

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC VIOLENCE EXPERIENCES AND STRATEGIES: THE
CASE OF WOMEN'S CENTERS IN ANKARA

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THE CASE OF WOMEN'S CENTERS IN ANKARA**

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC VIOLENCE EXPERIENCES AND STRATEGIES: THE CASE OF WOMEN'S CENTERS IN ANKARA

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Economic violence against women encompasses all behaviors and attitudes that cause economic harm to women. Acts of economic violence include restricting women's access to financial resources, damaging or seizing their assets, and hindering their participation in education and employment. This study aims to understand women's experiences of economic violence and coping strategies through interviews conducted with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Women's Center members. The research questions "How do women's experiences of economic violence shape their economic independence and participation in financial decision-making processes?" and "To what extent do socio-economic differences affect women's coping strategies against economic violence?" guide this master's thesis. By integrating data obtained from fieldwork with existing relevant literature, the thesis seeks to amplify the voices of women who have experienced violence, strengthen solidarity among women, disseminate the strategies devised by women, and serve as a resource for combating economic violence, an area with limited research in Turkey.

Keywords: economic violence, coping strategies, patriarchal family, economic independence, women empowerment

ÖZ

KADINLARIN EKONOMİK ŞİDDET DENEYİMLERİ VE STRATEJİLERİ: ANKARA KADIN LOKALLERİ ÖRNEĞİ

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Kadına yönelik ekonomik şiddet, kadına ekonomik zarar veren tutum ve davranışların tümüdür. Kadının finansal kaynaklara erişiminin engellenmesi, sahip olduğu kaynaklara zarar verilmesi ya da el konulması ve eğitim ve istihdama katılımının engellenmesi, ekonomik şiddete örnek eylemler arasındadır. Bu çalışma, Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kadın Lokallerine üye katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmeler üzerinden kadınların ekonomik şiddet tecrübeleri ve baş etme stratejilerini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. “Kadınların ekonomik şiddet deneyimleri, ekonomik bağımsızlık ve finansal karar alma süreçlerine katılımları üzerinden nasıl şekillenmektedir?” ve “Kadınların ekonomik şiddetle baş etme stratejilerinde sosyo-ekonomik farklılıklar ne derece etkilidir?” araştırma soruları üzerinden şekillenen yüksek lisans tezi, saha çalışmasından elde ettiği verileri mevcut ilgili yazın ile bir araya getirerek şiddet mağduru kadınlara ses olmayı, kadınlar arası dayanışmayı güçlendirmeyi, kadınların ürettiği stratejileri duyurmayı ve Türkiye’de hakkında oldukça sınırlı çalışma yapılmış olan ekonomik şiddet ile mücadele konusunda bir kaynak olmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ekonomik şiddet, baş etme stratejileri, patriyarkal aile, ekonomik bağımsızlık, kadın güçlenmesi



To my sisters

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (Krug et al., 2002, p. 5). Among the various forms of violence, violence against women is a particularly pervasive issue that spans across cultures and societies, manifesting through physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse. The societal and global factors that support such violence include deeply entrenched patriarchal norms, gender discrimination, and economic inequalities that are perpetuated by cultural and legal frameworks. These factors not only facilitate violence but also contribute to its normalization within communities and nations.

The impact of violence on women is profound and multifaceted. Physically and emotionally, the repercussions can range from immediate injury to long-term psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress. Economically, violence against women often leads to increased financial dependency, restricted access to employment, and loss of income, further diminishing their capacity to escape abusive environments.

Among the forms of violence against women, economic violence is particularly insidious and frequently overlooked. Defined as the control of a woman’s ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources, economic violence diminishes her financial independence and socioeconomic status. This form of violence manifests in various ways, including but not limited to, restricting access to finances, controlling

the flow of money within the household, theft of property, denying the right to work, and exploiting the labor of women without just compensation.

Despite its severe implications, economic violence often remains invisible because it overlaps with the social norms and legal structures that frame economic relationships within families and societies. As such, it is commonly normalized and accepted as part of gendered roles where women are not entitled to financial autonomy or equal economic participation. This invisibility is compounded by the global nature of gendered economic disparity, making economic violence a universally pervasive form of discrimination that is seldom addressed with the urgency it demands.

Economic violence arises when the perpetrator (i.e. partner, family member, friend or a person from the inner circle) attempts to secure dominance in the existing hierarchy by exerting full control over a woman's financial resources and activities. By controlling the household's financial situation, making financial decisions without consulting her, and blocking her independent access to money and property for personal and domestic needs, women subjected to economic violence are unable to secure independent sources of livelihood (e.g., property and regular income-earning jobs) and become dependent on the abusive partner or a household member.

1.1. The Aim of the Thesis

The primary aim of this thesis is to analyze the experiences of economic violence among women from different socio-economic backgrounds and the strategies they develop in response with examples from Turkey, with a detailed examination centered on Ankara as a critical field study. Economic violence encompasses a range of manipulative and coercive behaviors that limit women's access to financial resources, severely impacting their economic independence and autonomy. This research seeks to delineate the various manifestations of economic violence, understand the coping strategies employed by women, and assess how socio-economic factors influence the prevalence and nature of this violence.

In delving into the intricacies of economic violence, this thesis endeavors to catalog and analyze the different acts that such violence can take. From controlling a

woman's ability to use or access money to sabotaging her employment opportunities and manipulating property ownership, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the economic barriers that women face. The exploration includes an in-depth look at how these behaviors are not merely instances of personal or isolated abuse, but rather indicative of broader systemic issues that allow such dynamics to persist within the Turkish context.

Particularly focusing on Ankara, the study examines the specific strategies that women employ to cope with economic violence. By understanding these strategies, the research hopes to shed light on how women from different socio-economic backgrounds navigate these challenges. The insights gained from this localized context are used to reflect upon the broader situation across Turkey, aiming to offer generalized conclusions that can inform national strategies and interventions.

Moreover, this thesis assesses the role of various socio-economic factors, including educational attainment, employment status, and familial dynamics, in shaping the experiences of economic violence. It investigates how these factors either exacerbate or mitigate the conditions leading to economic abuse, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved. The interplay between these socio-economic elements offers a layered perspective on the systemic nature of economic violence and highlights the critical areas where interventions could be most effective. The ultimate goal of this research is to contribute significantly to the discourse on gender equality and women's economic empowerment in Turkey. By offering detailed empirical insights and theoretical analysis, this study supports the development of targeted policies and practices that aim to enhance women's economic security and independence. The findings from this study are intended to pave the way for future research and policy-making, advocating for robust interventions that can address and mitigate economic violence against women.

Through this comprehensive exploration, the thesis not only highlights the specific challenges faced by women in Ankara but also illuminates the broader patterns of economic violence across Turkey. This approach establishes a foundation for understanding the experiences of economic violence among women with different

socioeconomic patterns while emphasizing the importance of creating solidarity networks and systemic changes for women's awareness and empowerment.

1.2. Significance of the Research

This thesis holds significant value as it addresses the critical and underexplored issue of economic violence against women in Turkey. Economic violence is a type of domestic violence that often occurs within the private space and is predominantly perpetrated by men, who are frequently seen as the "head of the household." This dynamic makes it difficult for victimized women to objectively assess the extent of the violence they experience. Victims often lack awareness of the abuse, leading them to normalize and trivialize their experiences, thereby keeping the issue hidden. For women who do not have access to independent sources of income, developing strategies to cope with economic violence within the household is of vital importance.

The field study conducted as part of this research is pivotal as it provides a platform for women to share their experiences and coping strategies in a focused group setting. By engaging directly with victims of economic violence, the study aims to provide a space where women can articulate their experiences in their own words, thus contributing to a collective awareness of economic violence. This approach not only helps in illuminating the personal dimensions of economic violence but also emphasizes the structural and systemic issues that allow such violence to persist.

The significance of this research extends beyond its academic contribution; it provides practical insights that can inform policy and intervention strategies aimed at mitigating economic violence against women. By highlighting specific coping strategies and the effectiveness of various socio-economic supports, the thesis offers guidance on how to better support women in managing and overcoming economic violence. The empirical data gathered from the field study in Ankara, while situated within the broader Turkish context, enriches the existing literature on economic violence and offers grounded insights that can inform future policies and interventions.

Additionally, this study raises awareness about economic violence. Economic violence often goes unrecognized and unaddressed by both legal frameworks and support services, and by shedding light on this issue, the thesis advocates for a more comprehensive approach to tackling all forms of violence against women.

In summary, the significance of this research lies in its ability to fill a crucial gap in the literature, provide empirical data from a local context with broader applicability, and offer practical insights that can inform policy and practice. The thesis not only contributes to academic scholarship but also plays a vital role in advancing discussions on women's rights and gender equality in Turkey and beyond. By exploring the intricate dynamics of economic violence and women's responses to it, this study paves the way for more informed, effective, and holistic approaches to addressing gender-based violence.

1.3. Background of the Study

Economic violence against women in Turkey presents a complex intersection of gender, economic disparity, and societal norms, deeply rooted in the structures of the household and influenced by the broader patriarchal and capitalist systems. This form of violence is characterized by male partners or male members of the household exerting control over women's financial resources and activities to secure dominance in the existing hierarchy. Such control manifests through overseeing household finances without consulting women, making unilateral financial decisions, and restricting women's independent access to money and property. This control not only cements the dependency of women on their abusers but also limits their ability to establish independent livelihoods, such as owning property or maintaining consistent income-generating activities.

The entrenchment of economic violence is closely tied to cultural, social, and religious norms that shape and sustain the gender roles within Turkish society. The reports on domestic violence against women in Turkey, published in 2009 (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2009) and 2015 (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2015) provide insights into economic violence

against women in Turkey. Economic violence, like other forms of violence, exhibits a complex nature. Hindering women from working or forcing them to quit their jobs was identified as the most prevalent act of economic violence, representing 23% in 2008 (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2009, p. 56) and 24% in 2014 (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2015, p. 100). The 2015 report delves deeper into the nuances of economic violence. It reveals that 30% of married women in Turkey have encountered such behaviors at some point, with 15% experiencing them within the past year. Notably, 9% of women reported not receiving money for household expenses, while 5% had their income withheld against their wishes (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2015, p. 101).

The prevailing patriarchal norms in society facilitate the normalization and invisibility of the violence women experience. Gender roles assign women as the sole responsible for household duties while hindering their participation in the public sphere. In this regard, spaces that enable women's participation in the public sphere facilitate their awareness and empowerment. Women's Centers affiliated with the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality serve the need for such spaces. Operating in various regions of Ankara with a nominal membership fee, these centers facilitate women's access while offering courses, seminars, and awareness-raising sessions to empower women. Additionally, bringing together members with similar socio-economic backgrounds at specified times during the week allows for shared experiences and the formation of solidarity networks, mitigating the potential loneliness women may feel due to their inability to share the violence they experience within the household. Therefore, the proliferation and enhancement of institutions such as women's centers are crucial for women's empowerment.

This thesis aims to examine women's experiences of economic violence and the coping strategies they develop in response to these experiences. Advocating the idea that socio-economic status influences the forms of economic violence experienced by women rather than their likelihood of experiencing economic violence, this study explores women's perceptions of economic violence, its impact on their economic independence, participation in financial decision-making within the household, and

how the strategies devised vary or converge based on socio-economic characteristics. The central research questions, "How do women's experiences of economic violence shape their economic independence and participation in financial decision-making processes?" and "To what extent do socio-economic differences affect women's coping strategies against economic violence?" guides the exploration. By integrating field data with relevant literature, this study seeks to give voice to women victims of violence, strengthen solidarity among women, raise awareness of the strategies they develop, and contribute to the scarce resources on combating economic violence in Turkey.

Moreover, this study discusses how the exploitation of domestic labor under capitalism exacerbates economic violence. Capitalist structures often undervalue domestic work—typically performed without pay by women—which further entrenches economic disparities and reinforces women's economic dependence. The domestic sphere becomes a site not only of economic exploitation but also of resistance as women navigate these complex dynamics.

In addressing these issues, the thesis not only maps the current landscape of economic violence against women in Turkey but also provides a critical analysis of how capitalist and patriarchal structures perpetuate this form of violence. It contributes to a better understanding of the broader social and economic systems that impact women's lives and offers a foundation for developing more effective interventions to support women facing economic violence.

1.4. The Plan of the Thesis

This thesis is designed to offer a comprehensive exploration into the economic violence experienced by women in Turkey, delving deeply into its manifestations, impacts, and the coping strategies employed by women. The narrative begins with an introduction that sets the stage for the study by framing economic violence within the broader societal and economic structures of Turkey. The introduction highlights the significance of the research, articulates the objectives, and establishes the methodological foundations that guide the subsequent chapters.

Following the introduction, the thesis unfolds through a series of interconnected chapters, each building upon the previous to enrich understanding and discussion around economic violence. The literature review follows the introduction, where a thorough analysis of existing research on economic violence is presented. This chapter critically examines theoretical frameworks and empirical studies relevant to economic violence, gender inequality, and the socioeconomic conditions that perpetuate such dynamics in Turkey. It identifies gaps in the current literature and sets the theoretical groundwork that supports the empirical research conducted in this study.

The methodology chapter details the qualitative research approach utilized in this study, describing the selection of Ankara as the field site and the rationale behind this choice. It explains the data collection methods, which include semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, elaborating on how these methods are suited to capture the nuanced experiences of women facing economic violence. The chapter also discusses the ethical considerations inherent in conducting research on sensitive topics such as violence against women.

The core of the thesis is presented in the findings (discussion) chapter, where the data gathered from the fieldwork is systematically explored. This chapter presents the types of economic violence encountered by participants and explores the coping strategies they develop in response to their experiences. It also assesses the influence of socio-economic factors on the experiences of economic violence among women in Ankara, providing a detailed examination of how these factors intersect with cultural norms to shape women's experiences and responses. This chapter offers a comprehensive understanding of the implications of the study's results, considering how they contribute to the existing body of knowledge and what they reveal about the societal and economic mechanisms that sustain economic violence against women in Turkey. It also discusses potential interventions and policy implications derived from the findings, aiming to provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders involved in combating gender-based violence.

The thesis concludes with a summary and recommendations chapter. This final chapter synthesizes the key insights gained from the research, outlines the

contributions to the field, discusses the limitations of the study, and suggests directions for future research. It aims to provide a conclusive reflection on the significance of the findings for both academic audiences and practitioners in the field of gender studies and public policy.

By weaving these chapters together in a narrative format, the thesis ensures a cohesive and comprehensive treatment of economic violence against women in Turkey, providing depth and clarity to the investigation and highlighting the complex interplay of individual, cultural, and systemic factors that contribute to this pervasive issue. This structured approach allows for a thorough exploration of the topic, ensuring that each aspect of the issue is critically examined and discussed.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This section aims to establish a bridge between fieldwork and literature by addressing the concept of economic violence and related terms. Additionally, concepts and theories in the literature are important for shaping the field research because this thesis aims to contribute to the current literature on economic violence, which I believe does not receive enough attention in academia, and to reveal the strategies put forward by women who are aware or unaware of experiencing economic violence to empower and protect themselves.

To understand a problem, examining the factors that cause and reinforce its emergence is necessary. Therefore, in this chapter, the concept of violence is first addressed. Subsequently, frequently interchangeable terms related to violence in literature and daily usage are examined to prevent the duplication resulting from this misuse. The misuse of concepts can lead to ignorance of the magnitude of violence as a societal problem and can also result in the neglect of certain types of violence while drawing attention to others.

Economic violence can be defined as the systematic use of financial mechanisms by perpetrators to establish domination over women. With the impact of labor exploitation and globalization, economic violence becomes an increasing threat to women, limiting their capacities and potential and rendering them vulnerable to different forms of violence (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020, p. 228). The continuation of this chapter aims to examine the relationship between globalization and economic violence to emphasize the importance of adopting a comprehensive perspective towards the issue. Finally, studies and data on economic violence in Turkey are examined to conclude this section.

2.2. Clarification on Terms

Discussions on gender-based violence do not have a long history in the literature. Since the 1970s, the increasing visibility of the feminist movement, the proliferation of civil society and grassroots movements for women's rights, the establishment of gender studies and women's studies departments at universities, and the generation of data on violence against women have paved the way for the scientific examination of the issue. This data production has also increased awareness of different forms of violence (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2020, p. 9). The diversity of forms of violence sometimes leads to discrepancies in the correct use of concepts; this situation often hinders accurate data production, understanding of the problem, and the adoption of correct solutions. Therefore, this chapter examines some concepts used interchangeably in the literature and daily life to address this issue.

2.2.1. Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term used to describe a form of violence that targets a person due to their gender and affects individuals who do/do not identify as the same gender. While physical violence may be the primary association with the term "violence," gender-based violence encompasses non-physical forms of violence as well (i.e, psychological, verbal, sexual, economic, and digital violence), impacting not only a person's bodily integrity but also their mental well-being and life practices. Despite the fact that they substitute each other in daily usage, or it is problematically used as "gender-based violence against women", they are not synonyms. GBV encompasses violence against women and any forms of violence experienced by gender-conforming and non-conforming individuals. At this point, it is essential to highlight that GBV includes violence that LGBTIQ+ individuals experience due to heteronormativity and cisnormativity, rigid and hierarchical ideas about sex, gender, bodies, and sexuality (OurWatch, 2023).

Some scholars argue that the term itself is problematic regarding its definition and usage by international actors, including international organizations (IOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and advocacy groups. Leach and Humphreys

(2007) espouse that all violence forms are gendered and add that defining a form of violence as “gender-based” implies there are other forms of violence that are not gender related: the term suggests that the violence is not necessarily gendered, and it can occur separately from structural gender inequalities (s. 108). On the other hand, Cornwall (1997) argues that alternating the term “gender” with “women” in the literature brings about the perception of GBV as violence by males against females and brings the discussion to “men-in-general/women-in-general” level (s. 8). Sophie Read-Hamilton (2014) supports Cornwall through bringing her perspective as a humanitarian worker, arguing the term needs to “focus on a wider range of gendered and sexualized violence” (p. 6) to address the violence, especially in communities affected by armed conflict and disasters, such as sexual torture against LGBTIQ+ individuals, forced recruitment of males into armed forces, or any form of child abuse (p. 8).

2.2.2. Violence Against Women

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) issued by the United Nations General Assembly 1993 accepts violence against women as a sub-category of GBV. It defines the term as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104, 1993). Violence against women and girls, in other words domestic violence, is divided into many sub-forms in the literature. These include intimate partner violence, sexual violence, femicide, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, child marriage, forced marriage, and online or technology-facilitated violence (UN Women, 2020).

According to data from the United Nations Women's Unit (UN Women), one in every three women worldwide experiences violence against women. However, only forty percent of these individuals seek support from various channels after experiencing violence (UN Women, 2013). Dominant social and cultural norms in societies, a woman's family structure, the resources she possesses, and her capacity

to utilize these resources for her own life led women to develop different responses to the violence they experience (Beşpınar et al., 2020, p. 193).

2.2.3. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) refers to the desire of men to exert control over women within relationships (Davis & Hagen, 1992; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Yllo, 1993). It is often referred to as "intimate partner violence within the family" (Bonnet & Whittaker, 2015, p. 265), encompassing violence between couples as well as violence inflicted by adults on children and the elderly (Tolan et al., 2006). According to the data provided in the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) 2018 report (UNFPA, 2019), 18% of girls aged 15 and older experience intimate partner violence from current or former partners.

The recognition of IPV as a significant concern emerged in the early 1970s in the Western world, coinciding with establishing the first women's shelters in the late 1960s. Following these initial efforts, researchers conducted statistical studies involving women residing in shelters. These studies revealed a range of violent behaviors, spanning from physical assaults severe enough to require hospitalization to instances of threats and psychological abuse (Eisikovits et al., 2004, p. 739). However, a notable issue arises in the literature concerning the narrow scope of the definition of IPV. While it predominantly covers physical and psychological acts, this narrow interpretation may fail to capture the problem's complexity in reality fully.

Scholars argue that broadening the definition may introduce various challenges, potentially diluting the concept's core meaning (Eaton, et al., 2008; Merrill & Wolfe, 2000). Moreover, expanding the definition may inadvertently downplay the severity of physical violence, with some suggesting that other forms of violence serve as precursors to physical violence rather than constituting violence in their own right (Eisikovits et al., 2004, p. 730).

2.3. Economic Violence

Domestic violence often remains hidden due to its occurrence in private spaces, making it difficult to determine the extent of the violence and the damage it causes, thus often leading to the neglect of the harm inflicted on the victim (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2020, p. 154). While physical violence, even when perpetrated in intimate settings, is more likely to result in visible effects, making it a less concealed form of violence, other forms of violence are more difficult to detect, thereby remaining hidden. Consequently, physical violence tends to receive more attention and discussion due to its tangible nature. However, this tendency can lead to the trivialization and normalization of other forms of violence, obscuring the challenges faced by women (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020, p. 225).

Although IPV is considered mostly physical or emotional, male partners may attempt to control women's financial resources and activity completely to guarantee their dominance in the power structure. An intimate partner may resort to economic violence by controlling family finances, deciding on financial matters without taking women's opinions, and denying women access to money and properties independently to meet personal and domestic needs (Fawole, 2008, p. 168). Economic violence is defined in the literature as a form of domestic violence that affects women's daily lives and livelihoods (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020, p. 228), but its scope extends beyond this definition. Women require financial resources to lead a dignified life, and the absence of these resources does not only result in income poverty. At this juncture, it is imperative to introduce Amartya Sen's "capability approach," as he critiques the prevailing literature for its exclusive focus on income (Sen, 1989). He argues that poverty signifies not merely a lack of income but the absence of fundamental capabilities necessary for functioning. Sen distinguishes between functioning and capability, akin to the disparity between achievement and the freedom to achieve. Functionings encompass various states of being and doing, while capabilities denote the alternative combinations of functionings that individuals have the freedom to choose (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993).

Economic violence mainly occurs through economic exploitation, employment sabotage and economic control (Ohlan, 2021, p. 1). Women are deprived of the

necessary economic opportunities to lead a life free from violence by perpetrators; through the utilization of financial resources as a means of coercion, women are subjected to systematic threats, control, and intimidation (Altınay & Arat, 2007; Fawole, 2008). Economic exploitation includes taking women's money, damaging their property, refusing to contribute to domestic spending equally, and limiting access to cash, funds, and credit facilities. It prevents women from gaining independent means of livelihood (i.e. property and regular income) and makes their dependency on abusive partners inevitable. Studies show that the lack of housing and income are significant reasons cited by women who leave shelters and recouple with their abusive partners (Johnson, 1992; Menard, 2001; Schechter, 1982).

Economic sabotage may show itself as restricting or undermining women's participation in labor market, preventing them from getting proper education or job training, and using "intentional tactics" (Sanders, 2015, p. 6), including physical or emotional abuse before job interviews, harassment at workplace, destroying study materials, and rejecting to share care and domestic responsibilities (Kenney & Brown, 1997; Ptacek, 1997; Riger et al., 2000; Swanberg & Macke, 2006; Swanberg et al., 2005; Tolman & Raphael, 2000).

Previous studies indicate that in regions where gender inequality and patriarchal ideology are prevalent, such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, women's participation in employment increases their likelihood of experiencing violence (Ecevit & Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2020, p. 162). As women become involved in employment, their social statuses change, and they become part of the public sphere. However, when this change begins to threaten power dynamics that favor men in society, women may be forced to withdraw from the public sphere. (Kaukinen & Powers, 2015, p. 241).

Economic violence is reinforced by cultural norms and patriarchal values of the society— through subordinating women's involvement in the public sphere and restricting their economic independence, economic sabotage confines women within the private sphere and entitles them to domestic roles and responsibilities. Studies show that some women in Africa are not allowed to work, while others are allowed

only for a period or certain days of the week by their partners (Fawole et al., 2005; World Health Organization, 2002). Moreover, in the United States, intimate male partners force women to quit their jobs (Zink & Still, 2004) or use some tactics to ensure women cannot make money (Raphael, 2002; Swanberg, Logan, & Macke, 2005). In this regard, Yasemin Dildar (2015) has examined the factors influencing women's labor force participation in Turkey through the lenses of patriarchal norms and religiosity. Emphasizing the negative impact of increasing patriarchal norms and religiosity on women's withdrawal from the labor force, Dildar underscores the complexity of socio-cultural dynamics affecting women's labor force participation, highlighting the need for further research to comprehend these dynamics.

Economic control means restricting spending for basic needs (i.e., food and clothing), denying women access to financial, agricultural, and healthcare services or overcontrolling their spending, and exclusion from financial decision-making. Although, in some, it may be seen that women have a comfortable life with their children and men provide for their needs, they might still have no voice in the family budget and how it should be spent (Fawole, 2008, p. 169).

There are many social, economic, and cultural reasons for women to continue in relationships where they experience economic violence (such as maintaining a romantic relationship or staying in the family home). Therefore, it is essential to avoid generalizations, and the results obtained considering the social conditions of the researched geography should be evaluated within these specific conditions. Studies by Dalal in India (2011) and Heath in Bangladesh (2014) emphasize the importance of considering social conditions. In both studies, it was observed that women who participated in employment were more likely to experience violence; Dalal, for instance, found out that women working from home were less likely to experience violence compared to women working outside the home, and part-time working women were less likely to experience violence compared to full-time working women. When examining the literature on economic violence, the most important conclusions to be drawn are that generalizations about the causes and consequences of violence do not necessarily yield accurate results and that economic violence exposes women to other forms of violence as well).

2.4. Globalization and Economic Violence

Gender-based economic violence is directly related to labor exploitation, with women who participate in the workforce but lack any security being more susceptible to economic violence (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020, p. 228). Even if women do not participate in employment, they are still exploited because the unpaid labor they provide within the household is the most valuable product of the capitalist market (Federici, 2022, p. 19). Hidden labor within the household encompasses providing physical, emotional, and sexual services to paid working household members, preparing them to work the next day efficiently. Additionally, for the smooth operation of the capitalist system, women give birth to new workers, raising them to fulfill all the responsibilities expected of them by the system when the time comes. Furthermore, women bear the entire emotional and spiritual burden of the family; ensuring the well-being of all family members is almost considered a woman's innate responsibility. However, as Federici points out, all these emotional responsibilities and services expected of her almost turn the woman into a slave (p. 25). The disregard for women's labor and the enslavement of women are based on the capitalist division of labor, one of the fundamental purposes of the concept of family. Engels defines the family and its unquestionable privacy as the "essence of capitalist ideology" and argues that capitalism rose through the institution of the family.

Globalization is a significant result for understanding the economic violence experienced by women due to its consequences, such as cheap and ununionized labor, poverty, and the transfer of social service responsibilities from states to families, in other words, women. In the 1970s, the contraction of markets and intensified competition led Western countries to abandon traditional production methods and embrace technological advancements. During this time, changes in governments in countries like the UK, the US, France, and Germany, with new liberal figures taking the helm, accelerated the pace of globalization (Ecevit, 1998, p. 32).

Neoliberalism necessitated the existence of a strong free market. Therefore, steps were taken towards the liberalization of trade, financial capital, flexible production processes, and the globalization of production. Before the 1970s, a vertical relationship between the colonial powers and their dependent colonies in Africa, Latin America and Asia was the dominant pattern in global economy. However, as a result of the transition from import substitution to export oriented policies, production became international, and companies became cross-national. Export-oriented policies led many developing countries to produce not for domestic but international market (Pyle & Ward, 2003, p. 463).

Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) emerged in the 1970s to facilitate the implementation of neoliberalism. The aim was to ease the participation of developing and underdeveloped countries in the new production process, enable them to repay their debts to Western states, and keep them within this global production process. The power and influence of the IMF and the World Bank varied in each country depending on the amount of capital provided (Elson, 1992, p. 29).

Beginning from 1970s, multi-national companies (MNCs) and international organizations like World Bank, IMF and UN started to provide loans for SAPs in African, Latin America, Caribbean, and Asian countries in order to achieve total liberalization and free market globally (Pyle & Ward, 2003, p. 463). Besides the changes in production and supply chain, “structural adjustment policies” began to take place in the capitalist literature about the third world countries to change their market strategy and enable them to adapt the new capitalist order easily. Countries whose economies were severely affected from the oil crisis in 1970s were constrained to implement those programs to pay off their debt. In that atmosphere, MNCs and INGOs gained a dominance, and it resulted in their deliberate interventions over domestic affairs of developing countries (p. 464).

Occurring as an uneven process, globalization forced many countries to integrate themselves to the new capitalist system hastily. Efforts of MNCs to provide homogeneous solutions to heterogeneous contexts (Lingam, 2005, p. 8) caused a detachment from historical, political, economic, and cultural realities of these

geographies. Developing countries succeeded it in varying degrees, that is to say, this led existing inequalities to rise and sharpen.

The globalization of capital and labor markets has led to a decline in production, an increase in unemployment, and the wastage of existing resources in developing and underdeveloped countries. The main victims of unemployment, poverty, and reduced social services have been women and girls (Ecevit, 1998; Joekes, 1987; Nash, 1990). Globalization draws its strength from four main ideas: cheap labor, long work hours, absences of job security and right to strike (Elson & Pearson, 1986, p. 72). Women who fell into the grip of the economic crisis began to join the workforce in the mid-1980s due to declining household incomes. The demand for cheap labor emerged in countries where structural adjustment policies were implemented, and an export-oriented development model was adopted, leading to increased market demand for women. Women who started working in sectors such as piecework, domestic service, textiles, clothing, toys, and shoes (Nash, 1995, p. 156) were forced to accept wages 20% to 50% lower than men working in the same sectors (Rios, 1995, p. 197). UNICEF (2007) data shows that women carry 51 percent of work burden in industrialized economies, while the number is 55 percent in developing countries.

The urgent need for cheap labor force led to the increasing employment of women in some sectors more than men— in other words, “feminization of the labor force” (Elson & Pearson, 1986). The increase in the proportion of women in the workforce and the higher employment of women than men in specific sectors have been scrutinized by many researchers (Elson & Pearson, 1986; Safa, 1981; Standing, 1989). However, opportunities for secure employment and wages in the formal sector are limited due to inflationary policies. Women seeking solutions to protect their households from the effects of poverty have been compelled to turn to the informal sector. The informal sector refers to work activities that lack any official employment contract, social security, fringe benefits, or insurance coverage (Connolly, 1985, p. 59). The presence of women in the informal sector and the nature of their work contribute to the marginalization of the workforce. The tasks performed by women in this sector generally fall outside the purview of regulations, lack a minimum wage guarantee, and provide little protection for workers against market

fluctuations. Examples of such work include childcare, elderly care, domestic cleaning, and piecework. As women become marginalized in the labor market, they become vulnerable to economic violence (Gündüz Hoşgör, 2020, p. 237). At the same time, employers secure themselves by having access to a flexible and inexpensive labor force that is always available (Allen & Wolkowitz, 1987).



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This section aims to delineate the process of formulating the thesis. The thesis investigates economic violence, the coping strategies developed in response to it, and how these strategies both resemble and differ from each other based on the differing backgrounds of the victims of violence. Primarily shaped through the fieldwork, this thesis examines how the coping strategies of individuals affected by economic violence manifest within and across different socio-economic regions of Ankara. In designing the fieldwork, I aimed to ensure diversity in the data collected by conducting semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with members of locales situated in socio-economically diverse areas of Ankara.

In this thesis section, I first elucidate how I formulated my research question before embarking on fieldwork. Subsequently, I elaborate on selecting the most suitable methodology for answering this question and why I considered this method the most appropriate. Lastly, I provide a comprehensive account of my six-month-long fieldwork, incorporating my observations regarding the regions where the locales are situated, the general characteristics of these locales, and the profiles of the participants.

3.2. Formulation of the Research Problem

The research problem might be originated from “a void in the literature, a conflict in research results in the literature, or topics that have been neglected in the literature” (Cresswell, 2014, p. 72). On the other hand, a research question may arise from a

problem encountered in various aspects of the researcher's daily life (i.e., work life, private life, social and romantic relationships). In formulating the research question for this thesis, I attempted to problematize an issue that caught my attention in my daily life by exploring the literature.

The starting point for this research was the pattern I observed among women in my social circle who graduated and started working, quickly withdrew from employment after getting married, or never entered the workforce since I have completed my undergraduate degree five years ago. The challenges of finding high-skilled jobs, gender-based discrimination in the workplace, hostile working environment, low wages, and limited benefits, along with the rapidly increasing cost of living, contribute to the trend of women withdrawing from employment.

The point that makes this topic compelling and necessitates academic research is that for women, withdrawing from the workforce is not merely about losing economic independence, just as participation in the workforce is not solely about gaining it. Women's employment engagement provides them with economic autonomy and financial management skills and facilitates their inclusion in the public sphere. The patriarchal order predefines roles for both men and women; in this order, men represent the household in the public sphere, earning money and dealing with external matters, while women are designated as “homemakers”, responsible for all household duties, including emotional work. Consequently, women's mobility is greatly restricted. Women's participation into the workforce enhances their mobility and visibility in the public sphere, transforming the balance between the public and private spheres, and thus holds significance in terms of women's rights advocacy.

According to the Household Labor Force Survey of 2021, the labor force participation rate for women aged 15 and over is 32.8%, whereas for men, it stands at 70.3% (TURKSTAT, 2023). The proportion of women who have completed at least one level of education increased by approximately 15% from 72.6% in 2008 to 87.3% in 2021. When examining the labor force participation rate based on educational attainment, it is observed that both men and women show an increase in labor force participation corresponding to their level of education. However, women's rate remains lower than men's across all educational levels.

Current statistics on the reasons for not being in the labor force (TURKSTAT, 2023) reveal that the most common reason for men not participating in the workforce is retirement eligibility (41%), while for women, the most prevalent reason is engagement in household chores (43%), a factor absent among men. The data illustrates the extent to which women's labor force participation is intertwined with the social norms generated and strengthened by patriarchy. The role assigned to women as the "caretaker" poses a significant barrier to their involvement in the public sphere while also making it inevitable for them to shoulder many responsibilities within the household alone.

The notion that women cannot participate in the workforce due to engagement in household chores is a product of the patriarchal system prevailing in society. The belief that women cannot join the workforce due to household chores has been taught to women to ensure the continuity of the patriarchal order; it is not a natural consequence but an artificial construct. The fundamental point that propelled me to research and address this issue is my assertion that economic violence exists along a spectrum, and women find themselves within this spectrum irrespective of their educational levels and socio-economic statuses. The reason for the changes experienced by women and family structure independently from the educational and socio-economic levels of individuals lies in the fact that the roles within the family and the family structure itself have been influenced by the development of capitalist economy and the concept of private property, impacting the entire society.

In his book "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", Engels (1975) examines the historical transformation of the concept of family. He argues that with the development of capitalist society and the change in the means of production, the family, which was once a social structure, gradually lost its social value and became relegated to a "private service" (p. 137). In the pre-capitalist era, the family structure had a communal significance, where tasks such as housework and childcare undertaken by women held social importance, akin to the responsibilities held by men, and were regarded as public duties. However, with the advent of industrialization and the transition of means of production into private ownership, the family structure changed. Household tasks became disconnected from

social production and took on a secluded, private nature. As the visibility of women diminished, men became the sole link between the family and the outside world, granting them a formidable advantage. In the modern patriarchal family structure, women are relegated to the role of caregivers, isolated from society, and provided care in a manner akin to slavery, forming the foundation of modern society.

The status change experienced by women within the patriarchal family structure, as expressed by Engels (1975), is a common issue for all women regardless of the branches of business (p. 137). The woman working as a domestic slave at home is forced into the domination of the man because she cannot achieve economic freedom. On the other hand, the woman who enters the workforce to earn money cannot fulfill her responsibilities at home, leading to both domestic violence and a sense of moral responsibility returning to her. This thesis argues that all women occupy a place within the spectrum of economic violence. However, the strategies women develop to cope with this violence vary depending on their socio-economic status. Shaped around the question of "What kind of strategies do women develop to cope with economic violence, and to what extent do the implementation of these strategies show similarities/differences based on the socio-economic status of women?", this thesis aims to create a typology of violence and resistance based on data obtained from field research.

3.3. Selecting the Method

While designing this thesis, I envisioned it to be a guide that amplifies the voices of women experiencing economic violence and sheds light on the strategies they develop to cope with and empower themselves against this violence. Therefore, this thesis should go beyond a desk-based research and listen to the voices of the women. As Creswell's definition of qualitative research (2007), it should have "used an emerging approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes" (p. 37). Qualitative research was a better option than quantitative research to answer the questions this thesis asks since the data obtained at the end of the research would convey participants' experiences firsthand and provide the

necessary signals to find the answer to the research question in a complex social setting where many factors are interrelated. In the social sciences, the qualitative method is preferred to hear suppressed voices, to encourage people to tell their stories in their social spaces without any expectations, and to eliminate power relationships (p. 40). When quantitative measures and numerical data fall short of reflecting the complexity of the problem, qualitative methods emerge as a more suitable approach for the research question. Qualitative research focuses on the uniqueness of individuals, their emotions, and experiences, enabling a comprehensive examination of the problem and its responses.

One of the most significant achievements this thesis aims to accomplish is enabling women to speak out against the violence normalized by society. In Turkey, women's presence in social life is controlled and restricted by traditional norms, customs, and practices. These norms, supported by religious values, also justify the unequal power relationship between men and women (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2012, p. 2745). The gradual detachment of the family institution from the public sphere and its acceptance as a purely private structure contribute to making the domination exerted on women within the family an intimate matter that should not spill over into daily life. Many women who do not receive the necessary social and legal support in the face of violence they experience find themselves normalizing, simplifying, and accepting the violence. One of the challenges of this fieldwork was expecting participants to speak with me, someone outside their social circles, about a phenomenon which is preferred not to be disclosed by society. Therefore, there was a need to create a safe environment where participants with similar social settings could come together and discuss the unspoken issues. For this reason, I decided to conduct focus group research in my fieldwork.

One of the essential features of focus group discussions is providing participants with a "safe environment where they can share ideas, beliefs, and attitudes in the company of people from the same socio-economic, ethnic, and gender backgrounds" (Madriz, 2003, p. 364). In this safe environment, participants engage in interactive discussions with each other under the guidance of a moderator, generating a flow of data that may not be achievable in individual interviews. As individuals share their views,

they also hear the perspectives of others, which allows them to reconsider their own opinions based on what they hear. At times, focus group discussions encourage individuals who may prefer not to speak up, thereby fostering inclusivity. One of the most unique aspects of focus groups is that they do not aim to reach a consensus on ideas put forward; instead, the emergence of diverse viewpoints on a common topic creates a unique dataset for the researcher (Hennik, 2014, p. 31).

3.4. Participant Recruitment & Site Selection

In qualitative research, the random selection method commonly used in quantitative studies is not appropriate; this is because the aim of qualitative research is "not to infer but to understand, not to generalize but determine the range, and not to make statements about the population but to provide insights about how people in the groups perceive a situation" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 66). Participants in qualitative research represent more than just numbers; therefore, selection should be based on purposive recruitment involving individuals who possess the necessary characteristics for the research, have relevant experiences related to the research topic, and have the potential to share their perspectives deeply on the topic under discussion. At the end of the recruitment process, the individuals included in the research are referred to as "information-rich participants" (Hennik, 2014, p. 41) because these individuals are the ones who can provide the most accurate information about the research issues.

There are various recruitment strategies for the purposive sampling process, and multiple strategies can be used together based on the requirements of the research. I needed to meet people from different social settings for my field research. Still, at the same time, I needed an intermediary person or institution to connect me with these individuals. Expecting individuals to disclose household issues to a stranger sincerely was not realistic; on the other hand, as a young, unmarried researcher who was not personally affected by the problem this research studies on a large scale, I was not someone with whom participants could establish an immediate rapport. Therefore, I contacted the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Women and Family Unit Directorate, with whom I had previously conducted fieldwork and closely followed their work.

The Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Women and Family Services Directorate was established in 2021 to provide quality services to women, youth, and children. This Directorate comprises five units: the Family and Life Centers Branch Directorate, the Children's Services Branch Directorate, the Marriage Directorate, the Women and Family Branch Directorate, and the Administrative and Financial Affairs Branch Directorate. The Women and Family Branch Directorate provides services to support and empower women aged 18 and over in Ankara in terms of their personal, physical, mental, social, cultural, economic, and educational well-being. Affiliated with the Directorate; Women's Shelters, Women's Counseling Centers, and Women's Centers aim to facilitate women's access to urban services and increase their participation in local mechanisms by developing and implementing women-centered policies.

According to the official definition on the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality's website, Women's Centers were established "to support and empower women, who are the fundamental pillar of the social structure in Ankara aged 18 and over, in terms of their physical, mental, social, cultural, and educational well-being. Women's Centers are programmed as centers for enhancing social communication, supporting women in sports and healthy living, raising awareness about issues they face, providing problem-oriented approaches, and offering expert-supported training, seminars, and panels to achieve success in various fields" (Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, 2022). In addition to academic and artistic activities and sports activities, Women's Centers also offer various services such as social awareness campaigns, entertainment events, excursions, health screening programs, and family counselling. Participants can apply for membership at the Centers by submitting a photocopy of their ID and two passport-sized photographs and completing their membership by paying the annual membership fee with a credit card during registration.

Considering my thesis research and the profile of the participants I wanted to interview, Women's Centers seemed to be the most suitable option. There are several reasons for this; firstly, Women's Centers operate in 21 regions in Ankara, providing an excellent opportunity to ensure diversity among target participants in the field

research. Secondly, Women's Centers inherently fulfill several of the recruitment strategies mentioned above: their affiliation with the municipality gives them the status of official service, while the influence of the center managers and trainers on the participants facilitates their positioning as gatekeepers. Finally, gathering at the Centers and increasing interaction indirectly fosters the creation of an informal network of solidarity among members of the Centers. Especially considering that participants from socioeconomically weaker areas tend to have low participation in public spaces, the Centers serve as socialization hubs, providing safe spaces where women with similar experiences can share and empower each other within a natural setting.

When selecting the centers to work with, I aimed to ensure demographic and socio-economic diversity among the participants I could interview. Therefore, I chose four regions where I intended to conduct focus group discussions: Çankaya, Cebeci, Sincan, and Altındağ neighborhoods. I prepared an information note explaining the objectives of my thesis and the nature of my study, which I then submitted to the municipality. I obtained the contact information of the managers of the centers operating in these neighborhoods, namely Çankaya, Şafaktepe, Harikalar Diyarı, and Altındağ, and reached out to them. Only the Çankaya center declined my request for interviews. Further details regarding this matter are explained in the "Conducting a Fieldwork: Challenges & Opportunities" section.

3.4.1. Cebeci/ Şafaktepe Women's Center

Although Şafaktepe Women's Center is located in the Mamak district, according to both the center manager and the individuals I interviewed, most of the center's members reside in the Cebeci neighborhood. Therefore, it is essential to examine the demographic characteristics and history of the Cebeci neighborhood rather than the Mamak district to understand the dynamics of the Şafaktepe Women's Center.

In the 1920s, corresponding to the early years of the Republic, the Cebeci neighborhood, although physically close to Ulus, which was considered the city

center at that time, had not yet been integrated into urban life and remained unaffected by the rapid transformation experienced by the city following Ankara's designation as the capital. With the declaration of Ankara as the capital, the region known as Yenişehir, covering present-day Kızılay, Sıhhiye, and Maltepe neighborhoods, faced a housing shortage due to the rapid influx of migrants to the city. As a result, Cebeci began to grapple with the issue of unplanned urbanization from the late 1920s onwards, shaped by the intersection of planned city construction initiatives and the real-life needs of its inhabitants (Şenol Cantek & Zırh, 2014, p. 147)

In 1927, the municipal authorities, described as the Şehremaneti at the time and resembling the city government, constructed 291 houses in Cebeci and its surrounding area, designed according to modern architecture, to accommodate the families of civil servants and bureaucrats relocating to Ankara, particularly from cities like Istanbul and Izmir (p. 148). Although later incorporated into the capital city planning, Cebeci carved out a niche between old and new Ankara. Over time, it evolved into a buffer zone due to infrastructure development and the presence of public institutions such as universities, hospitals, and military establishments. These institutions also influenced the demographic profile of the neighborhood, which has been home to a diverse population, including academics, civil servants, bureaucrats, healthcare professionals, students, artists, and military personnel since the Republic era (p. 167).

Şafaktepe Women's Local has been serving female residents of the area since 2002. According to the 2023 data, the local has 2168 members, making it one of the locals with the highest membership affiliated with the Metropolitan Municipality. The local has ample physical facilities, including classrooms, a closed swimming pool, shower and changing rooms, and a kitchen. Additionally, the spacious garden of the local is used for outdoor sports activities during the summer months. The majority of the members are retired homemakers over the age of 60 from government institutions. Among the most preferred activities by the members, pilates classes stand out. Certified pilates instructors conduct group lessons for members on certain days of the week. While attending pilates classes, members do not bring any equipment except

for personal items (e.g., towels, water, spare clothing), as the local provides all necessary equipment for sports. Some members also bring their spouses to outdoor pilates classes, and others do not object to this practice, expressing that they do not feel uncomfortable. At this point, female members' not having any privacy concerns is essential for understanding the participant profile.

3.4.2. Altındağ/Altındağ Women's Center

Altındağ is one of the most significant districts representing old Ankara, so much so that the district's history aligns with the period when Ankara was the first settlement center (Altındağ Belediyesi, n.d.). Having a known history dating back to the Paleolithic era, Altındağ sheds light on all periods of Ankara's history. Established around Ankara Castle, the district served as the city's center until it was declared the capital in 1923. However, from 1923 onwards, the modernization movement that influenced the city and the urban planning implemented by the state gradually exacerbated the polarization between Old and New Ankara, leaving Altındağ under the influence of this cultural, social, and economic divergence (Aygül, 2014, p. 265). In the first ten years of the Republic, as the state carried out the modernization efforts of the capital and the new Ankara was built around Kavaklıdere-Çankaya in the southern part of the city, neglecting Altındağ in the north, the district found itself unprepared for the intense wave of migration the city would experience in the following years.

By the 1940s, the polarization between Old and New Ankara became even more pronounced; the difference between the two regions became more apparent socio-economically and culturally rather than in infrastructure. While Altındağ, as the center of the old city, continued to host the daily life practices of the local population, Yenışehir opened the doors to modern life for the elites and bureaucrats, introducing new consumption habits; luxury hotels and restaurants began to increase in number, cinemas and bookstores lined the streets, and radios began broadcasting (Batuman, 2013, p. 579). The intense urbanization in Yenışehir, starting in the 1950s, increased land prices and infrastructure costs, eliminating the possibility of middle and lower-class migrants becoming residents of the modern capital. Most of

Altındağ's population worked in "marginal jobs" such as domestic work, laundry services, selling simit (Turkish bread), or working as servants in government institutions due to financial constraints during this period (Aygül, 2014, p. 264). Consequently, many children were deprived of educational opportunities due to financial constraints, and the local population could not maintain primary hygiene conditions. As a result, Altındağ fell under the influence of a squatter settlement trend that would last until the 1980s, exacerbating existing social and spatial problems.

In addition, the 25-year tenure of former Ankara Metropolitan Mayor Melih Gökçek is highly significant in understanding Altındağ's social identity. Since coming to power in 1994, Gökçek has managed to reduce the impoverishing effects of neoliberalism and strengthen Islamist networks within civil society, uniting different right-wing ideologies under the umbrella of Islamism (Batuman, 2013, p. 588). Gökçek's pragmatic populist governance, marked by large-scale urban renewal projects and aid distribution, has left a significant mark on the quarter-century-long urban and social development of Altındağ.

Altındağ Women's Center, compared to other centers within the scope of this thesis, has more limited physical facilities. Located on the 5th floor of the Altındağ Municipality Building, the center is among those with the fewest members, with 176 members, according to 2023 data. The members who visit the center are primarily housewives aged between 35 and 60 who have never worked and belong to the middle-lower class socio-economically. The most popular courses at the center are pilates, painting, and Turkish classical music. Members do not need to bring additional materials to participate in these courses, as the center provides all materials.

3.4.3. Ümitköy & Çayyolu/Ümitköy Women's Center

Ümitköy and Çayyolu neighborhoods, despite not having a rooted history, have become centers within themselves, distant from the city center, and host an upper-middle-class population, referred to by the locals as a "respectable, safe area." The

urban development of Ankara, following its designation as the capital, was shaped along the North-South axis until the 1950s. However, along with urban development, the opening of Ankara to modern life and the emergence of new job opportunities in the city center with changing daily life practices led to an unforeseen wave of migration to Ankara. Due to the inadequacy and high cost of existing housing and infrastructure facilities, the housing problem emerged, and to curb the rapidly spreading squatter settlement trend, housing cooperatives (e.g., Ankara Cost-Effective Housings Cooperative Company) were established initially, followed by the Master Plan Bureaus and the Ankara Metropolitan Bureau of Development by the state. Based on research conducted by the Ankara Metropolitan Bureau of Development between 1970-1975 and published in 1982 as the "1990 Ankara Development Plan," the plan foresaw the city's expansion towards the southwest in addition to the existing north-south axis, thereby creating a new living space away from the congestion and air pollution of the city for the lower-middle class and public employees on the outskirts of the city (Açmaz Özden, 2013, pp. 119-121).

Today, located 25 km away from the city center in Kızılay, Ümitköy and Çayyolu, situated south of the Eskişehir Road, have become a new center outside the city center. In addition to mass housing complexes such as Konutkent-1, Konutkent-2, Koru, and Yaşamkent, the area is surrounded by numerous universities (e.g., METU, Bilkent University, Başkent University, Hacettepe University, Çankaya University), public institutions (e.g., Presidency of Religious Affairs, AFAD, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry), and hospitals (e.g., Bilkent City Hospital). The residents of the area, who can be described as elite, are well-educated, financially stable, and engaged in respected professions or retired from these professional groups; the socialization practices of this sophisticated community are explained by the presence of upscale shopping centers housing many luxury brands, luxurious restaurants offering various cuisines, modern cafes, and hotels.

Located in the back alley of Galleria Shopping Mall, one of Ankara's oldest shopping centers, Ümitköy Women's Center provides services to its members in a detached building within a spacious garden. The winter garden, pergolas, and wooden structure resembling a small stage in the garden are used for classes when weather

permits. According to 2023 data, the center has 990 members, mainly consisting of retired individuals aged 50-65, university graduates, married, and parents/grandparents from the upper-middle socio-economic class. Participants in the center's courses mostly commute by car; therefore, a large parking lot serves the members in front of the center. Yoga, pilates, and Turkish Classical Music courses are among the most popular courses at the center. The Turkish Classical Music course, in particular, provides significant clues about the profile of the members. In this course, members learn to play the oud. Unlike other courses, members bring their own ouds to this course, demonstrating that individuals allocate a budget ranging from \$100 to \$2000 for their hobbies.

For centuries, the oud has played a cultural and historical role in Central Asia and the Middle East. Referred to in literature as the "philosopher's instrument" or the "queen of instruments," the oud has contributed to the transmission of the political philosophy of Ancient Greece, the Middle East, and Central Asia from the past to the present due to the historical richness of its birthplace. Having a share in the development of Anatolian music, the oud, primarily since the 20th century, has led to socio-economic developments in society with the increase in the number of oud players and enthusiasts, the establishment of oud workshops, and the adoption of modern teaching methods in oud instruction, particularly in Istanbul. In light of this information, the high interest in the oud course at Ümitköy Women's Center is essential in understanding the participant profile of the center.

3.4.4. Sincan/Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

In the early 1950s, when urbanization efforts gained momentum in the capital, Sincan was a small settlement unit quite far from Ankara. Starting from the 1960s, the increase in transportation and public transportation options in this region of the city led to the district's development towards the north and the rapid increase in its population (1, 358). As transportation facilities became widespread, the middle-lower-class urban residents who struggled with the high cost of living in the city center began to settle in Sincan from Ankara. According to Karakocak's study in 1990, approximately 90% of the population of Sincan commutes to Ankara during

the day for work and education purposes and returns to their homes in Sincan in the evenings (p. 360).

The facilitation of transportation activities between the city and Sincan through suburban trains, which started operating in 1975, paved the way for Sincan to become both culturally and geographically the "other" of the modern center (p.372). With the implementation of the "Ankara Metropolitan Area Master Plan" in 1990, housing projects preventing shantytowns and the construction of the Sincan Organized Industrial Zone were planned to promote the development of the district towards the west of the city, including Eryaman and Sincan. While initially facilitating homeownership for urban residents belonging to the middle and lower-middle socioeconomic classes, this situation led to the departure of the gradually enriched segment settled in Sincan and the "gentrification" of the city center, especially with the onset of intense migration from neighborhoods such as Çiğir, which were located in the center but described as "problematic," to Sincan (p.381). The Sincan Organized Industrial Zone became a gateway to employment for many workers earning minimum wage, which also contributed to the solidification of the perception of poverty associated with Sincan.

This physical distance from Ankara has also led to a cultural divergence between Sincan and the modern capital. Ghannam argues that in contexts where neighborhood relationships are disrupted due to stigmatization and physical segregation of urban residents, individuals tend to create a collective identity based on religion (p.136). This situation has similarly manifested itself in Sincan. Over time, the neighborhood, which has become a region where marginalized segments of the city live, has turned into a symbol from an Islamic perspective, especially becoming a center of attraction for conservatives during the February 28 process, and started to be referred to as the "fortress of Islamic identity" in Ankara (p.386). The actions of the local administration supporting this understanding (i.e. the closure of buffets selling alcohol and venues serving alcoholic beverages, banning the sale of turkeys on New Year's Eve, and organizing speeches and events against secularism and in favor of jihad during Jerusalem night event organized by the Mayor of Sincan on January 30,

1997) have led to the prominence and rise of the dominant conservative Islamic identity code in Sincan today (p.386).

The Sincan Women's Center, established in 2004 in Sincan, is located within the Wonderland Park, described as one of the largest park¹ in Turkey and Europe. Although the physical capacity of the Center is suitable for cultural, artistic, sports, and educational activities, outdoor sports activities like those in Ümitköy and Şafaktepe Women's Centers are not available in Sincan. Classes are held in large buildings with modern desks and smart boards. The Center offers various courses in sports activities such as Pilates, Table Tennis, Folk Dance, art and handicrafts classes, and Quran lessons; Quran lessons are among the most preferred courses by local members. For this course, members bring their own copies of the Quran; individuals learn methods of correctly reciting and memorizing the Quran under the guidance of an instructor while also gaining knowledge about its content. In addition to courses, the Center organizes seminars on women's health and mental and physical well-being, provides space for social gatherings commonly known as "days" among the public, and arranges city and intercity tours and picnics. Described as a "meeting point for women who know how to allocate time for themselves" on the official website of the Metropolitan Municipality², the Sincan Women's Center aims to provide all women who become members with a "home-like warmth" by operating under the slogan "Women of a crying society cannot make children smile". Combining the expressions I expressly referred to in the last sentence with my field observations, the Sincan Women's Center evokes a second private space constructed by the state for women in the public sphere, where women can leave aside the loneliness they experience at home and become a home for each other's loneliness, even if only for a few days a week.

3.5. Guidelines

In this thesis, I used a qualitative method to understand women's strategies for coping with economic violence and the influence of individuals' socio-economic

¹ For detailed information, please check the official website of the Metropolitan Municipality: <https://anfa.com.tr/harikalar-diyari/>

² <https://www.ankara.bel.tr/kadin-ve-aile-hizmetleri/kadinlar-lokali/harikalar-diyari-kadinlar-lokali>

backgrounds on the emergence and implementation of these strategies. As the data collection method, I decided that focus group discussions would best meet my research needs. When preparing the guidelines, determining the flow of questions ensures the overall direction of the discussion; therefore, although the flow may deviate from the intended structure due to human factors during the interview, it is crucial to have a clear and logical structure initially. For this reason, I prepared the guideline according to Hennink's focus group discussion guide, "Hourglass Design" (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 50). Firstly, I prepared introductory questions to allow participants to introduce themselves, get to know each other and gather demographic information for the thesis, including questions about age, marital status, number of children, and educational background. Introductory questions are important for participants to feel safe and establish familiarity, representing the broader part of the hourglass.

As the hourglass narrows, specific questions focusing on the research objectives are included, comprising about 1/3 to 2/3 of the total questions. In designing these specific questions, I asked myself, "What do I want to learn from women?" and identified three main topics: women's economic independence, involvement in financial decision-making processes at home, and strategies they develop against economic violence. Therefore, I formulated the guideline based on these three headings. I utilized the questions used in the World Health Organization's 2002 study on violence against women (World Health Organization, 2002). When employing these questions in my qualitative field research within the framework of a quantitative study, my focus was on prompting participants with follow-up questions to elaborate on their responses and obtain detailed information regarding their diverse experiences of violence. At the end of the guideline, when the hourglass widens again, there is a need for a question or questions to conclude and summarize the discussion. I asked women who shared their own experiences of violence throughout the discussion to suggest recommendations for protecting their daughters from economic violence, considering their own experiences. The details of the guideline design are explained in the table below:

Table 1. Focus Group Guideline

Part	Questions	Purpose
Introductory Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age: - Marital Status: - Do you have children, if so, how many? - Who do you live with in your household, and how many people are there in total? - Are you employed, and if so, what do you do for a living? - How many people work in your household, and who are they? 	Provides cognition and rapport among participants and the moderator
Key Topics & Specific Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has your spouse/male members of the household: - Ever prevented you from working or caused you to quit your job when you wanted to work? - Ever refused to provide money for household expenses despite having money for other expenditures? - Ever taken control of your income against your will (in cases where you have income)? - Do you have your own bank account, bank card, or credit card? - Do you own any property (house, car, land) yourself? Do you have any jointly owned property with your spouse? 	Heading 1: Women's experience of economic violence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who do you think has the authority over financial matters in the household? - Do you believe you have a say in household financial matters? - Have you made the decision to work or not on your own? Have you needed to consult with someone to make this decision? - Can you financially control the money you earn? 	Heading 2: Women's involvement in financial decision-making process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you do anything to provide/protect your own financial power within the household? If yes, what do you do? 	Heading 3: Strategies women develop against economic violence
Closing Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (If applicable) What advice would you give to your daughter when she turns 25 for her economic independence, how would you want her to manage her money? 	Provides closure and concludes an active discussion

3.6. Conducting a Fieldwork: Challenges & Opportunities

During the field research, I encountered several key challenges, which can be broadly categorized as difficulty in finding an adequate number of participants for

focus group discussions at women's centers during the summer, peer pressure among participants who knew each other at the centers, and challenges stemming from the large number of participants in some focus groups. As a young, unmarried woman conducting fieldwork, I faced some general challenges.

I began focus group discussions on July 26, 2023. As it coincided with the summer break, recruiting enough participants for the discussions at women's centers was challenging, where women with school-aged children were predominant. Upon visiting the center for the first time to schedule discussions, I observed a low turnout of participants attending the courses. When I discussed this with the local manager, Fatma Hanım, she mentioned decreased attendance at the centers during the summer holidays. Consequently, I had to reschedule the discussions at this center for a day when the pilates class, which had the highest attendance, was held. Participants I spoke with before the focus group discussions mentioned that attending classes was easier for them in the mornings when pilates classes were held, as it became challenging to attend classes later in the day when their children were at home. This illustrates how women's daily lives are primarily shaped by their identity as mothers, as they often plan their schedules around caregiving responsibilities.

Secondly, while conducting discussions with participants who were members of women's centers provided many facilitations for the research, it also presented some challenges. The individuals I interacted with were women who joined the centers to engage in the public sphere, socialize, and self-improve. Therefore, they were individuals with a certain level of awareness of their realities and capable of taking action. Despite employing random selection to choose participants within the centers, this led to a selection bias throughout the research. Selection bias occurs when the individuals, groups, or data analyzed in a study are not selected randomly, resulting in the sample inadequately representing the population of interest. To mitigate this bias and enhance the study's randomness, I conducted discussions at women's centers in different socio-economic regions of Ankara and included various participant profiles in the research.

Another challenge during focus group discussions at women's centers was interacting with participants who knew each other. While this situation facilitated support and

increased sharing among participants, particularly at centers like Altındağ, Şafaktepe, and Harikalar Diyarı, it sometimes led to certain participants remaining passive within the group due to peer pressure, as observed at the Ümitköy center. In some cases, participants approached me privately after the focus group discussions to share their experiences of violence, indicating that they felt comfortable discussing such sensitive topics outside the group setting.

Moreover, I had to conduct focus group discussions with larger-than-ideal numbers of participants at some centers. For instance, I had to conduct discussions with 16 participants at the Ümitköy Center and 14 at the Harikalar Diyarı Center due to participants' reluctance to spend extra time for discussions after their classes. This occasionally posed challenges for me as a moderator in controlling the group, eliciting necessary responses to questions, and maintaining the flow of the discussion.

Lastly, I faced some general challenges as a young, unmarried woman researcher. One of these challenges was "proving myself and my work as a young female student." When contacting local managers over the phone to arrange focus group discussions, I made efforts to confidently present myself and my work because local managers served as both facilitators and gatekeepers throughout the study; their support facilitated my contact with participants, while their refusal closed the doors of the centers to me. I encountered this issue directly at the Çankaya center, where the local manager, despite my detailed explanation of the scope of my work, expressed an inability to support my work at the center. She indicated that the participants at the center would not be interested in meeting with me or contributing to my research, and therefore, they could not assist me. Despite my request for an opportunity to visit the center once to convince the participants to meet with me personally, she declined.

On the other hand, when introducing myself to participants at every center, I received similar reactions, such as being told, "You're the same age as my daughter/son/sibling." For these individuals, I was perceived more as a student than a researcher, and supporting me was equated with supporting their children or siblings.

Consequently, they viewed me hierarchically, and in some discussions, some participants preferred to offer advice about my work rather than respond to questions. Additionally, in some centers, I was indirectly questioned about why I was still unmarried and why I was struggling to work and study away from my family. In fact, at the Ümitköy center, one participant introduced herself at the beginning of the discussion by mentioning that she had a son who was similar in age to me, was unmarried, and had a good job.

Being a woman, young, and unmarried led me to exist in the field not as I defined myself but as someone's daughter or sister. Although exhibiting a stance contrary to what society expected of me, not conforming to gender roles, and conducting research that questioned these roles alone in the field was a challenging experience, what I learned and contributed to this research is equally valuable.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: WOMEN'S ECONOMIC VIOLENCE EXPERIENCES AND STRATEGIES

4.1. Introduction

This chapter includes the results of a field study conducted between July and November 2023 in four support centers involving a participant pool of forty-seven women.

The objective of this chapter is to scrutinize the diverse experiences of economic violence among women and construct a typology encapsulating the coping strategies they have developed. Additionally, the socio-economic backgrounds of women who produce similar strategies against economic violence will be examined to conduct a comparative analysis.

The chapter aligns research findings with pertinent literature and a theoretical framework. Within this context, the chapter predominantly disseminates participants' perspectives regarding financial decision-making within the household and economic independence. Furthermore, an analysis delineates how these perspectives are molded and influenced by extraneous factors, such as family structure, educational attainment, and employment status. Subsequently, the chapter expounds upon three primary typologies I created to comprehend the strategies developed by women in coping with economic violence.

4.2. The Significance of Women's Centers for Participants

Women's centers offer women living in their respective regions affordable and reliable socialization and access to high-quality facilities. Participants gain free

access to all courses and cultural activities upon paying the annual membership fee, and they also have the chance to expand their social circle. Many of the women I interviewed had been members of women's centers for a long time and regularly participated in center activities. Some always frequented the same center, while others had memberships in different centers. Based on the information gathered from the interviews, coming to the center is a pleasurable pastime for all women. However, the meaning of this "pleasant time" varies depending on the participants' socio-economic status, age range, and household responsibilities. For women, especially those who have children and do not work, coming to the center, attending courses, and chatting with friends afterwards represents the only time they can do something for themselves. Women who struggle with household chores all day, take care of children or elderly family members, and primarily identify as mothers, wives, or caregivers have the opportunity to shed these identities for a few hours each week while their spouses are at work and their children are at school. During this time, they can leave their homes, socialize with other women like themselves, and engage in activities tailored to their interests.

"When you're busy taking care of children and managing the household, you don't get a chance to relax at home. That's why coming to this center feels so good to me. These conversations really uplift a person; they motivate you." Aslı, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

"I'm 54 years old. I got divorced due to severe incompatibility. My child passed away, and now I live with my mother and my younger brother; there are three of us. I always come to these centers, and it's very beneficial. When you step out of the house, the atmosphere changes; it feels like you can breathe again." Ayşe, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's center

Women's centers also serve as places where participants with limited resources can develop themselves, increase their capabilities, and gain the opportunity to participate in public life. During our interview with Tülay Hanım, the manager of the Wonderland Women's Center, when asked about the changes she observed in participants who are members of the center and regularly attend courses, she responded as follows:

"Of course, there is a difference, isn't there? Sometimes, when women come for registration, they are in such a state that they can't even ask a question at

the reception. They need to learn how to make the payment for membership fee. They can't express themselves. As women start coming to the center regularly, we see how they change, how they begin to express themselves, how they open up. This makes us very happy."

For retired and middle-aged women, coming to the center represents a retirement dream. Women who have completed their childcare responsibilities, retired, and have relatively reduced household duties come to the center to socialize when their spouses work. These women, who express that they spent their younger years taking care of children, serving their spouses, and working, enjoy quality time at the center with the peace of mind that comes from shedding these responsibilities:

"I worked, and now I am retired. I am very content with my situation. I always paid attention to my sports or activities. Now that I have some free time, I come here." Meryem, 60, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"I am 57 years old, a housewife. I've never worked. I have two children; one is working, and the other has just started university. After their responsibilities were over, I started spending my days at the center." Gizem, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"I'm 60 years old, married with two children. One is married, lives in Ankara, and my son studied in Finland. After retiring, I wanted to come to the center and engage in activities." Tuğba, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"I am 61 years old, a retired teacher. I have two sons, both married, and three grandchildren. I share the same house with my retired husband. In retirement, I try to do everything I postponed." Aysel, from Ümitköy Women's Center

For women who do not have financial freedom, cannot socialize due to household responsibilities, do not have the budget to allocate for socializing, and whose social activities are controlled by the male figure at home, being able to spend quality time without privacy concerns in a municipality-owned space at a reasonable cost is of great importance. Women's centers in Şafaktepe, Altındağ, and Sincan Harikalar Diyarı are good examples of centers where participants fitting this description are in the majority. Additionally, considering its location and participant profile, Ümitköy Women's Center provides its members with opportunities for socializing and a pleasant retirement life without leaving their living areas.

4.2.1. Economic (In)Dependence and Employment

4.2.1.1. Not Being Able to Work Due to Domestic Responsibilities

Economic violence, although frequently experienced due to the patriarchal order and entrenched gender roles in society, is a type of violence that is much easier for women to overlook compared to other forms of violence. Violence is mostly addressed through physical violence, only becoming a subject of public discourse when there is physical harm involved, thereby transcending the realm of privacy for women and the family when it poses a threat to bodily integrity. On the other hand, the scope of economic violence often overlaps with the patriarchal family structure and the roles assigned to its members; in a system where the man is defined as the breadwinner, there is no problem perceived in him controlling all the financial mechanisms of the household and having decision-making authority over these mechanisms. Similarly, in the same system, a woman's desire to work and control the money she earns can be interpreted as absurd demands despite her responsibilities to her husband, children, and sometimes extended family. Generations born and raised in this patriarchal system reproduce it, passing it on to the next generation, which is why many types of violence are ignored or normalized.

One of my concerns when designing the fieldwork was that participants might not be aware of economic violence and, therefore, might not find answers to my questions. Therefore, I decided to first learn from the participants whether they had experienced economic violence by asking questions related to indicators of economic violence. When preparing the focus group questions, I utilized three questions from the World Health Organization's (World Health Organization, 2002) study on violence against women conducted in 10 countries in order to determine whether participants had been subjected to economic violence:

Has your spouse/a male member in the household*:

- a. Ever prevented you from working or caused you to leave a job although you wanted to work?
- b. Ever refused to provide money for the need of household, despite having money for other expenses?

c. Ever taken away your income against your will (when you have an income)?

In addition, I asked the participants the following questions that I prepared based on the most common forms of implementing economic violence:

d. Do you have your own bank account, bank card, or credit card?

e. Do you own any property (house, car, land) yourself? Do you have any jointly owned property with your spouse?

These questions are fundamentally based on the three concepts used by Ohlan (2021) in defining economic violence. Ohlan argues that economic violence is enacted through the means of economic sabotage, economic exploitation, and economic control (p. 1). Economic sabotage involves restricting a woman's career and depriving her of the educational opportunities necessary for participation in the workforce (Sanders, 2015). Economic exploitation encompasses seizing a woman's income and causing damage to her possessions, while economic control involves depriving a woman of financial resources even for her basic needs and excluding her from the decision-making process in financial matters (Fawole, 2008). Participants' responses to questions and approaches towards the violence they have experienced are indicative of their awareness level on the matter.

Most non-working participants in the focus group discussions withdrawn from employment due to restrictions imposed by their husbands. Some participants shared that they had worked in various jobs before getting married; however, they were either discouraged from work or had their employment made conditional by their spouses after marriage. This story aligns with the general picture in Turkey. When examining the data, it is observed that the women's labor force participation rate in Turkey is significantly below the averages of OECD, EU, and G20 countries. According to the 2023 OECD data, the women's labor force participation rate in Turkey is 34.4%, while this rate is 62.2% on average in OECD countries, 67.7% in G7 countries, and 64.9% in the EU (OECD, 2023). In addition to the low labor force participation rate, women cannot participate in full-time employment as much as men due to gender-based norms, the patriarchal family structure, and domestic responsibilities. According to the 2023 TURKSTAT data, the part-time employment

rate for women increased by 5.5% to reach 16.4% compared to the previous year, while this rate is only 7% for men (TÜİK, 2023). Responsibilities attached to their roles as a caregiver daughter, a wife and “future mother” hinder women’s participation in the workforce, as men in the family dictated that their main focus should be on their home and family. Consequently, even if unwillingly, women were compelled to withdraw from the working life and set aside their economic independence.

In the field, I observed that many women were subjected to economic sabotage. Sanders (2015) defines economic sabotage as the use of intentional tactics by the perpetrator to prevent a woman from participating in employment; these tactics can include refusing to share caregiving and household responsibilities, subjecting the woman to emotional and physical abuse, and preventing her from obtaining the necessary education for work, among others. Men who seek to maintain their dominant position a patriarchal hierarchy by controlling women attempt to prevent women from working by citing various reasons. The most frequently cited reason among these is the caregiving responsibility that arises after a woman becomes a mother because it can be legitimized within Turkish culture through clearly defined gender roles for men and women. Gender roles in society expect women to be modest, obedient, family-oriented, and fulfill their responsibilities, while expectations for men revolve around dominance, power, independence, and sometimes aggression (Sakallı-Uğurlu et al., 2021, p. 214). Considering these roles and expectations, expecting a married woman to work in jobs deemed appropriate for her gender, to fulfill the responsibilities of motherhood and withdrawing her from employment if she does not comply are considered justifiable reasons in society. Some of the intentional tactics I encountered in the field are as follows:

"My husband said, 'If we have a child, you will take care of them for the first 4 years, I don't want you to work for the first 4 years.' After those 4 years passed, it was tough for me to return to work. So, I stayed at home for 17 years. Then I started working again." Melis, 44, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women’s Center

"I wanted to work, I had a one-week work experience, but my husband prevented it. I was newly married at the time, we had a child, and he used the child as an excuse, saying, 'Who will take care of them.' I found a solution to

that, too; after finding the solution, I worked for a week, and then there were arguments." Ceren, 42, from Altındağ Women's Center

"When I was single, I worked as a cashier at a photographer's shop and did sales; my family didn't interfere. But when I got married, my husband didn't want me to work. I love being social, but he said, 'No, it's unnecessary.' He said, 'Your days will be filled with children and family anyway.'" Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

Conditioning participation in the workforce by treating caregiving, a shared responsibility of parents, as the sole responsibility of women, interfering with career choices, and obstructing women's employment through emotional manipulation are concrete examples of tactics used for economic sabotage.

At this point, it is also necessary to discuss the perpetrator of economic violence. When I asked the participants whether they decided to work or not, some of them expressed that their fathers before marriage and their husbands after marriage prevented them from working and studying. It is also important to consider that these individuals got married at an early age. The family is an institution where its members unconsciously develop a sense of belonging. Therefore, it holds a different place in shaping our lives compared to other institutions to which we belong. Family members may develop consent towards this institution later on and exhibit loyalty. However, in societies where the welfare of the community is based on the family institution, such as Turkey, it is quite difficult and risky to go against the norms and rules of the family. Especially for women who have been deprived of education and employment opportunities at a young age, getting married without discovering their potential, without acquiring the skills, intellectual and professional knowledge required to lead an independent life leads them from one man's control to another:

"The teacher in the village said to my father, 'I will cover all expenses; let this girl come and study'. However, my father said, 'Girls have nothing to do outside, ' he didn't send me. I got married before I turned 18, and my husband was of the same mindset as the villagers. He never allowed it. He had said from the beginning, 'I won't let her work' firmly." Melek, 54, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"I wanted to work, I wanted to study... He made me give up on all of them. I had gotten into university, he made me give up on that too." Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I never worked; and my husband didn't want me to work at all. I got married at 18 and became a mother at 19." Aysel, 52, from Altındağ Women's Center

When women are deprived of the chance to become independent, self-sufficient individuals, and when they are subjected to similar restrictions by their spouses after marriage, this situation increases their likelihood of being economically and socially dependent on their partners. As a result, women become more vulnerable to both economic violence and other forms of violence.

A striking observation derived from the field study concerning economic sabotage and perpetrator of the violence was to the dispositions of husbands working in public institutions. Evidently, men, inherently embedded in the gendered hierarchy and immersed within an environment fortified by the authority and ideology of the masculine state, extend this approach into their familial domains. The narratives of five participants from two different support centers (Altındağ and Ümitköy) pertaining to their professional endeavors substantiate the notion that these men perceive marriage as characterized by a passive role for women, lacking agency, wherein women are "chosen" rather than serving as the "decision-maker." Additionally, such marriages are construed wherein rules and roles are established upon the preferences and anticipations of men:

"I wanted to work; I had just recently gotten married. My husband said, 'If I wanted a working wife, I could have found one,' and he didn't want me to work... I got a social insurance, but then my husband said, 'I don't want to pay for your insurance.' He wanted me to be dependent on him, didn't want me to be free. He said, 'If we divorce, you can take your father's pension. I take care of you and meet your needs, why bother with insurance?'" Şule, 64 from Ümitköy Women's Center, whose husband was a retired colonel in Turkish Armed Forces

"My husband was a district governor, and as you know, we would have relocations. I gave birth to my first child, and right after that, I got pregnant with the second one 1.5 years later. Of course, finding a caregiver in small places is very difficult; my parents were helping us. I wanted to have an abortion to the second child because I couldn't even take care of the first one; my mother was taking care of her. When the relocation came up, my parents couldn't take care of the child either. That's when my husband said, 'Quit your job, and you can take care of both the older one and the one to be born.' My parents supported him in this decision." Ashı, 60, from Ümitköy

Women's Center, whose husband was a retired district governor in the Ministry of Interior Affairs

“(Before getting married) I was working as a cashier in a store, then I got engaged. Actually, my husband left the decision to me; but he said, ‘If you're going to work, work as a civil servant.’ Then, right after we got married, I had a child. When I wanted to work, he said, ‘Who will take care of the children?’ I replied, ‘Our mothers can take care of them.’ ‘You won't feel comfortable, and neither will I,’ he said. When I suggested hiring a caregiver, he said, ‘If we'll just be giving your salary to the caregiver, what's the point?’ He convinced me in that way.” Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center, whose husband is working was a soldier in Turkish Armed Forces

4.2.1.2. Devaluation of Women's Labor

Among the participants (especially those with a history of employment), some have been subjected to economic exploitation as much as economic sabotage. This type of violence, where financial resources are used in favor of the perpetrator, includes actions such as taking out loans, going into debt, making the woman a guarantor without her consent, seizing the woman's sources of income and properties, causing damage, or stealing (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2023). Some participants shared their experiences of economic sabotage with the following statements:

"While married, everything in the house was managed with my money; I would receive the salary, and I wouldn't even notice when it came or went. (My husband) claimed he was working, but there was nothing visible. It was unclear what he earned or did; he was running the house with my money." Ayşe, 54, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's center

"I was receiving the salary and handing it over to him. I would set aside some money only for transportation expenses. And if I gave it to him late, he would ask, 'Hasn't the salary come yet?' He would monitor it so closely." Hande, 60, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

For women, being in the workforce does not always mean they are economically free. Especially in patriarchal societies where women's participation in employment is subject to many conditions and their household responsibilities are prioritized, when the woman's work becomes a necessity due to economic conditions, the man, who is forced to share the breadwinner role assigned to him by society, feels

threatened in his masculinity and authority. This concept is defined in the literature as fragile masculinity. In every society, there are certain expectations and restrictions based on gender. Depending on the cultural and historical context, society expects a man to have qualities, behaviors, preferences, and characteristics that align with masculine expectations. When a man feels that he cannot fully meet these expectations (e.g., when his spouse is forced to work), he may fear being ostracized by his peers and society and worry about losing his high masculinity status (DiMuccio & Knowles, 2020, p. 25). This state of fear and anxiety is defined in the literature as fragile masculinity. A man who feels that his masculinity is under threat may adopt aggressive thoughts and harmful, toxic behaviors in order to maintain his status within society (Harvard Business Review, 2023). Therefore, the economic sabotage experienced by the two participants quoted above can be associated with concepts of fragile masculinity and the preservation of masculinity status.

Women's labor in the workforce is delegitimized through appropriation of their earnings, while their labor within the household is devalued and rendered invisible by men. Domestic labor is traditionally assigned to women according to gender roles. The ideal woman is expected to take care of all household chores and responsibilities, including all family members' care and emotional labor. However, society often renders this labor invisible, devalued, and not considered economic worth. In focus group discussions, some participants shared instances where their spouses belittled and marginalized their household chores:

"After my second child, when I wanted to return to work, my husband strongly opposed it. Because he had gotten used to everything being ready – his clothes in the closet, dinner on the table, soup ready – when he came home. For him, I had become the 'manager of unnecessary tasks,' because I cared for everything related to the children. When I expressed my desire to return to work due to feeling bored and suffocated, he objected." Aslı, 60, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"I sometimes say to my husband, 'You will retire, you will get the compensation for the years you worked.' However, I will never be able to retire. I have no compensation for wear and tear. My husband says, 'I will give you the compensation for it.'" Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

Aslı's husband's characterization of Aslı as the 'manager of unnecessary tasks' because she was responsible for household chores directly relates to the gendered

division of labor. This division deepens the separation between the public and private spheres, making women's labor within the private sphere invisible and increasing their dependency on men. On the other hand, Ayşe knows that her labor is being exploited and will not receive any compensation in return. The unpaid labor that Ayşe and Aslı provide within the household is labor that has economic value in the market. However, women not only fail to receive compensation for this labor when performed in their homes, but they also do not have the right to enter paid employment, earn money, and purchase household services. According to the male mindset, women are obligated to perform these tasks at home for free, as they can do so without any cost. If the money earned by working is to be spent on household chores or care services, then there is no point in women working. Engels (1975) argues that the foundation of the modern family is “founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife” (p. 137), and modern society is a “mass composed of these individual families as its molecules” (p. 137). This system of servitude is a significant obstacle to the liberation and economic empowerment of women.

4.2.1.3. Consciousness Level Regarding Economic Violence Against Women

Participants were mostly well aware that their spouses pressured them not to work and perceived their financial freedom as a threat. They also understood that their husbands aimed to make them financially dependent to strengthen dominancy in the household. The participants openly expressing the violence they were subjected to encouraged other relatively reserved participants to share their experiences. During the discussion, I witnessed many participants finding courage in each other to open up and realizing that they were not alone; at this point, I saw that I could contribute to the primary goal of my thesis, which is contributing to the collective empowerment of women.

At this point, I need to make a comparison based on my field observations between Mamak and Ümitköy; indeed, there were differences in terms of positions and education levels among the working participants in the two support centers, and this situation significantly affected their approaches to the violence they were subjected

to. The participants I interviewed in Mamak, who were retired, mostly held positions as civil servants or supervisors in public offices. Their education levels were predominantly high school and vocational school, with one having a university degree. On the other hand, in Ümitköy, almost all participants were university graduates, with a considerable number having pursued a postgraduate (master's and doctoral) degree. Corresponding to their education levels, these participants, who were retired, had held senior positions such as specialists, directors, clinical psychologists, and senior architects or engineers in various ministries (i.e. Family and Social Policies, Environment and Urbanization, and Finance).

While focus group discussions in Mamak contributed to collective empowerment, I observed that the opposite occurred in Ümitköy. When I gathered with participants and started to explain my thesis and the aim of the gathering, the atmosphere became tense, and voices escalated as if no one in the group had any knowledge about the topic I was addressing; the environment conveyed the feeling that participants had no experiences related to economic violence. In fact, positioning themselves completely outside the discussion on economic violence, some participants even suggested that Ümitköy was not the right location to address “such” topics and recommended going to “lower” areas or support centers to work on these issues. For this very reason, I realized that the questions I asked at the beginning of the discussion seemed meaningless to most participants; of course, everyone was well-educated and had voluntarily joined the working life, everyone had their own property, their own bank accounts, and their bank cards were not kept by their spouses. As the discussion progressed and the questions became more detailed, although a few participants began to share their own experiences, the desired feedback from the group could not be achieved. The majority of the group exhibited an attitude as if what was being shared by those who spoke about their experiences of violence meant nothing to them. The reactions of the participants in the group circulated along the lines of “We also hear that such things happen, and it's very sad; some women don't even know how much their salaries are, how painful!”

I define the participants in the Ümitköy Women's Center who showed reluctance to share the violence they have experienced as *fragile elites*. Similar to fragile

masculinity, acknowledging experiencing violence for participants in this group, who can be described as having a certain socio-economic status and cultural background, termed as sophisticated elite, jeopardizes the high status they position themselves in and leads to a redefinition of themselves. Rejecting the pressure experienced is often an example of a defense mechanism; however, once it is recognized, ignoring it becomes impossible. I had the opportunity to observe that focus group discussions provided an opportunity for awareness and solidarity for participants experiencing the situation I defined as fragile elitism. As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, learning about the existence of people struggling with similar issues in their social circles, listening to those who share their experiences even if they do not share their own, and seeing that they are not alone have been a step in the empowerment process for these participants.

4.2.2. Financial Decision-Making in the Household

The stereotypical heterosexual family structure adheres to a model where the woman is responsible for household chores, the man works and earns money, and human labor is exploited most efficiently according to the capitalist system. Gender-based wage discrimination, where women receive lower pay for the same work as men, and gender-based job segregation in the labor market play a significant role alongside the expected household chores and caregiving responsibilities assigned to women. The lack of financial return for the labor women provide due to exploitation makes them less influential in financial decision-making processes within the household (Burgoyne & Kirchler, 2008, p. 135). This situation not only renders women financially disadvantaged within the household and society but also leaves them more vulnerable to other forms of violence.

In focus group discussions, I asked participants the following questions regarding their involvement in financial decision-making processes:

- Who do you think has the authority over financial matters in the household?
- Do you believe you have a say in household financial matters?
- Can you financially control the money you earn?

Based on the data I collected, I arrived at two conclusions: Firstly, in the participants' minds, financial decision-making processes are divided along the axes of public and private spheres, much like gender-based division of labor. Secondly, women believe they have control over all household expenses; however, having control and having control within the boundaries set by the man are two separate concepts. My observation suggests that the setting of the participants is closer to the second concept.

4.2.2.1. Public/Private Space Distinction in Financial Decision-Making

Participants' responses to the question of who has authority over financial matters in the household can be categorized around three main headings: those who say it's in the hands of women, those who say it's in the hands of men. Those who say decisions are made jointly. At this point, it's necessary to mention the difference between control and management of money. As Pahl (1985) pointed out, control of money represents strategic power, while management represents more administrative power. This power differentiation can lead individuals to have different authorities overspending and managing money; for instance, even if both the woman and the man work in a household, control of the money may still solely belong to the man, or while the man earns and controls the money, the woman may be the one managing it. Notably, participants I interviewed in Şafaktepe, Altındağ and Sincan locals expressed that their involvement in decision-making processes and control over financial matters varied depending on the categories of expenses. While women have decision-making authority regarding household expenses, decisions about expenses related to children or property acquisitions are either made jointly or solely by men:

"Usually, women are at home in the evenings. Men buy the necessities on their way home from work; they don't know what is needed, we tell them."
Melek, 54, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"(Regarding property purchases) He never asks me; my husband always decides by himself. Besides my husband, there is no other authority in our house."
Özge, 44, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"I'll tell you, it's mutual for us. I don't decide alone. For example, if we're going to enroll the kids in an English course or my son plays football at

Fenerbahçe, we have expenses for that. I research, then tell my husband, and we proceed that way." Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

"There should be mutual agreement, that's necessary. In those (houses) where we'll live, it's us who will live there anyway." Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"At home, there should be a Minister of Internal Affairs, and the man should be the Minister of Foreign Affairs." Mine, 55, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"In Turks, the woman is the empress. The man is beneath her. Mother's authority is unlimited. They decide everything. But men decide about money." Aysu, 61, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"We go shopping for the house together, so I don't know anything about how much each thing costs. I choose the necessities, and my husband pays." Banu, 36, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

As evident from the quotes above, women's participation in decision-making processes is mainly limited to areas associated with their assigned household chores and caregiving responsibilities, which involve the private sphere. However, even within these areas, women do not possess strategic power over money; in some cases, both strategic and administrative power belongs to men. Women provide information to their spouses regarding spending categories where money is necessary; however, men have the authority to make decisions. In the families of the women quoted above, typically, the man is the sole breadwinner, and due to the invisibility of women's household labor, women appear to have no share in earning this money. The institution of the family, which is considered the cornerstone of Turkish patriarchal society, evaluates the worth of a woman based on her being a caring mother, a good wife, and a woman devoted to her home, referring to women as the "Minister of Internal Affairs" and the "empress" reflects this evaluation.

When asked about investment-focused expenses such as property acquisitions, I encountered difficulty obtaining up-to-date responses from locals outside of Ümitköy due to their economic circumstances not conducive to investing. Therefore, participants responded to these questions with expectations such as "If we ever buy something, we will decide jointly." In Ümitköy, however, where residents mainly belong to high-income brackets and sustain their livelihood with dual incomes, the

general picture was that while women may own the residence and daily-use items, rental properties are owned by men, even though women do not benefit from the passive income obtained by renting out these properties. Women's socio-economic status, level of education, and work history vary, yet women's control over finances remains unchanged, only taking on different forms. Women in neighborhoods like Sincan, Altındağ, and Mamak, where lower-income groups reside, struggle to have a say in the allocation of limited resources based on their specific needs. Meanwhile, women in households like Ümitköy, where residents mostly have high incomes and sustain their livelihood with dual incomes, face difficulties benefiting from passive income obtained by renting out properties despite owning properties themselves.

Women who can be described as professional housewives are responsible for the needs of the household and its expenditure status; however, while women may have control over money management in this "business" called home, the person who controls and approves spending is the man. I emphasize spending approval because the man does not necessarily spend the money by himself. The man can make this expenditure himself or authorize the woman to spend by giving her a share of the household income. However, since women manage money only within the boundaries set by men, this situation does not provide them with financial freedom and empowerment. Women devote their entire lives to their homes, families, and children, and in return, the man ensures the woman remains under his control in the private sphere and under his authority. The illusion created by this situation suggests that women play a role in financial decision-making mechanisms within the household; however, women only have authority within the confines determined by men. This illusion is further elaborated in the next section.

4.2.2.2. The Illusion of Women's Decision-Making Power at Home: "We Decide Where the Money Goes!"

In the focus group discussions, some women interviewed (mostly housewives) expressed that they had the decision-making authority in all household expenses. These women stated that they were responsible for all household chores, and they

believed that their spouses lacked sufficient knowledge about managing the household; hence, money-related decisions were made by consulting them:

"Of course, men make the purchases, but generally, women are the ones who run the household. We determine the savings and everything." Ceren, 42, from Altındağ Women's Center

"Externally, it seems like our husbands make the decisions, but in reality, it's us. We manage them, you know. When he comes home in the evening, he will ask, 'Where's my dinner?' and expect dinner to be ready (referring to her spouse). So, if he dares, he doesn't ask me when buying something (referring to property purchases)." Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

"My husband consults me when deciding to buy a house, saying, 'You'll be the one living in it, so you know better.'" Aslı, 60, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"I don't know much about cars, men know more about that. However I still sit in the passenger seat and have a look. My husband asks, 'Is it comfortable?' and I also decide on the color." Hülya, 47, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

From these quotes, it can be understood that women perceive themselves as decision-makers, although men apparently make decisions externally. However, looking at the big picture, it becomes evident that this is an illusion; women only have a say in matters where men allow them to express their opinions. The man decides to buy a house, but the woman expresses opinions regarding the furnishings and features of the house. The man decides to buy a car, but the woman is involved in decision-making regarding design aspects such as comfort and color. The power of men within the household is shaped and supported by societal norms and values. On the other hand, women's economic dependence on men, their lack of access to education and information, and the psychological and emotional pressure they face within the home serve to reinforce this power. However, men strive to maintain the continuity of their power and eliminate potential threats by trying to preserve the status quo within the household. This is achieved by allowing women a voice and influence in areas opened up by men, thereby both shifting non-threatening responsibilities onto women and minimizing the possibility of women challenging male authority in the long term. Such areas include managing household expenses, making daily childcare decisions, and home/car decoration and design. By allowing women to participate in

decision-making processes in these areas, men create an illusion of equality in the household's distribution of tasks and decision-making processes. Although women may play a visible role in these processes, the planning, implementation, and control processes are ultimately in the hands of men.

4.2.3. Strategies

Economic violence is a form of violence that threatens women's right to live a free life, restricts their capacity to acquire and develop the necessary skills for a dignified life, exploits women's labor, and consequently leaves women vulnerable to other forms of violence. Economic control, economic sabotage, and economic exploitation are different forms of economic violence, representing a broad spectrum. This thesis argues that women can be exposed to economic violence regardless of their socio-economic status, and factors such as education, age, marital status, and income level affect their position within this spectrum rather than their likelihood of experiencing violence. Economic violence is directly related to gender-based division of labor and the invisibility of women's domestic labor, both of which are constantly reproduced and reinforced by patriarchal values and the capitalist mode of production.

Women who lack the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources (which can be social or material) to combat economic violence develop various strategies to empower themselves, protect their interests, and carve out maneuvering space within the existing patriarchal order. This struggle of women is directly related to Kandiyoti's concept of patriarchal bargaining. Kandiyoti (1988) argues that women develop strategies under the guise of patriarchal bargaining to combat patriarchy (p. 274). These strategies can vary depending on socio-economic variables and be reshaped according to circumstances (p. 275). The concept of "bargaining" is inherent; the strategies produced can be negotiated and transformed based on changes in interests and gender-based power relations in the society.

An important detail to emphasize at this point is that despite being in a disadvantaged position in this patriarchal power balance, women are not vulnerable. The women I interviewed, although experiencing economic violence in different ways, do not

passively accept this violence. Instead, they evaluate the resources available to them to cope with this violence and strive to strengthen themselves in the patriarchal bargain they are constantly engaged in. They develop strategies. Just as economic violence is a spectrum, the actions taken and strategies developed to empower against it vary depending on individuals' resources and socio-economic states.

Data obtained from fieldwork confirm that women develop strategies to cope with the violence they face; however, the scopes of these strategies differ. Furthermore, it has been revealed that women with different socio-economic backgrounds produce similar strategies; therefore, the strategies will be examined and compared in terms of their implementation methods.

4.2.3.1. Strategy 1: "Trimming Your Own Money": Secret Bank Accounts, Under-the-Mattress Savings, Buying Property

Trimming money involves, in essence, women setting aside a certain portion of their available financial resources (such as salary, retirement benefits, bonuses, inheritance, or money provided by their husbands for household expenses) without their spouses' knowledge and investing it in various ways to create resources for themselves to combat economic violence. The method of implementing the strategy varies depending on the available resources. Working women often employ this strategy by underreporting their earnings to their spouses and saving the difference through accumulation and investment:

"I bought a house with my retirement bonus without telling my husband."
Gülnur, 58, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"There have been occasions when I've taken money from my own earnings without telling my husband. I've underreported or concealed my money."
Yasemin, 62, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I used to work at the hospital, and we had a salary and a bonus. My husband didn't know about the bonus, and I didn't tell him." Feride, 57, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I have my own property. I also bought my first car without my husband's knowledge. I didn't tell him for a while." Pervin, 55, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

Participants with a work history predominantly attend the Ümitköy and Şafaktepe women's centers, yet none of the women I interviewed in Ümitköy employ this strategy. As Kandiyoti argues, strategies are shaped by the conditions and resources available to victims of violence. Participants in the Ümitköy and Şafaktepe occupy different positions on the spectrum of economic violence; the economic violence experienced by participants in Ümitköy does not constitute a significant obstacle to their living standards or make women feel threatened about their future, given their socioeconomic status and high household income levels. In contrast, participants in the Şafaktepe Women's Center belong to the more fragile middle class in terms of economic fluctuations. Possible loss of income, decline, or unemployment would affect the economic power balance within households, impacting the scope of economic violence experienced by women in the Şafaktepe more profoundly than those in the Ümitköy.

The method of implementing this strategy by participants who do not work and have no stable income differs from that of working women. Due to the limited sources of income and the lack of necessary skills for managing existing resources, the implementation methods of women who do not work mostly involve requesting more money than necessary from their spouses for household needs, depositing the remaining money into hidden bank accounts after meeting the household needs, not informing their spouses about the inherited property, and engaging in secret piecework at home to accumulate earnings in a hidden bank account:

"I started doing side jobs secretly from my husband. He didn't know about it. I had to open an account for that job. That was also a secret. I have my own property inherited from my family. Some of it, my husband knows about, some he doesn't. I also don't tell him." Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I had 30 years of savings; I used to keep it in a teapot in the kitchen. I kept it there for years, thinking it was safe. It turns out my (referring to her husband) husband followed me all these years and waited for the savings to accumulate. He took all my savings." Mine, 55, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I used to save a little money, not hide it. For example, if I had 200 lira, I spent 100 lira and put aside 100 lira. I said, 'My money ran out.'" Leyla, 53, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"I used to buy gold with the money he gave me without telling my husband. When I accumulated money, I said, 'I will apply for Hajj,' and my husband didn't want me to go. 'Don't do it,' he said. I did it without telling him, and didn't the application come out for me immediately? 'How will you go?' they asked me, both the children and my husband. I said, 'I saved the money by putting gold aside with my money, I didn't tell you, when the money was enough, I applied.' I thought I would tell when the money equaled, and when it equaled, I told." Zübeyde, 59, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

The centers where this strategy is most commonly employed are the Şafaktepe and Harikalar Diyarı women's centers. While the methods of implementation vary among women who employ this strategy, their objectives, with few exceptions, remain consistent:

"Turkish women are not individually inclined to say 'Let me go on a special vacation, let me do this.' When my child is in need, my husband is in need, I'm still inclined to give it to them." Feride, 57, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"We don't have concerns about spending on ourselves. We save money thinking it may be needed for our children or husbands someday. I helped when my children needed, I helped when they bought a car. There have been times when I said, 'This is my money.'" Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I've always had a secret account. I always set aside some money. That's what my mother used to say to me." Jale, 64, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I helped the children a lot with their education; I gave them a lot from my savings." Yasemin, 62, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"We set aside money for tough days, of course. However, we immediately take it out again; tough days come very quick. Money never stay in the account." Hülya, 47, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

Considering the profiles of the participants, these individuals belong to the middle and lower socio-economic classes; thus, their coping practices are more developed compared to those of women at the Ümitköy Women's Center who are involved in the workforce. Coping with poverty is a practice shaped by individuals' resources, skills, and social networks. The primary motivation for women who adopt this practice and develop strategies is to support their spouses during financial difficulties

and to do their best to ensure that their children do not need to resort to similar practices. In this regard, motherhood is not only a powerful tool for perpetrating and legitimizing violence but also an important factor in determining strategies against violence.

4.2.3.2. Strategy 2: “Asking for Insurance” as a Preemptive Action

Women have developed this strategy to secure their future in patriarchal negotiations with their spouses against the pressure they face to quit their jobs and provide unpaid labor within the household. Women employed in public institutions are entitled to many fringe benefits such as social security, access to healthcare, retirement benefits, and future security; leaving their jobs entails the loss of a regular income and the forfeiture of many ancillary rights and future security. Women who are aware of the rights they have acquired through their employment, especially, face increased pressure to quit their jobs after having children. Therefore, in negotiations with their spouses, they have stipulated preserving their employment rights, ensuring that their spouses continue to pay their social security contributions even if they leave their jobs. Thus, women have not only avoided experiencing loss of acquired rights but also indirectly ensured the compensation for the labor they provide at home in the long term and prevented the exploitation of their labor:

"When I had my child, I was working; I had been a civil servant for 5-6 years. I said, 'Okay, I'll quit my job, but you'll continue to pay my social security contributions.' He continued to pay my social security contributions, and after I left, I struggled a lot, but at least I could retire without losing a year." Reyhan, 60, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"When my son was born, my husband said, 'You don't work, I'll pay your social security.' The boy was born, the girl was born, I raised them. Then, when they grew up, I returned to work and worked a little more. But I couldn't adapt anymore. I quitted working, a lot of time passed already. But my husband had paid my social security, so I didn't incur any loss." Aslı, 60, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"After the children grew up, I said, 'I need to start working again,' and I returned to work. It was a great advantage for me to continue paying my social security even when I wasn't working. I worked for another 6-7 years, got my social security counted, and thus retired early." Umut, 54, from Ümitköy Women's Center

This strategy, which I only heard from the participants I interviewed at the Ümitköy Women's center, has two main reasons. Firstly, the level of consciousness regarding employment rights is quite high due to the participants' education levels, cultural background, and work experience. Therefore, they can objectively assess the extent of the damage that quitting their jobs would cause. Secondly, the participants in the Ümitköy Center live in households with high-income levels; this directly affects the power dynamics between the parties in patriarchal negotiations and the strategies employed. While women's consciousness regarding their rights places them in a strong position in negotiations, the women's knowledge that their husbands have the financial means to pay for the woman's social security puts the man in a disadvantaged position in this negotiation. Women who employ this strategy have managed to protect themselves in this negotiation and secure their future by leveraging the resources they have.

Unlike the first strategy, the motivation for implementing this strategy is to prevent the exploitation of their own labor and to secure their future without leaving it to the discretion of their spouse. Just as the strategies are shaped, the motivation behind women's strategies is closely related to social conditions and available resources. Women I interviewed at the Ümitköy Women's center, unlike women in the Şafaktepe and Harikalar Diyarı women's centers, do not have concerns about the decrease in household income or the future of their children because the household income is higher and more stable. Their income sources are usually secure due to their employment in the public sector.

4.2.3.3. Strategy 3: No Strategy Needed If You are a Good Wife to Your Husband and a Good Mother to Your Children

The reason for considering this title as a strategy stems from the responses I received from a particular segment of participants during focus group discussions and the responses I did not receive. Women who are aware of the economic violence they face within the household but do not possess the necessary resources to cope with this violence develop a personal defense mechanism based on being good mothers

and wives. Although this defense mechanism reflexively emerges to reduce the destructive effects of economic violence emotionally and psychologically, it is evaluated as a strategy because it contributes to the well-being of women, even though it does not enable maneuvering in patriarchal bargaining.

The data obtained from the field indicate that this strategy operates through two main mechanisms. The first mechanism revolves around women who are subjected to economic violence in various dimensions and who do not have the necessary equipment to empower themselves in this cycle of violence and escape from male dominance, clinging to their primary identities of motherhood and companionship, constructed through the household responsibilities assigned to them:

Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center: "I sometimes say to my husband, 'You will retire, you will get rewarded for the years you worked. However, I will never be able to retire in my life. I have no wear and tear compensation. He says, 'I will give you the wear and tear allowance I will give you.' Some people belittle housewives, but not everyone can be a housewife, not everyone can be a mother.

Aysel, 52, from Altındağ Women's Center: Our most considerable success will be to see our children happy.

Ayşe: I understand, but some women belittle housewives.

Aysel: Forget it; empty vessels make the most noise. Actually, most of those who say it can't do what we do."

According to Bourdieu's definition, the family is an instrument that both defines and constructs social reality (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 19). The relationship between the family and society is bilateral; while family structure determines the dynamics of a society, it is also influenced by and transforms the values, norms, and rules existing in that society. The family structure considered normal in Turkish society, although transforming over time, still maintains a patriarchal image dominated by patriarchal values and heteronormativity: In this image, the woman is the bearer of household responsibilities, while the man establishes and maintains the connection with the public sphere of the household. Women's household responsibilities include housework, care services, emotional labor, and family unity. For a woman whose

connection with the public space is delimited by boundaries approved by the man and who has not acquired the necessary skills to negotiate within these boundaries, embracing her position within the family, expecting the respect and esteem she deserves to be shown to her based on motherhood and wifehood identities, and endeavoring to maintain her position is a strategy in itself. The conversation among participants I interviewed at the Altındağ Women's Center, mentioned above, serves as an example of this struggle to preserve this position. Ayşe's consciousness of the exploitation of her labor at home by her spouse and Aysel's response regarding her experience with this issue demonstrate the daily use of the defense mechanism.

The second mechanism operates through victims of violence using motherhood and companionship roles as bargaining chips in patriarchal negotiations:

"I wanted to work but couldn't, wanted to study but couldn't. Since these were taken away from me, I always used this situation to benefit my children. I focused on them, tried to educate them in the best schools, and provide them with the best living conditions." Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

In patriarchal bargaining, women are compelled to accept specific gender roles to gain certain advantages in a social order dominated by male hegemony. Women may have to make concessions for reasons such as not having economic independence, lack of support from solidarity networks, or societal pressure. At the point where women make concessions, their greatest hope is for their children, to whom they have dedicated their lives, to escape from this cycle of violence and deprivation and to have a prosperous life as strong individuals through good education. In order for this hope to materialize, women demand the provision of the necessary equipment for their children to have a promising future in exchange for the freedoms they have sacrificed in patriarchal bargaining with their spouses.

4.2.3.4. Empowered Women of the Field: "If My Husband is by My Side Today, I am Aware He Could be Against Me Tomorrow"

In this chapter, the experiences of women regarding economic violence and the strategies they develop are analyzed. Despite being in a disadvantaged position in

terms of power dynamics, one of the most significant outcomes of this thesis is the visible effort women exert to cope with violence and improve their situation. The diversity of strategies produced, even within similar strategies, showcases how efficiently women utilize their resources to empower themselves.

The awareness of violence experienced by women has surfaced multiple times during focus group discussions. Women who are subjected to violence in various forms, such as having their financial freedom restricted or being excluded from decision-making processes, are acutely conscious of the underlying patriarchal power dynamics aimed at preserving male dominance and subjugating women:

"At times, even if women have economic freedom, there are still women who are not free. Men do not want women to be superior to them in any way, whether educated or not. All the pressure is always about that." Aslı, 60, from Ümitköy Women's Center

"They do it deliberately. They want our women not to open up so they can do whatever they want outside. That is their only concern. However, if we had the knowledge we have now, of course, they wouldn't be able to do it." Yasemin, 62, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I never had any savings of my own for 30 years, then I realized what I was subjected to, and I rebelled. I always wanted everything to be together. I told myself we were living together, but then I realized I needed something of my own." Zehra, 56, from Şafaktepe Women's Center

"I got married at a very young age; my husband didn't want me to continue my education, he didn't want me to work, and he didn't want to pay for my insurance. He wanted me to be dependent on him; he didn't want me to be free." Leyla, 53, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"Men always want women to be dependent on them without being smart or having money. Turkish men especially want this." Ayşe, 39, from Altındağ Women's Center

The increasing level of awareness and the struggle women undertake to empower themselves yield various outcomes. Firstly, women manage to defend themselves against economic violence with the consciousness they acquire. For instance, women in Ümitköy Local ensured the continuation of their insurance despite their husbands' insistence after quitting their jobs, and women in Şafaktepe, Altındağ, and Harikalar

Diyari locals started saving and investing for themselves upon realizing the violence they faced in the early stages of their marriages.

Although women's empowerment struggles may not always yield tangible results for themselves, they raise awareness among the next generation, namely their children, to raise them as independent individuals in every aspect. Women who are economically dependent on their spouses or whose spouses withhold the necessary resources for an independent life strive to prevent their children from experiencing the same by imparting the knowledge they have gained. The responses to the closing question asked during the focus group discussions, "What advice would you give to your daughter to achieve economic independence by the age of 25?" serve as tangible evidence of this struggle:

"I would advise her always to have some money saved on the side. I would advise her to study." Melek, 54, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"I would advise her not to tell her husband all of her money, to always save money for herself." Leyla, 53, from Sincan Harikalar Diyarı Women's Center

"She needs to stand on her own feet, study, and choose a good profession; I would tell her that." Ceren, 42, from Altındağ Women's Center

"Women need to stand on their own feet; she needs to learn about life. Otherwise, the man tries to teach the woman life at his convenience." Aysel, 52, from Altındağ Women's Center

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has provided an in-depth examination of economic violence experiences of women in Turkey, offering a comprehensive exploration of its multifaceted nature and the deep-seated socio-economic and cultural dynamics that perpetuate it. Through detailed empirical research conducted primarily in Ankara, the study has highlighted the often overlooked issue of economic control and exploitation within familial and intimate relationships, and its broader implications for gender equality and women's rights in Turkey.

Economic violence against women is revealed as not merely incidents of financial manipulation but as a systemic issue that intertwines with traditional gender roles and societal expectations. The research has illuminated how such violence is embedded in the very fabric of everyday interactions and reinforced by legal and institutional inadequacies. Through qualitative methodologies, including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, the voices of women who have navigated these challenges provide poignant insights into the personal and collective struggles against economic oppression. The narratives gathered underscore the resilience and ingenuity of women in developing coping strategies that not only confront but also subvert the conditions of their economic subjugation.

In this thesis, we systematically explored the scale and implications of economic violence against women in Turkey, with a focus on Ankara as a primary field site. The study was structured around several key areas: defining economic violence, understanding its manifestations within private and public spheres and identifying the coping strategies employed by women.

Initially, this thesis set the stage by detailing the aim and significance of the research, emphasizing the gap in literature regarding economic violence against women and

the need for more comprehensive policy approaches. It outlined the socio-economic backdrop of Turkey and introduced the theoretical frameworks guiding the analysis. Then, it reviewed existing literature on economic violence globally, identifying key themes and debates that informed the empirical investigation.

In the methodology section, the thesis described the methodology employed in the study, which involved qualitative data collection through interviews and focus groups. This approach allowed for a deep exploration of the personal experiences of women facing economic violence, providing rich qualitative insights into the strategies they employ to mitigate its impacts.

Findings section presented the findings from the fieldwork, offering a detailed analysis of the data and discussing how economic violence manifests in the lives of women. It explored the diverse experiences of economic violence among women and constructs a typology of the coping strategies they have developed. Emphasizing how these strategies are influenced by participants' socio-economic backgrounds, family structures, educational levels, and employment statuses, it provided a comparative analysis across different settings.

The significance of women's centers is highlighted as providing safe, social spaces where women can escape from daily responsibilities and engage in personal development and public life participation. For many, these centers are a refuge where they can relax, socialize, and access various educational and recreational activities. Particularly for women without financial independence or those confined by domestic responsibilities, these centers offer a critical outlet and support network.

The findings delve into the patterns of economic (in)dependence and employment, revealing that economic violence is often overlooked due to its normalization within patriarchal family structures where men typically control household finances. Strategically, women employ various methods to cope with and counteract economic violence. The first strategy was trimming the money through creating secret savings accounts, buying property, or retaining hidden funds, which are often undisclosed to male partners. These approaches enable women to maintain a degree of economic independence and prepare for potential financial necessities or conflicts.

On the other hand, second strategy showed women may negotiate with their husbands to continue their social security contributions, preserving benefits even if they stop working. Mainly used by financially aware women at the Ümitköy Women's Center, this strategy helps maintain long-term financial independence and prevents labor exploitation at home, ensuring they don't lose accrued benefits or economic stability despite employment breaks. This reflects their proactive approach in managing family dynamics and employment rights within patriarchal constraints. Lastly, I analyzed that some women use their roles as mothers and wives strategically to negotiate within their patriarchal contexts, often trading off their career aspirations for ensuring better educational and future opportunities for their children. This form of bargaining reflects the deep-seated gender dynamics and the sacrifices women make within the family unit. Overall, the findings chapter underscored the pervasive impact of economic violence on women's lives and the varied adaptive strategies they develop in response. It illustrated the critical role of support structures like women's centers in fostering resilience and empowerment among women facing economic oppression.

Economic violence leaves women vulnerable to many other forms of violence. By weaving these elements together, the thesis provides a comprehensive overview of economic violence against women in Turkey, offering both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for change. It underscores the necessity of a multi-dimensional approach to effectively combat economic violence and promote a more equitable society. Therefore, I would like to reiterate the urgency of addressing economic violence against women but as a crucial component of broader gender equality and economic justice efforts.

The findings of this thesis underscore the critical need for policy interventions that go beyond mere recognition of economic violence as a form of abuse, advocating for substantive changes to protect and empower women economically. The study highlights the importance of legal reforms to facilitate women's participation in the labor market, including policies that improve work-life balance, such as flexible working hours, substantial parental leave, and robust childcare support. It advocates for the implementation of equal pay for equal work policies, which are essential in

closing the gender wage gap and providing women with the financial independence necessary to escape abusive situations. Furthermore, this thesis emphasizes the need for local governments and institutions affiliated with local governments to disseminate programs supporting gender equality and enhance the quality of existing programs with trainings, projects and informing sessions that promotes women's empowerment. These changes are vital for enabling women to maintain their employment and economic independence without being forced to choose between career and family obligations.

This thesis also highlights that the violence women experience within the household due to the patriarchal social structure and family order are often internalized and normalized, which lead to their isolation from public sphere. At this point, women's centers are critically important as safe spaces where women can break the cycle of isolation by sharing their experiences, facilitating the creation of support networks for victims of violence. Therefore, the thesis calls for the strengthening of women's solidarity networks, which play a crucial role in supporting victims of economic violence. These networks provide a platform for sharing experiences, offering mutual support, and organizing collective action to demand systemic change. Enhancing these networks can amplify women's voices in policy-making arenas and ensure that their needs and rights are adequately represented and addressed.

The women's experiences detailed in this thesis shed light on their resilience in the face of economic violence and their efforts to overcome it. Despite the patriarchal power dynamics that disadvantage them, women exhibit a remarkable determination to confront violence and improve their circumstances. Their diverse strategies underscore their resourcefulness and adaptability in navigating oppressive situations. Moreover, their heightened awareness of the underlying dynamics of violence enables them to assert themselves and safeguard their rights. While their empowerment struggles may not always yield immediate results, they raise awareness among future generations, ensuring their children can lead independent lives. Through imparting their hard-won knowledge and advice to their daughters, women endeavor to break the cycle of dependence and empower the next generation to strive for economic independence. Thus, the experiences and strategies of these

empowered women underscore the resilience and determination of women in confronting and transcending economic violence.

To conclude, this thesis does more than just map the contours of economic violence against women in Turkey—it provides a critical framework for understanding how deeply entrenched economic and gender inequalities give rise to such violence. It calls for a concerted effort among policymakers, community leaders, and advocates to implement a multifaceted strategy that addresses both the symptoms and the underlying causes of economic violence. By advocating for equitable economic policies, legal reforms, and the empowerment of women through education and solidarity, this research paves the way for transformative change that can significantly improve the lives of women across Turkey. This comprehensive approach not only seeks to mitigate the impacts of economic violence but also aims to foster a society where women can fully participate as equal partners in all aspects of life, free from violence and coercion. This thesis is a call to action, urging all stakeholders to recognize the urgency of these issues and to work collaboratively towards creating a just and equitable society.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Ayşe Gündüz HOŞGÖR

Danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz İrem Hüda Uzun'un "*Türkiye'de Kadınların Ekonomik Şiddetle Baş Etme Stratejileri*" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek 0421-ODTÜİAEK-2023 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan

Prof. Dr. İ. Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Doç. Dr. Şerife SEVİNÇ
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Doç. Dr. Murat Perit ÇAKIR
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Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

B. INFORMED CONSENT

Araştırmaya Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Sosyoloji Bölümü Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi İrem Hüda Uzun tarafından Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör danışmanlığındaki yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, kadınların hane halkı içerisinde yaşadıkları ekonomik sorunları ve bu sorunlarla baş etme yöntemlerini tespit etmektir.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden 5-8 kişiden oluşan bir odak grup çalışmasına katılmanız beklenmektedir. Yaklaşık olarak bir saat sürmesi beklenen bu çalışmada sizlere bir dizi soru yöneltilecek ve bu sorulara cevap vermeniz istenecektir. Daha sonra içerik analizi ile değerlendirilmek üzere çalışma sırasında cevaplarınızın ses kaydı alınacaktır.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya kurum belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Çalışma genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular veya uygulamalar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir

nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmayı yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı uygulayan kişiye çalışmadan çıkmak istediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Çalıştay sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Sosyoloji Bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör ya da yüksek lisans öğrencisi İrem Hüda Uzun ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

___/___/___

Informed Consent Form

This research is conducted within the scope of the master's thesis by Irem Hüda Uzun, a graduate student at the Middle East Technical University Sociology Department and supervised by Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör. This form is prepared to inform you about the research conditions.

What Is the Purpose of the Study?

The research aims to identify the economic problems women face within the household and their coping methods.

How Will We Ask for Your Assistance?

If you agree to participate in the research, you will be expected to participate in a focus group study of 5-8 people. This study, expected to last about an hour, will involve a series of questions directed at you, and you will be asked to answer these questions. Subsequently, your answers will be recorded for content analysis.

How Will We Use the Information Collected from You?

Your participation in the research should be entirely voluntary. No identity or institution-determining information will be requested from you in the study. Your answers will be kept confidential and only evaluated by the researchers. The information obtained from participants will be collectively analyzed and used in scientific publications.

What You Need to Know About Your Participation:

The study generally does not contain questions or practices that will cause personal discomfort. However, you can leave the workshop if you feel uncomfortable during the participation due to questions or any other reason. In such a case, simply informing the person conducting the study you want to leave will be sufficient.

Additional Information About the Research:

Any questions about this study will be answered at the end of the workshop. Thank you in advance for participating in this study. You may contact Prof. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör from the Department of Sociology or the graduate student Irem Hüda Uzun if you want to get more information about the study.

I have read and understood the above information and am participating in this study voluntarily.

(Fill out and sign the form before returning it to the researcher).

Name Surname

Date

Signature

__/__/__

B. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

A. Demografik Sorular

1. Yaşınız:
2. Medeni Durumunuz:
3. Çocuğunuz var mı, varsa kaç tane?
4. Hanede kiminle yaşıyorsunuz, toplamda kaç kişi yaşıyorsunuz?
5. Çalışıyor musunuz, çalışıyorsanız ne iş yapıyorsunuz?
6. Evde kaç kişi çalışıyor, kimler çalışıyor?

B. Ekonomik Şiddet ve Baş Etme Stratejilerine Dair Sorular:

7. Eşiniz/ hanedeki erkekler:
 - a.Siz çalışmak istediğiniz halde çalışmanıza engel oldu mu ya da bir işten ayrılmanıza sebep oldu mu?
 - b.Başka harcamalar için parası olduğu halde evin ihtiyaçları için size para vermeyi reddetti mi?
 - c.Siz istemediğiniz halde (geliriniz olduğu durumda) gelirinizi elinizden aldı mı?
8. Evdeki mali işlerin yetkisinin kimde olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
9. Hane içi finansal konularda söz sahibi olduğunuzu düşünüyor musunuz?
10. Çalışma/çalışmama kararını kendiniz mi aldınız? Bu kararı birine sormanız gerekiyor mu/gerekti mi?
11. Kazandığınız paranın kontrolünü kendiniz sağlayabiliyor musunuz?
12. Kendinize ait banka hesabınız, banka kartınız veya kredi kartınız var mı?
13. Kendinize ait bir mülkünüz (konut, araba, arsa) var mı? Eşinizle ortak sahip olduğunuz bir mülk var mı?
14. Hane içerisinde kendi maddi gücünüzü sağlamak/korumak için herhangi bir şey yapıyor musunuz? Neler yapıyorsunuz?

A. Demographic Questions

1. Age:
2. Marital Status:
3. Do you have children? If so, how many?
4. Who do you live within the household, and how many people are there?
5. Are you currently employed, and if so, what is your occupation?
6. How many people are employed in the household, and who are they?

B. Questions Regarding Economic Violence and Coping Strategies:

7. Your spouse/men in the household:
 - a. Has he prevented you from working or caused you to leave a job even though you wanted to work?
 - b. Has he refused to provide money for household needs despite having money for other expenses?
 - c. Has he taken away your income against your will when you have an income?
8. Who do you think has authority over financial matters in the household?
9. Do you believe you have a say in financial matters within the household?
10. Did you decide to work or not work by yourself? Did you need to ask someone for this decision?
11. Do you have control over the money you earn?
12. Do you have a bank account, debit card, or credit card?
13. Do you own any property (house, car, land)? Do you jointly own any property with your spouse?
14. Do you do anything to provide/protect your financial independence within the household? If so, what actions do you take?

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Kadına yönelik şiddet, gerek kamusal gerekse özel alanda ortaya çıkan, fiziksel, cinsel, psikolojik, ekonomik, siber zarar veya ıstırap ile sonuçlanan ya da sonuçlanma ihtimali olan, toplumsal cinsiyete dayanan her türlü eylem aracılığıyla kadınların keyfi olarak özgürlükten yoksun bırakılmasına verilen isimdir. Kadına yönelik şiddet, toplumsal ve küresel faktörler, derin ve köklü ataerkil normlar, toplumsal cinsiyet ayrımcılığı ve yasal düzenlemeler aracılığıyla gelişmekte ve güçlenmektedir. Bu faktörler sadece şiddeti kolaylaştırmakla kalmamakta, aynı zamanda toplum içerisinde içinde şiddetin normalleşmesine de katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Kadına yönelik şiddetin türleri arasında olan ekonomik şiddet, fiziksel yansımaları olmaması sebebiyle sıklıkla göz ardı edilmektedir. Bir kadının ekonomik kaynaklara erişimini, bu kaynakları kullanımını ve korumasını çeşitli yöntemlerle denetim altında tutma olarak tanımlanabilen ekonomik şiddet, kadının ekonomik bağımsızlığının önünde engel teşkil etmektedir. Bu şiddet biçimi, finansal kaynaklara erişimi kısıtlama, ev içinde para akışını kontrol etme, kadının sahip olduğu mülklere el koyma, iş hayatına katılımını engelleme ve kadın emeğini adil olmayan şekilde sömürme gibi çeşitli yollarla ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ağır sonuçlarına rağmen ekonomik şiddet, ekonomik ilişkileri çerçeveleyen sosyal normlar ve yasal yapılar sebebiyle genellikle görünmez kalmaktadır. Toplumsal cinsiyet normlarının kadına biçtiği ev hanımlığı, eşlik ve annelik rolleri sebebiyle kadının iş hayatına katılımı ve finansal özgürlüğüyle ilgili konular toplumda çoğu zaman önemsiz kabul edilmekte ve bu konulara dair ortaya çıkan hak ihlalleri normalleştirilmektedir. Ekonomik şiddet, şiddet failinin (örneği yakın partner, aile üyesi, arkadaş veya iç çevreden biri) mevcut hiyerarşide üstünlüğünü sağlamak için bir kadının finansal kaynakları ve etkinliklerini tam kontrol altına almaya çalışmasıyla ortaya çıkmaktadır. Evdeki finansal durumu kontrol edilmesi, finansal karar alma süreçlerinden dışlanması ve kişisel ve ev içi ihtiyaçları için finansal kaynaklara erişimini engellenerek ekonomik

şiddete maruz kalan kadınlar, bağımsız geçim kaynaklarına (örneğin, mülk ve düzenli gelir getiren işler) erişim sağlayamamakta ve şiddet uygulayıcısı partner veya ev halkı üyesine bağımlı hale gelmektedir.

Bu tezin temel amacı, Türkiye'de farklı sosyo-ekonomik geçmişe sahip kadınların ekonomik şiddet deneyimlerini ve maruz kaldıkları şiddete karşı ürettikleri baş etme stratejilerini analiz etmek ve Ankara'yı merkez alarak ayrıntılı bir inceleme yapmaktır. Bu araştırma, kadınların ekonomik şiddet deneyimlerini incelemeyi, üretilen başa çıkma stratejilerini anlamayı ve sosyo-ekonomik faktörlerin bu şiddetin yaygınlığını ve doğasını nasıl etkilediğini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Bu tezin elde etmeyi amaçladığı en önemli kazanımlardan biri, kadınların toplum tarafından normalleştirilen şiddete ses çıkarabilmelerini sağlamaktır. Türkiye'de kadınların sosyal hayattaki varlığı, geleneksel normlar, örf ve adetler tarafından kontrol edilmekte ve kısıtlanmaktadır. Bu normlar aynı zamanda dini değerler ile desteklenerek kadın erkek arasındaki orantısız güç ilişkisini haklı göstermeye çalışmaktadır. Aile müessesesinin kamusal alandan gün geçtikçe sıyrılması ve başlı başına mahrem bir yapı olarak kabul görmesi, aile içerisindeki orantısız güç dengesinin kadın üzerinde yarattığı tahakkümü de günlük hayata yansımaması gereken mahrem bir konu haline getirmektedir.

Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kadın ve Aile Hizmetleri Dairesi Başkanlığı, kadınlara, gençlere ve çocuklara kaliteli hizmet vermek amacıyla 2021 yılında kurulmuştur. Bu daire başkanlığına bağlı Aile ve Yaşam Merkezleri Şube Müdürlüğü, Çocuk Hizmetleri Şube Müdürlüğü, Evlendirme Şube Müdürlüğü, Kadın ve Aile Şube Müdürlüğü, ve İdari ve Mali İşler Şube Müdürlüğü olmak üzere 5 ayrı birim mevcuttur. Kadın Lokalleri, Kadın ve Aile Şube Müdürlüğü çatısı altında Ankara'da yaşayan kadınların bedensel, ruhsal, sosyal, kültürel ve eğitsel bakımdan desteklenip güçlendirilmesi amacıyla faaliyet gösteren kurumlardır. Lokallerde akademik ve sanatsal faaliyetler ve spor faaliyetlerinin yanı sıra sosyal

farkındalık çalışmaları, eğlence etkinlikleri, geziler, sağlık tarama programları ve aile danışmanlığı gibi farklı hizmetler sunulmaktadır.

Ankara'da toplam 21 bölgede faaliyet gösteren kadın lokalleri, saha çalışmasında hedeflenen katılımcı çeşitliliğini sağlamıştır. İkinci olarak kadın lokallerinin belediye çatısı altında faaliyet göstermesi onlara kamusal hizmet olma niteliği kazandırırken, lokal müdürleri ve lokalde eğitim veren eğitmenlerin katılımcılar üzerindeki nüfuzu, katılımcılara ulaşılmasını kolaylaştırmıştır. Son olarak katılımcıların lokallerde yürütülen faaliyetlerde bir araya gelmeleri ve zamanla aralarındaki paylaşımın artması, lokallerin dolaylı yoldan kadınlar arasında enformel bir dayanışma ağı oluşmasına yol açmaktadır. Özellikle sosyo-ekonomik olarak daha düşük bölgelerde yer alan kadın lokallerine üye olan katılımcıların çalışmamaları ve hane içi sorumluluklar sebebiyle kamusal alana katılımlarının oldukça düşük olduğu hesaba katıldığında, lokaller kadınlar için bir sosyalleşme merkezi olmanın yanı sıra benzer sosyal düzene sahip kadınların hem birbirleriyle deneyim paylaşımı yapabildiği hem de lokalin sunduğu imkanlar dahilinde bilinçlenip güçlendiği güvenli alanlar olma özelliği taşımaktadır.

Odak grup görüşmesi yapacağım lokalleri seçerken amacım görüşme yapabileceğim katılımcılar arasında demografik ve sosyo-ekonomik çeşitliliği sağlayabilmektir. Bu sebeple odak grup çalışması yürütmek istediğim bölgeleri Cebeci, Altındağ, Ümitköy ve Sincan olarak belirledim.

Cebeci, başlangıçta Ankara'nın hızlı kentleşmesinden etkilenmese de şehrin 1920'lerde başkent ilan edilmesinin ardından eski ve yeni Ankara arasında tampon bölge olarak ortaya çıkmış bir semttir. Başlangıçta Ankara'ya taşınan memurlar ve bürokratların barındırma ihtiyacını gidermek için inşa edilen Cebeci, çeşitli kamu kurumlarına ev sahipliği yapan ve akademisyenler, memurlar, öğrenciler ve sağlık çalışanları gibi heterojen bir nüfusu barındıran bir mahalleye dönüşmüştür. Cebeci mahallesinin sakinlerine hizmet veren Şafaktepe Kadın Lokali, çoğunlukla 60 yaş üzeri emekli kadınlardan oluşan önemli bir üye tabanına sahiptir.

Ankara'nın başkent ilan edilmesi ve yeni kentsel merkezlerin ortaya çıkmasıyla başlayan sosyo-ekonomik ve kültürel kutuplaşmada Altındağ, eski Ankara'nın temsili haline gelmiştir. Başkent modernleşme çabaları sırasında ihmal edilen Altındağ, sosyal ve mekansal zorlukları artıran gecekondu yerleşimleri ve marjinal işlerle özdeşleşmiştir. Altındağ Belediye Binası içinde bulunan Altındağ Kadın Lokali, orta-alt ve alt sosyo-ekonomik statüye sahip ev kadınlarından oluşan bir üye profiline sahiptir.

Ümitköy, şehir merkezinden uzakta, modern altyapıya ve saygın mesleklerle uğraşan sofistike bir nüfusa sahip olan orta-üst sınıf merkezlere dönüştü. Üniversiteler, kamu kurumları ve hastanelerle çevrili olan bu semt, iyi eğitilmiş ve maddi açıdan istikrarlı sakinleri cezbetmektedir. Galleria Alışveriş Merkezi yakınında bulunan Ümitköy Kadın Lokali, başlıca orta-üst sosyo-ekonomik sınıftan emeklilerden oluşan bir üyelik tabanına hizmet etmektedir.

Başlangıçta Ankara'dan çokça uzak ve küçük bir yerleşim birimi olan, gelişen ulaşım olanakları ve Ankara'nın merkezinden yaşanan göç nedeniyle önemli bir gelişme ve nüfus artışı yaşamıştır. Zamanla Sincan, şehrin marjinalleşmiş kesimlerinin din temelli bir topluluk kimliği oluşturduğu sosyo-kültürel bir ayrışmayla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Harikalar Diyarı Parkı içinde bulunan Sincan Kadın Lokali, orta-alt ve alt sosyo-ekonomik statüye sahip ev kadınlarından oluşan bir üye profiline sahiptir.

Kadın lokalleri, bulunduğu bölgelerde yaşayan kadınlara uygun fiyata güvenilir ve nitelikli sosyalleşme imkanı sunmaktadır. Katılımcılar lokale ödedikleri yıllık üyelik ücretiyle birlikte tüm kurslara ve kültür sanat faaliyetlerine ücretsiz katılım göstermekte, ayrıca çevre edinme şansı yakalamaktadır. Lokale gelmek tüm kadınlar için bir hoş zaman geçirme amacı taşımaktadır; ancak bu "hoş zaman" kavramının anlamı, katılımcıların sosyo-ekonomik durumları, yaş aralığı ve hane içi sorumluluklarına bağlı olarak farklılık göstermektedir.

Lokale gelmek, kurslara katılmak, arkadaşları ile kurs sonrasında sohbet etmek özellikle çocuk sahibi ve çalışmayan kadınlar için kendileri için bir şey yapabildikleri tek zaman dilimi anlamına gelmektedir. Gün boyu ev işleriyle mücadele eden, çocuk bakımı veya yaşlı bakımı ile ilgilenen, anne, eş veya bakım veren olma harici bir kimliğe sahip olmayan kadınlar, eşlerinin işte çocuklarının okulda olduğu zaman diliminde haftada birkaç saat bu kimliklerden sıyrılarak evden çıkıyor ve kendileri için, kendileri gibi kadınlarla bir araya gelerek sosyalleşme imkanı bulmaktadır. Emekli ve/veya orta yaşlı kadınlar için ise lokale gelmek bir emeklilik hayalinin gerçekleşmesi anlamı taşımaktadır. Çocuk bakımı sorumluluğunu tamamlamış, emekli olmuş, hane içi sorumlulukları nispeten azalmış olan kadınlar, eşlerinin işe gittiği zaman diliminde sosyalleşmek için lokale gelmektedir. Genç yaşlarını çocuk bakarak, eşlerine hizmet ederek, çalışarak geçirdiğini ifade eden kadınlar, bu sorumlulukları üzerinden atmanın vermiş olduğu vicdan rahatlığıyla lokalde kaliteli zaman geçirmektedir.

Saha çalışmasında pek çok kadının ekonomik sabotaja maruz kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ekonomik sabotajda şiddet faili, kadının istihdama katılmasına engel olmak için birtakım taktikler uygulamaktadır; bu taktikler bakım ve hane içi diğer sorumlulukları paylaşmayı reddetmek, kadını duygusal ve fiziksel istismara maruz bırakmak, iş için gerekli eğitimi almasını engellemek gibi eylemleri kapsamaktadır. Kadını kontrol altında tutmak, böylece ataerkil hiyerarşiyi sürdürmek isteyen erkekler, çeşitli gerekçeler öne sürerek kadının iş hayatına katılımına engel olmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu gerekçelerden en sıkça başvurulanı, kadının çocuk sahibi olduktan sonra doğan bakım sorumluluğudur; çünkü Türk kültüründe kapsamı açıkça belirlenmiş olan kadın ve erkek rolleriyle meşrulaştırılması mümkündür. Bu roller ve göz önüne alındığında, kadından evli bir kadına yakışır işlerde çalışmasını ve anneliğin sorumluluğunu yerine getirmesini beklemek, aksi takdirde kadını istihdamdan çekmek toplum nezdinde haklı gösterilen sebepler olarak kabul görmektedir. Ebeveynlerin ortak sorumluluğu olan bakım sorumluluğunu kadının sorumluluğu gibi kabul ederek kadının çalışma hayatını şarta bağlamak, meslek seçimine karışmak, duygusal sömürü yoluyla kadının çalışmasına engel olmak,

ekonomik sabotaj için kullanılan taktiklere somut örnekler olarak saha çalışmasında ortaya çıkmıştır.

Katılımcılara çalışıp çalışmama kararını kendileri alıp almadıkları sorulduğunda bazıları evlenmeden önce babalarının, evlendikten sonra ise eşlerinin çalışmalarına ve okumalarına engel olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu kişilerin erken yaşta evlilik yaptıklarını da göz önünde bulundurmak gerekmektedir. Aile, üyelerinin bilinç dışı şekilde kendisine bağıllık hissi beslediği bir kurumdur, bu nedenle kişilerin hayatını şekillendirirken aidiyet kurduğu diğer kurumlardan farklı bir konuma sahiptir. Aile üyeleri bu kuruma karşı sonradan rıza geliştirebilir ve rızası yönünde bir bağıllık sergileyebilir, ancak Türkiye gibi toplumun selametinin aile müessesesine dayandırıldığı toplumlarda ailenin normlarına ve kurallarına karşı gelmek oldukça zor ve risklidir. Özellikle genç yaşta eğitim ve çalışma olanakları elinden alınmış olan kadınlar, kendi potansiyellerini keşfedemeden, kendi başlarına bağımsız bir hayat sürmek için gereken becerileri, entelektüel ve profesyonel birikimi elde edemeden evlenerek bir erkeğin boyunduruğundan diğerininkine girmek mecburiyetinde kalmaktadır. Bağımsız, kendi kendine yetebilen bir birey olma şansı elinden alınan kadınlar, evlendikten sonra da benzer kısıtlamalara eşleri tarafından maruz bırakıldıklarında bu durum onların ekonomik ve sosyal olarak eşlerine bağımlı olma ihtimallerini artırmaktadır. Sonuç olarak kadın, hem ekonomik şiddete, hem de şiddetin diğer türlerine karşı daha savunmasız hale gelmektedir.

Katılımcılar arasında (özellikle çalışma geçmişi olanlar arasında) ekonomik sabotaj kadar ekonomik istismara maruz kalanlar da mevcuttur. Finansal kaynakların şiddet uygulayıcının lehine kullanıldığı bu tip ekonomik şiddete kadının rızası olmadan şiddet faili için kredi çekmek, borca girmek, kadını borca kefil yapmak, kadının gelir kaynaklarına ve mülklerine el koymak, hasar vermek ya da çalmak örnektir. Kadınların çalışma hayatında olmaları her zaman ekonomik özgürlük sahibi oldukları anlamına gelmemektedir. Özellikle kadının istihdama katılımının pek çok koşula bağlandığı ve hane içi sorumluluklarının önceliklendirildiği ataerkil toplumlarda erkekle birlikte kadının da çalışması ekonomik koşullardan dolayı bir

mecburiyet halini aldığıında, erkek toplum tarafından kendisine atanan ailenin geçimini sağlama rolünü bölüşmek zorunda kaldığı için erkeklğini ve otoritesini tehdit altında hissetmektedir. Her toplumda cinsiyete dayalı bazı beklentiler ve kısıtlamalar mevcuttur. Kültürel ve tarihsel bağlama bağlı olarak toplum, bir erkeğin erkeklik beklentilerine uygun niteliklere, davranışlara, tercihlere ve özelliklere sahip olmasını beklemektedir. Erkek bu beklentileri tam anlamıyla karşılayamadığını düşündüğünde (örneğin eşinin çalışmak zorunda kalması gibi), akranları ve toplum tarafından dışlanabilir, yüksek erkeklik statüsünü kaybedeceğine dair endişeye kapılabilmektedir. Bu korku ve endişe hali, kırılan erkeklik olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Kadınların istihdama katılarak verdikleri emek, kazandıkları paraya el koyulması yoluyla itibarsızlaştırılırken; hane içerisinde verdikleri emek de erkekler tarafından itibarsızlaştırılmakta ve görünmez kılınmaktadır. Ev içerisindeki emek, geleneksel cinsiyet rollerine göre kadına atfedilmiştir. Buna göre ideal kadın, evinin tüm işlerini yapan, ailenin tüm fertlerinin bakım sorumluluğu ve duygusal işi ile ilgilenen kişidir. Ancak bu emek, toplum tarafından görünmez kılınmakta, değersizleştirilmekte ve ekonomik değeri olduğu düşünülmemektedir.

Katılımcılara evdeki finansal konularda karar alma yetkisinin kimde olduğu sorulduğunda alınan yanıtlar üç temel başlık etrafında sınıflandırılmıştır: Kadınlarda olduğunu söyleyenler, erkekte olduğunu söyleyenler ve ortak karar aldığıını söyleyenler. Bu noktada paranın kontrolü ve yönetimi arasındaki farktan bahsetmek gerekmektedir. Paranın kontrolü stratejik gücü, paranın yönetimi ise daha idari bir gücü temsil etmektedir. Bu güç ayrılığı, bireylerin parayı harcama ve parayı yönetme açısından farklı yetkilere sahip olmasına yol açmaktadır; yani bir evde hem kadın hem erkek çalışıyor olsa da paranın kontrolü yalnızca erkekte olabilir; ya da parayı kazanan ve kontrol eden erkek olsa da yöneten kadın olabilir.

Kadınların karar alım süreçlerine katılımı çoğunlukla kendilerine atfedilen ev içi işler ve bakım sorumlulukları ile, yani özel alanı ilgilendiren alanlar ile sınırlıdır. Ancak bu alanlarda dahi kadınlar para üzerinde stratejik güce sahip değildir, hatta bazı durumlarda hem stratejik hem idari güç erkeğe aittir. Kadınlar, paranın gerekli

olduğu harcama kalemlerine dair eşlerine bilgilendirme yapmaktadır; karara dair otorite erkektir. Alıntılarında yer verilen kadınların ailelerinde çoğunlukla evdeki tek para kazanan kişi erkektir; kadınların hane içi emeğinin görünmezliği sebebiyle kadın bu paranın kazanılmasında pay sahibi değilmiş gibi görünmektedir.

Kadınların sosyo-ekonomik durum, eğitim seviyesi ve çalışma geçmişi değişkenlik gösterse de kadınlar üzerindeki finansal kontrol değişmemekte, yalnızca şekil değiştirmektedir. Sincan, Altındağ ve Mamak gibi daha düşük gelir gruplarının ikamet ettiği semtlerde kadınlar sınırlı kaynakların ihtiyaçlar özelinde kullanımı konusunda söz sahibi olma mücadelesi vermektedir. Ümitköy gibi çoğunlukla yüksek gelirli, çift maaş ile geçindirilen evlerde yaşayan kadınlar ise mülk sahibi olsalar dahi eşlerinin sahip oldukları evleri kiraya vererek elde ettikleri pasif gelirden faydalanamamaktadır.

Profesyonel ev hanımı olarak tanımlanabilecek kadınlar, ev işletmesinin ihtiyaçları ve gelir-gider durumundan sorumlu yetkililerdir; ancak bu işletmede parayı kontrol eden ve harcama onayı veren kişi erkektir. Harcama onayı diye vurgulanmasının sebebi erkeğin her zaman parayı harcayan kişi olmamasıdır. Erkek bu harcamayı kendisi yapabildiği gibi, kadına hane gelirinden pay vererek onu harcamalar için yetkilendirebilmektedir. Ancak kadın, yalnızca erkeğin kendisi için belirlediği yetki alanında para yönetimi yaptığı için bu durum kendisine bir finansal özgürlük ve güçlenme sağlamamaktadır. Kadın, tüm hayatını evi, ailesi ve çocuklarına adamaktadır, bunun karşılığında erkek kadını özel alanda ve kendi iktidarı altında tutmanın verdiği güven ve memnuniyetle kadının evin ihtiyaçları için talep ettiği harcamalara “makul olduğu müddetçe” onay vermektedir. Bu durum, kadının evdeki finansal karar alma mekanizmalarında rol oynadığına dair bir ilüzyon yaratsa da kadın yalnızca sınırları erkek tarafından belirlenen bir alanda hareket etme yetkisine sahiptir.

Maruz kaldığı ekonomik şiddetle mücadele etmek için gerekli bilgi, beceri ve donanıma sahip olmayan kadınlar, içinde buldukları durumda kendilerini

güçlendirebilmek, kendi çıkarlarını koruyabilmek ve mevcut patriyarkal düzen içerisinde kendilerine manevra alanı oluşturabilmek için birtakım stratejiler geliştirmektedir. Kadınların bu mücadelesi, Kandiyoti'nin (1988) ataerkil pazarlık kavramıyla doğrudan ilişkilidir. Kandiyoti, kadınların patriyarka ile mücadele edebilmek için ataerkil pazarlık adı altında stratejiler geliştirdiğini savunmaktadır (p. 274). Bu stratejiler farklı sosyo-ekonomik değişkenlere göre şekillenebilmekte ve kendini şartlara bağlı olarak yeniden üretebilmektedir (p. 275). “Pazarlık” adı buradan gelmektedir; üretilen stratejiler cinsiyet temelli güç ilişkilerindeki değişime ve çıkarlara bağlı olarak müzakere edilebilmekte ve yeniden dönüştürülebilmektedir.

Kadınların ekonomik şiddetle baş etmek için ürettikleri ilk strateji, “Kendi parandan kırpma” stratejisidir. Bu strateji, genel hatlarıyla kadınların maruz kaldıkları ekonomik şiddete karşı kendilerine kaynak oluşturmak amacıyla ellerine geçen finansal kaynaklardan (bu kaynak maaş, emekli ikramiyesi, prim, miras ya da kocalarının ev ihtiyaçları için verdiği para olabilir) belirli bir miktarı eşlerinden habersiz kendileri için ayırması ve çeşitli yollarla yatırım yapmasıdır. Stratejinin uygulanma metodu, sahip olunan kaynaklara göre değişiklik göstermektedir. Çalışan kadınlar, bu stratejiyi çoğunlukla eşlerine kazançlarını olduğundan eksik söyleyip aradaki tutarı birikim ve yatırım yaparak uygulamaktadır. Çalışmayan ve sabit bir geliri olmayan katılımcıların bu stratejiyi uygulama yöntemi, çalışan kadınlardan ayrılmaktadır. Gelir kaynaklarının kısıtlılığı ve var olan kaynakların yönetimi konusunda gerekli donanımına sahip olamamaları sebebiyle kadınların bu stratejiyi uygulama yöntemleri çoğunlukla eşlerinden ev ihtiyaçları için gerekenden fazla para istemek, evin ihtiyaçlarını karşıladıktan sonra ellerinde kalan parayı gizli banka hesaplarına yatırmak, ailelerinden miras yoluyla kalan mal konusunda eşlerini bilgilendirmemek, eşlerinden gizli evde parça başı iş yapıp kazancı gizli banka hesabında biriktirmek üzerinden şekillenmektedir.

İkinci strateji, eşleri tarafından çalışması istenmeyen kadınların iş hayatından çekilmek için sigortalarının eşleri tarafından ödenmesini şart koşmasıdır. Bu strateji, kadınların işten ayrılmaları ve hane içerisinde ücretsiz emek vermeleri yönünde

maruz kaldıkları baskıya karşı eşleriyle yürüttükleri ataerkil pazarlıkta geleceklerini güvenceye almak için geliştirilmiştir. Devlet kurumlarında sigortalı çalışan kadınlar, sosyal güvenlik, sağlık hizmetlerine erişim, emeklilik ve gelecek güvencesi gibi pek çok yan hakka sahiptir; istihdamdan çekilmek düzenli bir gelirin yanı sıra hem pek çok yan hakkın hem de gelecek güvencesinin kaybedilmesi anlamına gelmektedir. Çalışarak edindikleri hakların bilincinde olan kadınlar, özellikle çocuk sahibi olduktan sonra işten ayrılmaları yönünde artan baskılara maruz kaldıkları için eşleriyle yapacakları pazarlıkta çalışma hayatında edindikleri hakların korunmasını, bu sebeple sigortalarının işten ayrılışları bile eşleri tarafından ödenmesini şart koşturmuştur. Böylece kadınlar hem kazandıkları hakları kaybederek mağduriyet yaşamamış, hem de iş hayatından ayrıldıktan sonra evde verdikleri emeğin karşılığını uzun vadede de olsa dolaylı yoldan alabilme şansı elde etmiş ve emeklerinin sömürülmesinin önüne geçmişlerdir.

Bu strateji, yalnızca Ümitköy Kadınlar lokalindeki katılımcılar tarafından uygulanan bir stratejidir. Bunun iki temel sebebi vardır. Birincisi, katılımcıların eğitim seviyeleri, kültürel birikimleri ve çalışma geçmişleri nedeniyle çalışan hakları konusundaki bilinç seviyesi oldukça yüksektir. Bu sebeple işten ayrılmanın sebep olacağı zararın boyutunu daha objektif şekilde görebilmektedir. İkincisi, Ümitköy lokalindeki katılımcılar gelir seviyesi yüksek hanelerde yaşamaktadır; bu durum ataerkil pazarlığın tarafları arasındaki güç dengelerini ve uygulanan stratejileri doğrudan etkilemektedir. Kadının sahip olduğu haklar konusundaki bilinç seviyesi onu pazarlıkta güçlü konuma getirirken, erkeğin kadının sigortasını ödeyecek maddi güce sahip olduğunun kadın tarafından bilinmesi erkeği bu pazarlığın dezavantajlı tarafı haline getirmektedir.

Bu stratejinin uygulanma motivasyonu, ilk stratejiden farklı olarak kadınların kendi emeklerinin sömürülmesinin önüne geçmek ve geleceklerini erkeğin inisiyatifine bırakmadan güvence altına almak istemeleridir. Kadınların stratejilerini belirlerken sahip oldukları motivasyon, tıpkı stratejiler şekillendirilirken olduğu gibi sosyal koşullar ve sahip olunan kaynaklarla yakından ilişkilidir.

Son strateji, hane içerisinde maruz kaldığı ekonomik şiddetin farkında olan ancak bu şiddetle baş etmek için gerekli kaynaklara sahip olmayan kadınların, iyi bir anne ve eş olmaları üzerinden bir kişisel savunma mekanizması geliştirmesidir. Kadınların ekonomik şiddetin yıkıcı etkilerini duygusal ve psikolojik olarak azaltma amacıyla refleks olarak çıkan bu savunma mekanizması, kadınların ataerkil pazarlıkta manevra yapmasına olanak sağlamamasına rağmen iyi olma hallerine katkı sağladığı için bir strateji olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Sahadan elde edilen veriler, bu stratejinin iki temel işleyiş mekanizması olduğunu göstermektedir. Birinci mekanizma, ekonomik şiddete farklı boyutlarıyla maruz kalan ve bu şiddet sarmalında kendisini güçlendirme ve erkek iktidarından kurtarmak için gerekli donanıma sahip olmayan kadınların kendilerine yüklenen ev içi sorumlulukları üzerinden inşa ettikleri öncelikli kimlikleri olan annelik ve eşlik rollerine tutunmaları üzerinden işlemektedir. İkinci mekanizma, şiddet mağduru kadınların annelik ve eşlik rollerini ataerkil pazarlıkta koz olarak kullanması üzerinden işlemektedir. Ataerkil pazarlıkta kadınlar, erkek egemenliğinin hüküm sürdüğü sosyal düzende belirli avantajlar elde edebilmek için birtakım toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini kabullenmek durumunda kalmaktadır. Kadınlar ekonomik bağımsızlığa sahip olmamak, destek alabilecekleri dayanışma ağlarının eksikliği, ya da toplum baskısı gibi sebeplerle belirli tavizler vermek zorunda kalmaktadır. Kadınların taviz verdikleri noktada en büyük umudu, hayatlarını adadıkları çocuklarının bu şiddet ve yokluk döngüsünden kurtulacağı, onların iyi bir eğitim alıp güçlü bireyler olarak refah dolu bir hayata sahip olacağıdır. Bu umudun gerçekleşmesi için kadınlar, eşleriyle yaptıkları ataerkil pazarlıkta feragat ettikleri özgürlüklerine karşılık çocuklarının iyi bir gelecek sahibi olması için gerekli donanımların onlara sağlanmasını talep etmektedir.

Kadınların zamanla artan bilinç seviyesi ve kendilerini güçlendirmek için gösterdikleri mücadele, farklı çıktılar ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çıktılardan ilki, kadınların edindikleri bilinçle birlikte kendilerini ekonomik şiddete karşı savunmayı başarmasıdır. Ümitköy Lokalindeki kadınların eşlerinin ısrarlarına rağmen işten ayrıldıktan sonra sigortalarının devam etmesini sağlaması ve uzun bir aradan sonra

çalışma hayatına geri dönmeleri, Şafaktepe, Altındağ ve Harikalar Diyarı lokallerindeki kadınların evliliklerinin ilk dönemlerinden sonra maruz kaldıkları şiddetin farkına vararak kendileri için birikim ve yatırım yapmaya başlamaları bu başarının somut örnekleridir. Kadınların güçlenme mücadelesi, kimi zaman kendileri için somut çıktılar yaratmasa da kendilerinden sonraki kuşağı, yani çocuklarını, her açıdan bağımsız bireyler olarak yetiştirmeleri için gerekli bilinci edinmelerine katkı sağlamaktadır. Ekonomik olarak eşlerine bağımlı olan ya da bağımsız bir hayat için gerekli kaynakları eşleri tarafından alıkoyulan kadınlar, edindikleri tecrübeyi aynı deneyimleri çocuklarının yaşamaması için mücadele vermektedir.

Son olarak bu tez, kadınların ekonomik şiddetle mücadele edebilmesi ve güçlenmesi için ihtiyaç duyulan politika müdahalelerine vurgu yapmaktadır. Kadınların işgücü piyasasına katılımlarını kolaylaştıracak esnek çalışma saatleri, annelik izni ve devlet tarafından sağlanacak nitelikli çocuk bakım hizmeti gibi iş-yaşam dengesini iyileştirecek politikalar ve eşit işe eşit ücret politikalarının uygulanmasını savunmaktadır. Bu politikalar, toplumsal cinsiyet temelli maaş farkının yarattığı yıkıcı etkilerin ortadan kalkmasında ve kadınların şiddetten korunmak için gereken ekonomik bağımsızlığı sağlamasında temel öneme sahiptir. Ayrıca, bu tez, yerel yönetimlerin ve yerel yönetimlerle ilişkili kurumların toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini destekleyen programları yaygınlaştırmasını ve mevcut programların kalitesini artırmak için eğitimler, projeler ve kadınların güçlenmesini teşvik eden bilgilendirme oturumları düzenlemesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu tez ayrıca, kadınların özel alanda yaşadıkları şiddetin, ataerkil toplum yapısı ve patriyarkal aile düzeni nedeniyle sıklıkla içselleştirildiğini ve normleştirildiğini vurgulamaktadır, bu da kadınların kamusal alandan izole olmalarının önünü açmaktadır. Bu noktada kadın lokalleri, kadınların deneyimlerini paylaşarak izolasyon döngüsünü kırabilecekleri güvenli alanlar olması ve şiddet mağduru kadınlar için dayanışma ağları oluşturması nedeniyle son derece önemlidir. Bu nedenle, tez, ekonomik şiddet mağdurlarını desteklemekte kritik bir rol oynayan kadın lokallerinin güçlendirilmesini önermektedir.

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