

Example of essay on content analysis article critique

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



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Arielle Kuperberg, the author of “ The media depiction of women who opt out” aims to answer questions of gender roles in the society, the reasons behind women leaving their workplaces in order to be stay-at-home moms and to discuss the image of women in mass media. The author pays particular attention to television shows, books and articles about opting out over a 16-year period. Kuperberg also combines previous research findings with her own and draws conclusions from gathered data.

Kuperberg begins her research with an in-depth analysis of publications made by different authors. According to her, most of the publications in magazines and newspapers in 20th century portrayed women as housewives, who rarely pursue a career. Many TV shows at that time also put an emphasis on women’s home roles. The tendencies seemed to stick around until 1978, when first stories about women giving up “ homemaking” were published. (Geise, 1979) What many researches also agreed on was the fact that women’s careers were never treated as equally important to them as marriage and family. Media aggravated the issue further by telling horror stories about daycare centres and irresponsible moms with full-time jobs. The main idea of the research was to combine previous analyses with new ones and to focus on previously unanalysed imagery of women’s gender roles in modern society. The researcher seeks to answer two sets of questions, first one being the content of coverage:

- Who is profiled in these stories, and what are the major themes?
- How are women in these stories described and characterized?
- How consistent is the imagery surrounding women who opt out?

The second set of questions is concentrated on the context of the coverage

where the researcher aims to analyze whether the sources of information are aimed solely at women or at a larger readership.

As of variables used in the report, researcher concentrated on various aspects such as age, country, year and race. Researcher also went further and analyzed relation of independent and dependent variables in order to clarify the results they yield.

The main research method used in the article was content analysis of various articles and their relations to women's gender roles. Moreover, Kuperberg used quantitative and qualitative methods to identify frequency and meaning of the findings.

In the results section the author outlined three major themes that were identified as: " Family first, Child-centric", " The Mommy Elite" and " Making Choices". Based on these themes Kuperberg categorizes information gathered during her research. Apart from that, the author includes several examples from publications that support her findings. Kuperberg also brings up the question of relativism and objectivism by situating portrayal of women against actual trends of the time.

Response to the Article

Personally, I believe that the researcher chose a very interesting topic; research questions were also compelling. The author managed to find enough reliable data to be able to draw conclusions. The information used in the study was also interesting to read and it had very important insights.

In my opinion, the research was conducted quite well. However, I do have some concerns regarding this study. To begin with, the researcher reviewed her sources in order to define the variables as well as to explain how those

variables have been previously studied. While it helped me get a better understanding of the purpose of the study, it didn't state what is an actual direction of the study and what recommendations researcher wants to give. In most of the chapters of the report Kuperberg brought up a lot of interesting topics, even though not all of them were defined. Kuperberg, in order to avoid having biased data, gathered information from multiple authors. This helped her ensure the validity and reliability of the gathered data. Researcher also paid attention to the context of the findings in order to avoid errors in her study.

I believe that this subject needs to be analysed further. So far the researcher concentrated on 20th century lifestyle and tendencies and how they changed over the years. In the future, in order to get a better understanding of the topic I would suggest conducting a similar study on modern (2000-2014) media.

Bibliography

- Geise, L. A. (1979). The female role in middle class women's magazines from 1955 to 1976: A content analysis of nonfiction selections.
- Kuperberg, A. (2008). THE MEDIA DEPICTION OF WOMEN WHO OPT OUT. SAGE.