



*folklor/edebiyat - folklore&literature*, 2024; 30(3)-119. Sayı/Issue - Yaz/Summer  
DOI: 10.22559/folklor.2730

*Araştırma makalesi/Research article*

# **Consumer Society and Social Ecology in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***

*Charlie ve Çikolata Fabrikası'nda  
Tüketim Toplumu ve Toplumsal Ekoloji*

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## **Abstract**

This research conducts an ecological analysis of the addictions fostered by consumer society, the ethical dilemmas, and the capitalist forces shaping consumer society in Roald Dahl's novel "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." The analysis employs literature review and data analysis methods. The findings reveal that Willy Wonka, a pivotal character, embodies capitalist capital, instigates societal addictions through his products, and fails to address these addictions. Wonka induces addictions in children and adults with foodstuffs and other products manufactured by himself and other companies within the capitalist system. The prevalent addictions in the novel include food addiction, shopping addiction, and television addiction. Apart from Charlie Bucket, the protagonist, Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, and Mike Teavee exhibit addictions. The novel also addresses colonialism, which facilitates the spread of global capitalism. One of the social ecology elements criticized in the

Geliş tarihi (Received):14-02-2024 Kabul tarihi (Accepted): 15-07-2024

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novel is the portrayal of the Oompa-Loompa tribe, who work day and night in the Chocolate Factory. Willy Wonka tests his inventions on these workers he brought from India and assigns them dangerous tasks. Throughout the novel, these people are physically and mentally presented as the “other.” Additionally, the characters in the novel are judged for their physical characteristics, addictions, and choices. These results show that Dahl’s children’s novel “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” far from criticizing the values of consumer society, reproduces the social dependencies and weaknesses created by this society. The author designed the character of Willy Wonka as a capitalist and rewarded Charlie, who consistently conformed to him and the social consensus. The ideal character created in Charlie’s case is presented as one who does not criticize consumer society but only impulsively submits to it.

**Keywords:** *consumer society, social ecology, addictions, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

### Öz

Bu araştırmada Roald Dahl’ın *Charlie ve Çikolata Fabrikası* romanında tüketim toplumunun yarattığı bağımlılıklar, etik sorunlar ve tüketim toplumunu yönlendiren kapitalist sermaye üzerine ekolojik bir analiz gerçekleştirilmiştir. Analizde literatür taraması ve veri analizi yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Analiz sonucunda romanın önemli karakterlerinden Willy Wonka’nın kapitalist sermayeyi temsil ettiği, icat ettiği ve geliştirdiği yiyecek olarak ürettiği ürünler nedeniyle toplumda bağımlılıklar yarattığı ve bu bağımlılıkların çözümü için destek sağlamadığı görülmüştür. Willy Wonka, hem kendi ürettiği hem de kapitalist sistemde yer alan diğer firmaların ürettiği gıda maddeleri ve diğer ürünler aracılığıyla çocuklarda ve yetişkinlerde bazı bağımlılıkların oluşmasına yol açmaktadır. Romanda en sık görülen bağımlılıklar yeme bağımlılığı, alışveriş bağımlılığı, televizyon izleme bağımlılığı olarak gözlenmiştir. Romanın ana karakteri olan Charlie Bucket dışında, Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde ve Mike Teavee’in sahip olduğu bağımlılıklar bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca küresel kapitalizmin yayılmasına aracılık eden sömürgecilik de romanda yer aldığı görülmektedir. Romanın eleştirilen toplumsal ekoloji öğelerinden biri de Çikolata Fabrikası’nda gece gündüz çalıştırılan Oompa-Loompa kabilesinden getirilen insanlardır. Willy Wonka, Hindistan’dan getirdiği bu işçiler üzerinde icatlarını denemekte, onlara tehlikeli görevler vermektedir. Romanın her aşamasında bu kişiler bedensel ve ruhsal açıdan öteki olarak sunulmaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra romandaki karakterler bedensel özellikleri, bağımlılıkları ve seçimleri nedeniyle yargılanmaktadır. Bu sonuçlar Dahl’ın yazdığı *Charlie ve Çikolata Fabrikası* adlı çocuk romanının tüketim toplumunun değerlerini eleştirmek bir yana, bu toplumun yarattığı bağımlılıkları ve zayıflıkları yeniden ürettiğini göstermektedir. Yazar, Willy Wonka karakterini bir sermayedar olarak tasarlamış, sermaye sahibine ve bu topluma ters düşmeyen Charlie karakterini ise ödüllendirmiştir. Charlie’nin özelinde yaratılan ideal karakterin, tüketim toplumunu eleştirmediği yalnızca dürtüsel olarak boyun eğen bir karakter olarak sunulması söz konusudur.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** *tüketim toplumu, toplumsal ekoloji, bağımlılık, Charlie’nin Çikolata Fabrikası*

## Introduction

Literary works can explore desires, addictions, harmful habits, sexuality, militarism, etc. These themes are often interpreted by researchers through artistic lenses or diverse perspectives. Conversely, children's literature, which is read in educational settings, should uphold universal values and ethical principles. Children's books that espouse ideologies, violence, or inequality propaganda can have negative impacts on children. The consumer society, a byproduct of capitalism, has drawn criticism in children's literature for pressuring children to engage in constant consumption, fostering feelings of deprivation, and perpetuating inequality. While consumption tends to make people passive, engaging in production and sharing can cultivate active and responsible citizens. The consumption behaviors and attitudes of characters in children's books are crucial for nurturing children to become producers and sharers rather than mere consumers.

Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is a global bestseller. One of the central characters is Willy Wonka, a businessman and entrepreneur. Additionally, there are five characters in the novel who win Golden Tickets, granting them access to Wonka's chocolate factory, which is closed to the public. Except for Charlie, each of the four winners struggles with addiction. These addictions are put to the test during their visit to the chocolate factory, where winners with food and shopping addictions face penalties within the factory's system.

This research aims to analyze the characters in the children's novel in terms of consumption addictions and issues related to consumer society. Document analysis and text analysis methods are employed. Consequently, the novel will be analyzed considering relevant literature on consumer society.

The primary research questions are:

1- How does Roald Dahl depict consumer society and addictions through the characters in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*?

2- Are the depictions of addictions and habits of consumer society in the novel suitable for children's literature and education?

Prior to the analysis, it is imperative to define consumption and consumer society in the literature and discuss the context in which ethical values should be addressed in children's literature.

## Consumerism, social ecology, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

Ecological problems are increasing as consumer society gradually gets out of control. Social ecology focuses on criticizing social problems because when the ecological balance of society is disrupted, the balance of nature is also disrupted.

After the 19th century, literary works were influenced by consumer society. As a result of consumerism, social-economic classes, poverty, and workers' conditions became subjects of novels (e.g., Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Zola's *Germinal*). Many novels on these subjects can be found in children's literature as well. Antoine

de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* criticizes people's abandonment of many moral values for the sake of earning a lot of money. On the other hand, some children's books and magazines promote excessive consumption. Some picture books or best-selling novels contain many toys, food, clothes, accessories, etc., which promote advertisements, and products resulting from these children's books are sold in the market and become objects of desire for thousands of people.

In terms of ecology, humanity is consuming more and more. This situation disrupts both the social balance and nature. According to Burrows et.al (2009, 7) in the hunter-gatherer period, people consumed an average of 3 kg of natural resources (food, shelter, weapons, etc.) per day, per capita consumption (milk, meat, feed, etc.) in the agricultural society increased to 11 kg. In the industrial society, consumption reached 44 kg per person per day. As the number of vehicles used, fuels consumed, types of food, clothing, etc., increases, the amount of consumption will continue to increase. Capitalism is said to function best when the role of government is limited to protecting the nation, securing property, and facilitating markets.

Rich and capitalist countries can develop freely, but they cannot eradicate poverty or inequalities. Director of UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti Gunilla Olsson argues that the majority of rich countries are failing to provide healthy environments for children within their borders and are even contributing to the destruction of children's environments in other parts of the world. According to this view, it can be said that rich countries are doing more harm than good to the world's children. UNICEF calls for steps to be taken to protect and improve the environment in which children live, one of which is "Improve environments for the most vulnerable children. Children in poor families tend to be more exposed to environmental damage than children in wealthy families. This entrenches and reinforces existing disadvantages and inequalities."

According to Baudrillard (1999), consumption society cannot be explained only by the rapid growth of individual expenditures. Companies, and especially governments, support the increase of individual expenditures in society. Therefore, the consumer society has gained dominant power, both in legal terms and in terms of economic support. On the other hand, the consumer society is in a constant state of polluting and destroying the world and the planet.

The consumer society disrupts the economic structure of society. It disrupts different cultures and lifestyles and causes society to be separated based solely on economic income levels. Social ecology criticizes this degradation.

According to the research conducted by Franz (2013), children's literature texts can encourage children to become consumers by depicting vanity-oriented characters, showing product-centered relationships, and displaying commercialization. This research will discuss how consumer society and social ecology appear in Roald Dahl's famous novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

When globalism began in the early 19th century, capitalism became an ideology and economic system in the world for two decades. Many countries have attempted to break down trade barriers, promote free trade, and set up global organizations since the Second World War. Consumerism has been associated with capitalism since the 19th century. One of the most

important negative effects of global capitalism is the excessive widening of the gap between the rich and the poor. In recent decades, rent-seeking and predatory activities have tended to rise. On the other hand, work incentives of the asset-less poor wane. It is a problem about social ecology. It can be said that global capitalism is the biggest cause of ecological problems in the world. Especially, social inequality in the context of social ecology transformed nature's social life. The other negative effect is food addiction in the context of consumerism.

Social ecology, which is a type of ecology, encourages us to think of humanity as a species that belongs to the earth like other living and non-living things. Humanity living in the world makes it responsible for environmental problems. Problems such as inequalities and imbalances that humans produce while living together constitute one of the problems of the planet of which it is a member. Social problems are no different from other ecological problems and affect everything. Social ecology claims that almost all ecological problems are rooted in social problems. Ecological problems cannot be solved without solving the irrationalities of society.

Social ecology is the view that all our current ecological problems stem from social problems. According to this view, it is not possible to solve ecological problems without solving the problems of today's society. To ensure the balance of nature, social problems such as social classes, inequalities, and racism must be eliminated. Emphasizing the connections between eco-social degradation and a series of projects aimed at destroying indigenous peoples based in America, Bacon (2019) developed the term colonial ecological violence by evaluating the consequences of this structuring in terms of impacts on Indigenous peoples and indigenous communities.

Economic imbalances create many ethical problems and social unrest. In this novel there are many economic imbalances between Charlie's family and Willy Wonka: poverty-richness; tiny house- giant factory; weak nutrition-overconsumption foods. On the contrary seven people (four grandparents, a father, a mother and Charlie) live in a tiny house, Willy Wonka lives in a giant factory (Dahl, 2020: 3). *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl is a children's novel that tells the story of Charlie Bucket, a poor boy who lives with his family in a small house near a huge chocolate factory owned by the mysterious Willy Wonka.

It was the largest and most famous in the whole world! It was WONKA'S FACTORY, owned by a man called Mr Willy Wonka, the greatest inventor and maker of chocolates that there has ever been. (...) Twice a day, on his way to and from school, little Charlie Bucket, had to walk right past the gate of the factory. And every time he went by, he would begin very slowly, and he would hold his nose high in the air and take long deep sniffs of the gorgeous chocolate smell all around him. (Dahl, 2010: 5-6)

The factory is huge but Charlie's family's tiny house is near the factory. This contrast shows that capitalism includes contrary situations as an economic view. The house is not accelerated for living comfortably: poverty. Charlie's father is the only person in the family who has a job. He works in a toothpaste factory, and he can not earn enough money to purchase food for six people:

There wasn't even enough money to buy proper food for them all. The only meals they could afford were bread and margarine for breakfast, boiled potatoes and cabbage for lunch, and cabbage soup for supper. Sundays were a bit better. They all looked forward to Sundays because then, although they had exactly the same, everyone was allowed a second helping. (Dahl, 2010: 4)

Due to nutrition deprivation, Charlie's body is very weak. The staple food of the family is bread and cabbage soup. He adores chocolate, but Charlie can only eat chocolate on his birthday.

Since the main character of this novel, Willy Wonka, is an entrepreneur, a boy named Charlie wants to own a factory like him. So, this novel is the story of a child's desire to become rich. Min (2021) argues that *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* contains toxic consumer culture and modern capitalism. Wonka is a powerful entrepreneur who has no boundaries and can use people in every way to develop his own capital. Charlie is in Wonka's shadow, subservient to him; Oompa-Loompas are workers who work like slaves in Wonka's chocolate factory. Rudd (2020) declared Dahl's novel focuses on the desires of the consumer society.

Capitalism is an incentive for people to buy a variety of products, as it suggests constant consumption. Whether they have financial difficulties or not, people feel happy or unhappy according to the level of their purchases. Since winning money suddenly makes people dream of being able to buy more, lotteries and gambling are also acts supported by capitalism.

Not only buying but also having certain privileges categorises consumers. In this novel, people who have Golden Tickets hidden in chocolates will be able to visit the Chocolate Factory, which has been closed to visitors for years. Thousands of people who want to have this privilege buy a large number of chocolates and hope to find a ticket inside. Willy Wonka promised the following to the lucky winners:

I, Willy Wonka, will conduct you around the factory myself, showing you everything that there is to see, and afterwards, when it is time to leave, you will be escorted home by a procession of large trucks. These trucks, I can promise you, will be loaded with enough delicious eatables to last you and your entire household for many years. If, at any time thereafter, you should run out of supplies, you have only to come back to the factory and show this Golden Ticket, and I shall be happy to rell your cupboard with whatever you want. In this way, you will be able to keep yourself supplied with tasty morsels for the rest of your life. But this is by no means the most exciting thing that will happen on the day of your visit. I am preparing other surprises that are even more marvellous and more fantastic for you and for all my beloved Golden Ticket holders – mystic and marvellous surprises that will entrance, delight, intrigue, astonish, and perplex you beyond measure. In your wildest dreams you could not imagine that such things could happen to you! Just wait and see! (Dahl, 2020: 39-40)

After this letter, the whole world was stirred. People of all economic levels put everything they have into finding these tickets. Children were smashing their piggy banks and running to the shops to buy chocolate. One gangster stole 1000 pounds and spent it to buy Wonka's chocolate bars (Dahl, 2020: 19).

In the novel the global craze for Golden Tickets highlights society's obsession with wealth, privilege, and the dream of a better life. This reflects the fact that people, especially those in difficult situations, pin their hopes on lotteries to escape difficulties. The fact that capitalism presents wealth as a promise, but the only way to close the gap between poverty and wealth is to rely on luck, also sanctifies wealth. Wonka's Golden Ticket scheme should be considered an example of companies taking advantage of people's hopes and dreams for their own gain or fame. The desperate need for the Golden Tickets, and the lengths to which individuals and families go (including risking their limited resources) to obtain them, indeed suggests a critical look at societal values and the perils of rampant consumerism. For Charlie Bucket's family, the Golden Ticket represents much more than a chocolate factory tour. This is a ray of hope for the difficult life they normally live. The fact that Charlie's family, despite being poor, spends their limited money on chocolates in the hope of finding tickets, emphasises their desperation and the powerful appeal of the dream offered by Wonka. The money Charlie's father earns condemns them to only eat bread and, at best, drink cabbage soup. This novel also reveals how difficult it is for a worker to support and feed his family no matter how hard he works. The family's wish comes true, and Charlie finds the golden ticket.

The factory is a secret for everybody. Since Wonka doesn't want to know his secrets about chocolate's formula; the factory has been closed for ten years. Also, the workers can not quit the factory; they have been living in the factory. One day Wonka hides five Golden Tickets inside his chocolates and announces that he will give those who find these tickets a tour of the factory and a lifetime supply of chocolate. Sales increase as everyone is curious about this world-famous chocolate factory and desires the guarantee of eating unlimited chocolate. Charlie, a poor boy, puts everything he has into finding the Golden Ticket. His family gives all their money to Charlie so that he can gamble.

The Golden Tickets represent the exclusivity and allure of this world, to which only a select few are granted access. The global hysteria over the Golden Tickets mirrors real-world consumerist frenzies, whether it's the latest tech gadget, fashion item, or another status symbol. The lengths to which people go for these tickets, spending all they have, underscore the power of marketing and the allure of exclusivity.

Promoting wealth can be shown as the main idea of this novel. For many, a tour of the factory is beneficial not only for the chocolate, but also for understanding the mystery surrounding Wonka's empire. Having such wealth and a wonderful inheritance as a reward for Charlie at the end of the novel makes readers feel that this reward is a unique miracle. Grandpa Joe describes Wonka as an entrepreneur and intelligent man. "Did you know, for example, that he has himself invented more than two hundred new kinds of chocolate bars, each with a different centre, each far sweeter and creamer and more delicious than anything the other chocolate factories can make (Dahl, 2020: 9). Capitalism turns wealth into a myth in the consumer society. Thus, ordinary people are vulnerable to the possibility of achieving this wealth. Even if they have no idea how to become rich, the thought of having everything they desire triggers poor people.

Willy Wonka's factory, with its gates and secretive nature, can be seen as a metaphor for the insular world of big corporations. In fact, this factory not only produces chocolate but also strange ready-to-eat foods that are also addictive and increase people's dependence on sugary foods.

(...) eatable marshmallow pillows, lickable wallpaper for nurseries, " it said on the next door, (...) hot ice creams for cold days,cows that give chocolate milk strawberry-juice water pistols, toffee-apple trees for planting out in your garden – all sizes, exploding sweets for your enemies, stickjaw for talkative parents, wriggle-sweets that wriggle delightfully in your tummy after swallowing, iInvisible chocolate bars for eating in class. Sugar-coated pencils for sucking, fizzy lemonade swimming pools. (Dahl, 2010: 85-100)

Wonka does not hesitate to produce these unethical products to sell and admire himself, implicitly dominating those who will consume these foods. While people who are slaves to consumerism are criticized and mocked, Wonka is constantly looking for new ways to earn money. As a paradox, Wonka mocks the victims of the system he created. For example, although he causes others to consume sugary foods while he consumes vegetable dishes, he is ruthless towards those with food addictions.

Wonka considers all types of consumers. While he has no trouble finding the rich to buy his crazy inventions, he also designs products that even the poorest can afford.

Everlasting Gobstoppers!' cried Mr Wonka proudly. 'They're completely new! I am inventing them for children who are given very little pocket money. You can put an Everlasting Gobstopper in your mouth and you can suck it and suck it and suck it and suck it and it will never get any smaller! (Dahl, 2010: 73)

It is clear from this example that under capitalism, child consumers have little choice, and sellers will insist on persuading them to buy in any case.

No bigger than "*tiny men - medium-sized dolls,*" the Oompa-Loompas are a tribe from India. Wonka says that before he brought them to work in the chocolate factory, the Oompa Loompas lived in tree houses and ate bugs and bark to keep from starving to death. The Oompa-Loompas, brought from another land and made to work long hours without contact with the outside world, can be interpreted as a reflection of exploited labor in capitalist systems. Their cheerful demeanor and song and dance routines could be a satirical take on how society often overlooks exploitation if it's masked by entertainment or other distractions.

All factories," said Granpa Joe, "have workers streaming in and out of the gates in the mornings and evenings-except Wonka's! Have you ever seen a single person going into that palace- or coming out? (Dahl, 2010: 12)

The working hours of the Oompa Loompas, who have been uprooted from their homeland and now live in the factory, are therefore unlimited. They have no education and no private life. In their life, which is a kind of slavery, there are no measures or benefits to meet the needs of the modern individual.

The statement "All children, regardless of their economic situation, have a 'chance' at the Golden Ticket" creates the illusion of equality. So, is everyone equal when it comes to finding



tickets? Charlie finding a ticket is a serendipitous, almost miraculous event that highlights the rarity of such upward mobility; Because his family was very poor, they spent all their wealth on this cause. However, other candidates are more likely to find the golden ticket. None of them are rich, but they fall into this trap with the dream of becoming rich or with the passion to get everything they want, and they buy lots of chocolate to find their ticket. Wonka's plan turned into a very good advertising campaign. If this advertising campaign were real and not a novel, it is not impossible to think that many children like Charlie might have tried to buy this ticket and been disappointed.

Charlie bought two chocolate bars, but he couldn't find any Golden Ticket. But Grandpa Joe took a gamble and gave some money to buy a new ticket. Unfortunately, they couldn't find it yet. They spend all the capital of the family for a dream. He has fifty pence for food but chooses chocolate.

Automatically, Charlie turned and began moving towards the nearest shop. It was only ten paces away... it was a newspaper and stationery shop, the kind that sells almost everything, including sweets and cigars... and what he would do, he whispered quickly to himself... he would buy one luscious bar of chocolate and eat it all up, every bit of it, right then and there... and the rest of the money he would take straight back home and give to his mother. (Dahl, 2010: 34)

Charlie entered the shop and laid the damp fifty pence on the counter. Charlie finds money by chance and chooses to buy chocolate instead of food. In fact, his good fortune is also a stroke of luck.

While Wonka is shown as a genius and a benefactor, one could argue he's also a shrewd businessman. He benefits immensely from the Golden Ticket scheme in terms of marketing and sales, and he sets the rules of the game in his factory. Wonka is a metaphor for an entrepreneur. Children and their families wanted to be rich. The poverty controlled by capitalism that goes to the poor people believe they can be rich in the future.

The novel argues into the universal dream of a better life, suggesting that money and access are the keys to happiness and wonder. This mirrors capitalist ideals which often equate success and happiness with wealth. Also, the novel creates a false impression about wealth. The reader is presented with the idea that morally weak people cannot become rich. According to these failures and addictions are barriers to being rich.

Staniforth (1997) argued that the western colonies in North America and Australia represented a carefully structured, worldwide distribution network and formed a supply line. Western-based capitalism and capital gained power through colonialism. The natives, whose lands were taken away during the discovery of Australia and America, processed the resources in their lands for the white man. Slaves brought from Africa were also used as a labor force during the industrial development of rich countries.

In the novel examined, Oompa-Loompas are workers that Willy Wonka brought from a faraway land. Workers are smaller in size than western human sizes. They take care of all the work in the factory. Working hours are unlimited; They can be called in any situation. They

may be employed in hazardous work: as test subjects in experiments, as emergency rescue teams, or as singers or dance groups in times of crisis. There is no explanation as to what kind of difficulties they encountered while doing these jobs. We never could know the character of any worker intimately; they work alone and do not suffer. However, Wonka says that they sometimes die “accidentally” during experiments or have an unfortunate accident at work. Such examples are at a level in the child reader’s mind that may lead him to normalize the use of people under unethical conditions in production environments. In addition, through the Oompa-Loompas, child readers may get the idea that people living in exotic countries or ethnic communities do not have equal rights with the citizens of developed rich countries.

Social ecology suggests that people should be equal among each other, and that economic-based class distinctions feed this inequality. Charlie is the happiest and most moral character, despite his initial poverty. His happiness came not from wealth or possessions, but from love and family. This contrasted with other children who equated happiness with materialism. However, by the end of the novel, Charlie falls under Wonka’s influence and becomes a passive materialist; He becomes the approval authority of a ruthless businessman. Even though he knows that Wonka uses his workers as test animals for his strange inventions and uses all the people in the world as slaves, he does not criticize him. Although he is not expected to make morally correct and appropriate questions because he is a child, it seems problematic that the novel presents Charlie as a person who submits to authority in this way.

The novel is noteworthy in that it provides clues about how capitalism establishes the balance of production and consumption with the system of exploitation and the addiction to eating and shopping that exists in the consumer society.

Each child, except for Charlie, displays a vice related to consumption or behavior (gluttony, greed, gum-chewing vanity, and obsession with television). Their downfalls during the factory tour are direct results of these vices, suggesting that unchecked desires and lack of self-control can lead to one’s undoing.

There are four other lucky winners: Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, and Mike Teavee. Each lucky winner will bring their guardian with them. Together they go on an irrational journey in the factory. The factory is a chocolate and candy paradise; Moreover, there are slaves brought from indigenous tribes in the factory. These slaves sing songs and do what Wonka wants. As they explore this strange desire-trap atmosphere of the factory, all the children (except Charlie) succumb to their own bad habits and face problems of various kinds.

Throughout the tour, they witness the children’s misfortunes by the They are workers who are prohibited from leaving the factory. On the other hand, they are used as experimental animals for the medicines and foods that Wonka entrepreneurially designs. Oompa-Loompas, a small tribe of workers from Loompaland who sing moral songs when a child is in trouble. The strange thing is that the situation of these small workers working in the factory is not very bright. Oompa-Loompas are workers who are prohibited from leaving the factory. On the other hand, they are used as experimental animals for the medicines and foods that Wonka entrepreneurially designs.

In the end, only Charlie remains. Wonka reveals that this was all a test, and since Charlie passed, he is to inherit the factory. The book ends with Charlie and his family moving into the factory, ready to help Wonka continue his chocolate-making legacy. Can the transfer of this factory, where many evils are committed, to a child really be ethically considered a reward?

The desire to consume in the consumer society also leads to the development of some addictions. These addictions lead the person to an unhealthy life. On the other hand, addictions are also recognized as psychological disorders that need to be solved and overcome.

### **Consumption addictions in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*: Eating, buying, and screen addiction**

People become so dependent on products that they lose their ability to interact naturally with reality. The term addiction, derived from the Latin word “addictus” meaning debt slave, refers to a person becoming a slave to a single solution in coping with psychological pain or in the pursuit of happiness (quoted by Rinaldi, 2003, as cited in Passini, 2013).

Four winners display vices related to consumer addictions (eating, purchasing, screen addiction). Their downfalls during the factory tour are direct results of these vices, suggesting that unchecked desires and lack of self-control can lead to one’s undoing. But punishment is a very old method of education. Should this novel really be used for moral education? Is it good to punish or ridicule children for their habits, or should they be guided to give up their negative behavior? In the novel, children are mocked for their addiction to eating and their addiction to buying.

There are five children in this book: Augustus Gloop: A greedy boy Veruca Salt: A girl who is spoiled by her parents Violet Beauregarde: A girl who chews gum all day long Mike Teevee: A boy who does nothing but watch television and Charlie Bucket: The hero. (Dahl, 2020: 1)

It’s valid to see *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* as a cautionary tale about the dangers of consumerism, the exploitation of hope, and the lengths to which individuals will go for the promise of a better life. Literature is rich and multifaceted, and different readers will take away different lessons and interpretations from the same text.

The characters in this novel have food, buying, and screen addictions. The atmosphere of the novel is filled with exaggerated and morbid sources of pleasure: rivers of chocolate, mountains of sugar, constant entertainment, and implicit cruelty. Except for Charlie, all the characters in this novel have different weaknesses. Hissan (2012) says that the passions and addictions of the novel’s characters lead to a sad defeat. Therefore, it is claimed that this novel is a text that teachers can use to teach morality. On the other hand, one must think about the weaknesses or addictions that should be punished or treated. Food addiction has become a focus for scientific studies as an explanation for the distressing cravings and overconsumption that many people experience, especially in relation to delicious foods (Fletcher & Kenny, 2018).

The hope of obtaining a Golden Ticket sparks a worldwide eating and buying frenzy; People are buying Wonka's chocolates in bulk, and people are ready to give up their moral values with the promise of being able to consume more.

Buying addiction, which stands for "pathological buying" or "oniomania," is a type of addiction that occurs in online or real-world buying situations and causes significant dysfunction in patients (Vasiliu, 2022). In this type of addiction, a person cannot help the urge to buy; when he or she feels sad, happy, or empty, he or she buys something to comfort himself or herself.

The character in the novel named Veruca wants to buy everything that she sees: an animal, a human, food, a vehicle, etc. Because of this, she fails during the factory visiting process. Shopping addiction can be described as constant buying behavior or an irresistible shopping impulse that occurs unconsciously. The term "addiction" encompasses the patient's physical dependence on a substance as well as their psychological and behavioral dependence. This phenomenon is defined as an overwhelming and uncontrolled psychological tendency to engage in excessive and expensive purchases and to spend excessive time shopping. Negative psychological characteristics such as anxiety, anger, arrogance, and impulsivity support these problems (Hartney, 2018). Veruca's father buys for her what she wants. When they visit the factory, she wants to have everything she sees, like a boat, river, or Oompa-Loompas.

'Daddy,' said Veruca Salt, 'I want a boat like this! I want you to buy me a big pink boiled-sweet boat exactly like Mr. Wonka's! And I want lots of Oompa-Loompas to row me about, and I want a chocolate river and I want... I want...' (Dahl, 2020: 68)

Because of the morality of reward and punishment, Veruca wants something at every opportunity and Willy Wonka cannot tolerate this. She asks for the squirrels she sees in the factory, but Wonka won't let her. Suddenly, the squirrels drag Veruca and put her life in danger.

Hey, Mummy!' shouted Veruca Salt suddenly, 'I've decided I want a squirrel! Get me one of those squirrels!' (Dahl, 2020: 92) (...) 'They're not for sale,' Mr. Wonka answered. 'She can't have one.' 'Who says I can't!' shouted Veruca. 'I'm going in to get myself one this very minute!' (Dahl, 2020: 92)

Dahl wants to criticize wealthy families who cannot say no to their children's requests, and he achieves this with Veruca's father, who is obsessed with fulfilling her wishes:

Veruca's father: As soon as my little girl told me that she simply How to have one of those Golden Tickets, I went out into the town and started buying up all the Wonka bars I could lay my hands on. Thousands of them, I must have bought. Hundreds of thousands! Then I had them loaded on trucks and sent directly to my own factory. I am in the business, you see and I've got about hundred working for me over at my place selling peanuts for roasting and salting. That's what they do all day long. Those women sit there shelling peanuts and start shelling the wrappers off these chocolate bars instead! And they did. I had every worker in the palace yanking the paper off those bars of chocolate full speed ahead from morning till night (...) Well I just hated to see my little girl feeling unhappy like that, so I vowed I would keep up the search until I'd got her what she wanted. (Dahl, 2020: 21)

It is emphasized that families are one of the variables that lead children to overconsumption. But also, as can be understood, the author only criticizes, ridicules, but does not propose any solution. Dahl punished all the characters who have addictions, and he only gave a reward to Charlie.

### **Food addiction:**

Because certain foods can trigger an addictive response, physically and mentally developing children are at greater risk than adults. The consumption of addictive foods (e.g., sugar, chocolate, chips) is highly likely to occur in early childhood (Burrows et al., 2017). While classifying studies on food addictions, Sussman and Sussman (2011) state that appetite-stimulating effects are a trigger, loss of control overeating occurs, and therefore, negative psychosocial consequences occur in people. Augustus and Violet, they both suffer from this and restrict themselves in life because of this addiction.

The first winner of Golden Augustus Gloop has a food addiction. He wants to eat everything that he sees. In the factory, there is a floor of pure chocolate, and Augustus eats the liquid chocolate with a spoon. He falls into a river of chocolate and is sucked up by a pipe. Wonka and other characters shamed him for his obesity.

His mother had told the newspaper man. ‘He eats so many bars of chocolate a day that it was almost impossible for him not to find one. Eating is his hobby, you know. That’s all he is interested in. But still, that’s better than being a hooligan and shooting zip guns and things like that in his spare time, isn’t it?’ (Dahl, 2020: 18)

He can buy and eat a lot of chocolate in a day, and he could find the first Golden Ticket. Augustus has obesity and a psychological eating disorder. Because of these, many characters will characterize Augustus as fat.

The other character in the novel called Violet Beauregarde has a food addiction. She wants to chew gum every time; this is her food addiction. At the end of the adventure, Violet turns into a giant blueberry after chewing experimental gum.

Then suddenly, Violet Beau-regarde, the silly gum-chewing girl, let out a yell of excitement. ‘By gum, it’s gum!’ she shrieked. ‘It’s a stick of chewing-gum!’ ‘Right you are!’ cried Mr. Wonka, slapping Violet hard on the back. ‘It’s a stick of gum! It’s a stick of the most amazing and fabulous and sensational gum in the world!’ ‘‘Oh, to blaze with that!’ said Violet, and suddenly, before Mr. Wonka could stop her, she shot out a fat hand and grabbed the stick of gum out of the little drawer and popped it into her mouth. At once, her huge, well-trained jaws started chewing away on it like a pair of tongs. (Dahl, 2010: 76)

Violet makes the wrong decision to chew a dangerous piece of gum, and the gum swells and swells in her stomach. Violet becomes physically deformed and is ridiculed by the author for her gum addiction. Willy Wonka despises people with obesity and food addiction. Although he owns a chocolate factory, he develops a wide variety of impressive chocolates to entice people to eat chocolate all the time, but he makes fun of people who fall into this trap. Grandpa George and Willy Wonka also say negative descriptions about Augustus’s body (Dahl, 2020: 21).

Being fat is a negative feature in the novel that it can be found some examples of this statement:

fat shopkeeper” (Dahl, 2010, s. 36); “Who’s the big fat boy” (Dahl, 2010, s. 44); ““Who’s the kid with a picture of The Lone Ranger stenciled on his windcheater?” (Dahl, 2010, s. 44)” “The big fat boy stepped up. ‘I’m Augustus Gloop,’ he said. (Dahl, 2010, s. 47)””; ‘Good gracious me!’ said Mr. Salt, as he watched his fat wife go tumbling down the hole, ‘what a lot of rubbish there’s going to be today!’ (Dahl, 2010: 96)

That the novelist’s biggest reaction is to food addiction can be understood by the examples given from his pejorative use of the word “fat” with a negative connotation.

### **Screen addiction**

Screen addiction has been criticized by educators since the invention of television. Neil Postman even claims that television has destroyed childhood. Although Willy Wonka was a capitalist entrepreneur, he criticized the addiction to watching television (Postman, 1982). Mike Teavee, one of the characters of the novel, has an addiction to watching television. He watches TV all the time and has many guns as toys because of the effects on the screen. Mike Teavee is dwarfed by her addiction to watching television and is also eliminated. The illustrator of the novel depicts Mike with guns in every scene.

The nine-years-old boy was seated before an enormous television set, with his eyes glued to the screen, and he was watching a film in which one bunch of gangsters was shooting up another bunch of gangsters with machine guns. (Dahl, 2010: 27)

Sussman & Moran (2013) argued that TV watching can be an addiction. Addiction to watching TV isolates the person from real social relations and turns the person into a consuming and passive person rather than a productive and active citizen. The shows and advertisements watched on TV disconnect the person from real life and make him believe in an ideal illusion. In this novel, the boy named Mark cannot develop socially and emotionally by watching TV; actually, he is alone. In the novel, Wonka also mocks him and is punished with a bad ending.

Willy Wonka also dislikes Mike, who is addicted to TV. On the other hand, there is a television room in his factory. When Mike sees this room, he passes out and gets into some trouble.

Certainly, there’s a television room,’ Mr. Wonka said. ‘That button over there.’ He pointed with his finger. Everybody looked. TELEVISION CHOCOLATE, it said on the tiny label beside the button. ‘Whoopee!’ shouted Mike Teavee. ‘That’s for me!’ He stuck out his thumb and pressed the button. Instantly, there was a tremendous whizzing noise. The doors clanged shut, and the lift leaped away as though it had been stung by a wasp. But it leaped sideways! And all the passengers (except Mr. Wonka, who was holding on to a strap from the ceiling) were unglued from their feet on to the door. (Dahl, 2010: 101)

Mike is so fond of television that he is eager to get into it. Willy Wonka is conducting an experiment with television in his factory; Mike agrees to volunteer for the experiment. As a result of the experiment, Mike’s body shrinks. At the end of the story, except for Charlie,

all children leave the factory defeated and unhappy. Willy Wonka says that all children's addictions were cured.

'He's changed!' said Grandpa Joe, peering down through the glass wall of the elevator. 'He used to be fat! Now he's thin as a straw!' 'Of course he's changed,' said Mr. Wonka, laughing. 'He got squeezed in the pipe. Don't you remember? And look! There goes Miss Violet Beauregarde, the great gum-chewer! It appears they managed to de-juice her after all. I'm so glad. And how healthy she looks! Much better than before!' 'But she's purple in the face!' cried Grandpa Joe. 'So she is,' said Mr. Wonka. 'Ah, well, there's nothing we can do about that.' 'Good gracious!' cried Charlie. 'Look at poor Veruca Salt and Mr. Salt and Mrs. Salt! They're simply covered with rubbish!' 'And here comes Mike Teavee!' said Grandpa Joe. 'Good heavens! What have they done to him? He's about ten feet tall and thin as a wire!' 'They've overstretched him on the gum-stretching machine,' said Mr. Wonka. 'How very careless.' 'But how dreadful for him!' cried Charlie. 'Nonsense,' said Mr. Wonka, 'he's very lucky. Every basketball team in the country will be trying to get him. But now,' he added, 'it is time we left these four silly children. I have something very important to talk to you about, my dear Charlie.' (Dahl, 2020: 123-124)

In fact, the children have not changed; they have not been freed from their addictions, they have only been ridiculed and humiliated for their addictions.

### **Conclusion**

Roald Dahl's world-famous children's novel, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is discussed in this study in the context of consumption and society and consumer addictions.

In this research, Roald Dahl's novel has been evaluated in terms of the addictions of the consumer society. In addition, the research shows that the principles necessary for the reconstruction of social ecology are not in the novel; In fact, it has been observed that this text fosters social divisions and depicts the class distinctions needed by the consumer society and a discrimination between citizens of underdeveloped and developed countries. Willy Wonka is a voracious entrepreneur. While he designs a healthy life for himself, he designs unimaginable products to ensure that the people in his community eat poorly and spend extravagantly. To sell more of his chocolate, he designs a golden ticket lottery and everyone, whether they have money or not, buys hundreds and thousands of chocolates to find these tickets. Willy Wonka is not a fair businessman. He brings his workers, the Oompa Loompas, from underdeveloped countries and makes them work for peanuts. The working hours of these workers are unlimited. Consumer children who are captive to producers like Willy Wonka have certain addictions.

The addictions of eating, screen, and buying created by the consumer society are seen in the fortunate ones of the novel. Charlie, the only innocent of the novel, is a passive capitalist. He admires Willy Wonka and likes everything he does without question and submits to his rules. Although he is poor, he spent all he had to find the golden ticket. The analysis of this novel shows that advertising, non-essential production, and addictions that feed the consumer

society weaken the society morally. On the other hand, in this novel, these problems are normalized; instead of eliminating these problems, the victims of the consumer society are punished. No matter how entertaining and fantastical a universe it presents, this novel has a negative impact on children's consumption habits. The reader of this novel may see poverty as fate and think that morality is individual, not social.

Books written for children can have a wide range of messages. On the other hand, in educational environments that focus on current world issues such as sustainability and ecology, it is not right to include children's books, like Charlie and Chocolate Factory, that encourage consumption habits and address consumption addictions in a sloppy way just because they are interesting.

**Research and Publication Ethics Statement:** This article constitutes an original research paper based on original data. It has neither been published previously nor submitted for publication elsewhere. The author has adhered to ethical principles and guidelines throughout the research process.

**Authors' Contributions:** The article is authored solely by one individual.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** Ethical committee approval is not required for this study.

**Financial Support:** No financial support was obtained for this research.

**Conflict of Interest:** There are no potential conflicts of interest related to this study.

**Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı:** Bu makale, orijinal veriler temelinde hazırlanmış özgün bir araştırma makalesidir. Daha önce hiçbir yerde yayımlanmamış olup başka bir yere yayımlanmak üzere gönderilmemiştir. Yazar, araştırma sürecinde etik ilkelere ve kurallara uymuştur.

**Yazarların Katkı Düzeyleri:** Makale tek yazarlıdır.

**Etik Komite Onayı:** Bu çalışma için etik kurul onayı gerekmemektedir.

**Finansal Destek:** Bu araştırma için herhangi bir finansal destek alınmamıştır.

**Çıkar Çatışması:** Bu çalışma ile ilgili herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

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