interview with Feride (Female, 45, Izmir).

people, we can change the world.”⁶⁷ Hence, attributing such moral aims not only to individuals themselves but also to their intimate communities consolidate moral control as well.

5.2.2. Being a Leader

Once the distributors established an intimate community out of their organizations, this community of direct sellers need to be controlled in order to keep involved the distributors in the business and motivate them to perform well in selling the products. In network DSOs, such network surveillance is under the responsibility of higher-level distributors. However, this responsibility cannot be considered as a form of formal authority coming with one’s position in the status hierarchy. Rather, it is a method that higher-level distributors use to control their downlines under the framework of leadership and gain power in this way (Tyre, 2015).

As direct sellers are in intimate relationship with other network members and they are self-employed entrepreneurs who do not have a boss, patronizing attitude towards their downlines is not welcomed. However, framing network control under the sense of leadership creates a surveillance mechanism in which the distributors do not feel themselves under someone’s control. These leaders have charismatic authority used to ensure the commitment of people (Biggart, 1989; Weierter, 2001; Tyre, 2015). According to my observations, their charisma is a result of their effective use of language in storytelling, their good-looking physical appearance, spreading positive energy around and their lifestyles reshaped based on the company’s organizational culture.

Creation of an intimate community helps distributors to maintain their leadership role. Erdiñç, for example, describes the sense of leadership by saying that:

⁶⁷ Guest Speaker in Herbalife Kadıköy Meeting – Altan (Male, 22, Antalya).

You should not be a boss, you should be a leader. How does that happen? You have to do what you always recommend to people. At the same time you should be able to make them feel good, and show them smartly when they make a mistake.⁶⁸

They have to keep intimate trust relations established among their networks. In another word, they have to be good role models like a mother and a father being a role model to their children.

Network control through leadership mostly functions as mimicking upline distributors' activities. Leaders show their downlines the road to success, and the downline distributors eagerly follow their road because as Orhan said:

My philosophy is that if someone succeeds, someone else can succeed as well because if you follow the same path and take the same steps, you go to the same place. I took that step in order to seize the opportunity.⁶⁹

Since they witness higher-level distributors' lives, know their stories and want to reach standard of live of their leaders, they see this as an opportunity and follow their upline distributors' lead. Ömer also mentioned a similar point in our conversation: "Something is changing in the life of the person who invited me to this job. When you see him/her, you say that [...] if I take the same steps, the same things can change in my life as well."⁷⁰ Therefore, they do not consider their sponsors' lead as a control mechanism. Rather, they always talk about their gratefulness and thankfulness to their sponsors who give them an opportunity to be healthy and wealthy. This results in homogenization in their practices as there is homogenization in their discourses.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Interview with Erdinç (Male, 30, İzmir).

⁶⁹ Interview with Orhan (Male, 21, İstanbul).

⁷⁰ Interview with Ömer (Male, 30, İstanbul).

⁷¹ See the section 3.1.2.

Network control is mostly addressed in the literature in terms of controlling the downline distributors by using fictive kinship terms (Biggart, 1989; Lan, 2002) and adopting the leadership role (Tyre, 2015). However, they also have consumer networks that they sell the products regularly. This is especially the case for lower-level distributors who do not have organizations yet. They had to exert control over their consumers to make sure that they continue consuming *Herbalife* products. Such control functions not under the framework of leadership, but acquiring titles such as ‘active life coach’, ‘lifestyle coach’, ‘wellness coach’ and ‘nourishment coach’ as the section 3.3.1 explained. They make regular contacts with their consumers either by telephone or face-to-face, and check whether the consumers properly use the products, drink enough water or do exercise in order to meet the requirement to reach a healthy life. Exercising this kind of control over consumers enables them to raise their status in the hierarchy and acquire a leadership role.

5.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, management of labor control in network DSOs is operationalized in a most efficient way by minimizing the role of the corporations because labor control is mostly conducted through self-control and network surveillance. Labor control, therefore, is a multi-dimensional process which subordinates labor’s bodies, emotions, moral sentiments as well as their constructed intimate relations within their networks. First of all, distributors build a “bridge” by disciplining themselves in order to achieve their desired success level. Creation of desire for wealth and health is the building block of that bridge. Secondly, they discipline other network members on way to reaching their imagined lives through acquiring a leadership role within their intimate network relations.

I should emphasize that these control mechanisms are discussed based on active distributors narratives. That is, I do not argue that network DSOs succeed to establish hegemony over all of their distributors. Rather, there are people who left the

distributorship because of various reasons, which demonstrates that there are disrupting moments – breaking down the domination of network DSOs over their distributors – in the labor control.



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, I aimed to address the labor process, formation of direct sellers' subjectivities, and forms of labor control in network DSOs by focusing on the case of *Herbalife*. I tried to show how network marketing incorporates individuals' bodies, social relations, moral values and emotions into the capital accumulation process, while at the same time enabling distributors to feel autonomous, to be a part of an intimate community, and to be happy via the circulation of joyful affects within the work environment and keeping their dreams alive.

In Chapter 2, I made a conceptual definition of network DSO. Network DSOs create a self-employed and self-expanding labor force via exercising flexible employment practices and encouraging cooperation among distributors. Based on these characteristics, network DSOs are able to integrate every individual as labor force irrespective of age, gender, formal education, and socio-economic status. Accordingly, global and local statistics demonstrate the dramatic increase in direct selling labor force over years. *Herbalife*, a nutrition company operating globally since 1980 and operating in Turkey since 1998, recruits its workforce from people who are in the pursuit of health and wealth.

In Chapter 3, I elaborated the labor process in *Herbalife* by looking at the practices of consuming, advertising, selling and recruiting. Distributors first consume the products to acquire bodily testimonials. As a result, their bodies become the *product of products* validating the company's discourse on health. Then, distributors advertise the products through turning their bodies into an advertisement board by carrying a company logo on them, and branding their lifestyle and displaying their bodily transformations on social media. Finally, distributors create a marketable story out of their experiences in *Herbalife* to tell potential consumers and distributors. I argue that as a result of these activities the

labor process is diffused through the distributors' lives including their bodies and social relations.

In Chapter 4, I focused on formation of distributors' subjectivities as "raw material" of their labor process and as facilitator of exercising labor control in direct selling. I demonstrated that active *Herbalife* distributors adopt the neoliberal ideal via investing themselves completely and struggling against difficulties, which gives their lives an entrepreneurial form. Secondly, within flexible employment relations, they consider themselves as autonomous subjects. Finally, they intensify their desire for health and wealth, which also helps them to engage with the company as sellers and consumers.

In Chapter 5, I scrutinized how labor control is exercised in the labor process in network marketing. I showed that distributors discipline themselves through disciplining their bodies (to reach an idealized image of a healthy body), managing their emotions, and attributing a moral mission to the act of selling. In addition to self-control, I also analyzed how the creation of an intimate community out of distributor networks and being a leader to downline distributors function as network surveillance. Hence, this chapter demonstrated that labor control in network marketing helps to minimize the role of companies.

I should note that this thesis has certain limitations since the research subjects is constituted from only active direct sellers who are currently working in the company and consuming the products. Therefore, the arguments raised in this thesis are based on the narratives of active *Herbalife* distributors and my observations during the fieldwork. However, I do not aim at excluding former distributors as research subjects. Though I am familiar with a number of former distributors, they do not accept to participate in this research.

If I was able to convince the former distributors to participate in this research, its framework could expand considerably. Accordingly, personal dilemmas and emotional crises of distributors due to commercialization of social relations and blurring work-life boundaries would be more observable. I think former distributors' experiences and ideas about network marketing would enable us to see disrupting moments in the labor control, which breaks down the hegemony of the company over its distributors. Furthermore, making a comparison between the narratives of active and former distributors in terms of healthy life style would provide a better insight on how health consumption of distributors are shaped in the organizational culture of the company. Making a comparative research to find out these aspects is my future research agenda.

Despite its limitations, the thesis contributes to the literature by taking consumption activities of distributors seriously, as a key part of the labor process, and its transformative effects on their bodies. Secondly, following distributors' practices on social media platforms is also a contribution since it showed that distributors produce labor in the virtual space as well to promote the products and expand their businesses. Thirdly, this thesis explained how distributors remake themselves as neoliberal, autonomous and desiring subjects facilitating the exercise of labor control. Overall, this thesis shows that DSOs like *Herbalife* blur the boundaries between work and life in the labor process by exploiting people's desire for health and wealth.

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APPENDIX: ORIGINAL QUOTES

CHAPTER 2

1. Page 11, Footnote 1:

Herhangi bir ürünü bu yolla satabilirsin ama bazı ürünlerin sadece bu kanalda satılması gerekiyor çünkü anlatılmaya çok fazla ihtiyacı var.



CHAPTER 3

1. Page 24, Footnote 3:

Böyle çok özel bir zaman ayırmıyorum. Her zaman, her yerde. Akşam da arayabiliyorlar, sabah da arayabiliyorlar. Kim ne zaman uygunsa, ben o zaman uygunum.

2. Page 27, Footnote 4:

Şu an iyisin ama 50 yıl sonra ne bileyim 30 yıl sonra 20 yıl sonra ne olacağın belli değil. Bunun amacı ileri dönük yatırım yapmak. Ondan dolayı kullanıyorum ben de.

3. Page 27, Footnote 5:

Ürünleri hiç kullanmadan bu işi yapan yoktur. Varsa da istisnadır çünkü bu önerilmez. *Be a product of product* ya da *living testimonial* meselesi.

4. Page 29, Footnote 6:

Bugün hayır diyen yarın yine evet diyor çünkü emin ol başka çare yok. Şu an Türkiye'de de bu böyle, dünyada da bu böyle. Bak Urla'da yaşıyoruz. Urla'da bile sağlıklı gıda üretmek mümkün değil artık çünkü tohumlar iyi değil, toprak iyi değil, su iyi değil, havadan gelen yağmur bile iyi değil artık.

5. Page 30, Footnote 7:

10 yıl öncesindeki beslenmenin ya da günümüzdeki beslenmenin bozulma aşamalarını gözlemleyebiliyorum. Farkında mısınız bilmiyorum. Gıdalar değişti dedik. Bunu ben demiyorum. Bunu bilim söylüyor.

6. Page 30, Footnote 8:

Herbalife Shake'i günlük alabileceğimiz besin değerini bize tam olması gerektiği gibi veriyor arkadaşlar. İşte birkaç bardak süt içiyoruz acaba kalsiyum alabiliyor

muyuz? Ya da biraz peynir yedim acaba tam olarak alabildim mi bilmiyorum ama bir bardak Shake'te bir öğünde almam gerekeni tam aldığımı bilim adamları bana net bir şekilde söylüyor.

7. Page 30, Footnote 9:

İnsanların birbirlerini çekememeleri kötü beslenmekten. Hepsi negatif insanların ama insanlar güzel beslenince pozitif düşünecek. Ne savaş olacak ne kardeşler arasında bir şeyler olacak, ne aileler arasında. Cennet dediğin işte hiç öbür tarafa gitmeye gerek yok. Cenneti hayatında yaşarken yaşayacaksın.

8. Page 33, Footnote 11:

Eminim şekillenmek istiyordur birçok erkek arkadaşımız burada. Şöyle güzel vücut olsun. Kesme baklavalar olsun. Ronaldo'nun bacakları gibi bacaklarım olsun. Arkadaşlar doğru bir şekilde tüketirseniz muhteşem bir kas yapınız, inanılmaz görünen bir vücut yapınız olur bilginiz olsun.

9. Page 36, Footnote 12:

Bizim mesela kıyafetlerimizde var hep Herbalife. Ben mesela hep Herbalife kıyafeti giyerim. Bazı arkadaşlarım şey yapar bana niye Herbalife kıyafeti her zaman giyiyorsun falan derler ama ben Herbalife kıyafeti giymekten hep karlı çıktım çünkü insanlar bunu görüp soruyor.

10. Page 39, Footnote 13:

Beslenmenin verdiği sağlık kalitesiyle insanlara sağlığı sunarak, insanlara sağlıklı yaşamı anlatarak aynı zamanda işimi yaşıyorum.

11. Page 39, Footnote 14:

Kalifiye deęilim hibir Őeyde ama bir firmanın rettięi rnlerden faydalanıp, bu yaŐadığım faydayı anlatarak, sadece bunu yaparak yani nk ben retmiyorum bunları, sadece bana olanları anlatarak o kadar ok insanın hayatı deęiŐti ki.

12. Page 41, Footnote 15:

Ykseliyorsa rozetin ya da statn bil ki altında yardım ettięin insan sayısı ok. Bu insanlar hakikaten bu rne inanmıŐlar. Bu rn kullanıyorlar ve bu rnden sonu almıŐlar.

13. Page 41, Footnote 16:

İnsanlara faydalı bir Őeyler yapıyorsun. İnanlıęa hizmet ediyorsun. Bu benim iin nemli. İnsanlar bu rnleri kullandığındaki deęiŐimleri grdęn zaman mutlu oluyorsun.

14. Page 42, Footnote 17:

rn nasıl satıyor dersin kolay oluyor benim iin. Sonucumla satıyorum. Bu benim 4 yıl nceki halim. Bu benim kızım. Bu da Őimdiki halimiz. (Duvarda asılı olan fotoęrafları gsteriyor bu sırada) Grdkleri zaman daha etkili oluyor.

15. Page 42, Footnote 18:

Sonu alan, iyi hisseden bir kiŐi, iyi takip ettięin bir kiŐi sana servet getirebilir nk baŐka insanları tanıyordur.

16. Page 43, Footnote 19:

Basit bir mantığımız var. Bir kiŐinin %100 abası yerine yz kiŐinin %1 abası bizim iŐimiz.

17. Page 43, Footnote 20:

Hakikaten sabarın seherinde çıkıyordum akşam gece yarlarına kadar hep arkadaşlarımla konuştum, hep sevdiğim insanlarla konuştum. [...] Böyle bir iş var. Türkiye'de ciddi bir işsizlik var. Gelin işi yapın. [...] Yani bu fırsatı değerlendirin. Bu bir fırsat.

18. Page 45, Footnote 21:

2001 krizinde bütün her şeyimizi kaybettik fakat bu iş sayesinde 4 yıla yakın bir sürede bütün borçlarımızı ödedik. Kızıma bir ev alamayacak durumdayken Türkiye'nin en pahalı 3 okulundan birinde, Bilgi Üniversitesi'nde bu iş sayesinde okuttum. Şu anda İstanbul'un en seçkin semtinde, Kanlıca'da, yol yalısı dediğimiz bir evde oturuyoruz.

19. Page 46, Footnote 22:

Günün sonunda burada müthiş bir hikâye duyacaksınız. Bu hikâyeyi dinlemeden buradan ayrılırsanız kendinize haksızlık etmiş olursunuz.

20. Page 46, Footnote 23:

Daha çok eğitime aslında hikâye dinlemeye gidiyoruz çünkü her konuşmacının çok farklı hikâyeleri oluyor. Her hikâyeden her konuşmacıdan bir şey bile kapsak kar. Tek bir cümlesi bile senin hayatını değiştirebiliyor.

21. Page 47, Footnote 24:

Esas beni etkileyen şey hikâyeler olmuştur toplantıda. Ev hanımı çıktı. Ayda yaklaşık 4.000 TL gelir elde ettiğini söyledi. Gezdiği ülkeleri söylemişti. Nasıl yani bir ev hanımı bunu yapabiliyorsa 10 katını yaparım dedim. Sinirlendim onu gördükten sonra. Sinirlenerek girdim bu işe. En son bölümde bir iş adamı çıktı. 4 tane işletme kapattım. Tek iş tek gelir Herbalife yapıyorum dedi. Düşündüğümde bir ev

hanımının yapabileceđi basitlikte, öğrencinin yapabileceđi basitlikte, bir iş adamının yapabileceđi prestijde bir iş dedim.



CHAPTER 4

1. Page 52, Footnote 26:

Bu iş hepimizin kendi sorumluluğunda bir iş.

2. Page 53, Footnote 28:

Kişisel gelişim çalışmalarına çok fazla öncelik tanıdık çünkü insanla birlikteyiz ve insanlar çeşit çeşit. Onları anlayabilmek için kendinizi geliştirmeniz lazım. Önce kendiniz değişmeniz lazım.

3. Page 53, Footnote 29:

Mesela ilk başladığımızda dediler ki eğitim var Antalya'da, oraya gelersen daha çok kazanırsın. [...] Cebimde param yok, kredi çektim, Antalya'ya eğitime gittim mesela. Eşim çok karşı çıktı. Para kazanmak için önce bir yatırım yapmanız lazım [...] ama yatırımın en güzel tarafı kendine yapıyorsun, bir binaya yapmıyorsun.

4. Page 53, Footnote 30:

Para veriyoruz ama biz onu işe ve kendimize yatırım olarak görüyoruz çünkü sadece işle alakalı şeyler öğrenmiyoruz eğitimlerde, kişisel gelişimi de oluyor eğitimlerim.

5. Page 54, Footnote 31:

Herbalife'ta kendine yatırım yapmaktan korkmayacaksın hiçbir zaman çünkü o yatırım sana bir şekilde dönüyor. Bunun karşılığını alıyorsun. Kat kat dönüyor sana öğrendiğin bilgiler sayesinde.

6. Page 55, Footnote 33:

Engelle karşılaşıp pes etmediğin zaman, o engelle mücadele ettiğin süredeki zaman zaten seni bir yerlere götürüyor.

7. Page 55, Footnote 34:

İnsanın iş hayatında da özel hayatında da biliyorsunuz çıkışlar ve inişler her zaman olur. Ama inişler olduğunda da ayakta durmayı güçlü olmayı başardığınızda emin olun hedefinize çok rahat bir şekilde ulaşabiliyorsunuz. Vazgeçmeyenler her zaman kazanır.

8. Page 56, Footnote 36:

İş özgürlük ya. Tek kelimeyle özgürlük diyebilirim. Çünkü bir kere kendi işinin patronusun öncelikle. Hiçbir şekilde kimseye hesap vermek zorunda değilsin. Hiçbir kotan yok, alt sınır üst sınırın yok. Kazanacağın miktarı tamamen sen belirleyebilirsin.

9. Page 57, Footnote 37:

Kimseye bağlı olmadığınız özgür bir iş. O açıdan çok keyifli. Kıyaslıyorum tabi önceki işimle. Önceki işim de rahattı ama tatile çıkmak bu problem oluyordu. Tek başıyaydım. Dört duvar arasında 20 yılımı geçirdim mesela ben. Tatilde bile aklınızda hep iş var ama bunda öyle bir şey yok. Yani her yerde yapabiliyorsunuz. Onun için iş kısmı da çok keyifli.

10. Page 57, Footnote 38:

Bahanelerinizi olabilir ama bahanelerinizi bir kenara atın. Sebeplerinizi düşündüğünüzde sebepleriniz gerçekten kuvvetliyse bu işte başarılı olmama şansınız söz konusu bile değil.

11. Page 58, Footnote 39:

Şirket önce sağlık sonra varlık veriyor.

12. Page 58, Footnote 40:

Mücadele edin, hırslı olun, kararlarınızdan vazgeçmeyin. Şirketimizin kurucusu Mark Hughes'un da dediği gibi şu anda nerede olduğumuz önemli değil. Önemli olan gelecekte nerede olacağımız. Hayal edin, hedef koyun, bir an önce başlayın.

13. Page 59, Footnote 42:

Kendisini kötü hissetmek isteyen, kilolu olmak isteyen, çirkin gözükme isteyen, kel olmak isteyen, sağlıksız olmak isteyen bir tane insan söyleyebilir misiniz? [...] iyi olma hissi kendiliğinden bir talep yaratır. Savaş dönemlerinde bile hiç kimse iyi olmak hissinden vazgeçmek istemiyor arkadaşlar. Herbalife muhteşem bir proaktif talep firması.

14. Page 60, Footnote 43:

Hayal ve hedeflerimden bir tanesi iyi ve kaliteli bir yaşamdı. Tabii kaliteli yaşam için önce sağlıklı olmanız gerekiyor. İkincisi, iyi bir gelire sahip olmak gerekiyor. Tabii ki o an sahip olduğum gelir bana iyi bir yaşam ya da hayal ettiğim yaşamı sunabilecek değerde değildi. Bunun için de bir arayıştaydım. Benim aslında firmayla tanışmam tamamen duygusal sebeplerle oldu, para kazanma sebebiyle oldu.

15. Page 60, Footnote 44:

Emekli olduktan sonra 1000 \$'lık ek gelir arayışındaydım çünkü seyahati çok seviyorum ve rahat yaşamayı çok seviyordum. Yani kötü gelirlere gelmedik. Zaten belli bir alt tabanımız vardı ama özgür ve istediğimce para harcamak istiyordum.

16. Page 61, Footnote 45:

Ben 23 yıl boyunca astsubaylık yaptım ve hiç 5 yıldızlı otelin kapısından içeri girmedim. Yani tatil dediğim zaman bizim ucuz askeri kamp olacak. [...] Hiç

aklımda da 5 yıldızlı otelden girip de para harcamak gibi bir şey yoktu işin açıkçası ama şimdi Herbalife sayesinde bazı yaşantıları gördük.

17. Page 61, Footnote 46:

Eşimin bana destek olma hedeflerinden birisi yurt dışında tatil yapmaktı çünkü memur maaşıyla sınırlı yerlerde tatil yapabiliyorsunuz. Her hayalinizi gerçekleştiremiyorsunuz [...] Ben sıkı çalışarak şirketten bu tatile hak kazandım ve eşime gemide yurt dışı tatili hediye ettim. Onun bir hayalini gerçekleştirmiş oldum firmada çalışarak.



CHAPTER 5

1. Page 63, Footnote 47:

İnanın başarı hikâyelerinin temelinde tek bir ortak nokta yatıyor: Gerçekten istemek, çalışmak ve birilerine el uzatmak.

2. Page 64, Footnote 49:

Hayal kurmasını öğrenmemiz ve disiplinli çalışmamız gerekiyor. Disiplin sizi hayallerinizi gerçekleştirmeye bağlayan bir köprüdür.

3. Page 66, Footnote 51:

Kendi isteyerek mi hasta oldu? Evet. Hiç kimse demesin ben hasta olmayı hiç istemiyordum. İstedğin için oldun. Sigara içtin, kanser oldun. Öyle. Ben niye 20 sene önce kanser oldum da şu anda olmuyorum. Ne değişti? Beden aynı beden, yani bedeni değiştirmedim. Aynı bedenle dolaşıyorum ama bedene yaptıklarım değişti.

4. Page 66, Footnote 52:

Ciddi kilolu olan kişiler en mutlu kişiler. Katılıyor musunuz? Kilolular sürekli gülücük saçarlar, mutlular hayatlarından. Katılıyor musunuz? Sebebi ne sizce? [...] Sebebi şu: çaresizler. Her yolu denedim diyorum [...] ama ben veremiyorum bu kiloyu ve o şekilde kendini kabullenip mutlu olmak zorunda. [...] çaresiz oldukları için sürekli mutlular. [...] sizce çözüm ne? herbalife çünkü dünyanın en iyi gıda firması.

5. Page 67, Footnote 53:

Başka firmalarda belki sadece amaç şu ürünü satmaktır veya bu ürünü satmaktır ama bizde o değil. Duyguyu sattığın zaman olacak.

6. Page 67, Footnote 54:

Bir deterjan insanın hayatını değiştiremeyebiliyor.

7. Page 69, Footnote 55:

Ben önyargılıydım kişilere karşı. Çok çabuk duvar örebilen bir kişiydim. O duvarları kaldırdım. Çok iletişime geçemezdim insanlarla. Şu an herkesle, her şekilde, her yerde iletişime geçebiliyorum. [...] Bir gülümse bile o iletişimi sağlayabiliyor. [...] O duvarları kırma konusunda bir gülümseme ile her şeyi halledebiliyorsun. Bu kadar basit.

8. Page 69, Footnote 56:

Negatif olaylar tabii ki olacak etrafımızda. Ben mümkün olduğu kadar televizyon izlemiyorum haberleri özellikle ama yine de bazen denk geliyor. O zamanda daha güçlü oluyorsun. O stres seni ezmiyor.

9. Page 70, Footnote 57:

Şirketimize ürünlerimize kalpten bağlı olduğumuz sürece, iyi sonuçlar aldırıp işimizi iyi şekilde severek isteyerek yaptığımız müddetçe zaten başarılı olacaksınız.

10. Page 71, Footnote 58:

Sen o ışığı, pozitif enerjiyi görüyorsun onun gözünde. Artık negatif olan insanlardan uzaklaşmaya bakıyorsun. Ben artık mesela çok samimi olduğum arkadaşlarımdan bile uzaklaştım çünkü onlarla bir arada olduğumda kendimi hasta hissediyordum.

11. Page 71, Footnote 60:

GET takımı, başkanlık takımı, milyonerler takımı gibi statülere geçtiğinizde insanlar önünde takdir ediliyorsunuz, takdir belgeleri veriliyor size. Bu kişileri çok etkiliyor. Ben de bu topluluğun içinde olmalıyım diye insanlar neredeyse ant içen pozisyona geliyorlar.

12. Page 72, Footnote 61:

Bu iş ticaretten kısmen daha farklı. Müşterilerin, daha doğrusu danışanların senin mutlu oluyor. Onlar mutlu oldukça sen de mutlu oluyorsun. Ticarete birine mal alıp verdiği kimse mutlu olmuyor çünkü iş olarak bakıyor ama burada başkalarının mutluluğunu paylaşabildiğin için, insanların hayatlarına dokunduğun için.

13. Page 73, Footnote 62:

Birçok insanın hayatına Herbalife'ı soktuğum için, onların kariyerinin yükselmesine yardımcı olduğum için kendimi manevi olarak da çok mutlu hissediyorum.

14. Page 73, Footnote 64:

Herbalife bencil bir firma değil. Kazancının belli bir kısmını dünya genelinde yardıma ihtiyacı olan çocuklara ayırıyor. Türkiye'de de aile vakfı var. Aldığım her alışverişin bir parçası yardıma ihtiyacı olan çocuklara ayrıldığı için inanılmaz keyif duyuyorum. Bu da işin manevi kısmı.

15. Page 75, Footnote 65:

Bir kardeşlik, dostluk, arkadaşlık bambaşka bir yaşam tarzı. Öyle bir aile ki birbirini kenetleyen.

16. Page 75, Footnote 66:

Belli bir rayına oturana kadar ilişkiler arkadaş kıvamına girdiği için onu mağazada bir müşteri gibi göremiyorsunuz. O sizin arkadaşınız ve arkadaşınızla paylaşıyorsunuz bilgilerinizi.

17. Page 76, Footnote 67:

Birlikte insanların yaşayabileceği daha iyi bir dünya yaratabiliriz arkadaşlar. Herkes elinden gelenin en iyisini yaparsa, daha fazla kişiye ulaşırsak dünyayı değiştirebiliriz.

18. Page 77, Footnote 68:

Patron olmaman lazım, lider olman lazım. O da nasıl oluyor. Kendin sürekli zaten insanlara tavsiye ettiğin şeyleri yapıyor olman gerekiyor. Aynı zamanda onlara hem kendini iyi hissettirip hem de yanlışları olduğu zaman bunu akıllı bir şekilde onlara gösterebilmen lazım.

19. Page 77, Footnote 69:

Benim felsefem biri başarmışsa biri de başarabilir çünkü [...] aynı yolu izlersen, aynı adımları atarsan aynı yere gidersin. O adımımı attım ben de geri kalmamak için, fırsat kaçmasın diye.

20. Page 77, Footnote 70:

Beni bu işe davet eden kişinin hayatında bir şeyler değişiyor. Onu gördüğün zaman diyorsun ki ben de [...] aynı adımları atarsam benim de hayatımda aynı şeyler değişebilir.