

Abstract

"Understanding Politics of the Breast's Representation" is a qualitative research work with the objective to study the representations of "breasts" created by mainstream institutions and by women themselves. The study aims to analyze how power is created and how the ability to create the representation of the "breasts" for women with breast cancer and the one who breast-fed their children, studied through the "Nom Mae Group". The study was done through the analysis of the representation of the breasts in the capitalist's discourse, family discourse, religious discourse, modern medicine's discourse as well as traditional medicine's discourse. The method of study is done by document analysis and the interview of two groups' women.

This study was carried out using the theories of representation, feminism and discourse. The part of the documentary research is done by analyzing information in the form of text and pictures from books, thesis, articles, advertisements and internet. Women from both groups were interviewed in order to hear from their own voices.

The representation of "the breasts" in capitalist institution discourse is all about beauty, modernism, breast augmentation. Breast size can affect the possibility for movie stars, singers to get a job. The breasts' representations in religious discourse are the picture of mother, purity, beauty, and spiritual. The representation of breasts in the family discourse is woman as wife, as mother, as support family building and it is the first point to socialize patriarchal ideology. This is the point where identity is constructed and a person accepts the society's idealism which leads to other discourses that create a fixed picture of the breasts and a stereotype of women.

As for women's voices, from women with breasts cancer, the representation of breasts was deconstructed by mediation, dharma instructions so that they can go beyond fear and unhappiness and can get rid of the idea of beauty. They then create a power from the breasts and become a lesson for others to learn from. Breast cancer was referred to as "the little piece" so as to reduce the powerful meaning of it. Breast cancer patients talk and exchange experience which is a way to create their own space and provide healing for each other. They can still be useful for the society without their breasts.

The voice of women who breast fed their children; they highlight the importance of "motherhood" and the value of "breast milk". The breast is the source of food for a human life and a place where a human being is created. Size of the breasts is not considered importance. Power coming from being in a group and support each other.

The condition that suppresses the ability to create the representation of the breasts for both groups of women is the awareness of their role as a wife, a mother which is fully supported by the structure of the society. Therefore the representation of the breasts for both group is still under mainstream discourse.