

UNDERSTANDING CIVIL SOCIETY LABOR WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF
GENDER AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

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**UNDERSTANDING CIVIL SOCIETY LABOR WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF
GENDER AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how gender and care structures may interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of workers in civil society organizations (or NGOs). Relying on feminist conceptions of civil society, NGOs are conceptualized as sites of social reproduction where some care work takes place as a part of societal needs provision. Qualitative research is based on semi-structured interviews with 20 NGO workers; 17 women and 3 men, from 17 NGOs in care-related professions and/or fields. The study examined the gender composition of the NGO workforce in Türkiye, often defined as female-intensive where women's and men's work may differ; but still as a relatively better sector in terms of gender equality. It also provides insight for a caring definition of civil society work and its emotional, unpaid or underpaid dimensions while it finds that perspectives highly depend on workers' personal conditions and engagement with care, gender and work structures. The focus on meaning and motivation-making processes as well as how workers juggle work and private life pointed to mechanisms beyond care and gender including financial, sectoral and workplace conditions and various personal, social and emotional systems. As a whole, this thesis offers feminist insight into third sector laborers' work/life reconciliation by incorporating their views and experiences as both laborers and individuals.

Keywords: Civil Society; Gender Division of Labor; Care; Social Reproduction; Work Life Reconciliation

ÖZ

Bu tez, toplumsal cinsiyet ve bakım yapılarının sivil toplum kuruluşlarında (STK) çalışanların deneyimlerini ve anlamlandırma süreçlerini nasıl şekillendirebileceğini araştırmıştır. Feminist sivil toplum kuramlarına dayanan tez; STK'ları toplumsal ihtiyaçların karşılanmasında merkezi bir rol oynayan bakım işlerinin bir kısmının gerçekleştiği toplumsal yeniden üretim alanları olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Nitel araştırma, 17 STK'da bakımla ilişkili meslek ve/veya alanlarda çalışan 20 STK çalışanı (17 kadın ve 3 erkek) ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere dayanmaktadır. Genellikle kadın yoğun olarak tanımlanan ve kadın ve erkeklerin emeklerinin farklılık gösterebildiği Türkiye'deki STK işgücüne cinsiyet dağılımı temelinde bakılmıştır. Sivil toplum emeğinin bakım odaklı bir tanımının yanı sıra duygusal ve ücretsiz (veya düşük ücretli) emek boyutlarına ilişkin içgörüler sunulmuş ve bu tanımların çalışanların kişisel koşullarıyla bakım, cinsiyet ve emek yapılarıyla olan ilişkilerine bağlı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Çalışanların anlam ve motivasyon oluşturma süreçleri ile iş ve kişisel yaşamlarını nasıl dengelediğine odaklanılması, bakım ve cinsiyetin ötesinde, finansal, sektörel, çalışma koşulları ile kişisel, sosyal ve duygusal sistemleri de içeren iş/yaşam dengesi mekanizmalarına işaret etmiştir. Bu tez, üçüncü sektör çalışanlarının hem emekçi hem de birey olarak görüş ve deneyimlerini bir araya getirerek, iş ve yaşam dengesi konusunda feminist bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sivil Toplum; Cinsiyete Dayalı İş Bölümü; Bakım; Sosyal Yeniden Üretim; İş Yaşam Dengesi

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Mehmet Kerem Ocak
who always cared for and supported me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	: Artificial Intelligence
AKP	: Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
CSO	: Civil Society Organization
EU	: European Union
GDCSR	: General Directorate for Civil Society Relations (also STİGM)
ILO	: International Labor Organization
INGO	: International Non-Governmental Organization
LGBTQ+	: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer Plus (or LGBTQIA+)
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
STİGM	: Sivil Toplumla İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü
TEGV	: Türkiye Eğitim Gönüllüleri Vakfı
TÜİK	: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Institute)
TÜSEV	: Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı (Türkiye Third Sector Foundation)
UNV	: United Nations Volunteer Programme
VGM	: Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü (General Directorate for Foundations)
WFH	: Work From Home

INTRODUCTION

The present research explores the relationship between women's role in the private and public spheres with a focus on civil society employment from a social reproduction perspective. By conceptualizing civil society work as social reproductive work, it examines how women working in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) reconcile their work and private lives along the lines of paid and unpaid labor.

From the theoretical framework of social reproduction theory, revisiting the literature for a feminist conception of civil society, my exploration moves beyond how relations are organized between the public and the private spheres; but towards a deeper analysis of a sexual division of labor in all spheres, including civil society as the main area of interest. Within this context, I explore civil society work as a social reproduction work. Along with this, I explore how people, particularly women employed within these organizations experience and give meaning to their paid and unpaid labor. Here, NGO work is conceptualized as care labor that also encompasses emotional labor. Towards this purpose, my overarching research question is formulated as *“How do gender and care structures interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of women working in civil society organizations, in relation to their social reproduction labor across the public and private spheres?”*

Some of the sub-questions are as follows: How do gender roles and expectations impact the employment of workers in civil society organizations? How do NGO workers experience gender divisions of labor in civil society organizations? Do they experience it? What kind of caring functions are performed by NGO workers within the boundaries of civil society? Are there unpaid dimensions of NGO workers' labor in civil society and what are they? How are NGO workers' motivations shaped in relation to their self-perceptions and meaning-making of their labor in civil society? How do workers' motivations relate with gender and caring structures? What conflicts and synergies arise in workers' reconciliation of their paid and unpaid labors, including the management of emotional labor in their work and private lives?

Building on an understanding of a gendered division of labor which affects the organization of labor in every society (Young, 1981), this research seeks to provide a feminist reading of civil society organizations as actors of social reproduction and to explore how relational and duty bound dimensions of social reproduction shape women's position both in civil society work and home. Feminist reading of civil society suggests that it is also a historically gendered construct; both as a space for women's emancipatory struggles for equality and as a site shaped by the need for care and social provision (Pateman, 1980, 1988). This brings forth the need to critically examine women's position in the changing landscapes of civil society; one that increasingly relies on and recruits women's labor and positions them as its primary actors. Such framing characterizes civil society as a space that favors women over men in contrast to the understanding of the civil sphere as a public space that historically excluded women (Phillips, 2001, p. 73).

In this respect, social reproduction theory (Arruzza et al., 2019; Bhattacharya, 2017; Dalla Costa & James, 1972/2019; Engels, 1884/2021; Federici, 2004; Fraser, 1990; Vogel, 1983/2013) provides an important theoretical framework for my empirical analysis of how civil society operates as a women's space shaped by the dynamics of paid and unpaid work. Hence a feminist conception of civil society work from a social reproduction perspective requires an understanding of *sexual division of labor* which concerns the way unpaid labor and paid labor are organized within the realms of public and private spheres (Hartmann, 1976, 1979; Pateman, 1980; Young, 1981). Feminists have long understood social reproduction in a broad sense-extending beyond family to include provisions at the societal and community level including the institutions of the third sector engaged in social reproductive labor such as healthcare, education, childcare, elderly care and social workers (Benston, 1969; Dalla Costa, 1977/2019).

More recent proponents of social reproduction have focused more on its organization which involves a complex network of actors including civil society and other sites where social relations are produced (Arruzza et al., 2019; Bhattacharya, 2017; S. Ferguson, 2017; Vogel, 1983/2013) and as a site of struggle under capital's pressure, responsibilities of social reproduction have been offloaded to communities and families (Fraser, 2016; The Care Collective et al., 2020) which mostly end up on the shoulders of women not just

in families but also in communities (Folbre, 2001). Over time, the question of who provides social reproduction has become more complex while we see a continued rise around the world with the third sector being a provider of public and personal services (Bode, 2006; Etzioni, 1973).

Within this framework, I employed social reproduction as a broader definition of care labor for the reproduction of human life that includes reproductive labor in the third sector. Such labor also pertains to emotional labor which is important aspect of my research as I dealt with both paid work and volunteer (unpaid) work in the third sector. Accordingly, reconceptualization of third sector as a site of social reproductive labor and of third sector workers as care laborers challenge the conventional public and private divide that confines women's care labor to the private sphere. Building on an understanding of the gendered dynamics in civil society in Türkiye; the focus of my empirical research is women's employment in the third sector. I explored how as presumable subjects of care and emotional labor both at home and at work; women's responsibilities, motivations, civil society work pressures and demands are reconciled across public and private spheres within the context of paid and unpaid work.

In Türkiye, the number and impact of third sector and civil society organizations in providing social services and assistance has been increasing (Acı, 2008; İçduygu et al., 2011; Şentürk, 2014). An overview of the functions assigned to NGOs in Türkiye indicates that most nonprofit and non-governmental associations and foundations as categorized by the public authorities engage in the forms of social reproduction – serving the regenerative needs of the population through the provision of care and emotional labor in a socially organized way (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a). It is here that the contribution of social reproduction framework will be employed; to provide an analysis of third sector work as social reproductive work by exploring both the paid and unpaid care labor of women that cut across public and private spheres.

Several important bodies of work in Türkiye contribute to our understanding of civil society, gender, citizenship, empowerment of women and social reproduction (Arat 2001, Arslan, 2022; Atalay, 2019; Dursun, 2019; Kandiyoti, 2016; Kazanoglu & Ketola, 2022). For this exploration, the body of research in Türkiye that specifically addresses third

sector work as reproductive labor and explores gendered experiences of third sector workers remains limited – especially when it comes to examining how civil society operates as a site of social reproduction from the perspective of NGO workers. This research aims to fill that gap. By drawing on the social reproduction theory and feminist conceptions of civil society, it explores the social reproductive labor of civil society actors; workers employed in Türkiye’s associations (*dernek*) and foundations (*vakıf*).

For the abovementioned research purposes, chapters of the thesis follow this structure:

First, in Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, I offer a synthesis with the help of diverse themes focusing on the intersections of civil society and social reproduction. Here, I start with *Feminist Conceptions of Civil Society* within the context of analytical categories such as public-private dichotomy, patriarchy and sexual divisions of labor. Then, I continue with my *Theoretical Framework: Social Reproduction* where I delve on the definitions and historical development of the framework as well as sexual divisions of labor that I identified as an operating category of the relationship between social reproduction and civil society work. After this, I move on to discuss *Gender and Civil Society Work: A Social Reproduction perspective* while I examine civil society as a site of social reproduction and delve into gender division of labor, especially concerning care work, emotional labor and volunteer/voluntary labor categories in NGOs. Lastly, I turn my gaze to *Civil Society and Social Reproduction in Türkiye* where I discuss the development and transformation of civil society as well as its feminist conceptions; followed by some perspectives on patriarchy and sexual division of labor in Türkiye before wrapping up with the discussion of paid and unpaid work in civil society in Türkiye.

Chapter 3 reports on the *Findings and Analysis* of my qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews with a female-majority (17 women, 3 men) sample of 20 NGO workers. In this chapter, I report my field findings and thematic analysis where I lay out the three main themes that relate to my main research questions. First, under the theme of *Gender Division of Labor in Civil Society*, I organized my field findings which refer mainly to the feminized, caring, gendered, flexible and precarious work that is available in the third sector that attracts more women than men, as it was often stated that men and women may have different motivations. This theme discusses my findings about *women’s*

work, men's work and discrimination and gender equality policies within the civil society sector. Second, under the theme of *Social Reproduction in Civil Society*, I report on my main findings from our discussions of *NGOs as Caring Actors* by referring to the role of civil society in total social reproduction of our societies as well as the social reproduction (care) labor that goes on in civil society. This is followed by a discussion of what goes on *Beyond the Boundaries of Paid Work*, referring to the considerable amount of *unpaid, emotional, caring and voluntary* work that take place in civil society. Third, I discuss the broadest theme of *Work/Life Reconciliation of NGO Workers* consisting of an elaborate picture of how NGO workers mitigate their lives within the context of further themes that focus on the *making of meaning and motivation, social reproduction (i.e. private life organization) of NGO workers, effect of NGO work on private life and emotional management and support systems* reported by research participants.

Chapter 4 is the *Conclusion* where I discuss the interpretation and relevance of my results in terms of how they answer my research question and reflect on my literature review as well as theoretical framework by summarizing key findings and takeaways. In the conclusion chapter, I also discuss the implications and limitations of my research and end with a reflection of theoretical and practical contributions of my thesis.

1.1. Methodology

The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection process, methods and techniques utilized in this thesis as well as the research approach and theoretical framework used to investigate how NGO workers mitigate their lives at home and in the workplace. In accordance with my research objective, I formulated my main research question as: “How do gender and care structures interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of women working in civil society organizations, in relation to their social reproduction labor across the public and private spheres?”. In the sections below, I provide a summary of how I interrogated this question by detailing different aspects of my research process, namely *Research Approach, Research Methods of Data Collection, Methods of Analysis and Evaluation of Methodology*.

1.1.1. Approach

Here, I lay out how my methods suit my research objectives and try to relate my research especially with feminist methodology which suggest an approach to research with women and their work. I consider my approach a feminist one since it recognizes the standpoint of women in conveying their experiences:

Feminist research positions gender as the categorical center of inquiry and the research process. By using a variety of research methods—quantitative, qualitative, mixed—feminist researchers use gender as a lens through which to focus on social issues. Research is considered “feminist” when it is grounded in the set of theoretical traditions that privilege women’s issues, voices, and lived experiences. (Hesse-Biber, 2013, p. 48)

My research is founded on the epistemological and theoretical foundations of wider feminist theory which aims to uncover women’s truths; but more specifically, I adopted a materialist feminist outlook. Drawing from social reproduction theory as my main theoretical framework, I used the guidance of feminist methodology to design my research which aims to lift up women’s voices as subjects of their own lives. Feminists adopt an epistemological approach that knowledge is socially determined (or situated), subjective, and relational as it is informed by the personal experiences of subjects, especially in the case of marginalized subjects such as women (Haraway, 1988; Harding, 1986). In feminist science; “feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge” (Haraway, 1988, p. 583); therefore I prioritized to understand the intersections of gender and labor in civil society mainly from the perspective of women.

In my research, I conceptualize NGO work as a form of socially reproductive labor examining its often unpaid and invisible characteristics and its relationship with other related labor categories identified by foundational materialist feminist thinkers since the 1970s (Vogel, 1983/2013; Dalla Costa & James, 1972/2019; Young, 1981; Hartmann, 1976). I also draw on contemporary social reproduction theorists who emphasize that such labor is increasingly performed under gendered and neoliberal constraints (Bhattacharya, 2017; Fraser, 2016; Arruzza et al., 2019; S. Ferguson, 2017). This perspective sheds light on how unpaid and underpaid forms of care, volunteerism and emotional labor – often carried out by women in settings beyond the household including within the third sector

– are integral to the functioning of society (Beneria, 1999; Baines, 2004; Baines et al., 2020; Bandali, 2020; Mastracci & Adams, 2019). The *sexual division of labor* emerged as the central category in this analysis; one that Nancy Hartsock (2019) acknowledges as difficult to fully articulate, yet essential for understanding how women’s lives are shaped by social relations structured through intersecting pressures of gender and class, which influence all aspects of women’s material activity. As sexual division of labor forms the basis of women’s oppression and subordination, “one can conclude then that women’s life activity does form the basis of a specifically feminist materialism, a materialism which can provide a point from which both to critique and to work against phallographic ideology and institutions” (Hartsock, 2019, p. 163). Feminist methodology seeks to examine women’s activities under social constraints with the aim of uncovering inequalities; whereby “feminist researchers have unique angles of theoretical perspectives that they use to assess women’s status within society and to formulate particular questions that might not otherwise be tackled by the hegemonic ideas that reinforce the existing system of gender inequality” (Hesse-Biber, 2013, p. 49).

The application of my research relied on an in-depth inquiry of women’s experiences of paid and unpaid labor, centered around a feminist conception of civil society within the context of public/private dichotomy dominant in feminist tradition. Since my research is guided by a Marxist feminist perspective, that is social reproduction theory, my main focus is to study *women’s perspectives*. Therefore, my epistemological approach is also informed by *feminist standpoint theory* rooted in Marxist and Hegelian thought; the theorists of which (Harding, 1986, 1992; Smith, 1990) are interested in how women’s material situation and everyday experiences impact their reconciliation with the dominant patriarchal culture and within social relations. They suggest that women provide more useful information since;

...women’s oppressed position within society is precisely what allows women to harbor rich insights into society as a whole. Because they are structurally oppressed in relation to the dominant group (men), women have access to a more enhanced and more nuanced understanding of social reality than men. (Hesse-Biber, 2013, p. 53)

In accordance with this, my research aims to foreground the voices of women as NGO workers, seeking a deeper understanding of how they construct and make sense of paid and unpaid labor processes at both NGO work and private lives and how these experiences relate to broader gender structures and their preconceptions of gender. My focus on women's experiences also aims to demonstrate the plurality and difference; i.e. the *diversity* of women's experiences. In addition, in an attempt to understand from a broader perspective the impact of gender and social reproduction structures on the civil society sphere, I decided to include in my research the male staff members of NGOs to hear their *voice*, too; since in feminist thought categories of difference such as gender, race and class (and among many others) and their intersection highly matter (Collins, 2019).

Thus, I aim to offer a unique feminist perspective of research on civil society as a site of social reproduction, focusing particularly on the social reproductive labor performed by women workers, with the organizing concept of sexual division of labor at the center.

1.1.2. Research Methods of Data Collection

For the operationalization process of my research, I found qualitative research methodology as the most applicable choice because my objective is to understand *how* NGO workers fare within the context of work/life reconciliation; and to get deeper insights into their experience within the context of care and gender structures which may (or may not) affect their paid and unpaid labor. Therefore, I chose *semi-structured interview technique* which is a credible qualitative method of research - that allowed me to have flexibility during the interview process as I tried to gain a deeper understanding of NGO workers' work/life reconciliation processes including their experiences, perceptions, views and mitigation mechanisms from the perspective of social reproduction. Finally, I conducted *thematic analysis* to identify patterns and trends relating to diverse aspects of sexual division of social reproductive labor and meaning/motivation-making processes with respect to paid and unpaid labor within civil society. My selections for research tools are in line with the feminist methodology's proposition that research should aim to amplify the voices of women— and disadvantaged

people; creating greater visibility by documenting “women’s own accounts of their lives” (Oakley, 2005, p. 226). Interviews give the chance “to talk or listen as women” and translate their experiences into speech (Devault, 1990).

Before starting the fieldwork, I organized my main and sub-research questions via further *operationalizing questions* geared towards an understanding of both *what* types of work NGO workers perform, *how* they make meaning of their work as care laborers as well as how they *mitigate* their situation in their public and private lives from an overall understanding of their gender and social relationships. I focused on the challenges, opportunities, constraints, support mechanisms and internal (emotional) processes of NGO work as social reproductive labor. Appendix C, can be viewed as an outline of research questions which relate to the main three themes of this thesis reporting on the exploration of main research interests; *gender division of labor*, *social reproduction* (care and unpaid labor) and *work-life reconciliation of NGO workers* in civil society.

After finalizing my research design, I conducted a pilot study; finetuned my questions and the course of the interview. Following the ethical approval of my university, I announced my research in NGO circles and got in touch with the staff of NGOs I wanted to include in my research. The sections below report on *sampling*, *profile of the sample* and the *procedure* of conducting the interviews.

1.1.2.1. Sampling

First of all, while recruiting research participants I used the *snowball sampling* technique which is a variation of *convenience sampling* (Miner-Rubino & Jayaratne, 2007). Given the network and cooperation available in the sector; I made use of NGOs’ and employees’ unofficial social networks and personal contacts since “snowball sampling relies on and partakes in the dynamics of natural and organic social networks” while it brings to the fore two related concepts: social knowledge and power relations (Noy, 2008, p. 329). This was also suited to gain trust and reach out to the right person as I got help from NGO staff in reaching out to their colleagues or coworkers.

In terms of inclusion criteria, I opted for a *purposive sampling* which aimed to achieve *maximum variation* (Patton, 2001) for an exploratory study of social reproductive labor in civil society to capture the variety of work, experience and individuality in the field. As I went through with this practice, I determined some criteria to select participants to include in my research. First, I restricted the types of NGOs I recruit from to the two most common forms of associations “*derneks*” and foundations “*vakıfs*” that had somewhat institutional structures and professionalized staff. Second, I aimed for a representation of various fields of work in civil society which I had determined beforehand with my advisor as areas where social reproductive labor might occur and I tried to capture a broad spectrum of experiences from workers that may represent gender divisions of labor and care labor within civil society. Here, I selected participants from fields I identified as “care-related fields” which are in contact with populations or disadvantaged groups such as *children, women, youth, disabled, migrants, earthquake survivors and addicted people*; and/or NGOs working in broader fields such as *education, development and environment*. I also took into consideration their previous job experiences. Third, I aimed for a diversity of NGO types comprising of smaller and bigger; more institutionalized NGOs, while I also included local and international organizations. In addition, I aimed for a representation of NGOs with different foci (or function) such as humanitarian aid organizations, rights- or advocacy oriented NGOs as well as issue-focused and service oriented NGOs; while excluding solely religious, advocacy and rights-based organizations for my research purposes when they do not offer services for citizens (or clients, society in a way) therefore not applicable for our conceptualization of social reproductive labor in NGOs. For such conceptualization, I looked for a form of care relationship with beneficiaries; meaning that NGOs with a service angle were included in the sample universe. Fourth, I prioritized some occupational roles and work fields with relationship and/or communication with the beneficiaries where I tried to include care labors per my definition; but also technical and managerial roles. Lastly, I tried to increase diversity of biographical information and personal status of participants in terms of their age, city, relationship and living situation as well as parenting/caregiving.

In the sampling stage, I received 43 applications via an online form where I got the online consent of participants to join my research. When I reached out to volunteers, I confirmed

their information and gradually invited participants who fit my criteria. In the recruitment phase, I had to eliminate some participants who had left their jobs, were not working in areas or jobs of primary interest to research objectives, were doing technical works or were involved in other ways than paid work relationship; or I had already recruited someone else from the organization. Also, there were some people who did not get back to me at all, and I did not analyze 2 interviews one of which was cut in half and the other was with a participant who did not turn out to be a paid worker in an NGO.

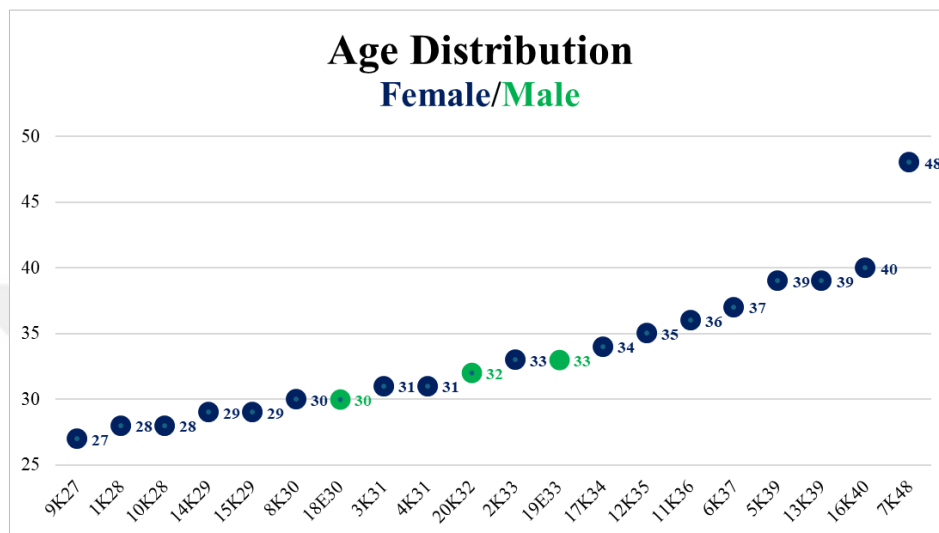
In the end, I recruited a majority of women and a small group of men (~80/20 female to male % ratio) to increase the representativeness of my field research regarding the gender distribution in the civil society sector. I decided to include all male participants from the same foundation to decrease the variability of the male experience, as my research focus was on women NGO workers' experiences. As a result, I included in my research a total of 20 participants; 17 women and 3 men.

1.1.2.2. Profile of the Sample

In terms of biographical information pertaining to participants, I paid attention mainly to gender, age and relationship (or marital) status and responsibilities that pertain to social reproductive labor. To evaluate, it was not hard at all to reach out to women NGO workers; in fact, I was able to get in touch with many people who were interested in joining my research. However; as I was reaching out to people to relay my invitation to teams and colleagues for diversity, I heard several times that coworkers were mostly “young and single women”. As a result, I was less able to ensure a variety in terms of age as majority of participants were younger; especially in their late 20s and early 30s consisting two thirds of both female and males. Rest of the participants were mainly in their late 30s whereas there were two participants 40 or above. I also anonymized participants and coded their information in a structure where I first gave them numbers (1 to 20), followed by their gender (K for women; E for men) and lastly their age (27 to 48). As shown in Figure 1.1. below; while male participants clustered closely around the

average age of 31.6, female participants spanned a broader age range (27–48), with a mean age of 33.7 years.

Figure 1.1. Age Distribution of Participants



I also tried to achieve some variation of participants in terms of their diversity in private life in order to address social reproductive labor at home. Since it was reported that NGO workers were mainly young, single women; my sample also consisted of single women mostly while there was some diversity. Among women participants, more than half were single (10) and in a relationship (1), nearly a quarter were married (4) and two participants were divorced/single. Among the married women, three had children and one had not chosen to have a kid. Male participants were all married; out of three male participants two of them had pregnant wives whereas one participant had a small baby. Living arrangements varied, too. Participants who were single were either living alone (6), living with family (5) or had roommates (2) whereas married participants lived with their husbands/wives and/or kids (7).

As a part of biographical information, I also obtained data on the educational background of participants. All participants who joined my study were university/college graduates. A majority had gained awareness of civil society during university and had participated in volunteering in youth. The impact of education was important for understanding NGO workers' narratives; I determined that most participants had been educated in social

sciences and humanities departments of universities where one half of participants had a background in social work or social services (6 out of 20) and psychology (4/20) departments. Other participants who had an education in social and humanities areas were graduates of political science – and international relations (2), sociology (2), business (2), teaching (1), art history (1) and communications (1) departments. There was one outlier from engineering (1). In addition, most of the participants had bachelor's degrees; whereas three participants had postgraduate degrees.

To cover a variety of NGO fields, I included 20 participants from 17 different NGOs in my semi-structured interviews. These NGOs operated in diverse fields, and there was overlap with the groups they worked with. As a result of such categorization, I found that women participants had worked primarily with three groups; *women*, disadvantaged groups including *children and youth* and *migrants (and humanitarian aid)*. These fields which were near equally represented, accounted for nearly 2/3 of women participants. When I took into account the fields of *addiction*, *disability* and *LGBTQ+* which were represented by one participant each, NGO workers in contact with disadvantaged populations were dominant groups among the participants. Lastly, two participants were outliers, as they were both management level employees in protection and community engagement areas, respectively in the fields of environment and education. Table 1.1. below shows a breakdown of NGO employees and their expertise areas:

Table 1.1. Participants According to Fields

Field	Participants
Women	1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17
Children and Youth; disadvantaged / with sickness	2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 14
Immigrants / Humanitarian Aid	1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17
Addicted, LGBTQ+, disabled	3, 10, 16
Environment, Education	12, 13

Many workers were highly motivated toward the sector; therefore they had since the first step into their careers, wanted to get into civil society. It can be said that nearly all participants spent the majority of their careers in civil society work; where the least

experienced workers had been in the sector after the 2023 earthquakes as paid workers; but they were involved with civil society longer than that. While the longest period worked was reported by the oldest female participant (48) who had been in her NGO for 17 years, the mean value of participants' civil society experience amounts to *6.7 years* in total, for both females and males. The table in Appendix E details the breakdown of my sample based on participants' cities, gender, age, NGO field, job and education.

1.1.2.3. Procedure

After participants accepted my invitation to join the study, I made the appointments. Interviews were conducted in *Turkish* from July to mid-September 2024 with some delays due to unforeseen preoccupations. I conducted the interviews mostly online; but I met five participants in person, representing one half of participants living in Istanbul. For the online interviews, I used Microsoft Teams and Word applications to set up, conduct, record and transcribe the meetings. I got the approval of participants both in the form and verbally before I started recording the whole interview online or face-to-face meetings where I took voice recordings on my phone. I also chatted with Artificial Intelligence (AI) to organize my thoughts as I prepared for my research and used AI's help with summaries and translation; but I did not get AI to write any part of the text in my thesis. During the interviews, I made use of an in-depth interview guide (see Appendix D) comprising of my questions and personal notes in *Turkish*. I also took field notes to keep track of the direction of the conversations. As shown in Table 1.2., I performed 20 interviews which amounted to *38 hours* of speech.

Table 1.2. Duration of Interviews

Length	Female	Male	Overall
Shortest Interview	1:23:13	1:23:35	1:23:13
Longest Interview	3:00:53	1:49:25	3:00:53
Average	1:57:50	1:33:06	1:54:07
Total Length	33:23:06	4:39:17	38:03:23

Feminist scholars suggest performance of research in a non-hierarchical and ungendered power relations where they offer more reciprocal and collaborative interviewing

techniques of listening carefully and paying attention to women's narratives; especially while interviewing women (Oakley, 1981; DeVault, 1999). This particularly describes my procedure where I tried hard to establish rapport and honesty with the participants as I was showing my intrigue and trying to understand what they were saying in the detailed conversations we had about their experiences of gender, care, labor and emotional aspects of social reproductive labor both at work and at home.

My main question form (i.e. interview guide) was composed of nearly 40 questions whereas during the course of the interviews some questions had to be rephrased or skipped according to participants' narrations while I also used probing questions. Semi-structured interview questions were organized under 4 headings which were detailed by exploration of further themes. First, interviews started with *demographic and biographical information* where participants reported on their age, where they grew up and lived, and their education processes. Second, we continued with their *career process and NGO experience*, delving into details of what type of work they do and what type of responsibilities they have/had in NGOs. We also discussed their career choices, development and working conditions where I captured an idea of their job motivations, especially as we discussed in detail the labor conditions, financial aspects and the impact of their work; which highly related with their *meaning-making processes* as a part of work/life reconciliation. Third, after getting acquainted as an individual and NGO worker, we continued with NGO workers' *private lives* and organization. Here, we talked about how they spend their time outside of work, how and if they share their *care* and household *responsibilities*, their relationships with spouses, children, parents, friends etc. and the conflicts experienced in work and private lives as well as how they mitigate challenges that arise and which supports they receive. Fourth, and lastly, we moved on to discuss the themes of *motivation, civil society's functions* and *gender* which contribute to an understanding of *work/life reconciliation processes* of workers as a whole. We started with questions to understand *meaning and motivation making processes* of NGO labor with respect to its positive and negative aspects, as well as their challenges and reconciliation efforts as social reproduction laborers. Then, we explored a presumable conception of *NGOs as care actors*. We also discussed whether there were dimensions of

civil society work that may be characterized as *emotional labor*, as we tackled other *unpaid* dimensions of NGO work and workers' (internal and external) *value perceptions* of their jobs. And finally, we discussed the subject of *gender*, in relation with participants' experience in their NGOs and their observations of civil society in general by scrutinizing NGO labor in terms of a presumable *gender divisions of labor* in the sector and *workplace equality*. We also discussed the relationship between NGO work and the presumable performance of *care work in civil society* as *women's work*, discussing how gender structures affected workers' choices of civil society employment.

Throughout the interviews I made sure that participants were giving their honest opinions as I was phrasing questions in a way that I ensured them I wasn't digging for specific answers; but rather trying to find out what their real opinions were. In addition, to ensure rigor, I was constantly probing meanings of statements and trying to make sure that I understood them correctly. I tried to affirm that the questions were clear and if not, I tried again to explain better while I tried to ask the same questions to all participants to make sure I gather consistent data from each interview. I also informed myself on the biases (check section 1.1.4 for more detail) that may create pitfalls in my specific research area and tried to avoid these by adopting a *reflexive* approach throughout the process, reflecting on what I could have done better after each interview.

1.1.3. Methods of Analysis

I started the Analysis phase of my findings after all interviews were over. In line with my choice of qualitative research methodologies and in compatibility with the data I gathered, I opted for *Thematic Analysis* as the appropriate method to interpret my field findings. I combined *inductive* and *theoretical approaches* suggested by Braun & Clarke (2006) in my analysis where I started my analysis first by building *bottom-up* the important patterns and trends that appeared in transcripts. As these determined my initial themes, which were many, I used the guidance of my theoretical framework and determined three umbrella themes and subthemes, in accordance with an outlook based on social reproduction.

In the implementation process, before going through with the *Thematic Analysis* process, I initially prepared the data by listening to all voice recordings and correcting automatic transcriptions to make sure they were verbatim. During transcription and translation, several steps were taken to ensure clarity and confidentiality in accordance with ethical considerations where I anonymized the names of individuals, organizations, and locations, particularly when participants could be identified. In some cases, I replaced names with descriptors (e.g., "the director," "a university in the region") and edited out repetitive phrases, fillers, and transitions (e.g., "you know," "like") to enhance readability, but I made no changes to the content or meaning. Translations were not word-for-word but very close; as I made use of translation AI (DeepL) to be more flexible and accurate with the language, then I rechecked the translations. I simplified sentence structures for clarity but always remained faithful to participant narratives. As explained above, I also coded participants' biographical information. Apart from this *data preparation phase*, I followed the 6-step process suggested by Braun & Clarke (2006):

1. *Familiarization*: I read through my interview transcripts, highlighting important parts that might aid in describing the situation in the field.
2. *Coding*: I imported transcripts into MAXQDA 24 software and started reading through the interviews; coding important parts of highlights. I started to interpret the data to determine the themes. After coding, I rechecked the coded segments to make sure they shared context and I re-coded some patterns, separating and merging them. The coding, theme building and reviewing phases were implemented more or less simultaneously.
3. *Generating themes*: I built from bottom up the patterns and trends that emerged from my research and I ended up with some themes and their breakdowns.
4. *Reviewing themes*: After finding out initial themes, I went back to my theoretical framework at the intersection of feminist perceptions of civil society and social reproduction as well as my main research topics where I determined my main themes.
5. *Defining and naming themes*: I grouped the preliminary themes under umbrella themes in a top-down structure breaking main themes into subthemes.
6. *Writing (Reporting)*: I followed an outline where I first introduced all my main themes and the subjects that dominated those themes. Then, moving towards the lowest level

of analysis, I reported on trends from the field by providing evidence with quotations and explaining the points of agreement and disagreement or the existence and nonexistence of certain patterns in the field.

1.1.4. Evaluation of Methodology

This section provides an evaluation of my methodology in order to justify my choices by referring to my strategies to ensure reliability and validity; as well as strengths which overcome methodological limitations and obstacles in the field. By following a structured process as described; I tried to increase both the reliability and the validity of my research.

Feminist methodology suggests that subjects should be given *voice* to express their situation in a non-hierarchical and reciprocal way; especially within research involving women (Oakley, 1981). My research objective is to *understand* the standpoint of NGO workers from a feminist social reproduction perspective and to make sense of how intricate processes interact to influence NGO workers' choices, and experiences. Therefore, semi-structured interviews served as the best way to achieve my aim of understanding civil society work and the situation of NGO workers in-depth as they provided information into their own experiences, beliefs and situations, as well as offer useful insight into a possible understanding of civil society as a site of social reproduction.

As my sample consisted of a female-majority, I believe that the semi-structured interview allowed us to have more flexible and sincere conversations as the considerably long duration of my interviews nearing 2 hours average (see Table 1.2.) proves. Participants provided detailed insight into the civil society sector and their labor in it as well as gender relations in the sector as they almost never glossed over my questions or gave careless responses. Thanks to the employment of a purposive, snowball sampling technique; social networks especially among young women NGO workers were useful both for the identification of participants, reaching out to them, but also the efficiency of the interviews as we had information-rich conversations. The flexibility of in person or online participation, also increased NGO workers' likelihood to join.

My research sample was predominantly composed of individuals who were highly aware of gender issues and had well thought out the impact of gender structures on different aspects; including its relationship with their identities as well as their work and private lives. Therefore, I believe their sincere and informed opinions specifically inform further studies for the understanding of civil society from the lenses of gender and care. All in all, I believe the strength of my research lies in the rigorous procedures I followed.

There were also some *obstacles and limitations* to my research that should be mentioned, too. First of all, finding people who volunteered for my research was not completely easy; I had to get in touch with many colleagues and friends to reach out to people which took some time; but I was eventually able to achieve a saturated sample. Also, as a consequence of my chosen *snowball sampling technique* mentioned in Section 1.1.2.1, it was not that easy to reach out to middle-aged or older NGO workers as well as ensure a diversity in terms of relationship and parenting/caring responsibility status. I was aiming to include people who had more diverse experiences of caring at both their work and private lives; but in the end I discovered from interactions that the field was populated more by single and younger women; so I adjusted my expectations and decided to report on their challenges instead. In accordance with this, since my sample was small (n=20) my findings represent a small part of NGO workers' population and do not offer generalizable results; however, I think they contribute to efforts to *understand* the lives of NGO workers in relation to their perceptions, motivations, and emotions.

Another limitation or a weakness of my research may be the male sample I interviewed who were all in their early 30s, all married and had quite similar private lives and careers. Also, they came from the same organization (by my design) but this organization was a more institutionalized and cited as a workplace with gender equality policies. However, as I was told of their profiles, I thought it would be more interesting to hear from young, married men as my female sample was composed more of young and single women. The fact that all men in my sample were *very aware* of gender issues and strong proponents of gender equality was another important consideration.

Another challenge in the process was sometimes the length of the conversations as participants had so much to tell and I had too much to ask, so it was a challenge to keep the interest going but I believe I was able to encourage participants. A related challenge with the length of the interviews was the hardship of accurately analyzing the large amount of information, for which I was very careful not to leave behind any findings but also trying not to overinterpret the data to fit into the themes.

In order to ensure the *reliability and validity* of my research; the first precaution was to be aware of *research bias*. Before going through with it, I familiarized myself with biases that might create pitfalls in my research. Some bias may still have occurred during the interview process even though I tried to eliminate them via continuous *reflexivity*. The types of bias I tried to avoid or minimize were mainly composed of;

1. Bias that may stem *from the researcher during the interview* process, concerning the researcher's behavior, which I tried to avoid by trying to adjust my tone, gestures (observer bias) and question framing (framing effect). When I realized that a question might seem suggestive, I ensured participants that I was trying to *understand objectively* what they think.
2. Bias stemming *from the participant during the interview* process, which may prompt them to respond in ways that would be socially desirable (social desirability bias), that they adjust their behavior (Pygmalion effect), that they answer in inaccurate ways (response bias), that they guess the purpose of research and alter their answers (demand characteristics) or that they might be more likely to respond to the research subject as they are volunteers (self-selection bias). I think that volunteer participation led to more engagement with the subject since participants were giving honest opinions even if they were not affirming my questions. However, some level of social desirability bias and Pygmalion effect may have occurred due to the sensitivity of my research subjects. I sensed a kind of *disturbed* attitude with some participants especially while discussing the relationship (i.e. association) of civil society with care labor and gender; but again these may be based on my bias as a researcher – researcher, or interviewer bias.

3. Lastly, I was very careful about *confirmation bias*, which I tried to avoid during the interviews especially as I did not force participants to get certain answers; but also in the data analysis phase I constantly made an effort to make sure I wasn't reporting on any finding out of their context and not ignoring some findings.

While bias cannot be fully eliminated, I incorporated strategies in my design to ensure rigor and reflexivity as well as establish rapport and trustworthiness with the participants. In alignment with Oakley's (1981) warnings and feminist methodological principles, our rapport consisted of interviewee's accepting my research goal and effort to provide the relevant information as I was 'socialized' them to report easily and honestly.

To increase further the *reliability* of my research; I made use of a semi-structured interview guide, recorded the interviews, transcribed them verbatim and tried to establish consistency, especially during coding and theme generation steps. I believe that my research is *dependable*, as results can be replicated with a similar sample and by asking the same questions. In addition, to ensure further the *validity* of my research I tried to avoid leading questions or selective listening, and practiced active listening. Lastly, in relation to ethical considerations, editing participant statements for clarity and translating them meaningfully rather than literally was grounded in feminist methodology concerned with respecting voices while making them intelligible to a broader academic audience (DeVault, 1990). With the principle of *no harm* in mind, anonymization was also performed (Hesse-Biber, 2014). To conclude, constant reflexivity helped a lot, since the interview processes got smoother as I got more experienced and acquainted with the field. In terms of reflexivity, I was guided by feminist methodology in that:

A feminist interviewing women is by definition both 'inside' the culture and participating in that which she is observing. However, in these respects the behaviour of a feminist interviewer/researcher is not extraordinary: all research involves the political considerations which flow from the researcher's own identity...Personal involvement is more than dangerous bias: it is the condition under which people come to know each other and admit others into their lives. (Oakley, 2005, pp. 230 – 231)

With this last reflection, I hereby conclude the methodology chapter and continue with my literature review and theoretical framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

My research draws on the feminist literature and employs a social reproduction perspective in analyzing women's social reproductive labor processes comprising the care and emotional labor performed within the context of civil society in Türkiye. Therefore, this literature review chapter consists of the following sections:

First, as part of feminist conceptions of civil society, the public/private dichotomy debate will be briefly explored, with a particular focus on contemporary feminist political thinkers (Fraser, 1990; Pateman, 1980, 1988; Phillips, 2001). Here I discuss the split of public and private spheres within a patriarchal system in relation to sexual division of labor and I aim to provide an overview of feminist conceptions and critiques of civil society from a broader theoretical lens including the radical and liberal approaches to feminism (Dahlerup, 1994; Dean, 1992; Howell & Mulligan, 2004; Phillips, 2001).

Second, the development of social reproduction framework will be thoroughly examined as it is an important theoretical lens to make sense of how "women as a class" have been doubly exploited with the unpaid work in the private sphere as well as via the sexual divisions of labor and occupational segregation at work within the public sphere (Arruzza et al., 2019; Bhattacharya, 2017; Hartmann, 1979; Vogel, 1983/2013).

The third section of the review will focus on a social reproduction perspective of civil society. Here, a conceptualization of NGOs as care actors and NGO workers as subjects of care labor will be attempted. To provide a social reproduction perspective on women's care labor (both paid and unpaid) in civil society organizations, I will focus on the commonalities between third sector and social reproduction labor. This includes examining how social reproduction labor is distributed in contemporary society; with particular attention to gender-based divisions in paid and unpaid labor, and how these divisions shape women's socio-economic conditions, choices, aspirations, and motivations. This literature review aims to keep the focus on a feminist reading of civil society work from a social reproduction perspective; recognizing the theoretical and empirical works that take into account women's paid and unpaid works in the forms of

caring, emotional and voluntary/volunteer labor in civil society (Baines et al., 2020; Benería et al., 2015; Mastracci & Adams, 2019; The Care Collective et al., 2020).

The last section will explore feminist conception of Türkiye's civil society with some background of its development and transformation as well as public and private debates in relation to the intertwined structures of patriarchy and capitalism covering the resultant social reproduction and gender regime which has implications for women's situation within paid and unpaid labors in both the public and private spheres; including civil society and the workspaces of NGOs.

2.1. Feminist Conceptions of Civil Society

Before moving on with its feminist conception, I should start by defining what I mean when I say *civil society*. The closest definition to the present understanding of civil society and its organizations; has been utilized by Jodi Dean (1992) who actually expanded on the pluralist view of civil society suggested by Cohen and Arato (1994) that defines civil society as a space that includes associations such as schools, religious institutions, clubs, museums, social movements; as well as the family (p. 18). Such definition relies on an understanding of a historical separation between the public and private spheres which constantly excluded women (Dean 1992; Pateman 1980, 1988).

A common definition of civil society that I also draw on is 'third sector' since it implies civil sphere as an alternative to public and private enterprise. Etzioni (1973) focused on a definition of civil society as 'the third sector' and discussed how they may perform a greater role in the provision of what he calls 'domestic missions' in relation to the provision of societal needs which are similar to our domestic, household needs.

In identifying the sources of women's oppression, feminists have been concerned with the separation of the public and private spheres from a broad perspective where the liberal social contract constructs the public world, or civil society "in abstraction from, or as separate from, the private domestic sphere" (Pateman, 1980, p. 122). Construction of the public space as what remains outside the familial and domestic has been the main focus

of feminist critique of public sphere since the private sphere was seen as the main point of struggle for women.

Carole Pateman (1988) suggested the concept of a *Sexual Contract* as a byproduct of the interaction between patriarchy and capitalism that refers to the prevalence of a gender based labor contract in the private sphere out of the liberal conception of social contract which also determines a different citizenship status for women by the confinement of their issues to the private sphere and their dismissal from public decision-making processes. The *Sexual Contract* according to Pateman (1988) creates the patriarchal civil society that regulates relations in the public, domestic and social spheres in a way that favors men who enjoy the benefits of the *fraternal contract* – including the sexual division of labor along the lines public and private divide. The division of feminist interest and the critical awareness of the dichotomy between the public and private affairs in feminism led to an ‘odd silence’ (Dean, 1992) on the subject of civil society which is “not a significant organizing category for feminists, and rarely figures in the feminist taxonomy” (Phillips, 2001, pp. 71–72). Howell (2004) characterized the lack of interaction in feminism with civil society where the family serves as a pale boundary in between. According to Howell (2004), the interrogation of the relationship between gender and civil society has been confined to a discussion on whether or not family was to be seen as a part of civil society; but still the demarcation of this boundary or the role of public/private divide in the organization of civil society relations did not attract a lively debate from feminists as much as their efforts towards understanding how relations between genders are shaped in the private and public spheres (pp. 2–5).

In the traditional sense, civil society and the public sphere have been interchangeably used to define the space of relations that is outside the domestic realm (Pateman, 1988). The creation of a civil, or a political public life preconditioned that the individual needs are met in a private space. This led to the separation of personal needs from the public space which resulted in the naturalization and confinement of the needs of social reproduction in the private sphere (Arendt, 1958/2018). From my perspective of interactions between social reproduction and civil society, Arendt’s account of the separation of the private from the public sphere resonates a strong connection to the

feminist problematization of women's confinement to the private sphere, which led to their exclusion from the public and civil society spaces. Feminist thinkers who have dealt with women's inclusion in civil society have theorized that the construction of the public sphere in opposition to the private sphere of intimate relations and family, has constituted the basis for women's social and economic exclusion from spaces of civil society; and they have problematized this separation in their analyses for an inclusive conception of civil society. For example, according to Pateman (1980), both the public and private lives are interrelated and connected by a patriarchal structure that is evidenced in the social problematization of the *family* in modern societies – an institution which in her classification represents the *social* (private) side of civil society; while the other side of it is the *political* (public) side or political and social organization.

Other feminists also advocate for including the family in the sphere of civil society for a reconciliation of private with the public sphere (Dahlerup, 1994). In the absence of a feminist interest to draw the line between civil society and the state in accordance with the public-private dichotomy; Phillips (2001) recites the ambiguity of civil society's definition in feminism as either too broad or too inclusive – *broad* in the sense that civil society spans everything outside the private sphere and drops the domestic sphere from view of political discussion; and *inclusive* in the sense that feminists are inclined to treat family as a part of civil society since relations in these two spheres have a profound influence over each other in relation to organization of affairs in the worlds of work, politics, scientific endeavor or how familial/domestic lives are lived (pp. 72-75). Feminists pointed to the interdependency of the public and private fields; but have not delved into the origins of civil society in relation with the private sphere (Pateman, 1988).

Although the sexual contract initially gives the impression of pertaining to the private sphere; according to Pateman, patriarchy extends throughout civil society – being made visible in, for example, the employment contract. Even though the two spheres gain meaning from each other, the private (womanly, natural) sphere is separated from the public, and only the public sphere is treated as a realm of political interest and is associated with political, economic, and civil society activities, and the private is relegated to the household and family while its issues are depoliticized. Nancy Fraser

(1990) also calls for a lesser separation of the public and the private spheres which is the condition for a civil society that is inclusive to all, including women; yet in her writing, civil society emerges as a part of the public sphere.

According to Jodi Dean (1992), focusing on a conception of civil society that is inclusive for women in a feminist sense is outright not possible in the current divide between the public and private because in the current separation women are excluded from the public sphere of civil society as it is composed of ideals and virtues that do not align with women's; but are constructed in a male way of interpreting the world (p. 386). She believed that a feminist civil society that includes and empowers women can only be constructed by moving beyond the current dualistic thinking of public and private spheres in relation to civil society (Dean, 1992, p. 393). Due to the centrality of the public and private dichotomy in feminist scholarship, it also emerges as the underlying theme of most feminist discussions of civil society.

Pateman provides a materialistic analysis of women's situation and offers a feminist criticism of the liberal conception of civil society that creates multilevel separations within civil society when the public and private are separated and gender-based divisions occur. This separation then leads the way to further divisions between entities, for example *society and state*, or *economy and politics*, or *freedom and coercion* or *social and political*, and these divided liberal worlds are in reality connected by the patriarchal structure that regulates and separates the private sphere, i.e. the family, by excluding it from the society (Pateman, 1980, p. 122). Women are relegated to the lower ranks in employment or completely confined to the private sphere with the aid of capitalism's device – the *sexual division of labor* (Pateman, 1980).

In spite of the dominance of the public and private dichotomy within feminism, there has been a contradictory “odd silence” on the subject of civil society as feminists sometimes conflated civil society with the state, the economy or both; and other times they viewed public sphere as the space of political debate (Dean, 1992, p. 380). Women have been construed as passive rather than active agents of society; lacking masculinized traits for inclusion in the civil sphere such as fairness, justice and rationality that shadow regulatory ideas for women like emotionality and privacy and are confined to the private, familial

and domestic sphere outside of the world of political action (Dean, 1992, p. 382). Division between the spheres and the masculinization of civil society have excluded women from its public dimension; therefore a theory of civil society which includes women needs to move beyond the public/private dichotomy (Dean, 1992, p. 392).

The delineations of civil society with respect to the family, state and the market within the public/private dichotomy alternate in feminist writing. According to Drude Dahlerup, (1994) the distinctions between the state, market and civil society are purely analytical and their borders are constantly changing; therefore this distinction does not even coincide with the public/private dichotomy. According to Dahlerup, the meanings of *private* interchange between the family, or the market; sometimes the family is the only private sphere whereas everything outside of it is considered public. She replaces the public/private distinction with the concepts of state, market and civil society; by bringing the family and the informal networks and organizations of civil society into the discussion to contribute to feminism's tasks of signaling gender and class conflicts within the distribution of tasks in societies and emphasizes civil society as "the third part of the triangle" that is generally neglected (Dahlerup, 1994, pp. 117–121).

According to Susan Moller Okin (1998), the internal theoretical ambiguity of the dichotomy between the public and private has implications for the positioning of civil society whereas one rendering distinguishes between *state* and *society*, locating civil society in the private realm while another distinguishes between *domestic* and *non-domestic* and locates civil society in the public realm where she focused on the latter dichotomy (p. 111). For example, Pateman (1988) theorized that civil society is a bifurcated sphere which comprises the family - the *feminine* private sphere and the *masculine* public life where patriarchal relations maintain the unity of social order and family lies at the heart of civil society embracing a wider conception of it as a combination of both public and private spheres; whereas Fraser (1990) categorizes civil society in the public sphere. This appears as an interesting dilemma within feminist conceptions of civil society; even though Fraser and Pateman offer criticisms to liberal and divisive understandings of spheres of life, their views seem not to converge on where exactly to locate the civil sphere within the public-private dichotomy.

Feminist scholars that group civil society in the public sphere, do not pay much attention to its problematization over the family or demarcation of its boundaries from other institutions of the private and the public sphere, such as the market or the state. Some feminists define civil society as excluding as the state, and the boundaries between the public institutions such as the state, market *and* civil society were not seen as relevant as the effect of family which shapes male and female norms in interaction with the private and public spheres (Howell & Mulligan, 2004; Phillips, 2001).

The realm of civil society and the family as a site of domestic relations are often contrasted with each other and therefore, feminist positions on whether the family belongs in or out of civil society are diverse. According to Phillips (2001), as an element of public life, civil society is understood by most feminists as where women are excluded; but also “because they regard familial/domestic relationships as inextricably intertwined with the way people organize and relate in the wider society, feminists are more inclined to treat the family as part of civil society rather than as a separate entity” (p. 75). Feminist scholars believe that the public and private spheres constantly affect and challenge each other in a way that exacerbates women’s oppression in both spheres.

As I explained, feminist conceptions of civil society navigate around the criticism of separation between the spheres. The “private” arena of social relationships where affection, tenderness, responsibility, moral duty, obligation, and caring succumb to the public sphere and civil society (Elshtain, 1981, p. 167). In addition to paying attention to women’s confinement into domestic tasks and exclusion from the public sphere; a social reproduction-based understanding of civil society needs to go beyond the public/private dichotomy and further examine the structural conditions for the maintenance of such social relationships within families and societies. Patriarchy and sexual division of labor, lead to women’s material as well as social oppression (Pateman, 1980).

According to feminist scholars, the distribution of tasks (as well as power) between the state, market and civil society is based on an ideology about the division of work between men and women which in most societies assign women a *double burden*. (Dahlerup, 1994, pp. 121–123). As women are recruited more into the labor force, they are required to work a *second shift*; (Folbre, 1994) while being employed in non-liberating; precarious and

poorly paid labor that depletes their resources otherwise spared for the provision of reproductive needs (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 74–75). Conclusively; engagement on the end of civil society theorists with feminist problematizations, will improve understanding of “how the family shapes norms and practices in the sphere of civil society, and how gendered power relations pervade the spheres of state, market, civil society and family” (Howell & Mulligan, 2004, p. 4). This will bring attention to issues of power and subordination in civil society and contribute to the creation of a more equal sphere.

Until now, I tried to demonstrate that feminist conceptions of civil society begins with but also moves beyond the public and private debate that prevail in broader feminist thought. Feminist thinkers aim to uncover the gender-based structures of domination that shape the foundations of civil society, while also addressing the ambiguities within feminism’s own conceptualization of civil society. I have focused on what constitutes the public and private spheres and how certain elements such as the state, market and family interact with civil society – the delineations of which have been constantly changing. I have also discussed that the main axis of feminist attention within an analysis of women’s subordination has been the divide between the public and private spheres and not a direct focus on the civil society sphere as a whole; even though it has contributed to the debate. I will continue with an overview of Social Reproduction Theory and its development within feminism.

2.2.Theoretical Framework: Social Reproduction Theory

This section will focus on the understanding of definitions and historical development of social reproduction as well as its analytical categories such as sexual divisions of labor; especially in conversation with traditional Marxism, early materialist feminism, Marxist feminism, as well as radical and liberal feminisms and current debates.

With the direction of feminist interest towards material analyses of women’s situation, especially in the late 1960s and the 1970s (Benston, 1969; Mitchell, 1966), Marxist feminists who focused on the intersections of capitalism and patriarchy rediscovered the concept of social reproduction. The domestic labor debate advocating the value of

women's work at home and especially the 'Wages for Housework' campaign by Marxist feminists brought attention to the subject of social reproduction, the organization of which has been undermined under capitalism historically and to our day (Dalla Costa & James, 1972/2019). During this vibrant time, feminists have contributed to the social reproduction debate by emphasizing different socially necessary labor and other conditions of life that specifically disadvantage women in societies; such as child care, domestic labor and household work (Benston, 1969; Dalla Costa & James, 1972/2019); in addition to sexuality and biological reproduction (Mitchell, 1966) as well as occupational segregation based on a sexual division of labor (Hartmann, 1976). Feminists in the 1970s mainly aimed to extend the definition of labor to include social reproduction duties that have historically fallen on women's shoulders. While feminist political thinkers' analysis revealed the dichotomy between the public and private spheres in relation to patriarchy and sexual division of labor; Marxist feminists in particular focused on the interactions between patriarchy and capitalism as the bases of women's oppression.

Social reproduction is defined as "activities that guarantee the physical, mental and emotional reproduction of labour power; eating, sleeping, dressing, washing, relaxing" (Arruzza & Duggan, 2013, pp. 87–88). In addition, prominent contemporary theorists who deal with social reproduction refer to social reproduction as "a vast body of vital activity" (Arruzza et al., 2019). They focus on uncovering how by transforming the formerly existing structures of patriarchy, capitalism has separated the activities of 'people-making' from 'profit-making', while assigning the first to women and subordinating this type of work to the making of profits. However, the activities of people-making are more than the biological creation and maintenance of life; it also encompasses the enhancement of people's capacity to work and the compatibility of their values and dispositions with the current system. Despite its centrality for the continuation of life, the organization of social reproduction activities remain invisible, unvalued and gendered; entrenching gender oppression (Arruzza et al., 2019).

According to Bhattacharya (2017), social reproduction as a category of labor remains analytically hidden on purpose in economic and political analyses; while capitalism only acknowledges market work as productive and disregards "the tremendous amount of

familial as well as communitarian work that goes on to sustain and reproduce the worker, or more specifically her labor power, is naturalized into nonexistence” (p. 2) while social reproduction theory aims to make these works visible.

Since the modern age emancipated women and the working classes at the same historical moment (Arendt, 1958/2018, p. 73), feminist view is that it still falls short of addressing women’s specific situation in the spheres of family, work and civil society. From the perspective of social reproduction as an organizing concept; the feminist claim is that the worker’s movement was wrong to assume women’s emancipation via inclusion in employment because patriarchal structures proved much more resilient as the reproduction of labor force has been so privatized that it was left to family ties and now the socialization of reproductive functions seems difficult to realize in our modern laboring societies (Arruzza & Duggan, 2013, pp. 87–88). Contemporary materialist feminists draw on the Marxist concept of social reproduction to understand women’s oppression (Vogel, 1983/2013); while some feminists engage critically with Marxist notions such as division of labor (Young, 1981) and labor power (Hartmann, 1976) in their materialist analyses of women’s situation.

Feminists explored new concepts especially in the 1970s to exhibit the material conditions of women. By then, they had identified the effect of *twin systems*, namely patriarchy and capitalism; and socialist feminists were exploring the related concepts of patriarchy and reproduction (Vogel, 1983/2013, p. 26). As it was discussed in the previous section, the concept of patriarchy has been dominating the liberal and radical feminist discourse and it was employed as the source of women’s oppression together with domestic labor that was considered unproductive. Marxist and socialist feminists have also adopted the concept of patriarchy, the centrality of which is parallel in different traditions of feminism, and they included it in materialist analyses of women’s situation. For example, Mitchell (1966) has provided a feminist analysis of women’s work at the labor market and concepts such as reproduction, sexuality and birth that relate to women’s subordination via patriarchy.

The views of materialist feminists such as Mitchell (1966) and Delphy (1977) provide a conception of exploitative relations of patriarchy; and materialist understanding of

women's situation which was reflected in movements such as the Wages for Housework campaign (Dalla Costa & James, 1972/2019; Federici, 1975/2012). Also, in Benston's (1969) thinking, women's work has been marginalized because it is not wage labor; so it is not monetized and this constitutes the basis of women's exploitation (p. 16). Hence, women as members of the "industrial reserve army" are stuck in their position of low wages at work and domestic labor at home (Morton, 1971; as cited in Vogel, 1983/2013, p. 19). Dalla Costa and James (1972/2019) suggested that domestic work not only produces use value, as in the Marxist sense, but also surplus value and that "the role of women as a source of social productivity" (p. 52) in contrast to the construction of the entire female role as a physically, psychologically and occupationally subordinated person as they emphasized women's double slavery in waged and unwaged work.

The contributions of early materialist feminists and the ensuing interest in the processes of social reproduction, led many feminists to focus on different aspects of control over women's reproduction in their explorations. For example, within the context of discussing the applications of Marxist methods to feminist analyses; Iris Marion Young has proposed the Marxist category of division of labor to be adopted. From an understanding of sex as a class; the economic structure and relations of domination of a social formation are based on a gender division of labor (Young, 1981, p. 56). Silvia Federici also adopted the sexual division of labor as a central category in her critique towards the present order of social reproduction which exploits women via housework (Federici, 1975/2012, 2008/2012). In Federici's view, the male worker made the female worker his servant; the sexual division of labor separated the tasks of men and women. Boosting capitalist accumulation while women's social position and work burdens deteriorated, their power and communal ties were undermined; patriarchy has deprived men of their own powers as well; causing self-alienation for all (Federici, 2004, p. 115). As a materialistic concept, the process of how social reproduction has been valued (or not valued) under capitalism is highly relevant for feminists who believe that capitalism stripped away the previous meaning (i.e. value) of women's work in the home by branding it unproductive (Fraser, 2016, p. 102).

Tensions arise as less room is made available for women to reconcile their public and private lives within this double demand for their paid and unpaid labor. Gender bias in

the division of labor and the definition of work exploits women in the home and the market (Folbre, 1994, p. 7). As more women enter paid employment, “even in the most advanced capitalist countries a significant proportion of women specialize in family labor, and even those who have paying jobs devote a large percentage of their time to housework and child care” (Vogel, 1983/2013, p. 96). Labor power is (re)produced in *working class family*; but it’s not the only site where social reproduction occurs (S. Ferguson & McNally, 2013). Social reproduction “...calls attention to the traditionally female world of family labor, but points beyond the family itself to the larger organization of power and production” (Folbre, 1994, p. 129). Feminists have pointed that the general organization of social reproduction needs to be under scrutiny if we are to provide an equitable distribution of resources and responsibilities between genders.

Currently, as more women have entered the workforce, the *double shift* that working-class women endure continues to burden them, even though men have been helping more in domestic tasks, especially now as part of the global working class, women still shoulder the overwhelming effects of care and social reproduction, as well as labor exploitation. These represent the still valid material constraints that structurally affect women even today. After the postwar era, as the number of hours spent on waged work has increased globally; it has depleted our time available for replenishment and care of our family and communities; meanwhile recruiting women to an unpaid second shift and relegating them to precarious and poorly paid waged work (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 74–75).

Feminist scholars working within a social reproduction framework, view production of goods and services and reproduction of necessities of life and labor as part of the same integrated process (Bezanson & Luxton, 2006) and they have loaded synonymous connotations to issues of care and reproduction. Since the burdens of reproduction, either biological, material or social have fallen on women’s shoulders historically; they employ Marxist feminist social reproduction concept to discuss capital’s exploitation of care labor as reproductive labor and the effect this has on sustainability of human relations and the physical world which need caring. To that end, they ask questions such as,

If workers’ labor produces all the wealth in society, who then produces the worker?
Put another way: What kinds of processes enable the worker to arrive at the doors

of her place of work every day so that she can produce the wealth of society? (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 1)

Proponents of social reproduction believe that women's oppression has always been relevant throughout history as domestic labor has been disregarded as a valuable contribution; but it has been made worse by capitalism's interest in continuing the endless cycle of surplus value and employing all families, women and populations for the reproduction of the labor power (Arruzza & Duggan, 2013). All in all, such a perspective offers promise to explain the role of women in the production of goods and services as well as the production of life as parts of an integrated process.

2.2.1. Sexual Divisions of Labor

Looking at the connections of feminist writings on civil society and social reproduction, *sexual division of labor* emerges as an organizing concept which is a structure that determines the distribution of production and reproduction duties both within and outside the home with respect to gender roles and in the forms of paid and unpaid labor.

As it was elaborated above, from a Marxist feminist standpoint, *unpaid labor* constitutes the material oppression and economic exploitation of women (Vogel, 1983/2013). According to Vogel (1983/2013), Marx and Engels (1845) outlined in *German Ideology* a history of family where the division of labor “was originally nothing but the division of labour in the sexual act” (p. 52) out of which arose the natural division of labor between men and women in the family; corresponding the development of private property. On the other hand, feminist critiques of division of labor center on the idea that woman's domestic labor has been disregarded as natural and devalued (Pateman, 1988); they have been subject to segregation at work with the invention of divisions between women's and men's work as well as discrimination in earnings (Hartmann, 1976; Reskin & Hartmann, 1986). This division is enforced on women by two major interlocking systems; patriarchy and capitalism that contribute to the material oppression of women by men.

Iris Marion Young (1981), providing a critique of Marxism being stuck to an understanding of production in a material sense, suggests that sexual division of labor

does “refer to all structured gender differentiation of labor in a society. Such traditional women's tasks as bearing and rearing children, caring for the sick, cleaning, cooking, etc., fall under the category of labor as much as the making of objects in a factory.” as a crucial aspect of division of labor in every hitherto society (Young, 1981, p. 52). As a unit of analysis, sexual division of labor is used by feminists for the tasks of exploring women’s situation between the public and private spheres; as well as the differences between men’s and women’s roles, power and motivations within the same spheres – such as spaces of work (labor market) or state, as well as civil society institutions.

For example, Pateman’s (1988) account shows how women’s bodies have been contracted to men in the private sphere and the public sphere, respectively via marriage and employment contracts, both of which are built on a sexual division of labor. Basically, sexual division of labor perpetuates women’s inferior position as the interaction between capitalism and patriarchy continue to undermine the private sphere as well as the traditionally female-associated skills such as caring and nurturing that are seen as an extension of women’s domestic roles (Hartmann, 1979).

In the coming sections, I focus on four conceptual categories I identified from my reading on feminist conceptions of civil society and social reproduction which correspond to labor processes where some type of sexual division occurs; according to scholars from different strands. These different types of labor can be both paid and unpaid, depending on the space and the conditions of the activity in question. These categories, namely *care labor beyond domestic labor*, *emotional labor* and *occupational segregation*, may overlap or constitute different parts of a process. The individual and interdependent understanding of these social reproductive labors provided within the family and civil society organizations are important and they constitute the theoretical framework of a conception of NGO workers as social reproduction actors.

2.2.1.1. Care labor beyond domestic labor

According to materialist feminists, domestic labor inside the family has a productive characteristic; as a source of social productivity and a vital producer of surplus value

within the division of labor; inside and beyond the family (Arruzza & Duggan, 2013, Costa & James, 1972/2019). However, domestic labor is a very important part of but not the only constituent of a network of social reproduction relations. An important characteristic of women's unpaid labor, that has especially been provided within the context of domestic labor at home, is the caring dimension of the tasks performed.

Ann Ferguson and Nancy Folbre (1981) define this type of labor as *sex-affective production* where they emphasize that tangible production such as food or clothing is important; but the bearing and rearing of children, and the provision of affection, nurturance, and sexual satisfaction all represent social use values that cannot be ignored (p. 317). England and Folbre (1999) offer a wider definition which includes caring work done in the labor market;

Caring work includes any occupation in which the worker provides a service to someone with whom he or she is in personal (usually face-to-face) contact. The work is called "caring" on the assumption that the worker responds to a need or desire that is directly expressed by the recipient.' Caring work includes such jobs as child care, teaching, physical and psychological therapy provision, nursing, doctoring, and the work of sales clerks and wait persons, to name a few. (p. 40)

According to feminists, care has been undervalued because it had 'feminine' connotations and has often been performed without pay. However, both the material and affective labor that women perform constitute social reproduction that no society should ignore (England & Folbre, 1999; Fraser, 2016, p. 99). Besides the provision of nurturance for the members of family; care has been understood as the constitution of humans "as social beings, forming their habitus and the cultural ethos in which they move" (Fraser, 2016, p. 101). This more central view of care in a way that is more than the provision of love and nurturing for the family; but one that sustains relations, represents the mutuality of recent connotations of social reproduction and care in the contemporary literature where "care is our individual and common ability to provide the political, social, material, and emotional conditions that allow the vast majority of people and living creatures on this planet to thrive" (The Care Collective et al., 2020, p. 10).

On the other hand, feminist thinking centered on social reproduction led to the unveiling of patriarchal structures behind how production and reproduction were organized in our

societies, bringing into question how the value of women's labor both at home and at work had been de-valued since (S. Ferguson, 2017, p. 122). Social reproduction was separated from production in capitalist societies; relegated to the family where it was feminized and sentimentalized via the emphasis on its emotional component. It was defined as 'care' instead of 'work,' and seen to be performed for the sake of 'love' as opposed to money (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 70–71). Federici's earlier (1975/2012) account also recognizes the double exploitation of women in paid labor; in addition to the reproduction of their housewife condition as often women take on caring jobs (p. 83).

Hence, social reproduction theory emphasizes that family is not the only site of social reproduction (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 70–71). Women's caring and nurturing *mothering role* permeates the labor market as well (A. Ferguson & Folbre, 1981). Women's reproductive capacity and the gendered distribution of caring permeate the market and civil society in another way where women repeat their roles as caregivers, nurturers and supporters. Therefore, women are included in civil society and at work as women (Dean, 1992, p. 385). Specialization in care-giving and supportive tasks restricts women's options, choices and remuneration (A. Ferguson & Folbre, 1981, p. 314). In such manner, Mignon Duffy (2005) deals with the devaluation of care work via her analysis of two alternative formulations for care work. The nurturance conceptualization which suggests a narrow definition of care based on the nurturing characteristics of socially necessary labor; and the reproductive labor framework which is more expansive and includes both relational and nonrelational jobs that maintain our societies via processes of social reproduction (Duffy, 2005, p. 80).

2.2.1.2. Emotional labor

Emotional labor as a concept was developed by sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1983) who paid attention to its functions and value. Hochschild uses the term to mean "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" intended to produce a particular state of mind in others which has an *exchange value* as it is sold for a wage (1983, p. 7). In this sense, the synonymous terms of emotion work or emotional

management are used to refer to same acts performed in the private sphere which speaks with feminist political economy's interest in unpaid work. In Hochschild's understanding, the provision of care via market and the recruitment of emotions by care workers as well as the expectation of emotional labor is harmful to the workers; contributing further to their exploitation (England, 2005, p. 391).

It is important to underline at this point that the respective delineations of emotional labor and care labor may be hard to draw from the literature as they are used interchangeably with each other or together with other concepts (Arruzza et al., 2019; England & Folbre, 1999; Fraser, 2016) but the common feminist viewpoint is that both emotional and care labor are extracted from women in an *unpaid* manner. Also, emotional labor as a concept commonly appears in literature as a dimension, a requirement, a skill or even a motivator (reward) for the performance of *paid work*.

Himmelweit (1999) adopts Arlie Hochschild's definition of emotional labor as it distinguishes a work or labor process characterized as the management of feelings and behaviors by the worker (*laborer*) in a way that "not all emotional labor is caring labor, but caring labor is a type of emotional labor" (p. 34). Since caring has two aspects; motivation and the activity, the emotional component is as crucial as the physical element of caring and requires the effort of the carer; however, all emotional labor does not involve the development of a relationship like in caring labor because it is employed by many occupations that require the worker to show certain emotions such as positive attitude, communication and service qualities (Himmelweit, 1999, p. 36). Emotional labor shares similarities with physical labor in that they "both require skill and experience and are subject to external controls and divisions of labor" (Newman et al., 2007, p. 26).

It has been suggested that there is a monetary effect of a so-called "care penalty" for women who choose professions that involve caring and nurturing since these jobs are not compensated because they are viewed as low skill and low effort occupations (Guy et al., 2008, p. 138). This penalty seems to appear when emotional labor is performed by women though; men actually receive more credit when they show these skills (Guy et al., 2008, p. 146). Traditionally, since emotion work that has been attributed to women and dismissed as 'nurturant' and 'supportive' and characterized as an intrinsic component of

works that women do in general; it has neither been an official part of the job description nor compensated (Guy et al., 2008, p. 8). This means that these skills are only invisible when women perform them; uncovering the gendered nature of the whole concept of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

Another important contribution in that regard is by Hardt and Negri (2000) who define the production in the service sectors of the economy and the labor involved in this production as *immaterial labor* as they produce immaterial goods consisting of a service, a cultural product, knowledge or communication (p. 290). The products of these affective labors of human contact and interactions are intangible, even when they are corporeal such as those offered by health services, and these affective labors are better understood “by beginning from what feminist analyses of ‘women’s work’ have called ‘labor in the bodily mode’ ” (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 294).

Fortunati (2007) finds their discourse of immaterial labor incoherent in a way that risks women’s work being confined to the bodily functions as the conceptualization of ‘affects’ as well as how production and consumption of social relationships take place are left unclear (pp. 146-147). Instead, Fortunati (2007) starts from Marx’s understanding that excludes immaterial labor as unproductive and discusses it in relation to the domestic sphere where post-industrial capitalism expanded and transformed immaterial labor outside of it (p. 140).

Hardt and Negri (2000) advocate that immaterial labor power (involved in communication, cooperation, and the production and reproduction of affects) is taking precedence in capitalist production (p. 53), while Fortunati (2007) also believes that a more subtle division today devalorizes material labor and attacks the body (i.e. manual, physical), and valorizing immaterial (i.e. cognitive, emotional) labor (p. 154). I believe these debates that focus on the nature of immaterial labor as a Marxist concept contribute greatly to the understanding of social reproduction processes that occur within the sphere of civil society; specifically within the NGOs as a workplace where workers are hired to perform the kinds of immaterial labors in the form of emotional labor (Eschenfelder, 2012; Mastracci & Adams, 2019). However, the view that immaterial labor is taking

precedence over material labor should be critically analyzed; but this point is beyond the purpose of my literature review.

In her more recent work, Federici (2009/2012) states her preference for the use of ‘reproductive’ labor as a more comprehensive form of labor than ‘affective’ labor as she also criticizes that many Marxists such as Hardt and Negri only pay lip-service to the gendered character of reproductive work in their conception of affective labor. In fact, Federici’s (2009/2012) understanding is critical of this Marxist interpretation of *affective labor* as a type of immaterial labor which may be characterized as a component of *every* job, such as fast food workers that are expected to service with a smile; but this would be misleading since much reproductive labor (i.e. affective and care labor in this sense) such as elderly care demands complete engagement that can hardly be conceived as immaterial. The theory of *affective labor* is problematic; but offering *carework* to imply the division between the physical and emotional aspect for the sake of advocating care labor as a skilled labor is reductive as well; a holistic understanding of care needs advocacy (Federici, 2009/2012, p. 122). As I move on, I will continue to refer to such interconnections of emotional labor and care work to define dimensions of gender divisions of labor and social reproduction within the context of civil society labor. Thus, these categories of labor are focal points of my theoretical framework and research.

2.2.1.3. Occupational segregation

Early materialist feminists such as Mitchell (1966) looked for explanations of women’s exclusion from production relations which they thought would explain and offer a way out of women’s material subordination. However, even though women’s participation in paid labor has offered a good deal of emancipation and progress, especially on issues of democratic engagement and workplace justice; it has been clear to later feminists that the increase in female employment has not resulted in equality. In fact, women still continue to be exposed to negative effects of occupational segregation by denial of entry into some work; whereas men continue to reject “any female responsibilities or tasks” and “women are promised a form of success defined entirely in male terms” (Folbre, 1994, p. 101).

Gender structures the division of men and women within paid and unpaid work. Feminists argue that in paid work, women are relegated to lower-paid, female-dominated *pink collar* or service occupations instead of high-paying, male-dominated, professional occupations (Fraser, 1996, p. 16). Even skills pertaining to support and nurturing have been branded as feminine and natural. Activities that require the performance of emotional labor, for example, are not viewed as learned, skilled or required and are therefore invisible and uncompensated (Guy et al., 2008, p. 146). Women have only been included as women; in the workplace they are recreated as care-givers and constructed as supporters to male activities in institutions, including civil society (Dean, 1992, p. 385).

Women are constrained to lower-paid, less skilled jobs often with less exercise of authority or control because patriarchal structures like the family wage system or fraternal associations (such as trade unions, which men utilize to keep their advantages) strengthen the domestic division of labor and reinforce women's inferior position in both spheres by securing the material base of women's oppression (Hartmann, 1976). Sexual division of labor extends into the workplace; as women are concentrated into narrowly-defined occupations where they work alongside other women and their work is different from men's (Pateman, 1988). Job segregation occurs horizontally and vertically; while women and men are distributed across gendered occupations – *glass wall*; there are also differences of power and status – *glass ceiling* (Guy et al., 2008, p. 140).

The concentration of women and men in different jobs has been labeled “sex segregation in the labor market” (Reskin & Hartmann, 1986, p. 1). In addition to the vertical and horizontal forms of segregation, it also forms between full-timers and part-timers and different wages are justified by different grades given to jobs while women's jobs are usually graded less-skilled than men's (Walby, 1989, p. 223). Throughout the decades, feminists have emphasized that the segregation in the labor market is based on a sexual division of labor. They have emphasized the patriarchal nature of the market which doubly exploits women's labor at home and at work; via smaller wages that disincentivize joining employment as well as assigning them to domestic work and reinforcing their material subordination (Dahlerup, 1994, p. 124; Hartmann, 1976; Pateman, 1988).

Feminist literature converges on the point that jobs which involve caring and emotional dimensions resemble women's unpaid work in the domestic sphere and they are less valued. It is important to note that a host of factors beyond past discrimination, such as differences between women and men in preferences, attitudes, values, experience, education, training, and so on may offer an explanation of women's materially inferior condition and they are probably all interrelated (Reskin & Hartmann, 1986, p. 2).

2.3. Gender and Civil Society Work: A Social Reproduction Perspective

In this section, I aim to provide a conceptualization of NGOs as places of social reproduction, and NGO workers as social reproduction actors with a look at paid and unpaid work. Firstly, in order to characterize *civil society as a site of social reproduction*, I will refer again to its feminist conceptions and the work of Marxist feminists that help conceptualize civil society as a social sphere of interaction that mediates care related needs of our societies and the labor performed within civil society organizations; i.e. third sector labor as a type of 'care work' from a social reproduction based understanding. Second, in an attempt to explore the characteristics of civil society work with a gender lens; I will delve deeper into the processes of *gender division of labor within third sector* that I believe relate to work performed within the third sector: *Care Work and Emotional Labor* and *Volunteer Work and Voluntary Labor* of NGO workers to identify social reproduction processes in the sphere of civil society with attention to the interactions between the public and private spheres.

This exploration of civil society based on a social reproduction perspective requires a materialist feminist approach. However, as I explored in the first part that civil society has not been a significant organizing category for feminists (Dean, 1992; Phillips, 2001) and the exploration of gender-related issues has not received much attention from civil society theorists (Howell & Mulligan, 2004); we need to look at a wide range of literature to answer some questions. Therefore, at the intersection of feminist conceptions of civil society and social reproduction, I will attempt to deepen the theorization of third sector labor with the aid of literature that deals with a range of issues such as gender equality,

pay gaps and volunteering within NGOs while trying to explore components of NGO work that refer to unpaid and gendered dimensions of emotional and caring labors.

Currently, there is a wide array of literature available on the gendered nature of third sector employment and their implications on the labor conditions within this type of employment I believe I should address first. Even though there exist some similar works focusing on the analysis of factors behind the gendered nature and labor conditions of third sector work processes within NGOs such as emotional labor (Costakis, 2021; Eschenfelder, 2012); literature is dominated by studies within the context of developed countries such as the USA and France and they focus on wide ranging issues from labor market or economy-wide perspectives of female overrepresentation in non-profit jobs (Faulk et al., 2013; Preston, 1989, 1990; Lanfranchi & Narcy, 2013; Lee, 2014).

The bulk of this literature reaffirm the often gendered nature of NGO work and the fact that women's role in the non-profit sector has largely been neglected in the theoretical sense (Themudo, 2009) as well as the underpaid nature of this type of female-intensive work in comparison with the public or for-profit sectors (Hirsch et al., 2017; Preston, 1989, 1990). But these studies do not adopt a feminist or a socialist perspective; therefore they do not go beyond labor market analyses to examine the structural effects of patriarchy and capitalism over the nature of women's labor in the nonprofits and occupational segregation even though they report the extensively female composition of nonprofit labor. Therefore, I refer to these studies only to contribute to my query for a gender division of labor in the nonprofit workforce. The findings of these studies, especially those relying on longitudinal and quantitative data also provide useful information for a macro level understanding of the third sector from a gender lens. In addition, I utilized from the analytical categories such as labor donations, pay gaps and feminization of labor to identify the specific paid and unpaid dimensions of NGO work for a presumable gender division of labor in the third sector.

Most of the literature on NGO work serves the purpose of advancing non-profit management as well as promoting civil society organizations as emancipatory spaces for women's empowerment in employment and/or they focus on labor market-related side of issues such as gender equality, access to leadership, job motivations and compensation.

Likewise, a recent scoping review of the literature on the intersection of Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) and gender suggested that research focuses mainly on three topics – *wages, careers and boards* – but structural analyses that are based on gender theory that address the outcomes of social processes are not very common (Holgersson & Hvenmark, 2023). Based on my literature review, there is a prominence of studies especially conducted in the USA and Europe which rely on country wide quantitative survey statistics of the non-profit labor force based on determinants of *gender and pay*. These works are inspired by the high rate of women employed in the non-profit sector. In efforts to explain this phenomena, the general inclination of the literature is based on a *labor donations hypothesis* relying on assumptions of altruism, personal values and intrinsic motivations of NGO workers. While the gendered composition of the non-profit sector is addressed (Faulk et al., 2013; Themudo, 2009), it is mostly understood as women's choice to lessen their wage losses or as a result of naturally female-dominated occupations available in the sector (Hirsch et al., 2017; Preston, 1989, 1990; Preston & Sacks, 2010). In these studies the wage differential is attributed to nonprofit work as it is typed as requiring less time and skills from the worker; while the willingness of workers to accept lower wages in exchange for social benefit in socially worthwhile organizations also contributes to its low pay because it is assumed that workers are willing to donate a part of their labor instead of pay – resulting in *labor donation* of NGO workers.

Labor donation appears as a gendered concept in this literature, too. Although within the third sector, workers tend to be more educated and female; even when they show similar characteristics with their public and for-profit counterparts; it was found that non-profit workers still earn less and the difference is even more striking in professional and managerial positions (Preston & Sacks, 2010, pp. 117–118). However, this situation is explained as a normal labor market process under the condition of women's already devalued labor “the labor donation (i.e. wage loss) increases with the potential income of the worker since it is most extreme for men, high-paying industries, and high-paying occupations, and is therefore most likely a normal good” (Preston & Sacks, 2010, p. 118).

In fact, nonprofit employment is shown to offer some comparative advantage for managerial positions, family friendly policies and benefits for women (Preston, 1990;

Lee, 2014; Lanfranchi and Narcy, 2013). Women's participation in the sector was also suggested as the result of insufficient opportunities in other sectors and their gravitation towards human service work traditionally associated with women whose pursuit of own interests are constrained (Themudo, 2009, pp. 664 - 667).

Within this literature which focus on the labor market analyses of the nonprofit labor, the *occupational locus* and *nonprofit compensation* are seen as the main reasons for why women are more likely to work in the nonprofit sector. As a result of gender-based segregation of occupations, women are more likely to crowd into female-dominated or female-typed occupations such as clerical occupations, nursing, teaching, or low level management based on quantitative nation-wide employment data in the USA (Preston, 1990, pp. 560-561). The main argument here is that women are not drawn to the *sector*; but more to the *occupations* available in the third sector. Thus, these studies do not delve on the further effects of structures such as patriarchy and capitalism, as materialist feminist analyses of these findings would attempt.

On the other hand, a social reproduction perspective would require that we take into consideration the material conditions that affect women's labor in NGOs while handling carefully the explanations based on women's altruistic values, labor donations, motivations and effects of their socialization; in relation with the constraints over distribution of women's labor and how they sort into occupations.

Another general tendency from the wider literature that I believe relates to the conceptualization of NGOs as caring actors is that there are many studies that provide an analysis of the third sector being a provider of 'social care' (Carey et al., 2009; Crampton et al., 2001; Daly & Lewis, 2000; Dickinson et al., 2012), which refers to a component of social reproduction as a complex network of relations and process for the sustainment of our species and laboring societies, beyond domestic care and household labor (Brenner & Laslett, 1991; S. Ferguson, 2017). I should also mention that these studies are conducted in the UK, France, Australia, New Zealand and Canada and they are mostly in conversation with the wider welfare state and social policy debates in these countries. I will refer to these studies, too, throughout my exploration of care labor within the sphere of civil society.

I believe a specifically similar conceptual framework to this thesis in a way that integrates feminist political economy in non-profit labor analyses, is found in the work of Donna Baines and her several collaborations on the issue of *nonprofit social services* (NPSS) which focus on care work in NGOs. Although Baines and her colleagues mostly focus on the provision of care work and its relationship with the nonprofit sector in Canada; they interact with feminist political economy in many comparative studies (Baines et al., 2020; Baines & Kgaphola, 2019). According to this understanding of the nature of nonprofit care work which sustains social reproduction, there are three dynamics of non-profit work: empowerment, emotional/personal costs and unpaid work (Baines et al., 2020). Baines (2004) also studies the performance of unpaid care work in the form of expanded use of volunteers and the volunteer labor of paid employees within the context of social service provision in nonprofit NGO settings. Throughout this section, I will benefit from Baines' works which recognize the contribution social reproduction and Feminist Political Economy (FPE) as a framework to feminist conceptions of civil society:

The FPE concept of social reproduction is rarely used in the civil society literature though much of civil society pivots on reproducing various populations for the next day of work and life: addressing unmet needs, providing care, reducing isolation, providing venues for participation, and providing much of the social glue necessary for social life. Similarly, social reproduction rarely mentions civil society in any detail, except as one of the spaces in which social glue is maintained (Baines et al., 2020, p. 2).

Together with Baines (2004, 2020); I also received guidance from the theoretical framework of Benería (1979, 1999) and Baldock (1998) in my conceptualization of gender divisions of labor within civil society labor who refer to its paid and unpaid characteristics and categories of caring, emotional, volunteer and voluntary labor. I will now start with the exploration of civil society as a site of social reproduction.

2.3.1. Civil Society as a Site of Social Reproduction

Social reproduction theory as a whole, critiques the capitalist understanding of taking granted the reproductive work that women as well as men do outside of the traditional workspaces of the factories, private enterprises or bureaucratic institutions. It offers that

we adopt a broader and more inclusive understanding of labor in terms of which types of labor we consider productive; therefore important, as well as a broader understanding of where this production takes place. In this section, while using civil society and third sector interchangeably, I refer to the sphere of activity where non-governmental, non-profit institutions and associations exist as service providers and employers for the provision of societal needs, in addition to the agents of the state and the market and I look at alternative understandings of civil society to characterize this sphere as a site of social reproduction.

The exploration below follows an analytical path which begins with the theorization of a 'social realm' or 'social sphere' as it appears in the writings of Arendt (1958/2018), Habermas (1962/1991) and Fraser (1990, 1997/2013) who are some of the most influential thinkers to my exploration of public and private dichotomy. I believe their conceptualization of a "social realm" or "social arena" as a third, alternative sphere to the public and private spheres resonates with the conceptualization of the modern third sector as a provider of society's care needs – i.e. social reproduction. Next, I discuss the concepts of *social/societal/total reproduction* that refer to the wider organization of social reproduction as a network of social relations and institutions (Bhattacharya, 2017; Brenner & Laslett, 1991; S. Ferguson, 2017; Vogel, 1983/2013). Then, I move on to discuss how care is distributed in our societies; especially how the pressure of paid labor has transformed the way social reproduction takes place. Here I briefly summarize feminist explanations of a 'care crisis' due to an *externalization of care work* in modern societies under the twin effects of patriarchy and capitalism (Arruzza et al., 2019; Folbre, 1994; Fraser, 1996, 2016; The Care Collective et al., 2020). Lastly, in complementarity with the social reproduction regime in effect that either places the burden of care on women or externalizes it; I will focus on the impact of modern welfare regimes in including the third sector for the performance of socially reproductive labors; including the care that is provided within civil society (Bode, 2006; Etzioni, 1973; Fraser, 1996; Phillips, 2001) and structures of social care.

2.3.1.1. The ‘social’ sphere

To start with, I believe that a focus on the conceptions of a ‘social realm’ or ‘social sphere’ within the private and public debate via citing influential thinkers (Arendt, 1958/2018; Fraser, 1990, 1997/2013; Habermas, 1962/1991) will contribute to my effort of understanding civil society as a site of social reproduction.

According to Arendt (1958/2018), our modern societies have been transformed into societies of laborers and jobholders due to a glorification of labor, and matters pertaining previously to the domestic arena have become issues of collective concern. Modern society witnessed the emergence of a “social realm” which is neither public nor private but is a modern construct of their submersion into each other (Arendt, 1958/2018, pp. 32–33). A similar social sphere which is neither private nor public is also identified by Habermas (1962/1991, p. 176), who believes that this blurred space is created by the commodification of social relationships and the privatization of civil society. According to Habermas (1962/1991), representing the development of the large industrial enterprise and bureaucracy; “world of work and organization” grew, and forms of social labor have been created in the private and public sectors (pp. 152–153). Also, Nancy Fraser was specifically influenced by Arendt’s demarcation of a social realm in her identification of the “social arena” that does not coincide with neither the family nor the market nor the state. In Fraser’s thought, this arena is a site of conflict where “runaway needs” are provided as well as where rival needs are determined historically by relations of power (Fraser, 1997/2013).

This concept of a social sphere represents the modern condition that the public and private spheres intermeshed whereby creating this new realm for the fulfilment of our societies’ social reproduction needs (i.e. reproduction of the labor power). It implies a complex net of actors that joined the family in the provision of social reproduction; such as private enterprises and public institutions (e.g. education, care, health etc.) as well as nongovernmental, nonprofit and community organizations that populate the modern third sector. Therefore, I liken the theorization of this ‘social arena’ or the social sphere (Arendt, 1958/2018; Fraser, 1990; Habermas, 1962/1991) to feminist conceptions of civil

society I covered earlier which pay attention to civil society's placement within the public/private dichotomy and an understanding of it as a social space that tends to our society's needs *in between* the two spheres that are in dynamic relationship.

2.3.1.2. Social, societal and total reproduction

In order to explore a relationship between social reproduction and civil society as a social sphere, my vantage point is an understanding of social reproduction as something that goes beyond the family realm. In general, socially reproductive labors were said to fall to women naturally, however social reproduction is more than the biological necessities of life and it refers to the reproduction of the capitalist system and the labor force as a whole. According to Marx in *Capital*, these constitute historically formed 'habits' and introduce a historical and moral element into the determination of the cost of labor power (as cited in Vogel, 1983/2013) that covers more than the reproduction that happens in the family.

While earlier materialist feminists emphasize that women's oppression has been based on the nature of their work being unpaid, emotional and outside of the market (Benston, 1969), current feminists' arguments have warned that the overemphasis on the material basis of women's subordination has led to the overemphasis of the family in its provision and the consequent devaluation of social reproduction labor within modern societies in general (Arruzza et al., 2019; Arruzza & Duggan, 2013; Bhattacharya, 2017; A. Ferguson & Folbre, 1981; Fraser, 2016). Such process leads to a sexual division within both paid and unpaid labor; as well as causing *double burdens* for women which exacerbates women's material situation even more (Folbre, 1994; Hartmann, 1976; Reskin & Hartmann, 1986; Vogel, 1983/2013; Young, 1981).

Corresponding to a perception of wider care structures, Bhattacharya (2017) finds useful the distinction between social and societal reproduction that Johanna Brenner and Barbara Laslett offer; who retain Marx's definition of social reproduction; but refer to the latter term *societal reproduction* as;

The activities and attitudes, behaviors and emotions, and responsibilities and relationships directly involved in maintaining life, on a daily basis and

intergenerationally. It involves various kinds of socially necessary work—mental, physical, and emotional—aimed at providing the historically and socially, as well as biologically, defined means for maintaining and reproducing population. Among other things, social reproduction includes how food, clothing, and shelter are made available for immediate consumption, how the maintenance and socialization of children is accomplished, how care of the elderly and infirm is provided, and how sexuality is socially constructed (Brenner & Laslett, 1991, p. 314).

Lise Vogel termed this wider organization of social reproduction “total social reproduction” and emphasized that although the renewal of the labor force happens in a variety of ways, the generational replacement by the family has been dominating the discourse (Vogel, 1983/2013, pp. 146–147). Capitalism’s separation of domestic labor from wage labor has resulted in the development of “specialized sites and social units for the performance of domestic labor” such as labor-camps, barracks, orphanages, hospitals, prisons, and other such institutions (Vogel, 1983/2013, p. 159).

According to social reproduction feminists, generational replacement in the kin-based unit of the family is not the only site of social reproduction; but there is a wider system of public and community-based structures such as healthcare, education, pensions and benefits that compose the “historically determined habits” (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 7). Historically, family has been the primary site for social reproduction; its biological, physical, mental tolls have been borne by women in the home. Social reproduction theorists, however, are careful about placing the family as the only site of reproduction and aim to discover other places and structures where social reproduction takes place. Other social relationships and institutions, such as public education, health care, prisons, community facilities and care centers may be sites of social reproduction (S. Ferguson & McNally, 2013). A more complete understanding of capitalism would need to go beyond workers and owners; but should consider the daily and generational reproduction that occurs in our societies within various other spaces (S. Ferguson, 2017).

Accordingly, feminists suggest to broaden the understanding of social reproduction and the provision of socially necessary goods and services which include structures and organizations beyond the family and women. For instance, referring to the care work that is primarily undertaken by women and largely unwaged; Steans and Tepe (2010) suggest the employment of social reproduction to refer to the relationship of “home work” with

the provision of social care provided by the state and the market which as a regime has gendered implications as women also undertake the complementary tasks such as paid work in education and healthcare (pp. 809–811). Civil society organizations and other voluntary communities may be categorized as spaces where not just the active labor force, but the whole society, culture and lifestyles are being developed and reproduced, too.

It is common among feminists to use care and social reproduction interchangeably and refer to a wider understanding of care structures. For example, England (2005) classifies Marxist feminist understanding of women's homemaking and domestic work as reproductive labor that guarantees the wellbeing of current and next generations as a narrower understanding of "care as public good production" (pp. 385–386).

All in all, I find the feminist definitions of social, societal and total reproduction useful for an understanding of civil society as a site of social reproduction.

2.3.1.3. Externalization of care work

From an overview, the caring dimension of social reproduction appears to be an issue of consensus within feminist literature. Even if earlier materialist feminists undermined the value of non-material caring and emotional labor (Mitchell, 1966); feminists have agreed on the critique of consideration of caring work as a natural attribute of women as one of the bases of women's socioeconomic subordination. More contemporary feminist thinkers who dealt with the issue of social reproduction have delved even deeper into the devaluation of traditionally female labor and tried to emphasize the important role of these caring functions for our society's maintenance.

Naturally, feminists have dealt with the question of distribution of social reproduction in relation to the regimes of their times. For example, Fraser has focused on the effects of welfare states in regulating relationships between labor markets and families; which helped shape gender divisions of labor as well as constitute the division between paid employment and unpaid caregiving work (Fraser, 1996, p. 56). She emphasized how the distribution of tasks between women and men have determined women's deprivation from material benefits under the welfare regimes of the postwar period and how it

continues systematically to exclude women under current “globalized and financialized regime” due to unequal responsibilities for social reproduction (Fraser, 2016, p. 104).

Even though capitalism has, since the industrial era separated the activities of production and reproduction while renumerating reproductive work by coining it as acts of *love*, *virtue* and *altruism* and leaving it uncompensated (Fraser, 2016, p. 102); it never dedicated social reproduction exclusively to the family, instead has “always situated some of it in neighborhoods, grassroots communities, public institutions, and civil society” (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 70–71). Behind capitalism stands currently a network of support provided by families, communities, and civil societies as well as a huge amount of unwaged labor including the labor of social reproduction which is still performed largely by women as uncompensated. Especially in its prevalent neo-liberal form, capitalism has recruited women into the workforce which resulted in the depletion of our resources for regeneration and caused an acute crisis of social reproduction by expropriation of women’s labor (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 64–74). Therefore, according to feminists, reproduction of our human capacities always involves a gender conflict; in addition to class and race-based conflicts over the distribution of social reproduction by institutional arrangements (Folbre, 1994, pp. 1–2) and after the advent of capitalism, a ‘care crisis’ occurred, caused by the structured appropriation of social reproduction which has been offloaded to individuals and families as well as being left to the hands of the free market;

In capitalist societies much, though not all, of this activity goes on outside the market—in homes, neighbourhoods, civil-society associations, informal networks and public institutions, such as schools; and relatively little of it takes the form of wage labour. Non-waged social-reproductive activity is necessary to the existence of waged work, the accumulation of surplus value and the functioning of capitalism as such. (Fraser, 2016, pp. 101–102)

Social reproduction perspective pays attention to how the costs of caring for ourselves and our dependents are distributed among members of our society and how these costs are largely paid by women and communities inside and outside the market whereas women experience a double day while time-use studies around the world show that women work much longer than men overall (Folbre, 1994, pp. 88–97). It pays attention to the resulting dualized organization of social reproduction under current global,

financialized capitalist regime “commodified for those who can pay for it, privatized for those who cannot” – a crisis of depletion and inequality (Fraser, 2016, p. 104).

Similarly, published during the COVID-19 crisis, authors of *The Care Manifesto* provide a contemporary analysis of the challenges brought upon communities in the spheres of care and social reproduction due to increasing number of economic and natural crises as well as processes of intense neo-liberalization, especially in developing countries from an ecologist, feminist, queer and intersectional perspective (The Care Collective et al., 2020). They refer to UN Economist Shahra Razavi’s (2007) definition of a ‘care diamond’ for societal care provision consisting of household, state, market and voluntary/community arrangements which guarantee societal welfare and accentuate the diversity of sites where care is provided in our societies. The authors of *Care Manifesto* study the case of Greece where activities left outside of the market have been devalued and delegated to other sectors and “marketized relations gave way to voluntary networks of care, mutuality and interdependency” as the number of community-managed networks have soared (The Care Collective et al., 2020, p. 60).

This way of looking at the issues of production and reproduction and the organization of welfare and provision of social needs suggest the adoption of a more inclusive definition of social reproduction as well as the actors that realize it and the spaces it takes place.

2.3.1.4. The ‘third’ sector

Even though there is a growing interest on the issue of social reproduction and efforts to analyze its provision in detail; its applications in relation to the sphere of civil society – or the third sector, are not abundant enough for a complete analysis. Therefore, I believe a brief look at the growth of the third sector and how it has been constituted as a sphere which assumes responsibilities that have historically only been assumed by the private and the public (i.e. state, welfare) sectors are required.

For example, as I previously mentioned, one of the earliest theoreticians of the ‘third’ sector, Etzioni (1973) views civil society as a sphere where “domestic missions” that are deemed not profitable or interesting enough by the market or the state are performed.

Etzioni identified the third sector as an alternative between the state and the market and put emphasis on their successful work in creating social development without even a concern for profits. He sees civil society organizations as “the appropriate vehicle through which we conduct the social as well as the economic ‘business’ of mature capitalism” and views the reliance on the third sector as desirable since it will lead to involvement of private sector and diminishing of the state’s role in the service of domestic missions (Etzioni, 1973, p. 315). This conception of the role of third sector in providing important social services does not accommodate with social reproduction theory while in fact it ends up diminishing social reproduction to a non-profitable type of labor. However, I believe that this early conception of the third sector represents a part of the situation of our current societies where communities and civil society actors have become important actors in the social scene as they have been attributed with more responsibilities due to capitalism’s disinvestment from welfare starting from the 1980s (Fraser, 1996).

Indeed, welfare provision has changed lately; due to the introduction of a “welfare mix” including voluntary agencies and the market in addition to the traditional welfare provider, the state. There seems to be less state, more market and more civil society – and accordingly, new modes of coordination in what may be labelled the “social welfare sector” (Bode, 2006, pp. 346–347). Previously, Evers (1995) conceptualized the third sector as a part of the welfare mix while welfare started to be presented in a hybrid way and nonprofits have become intermediaries bridging the gaps between the states, markets, households and communities. Also, as a dimension of the public space, these organizations “deliver goods, services and practical help to people” (p. 161). According to Evers (1995) “modern societies have always been 'mixed', building on the market, the state, the public civil sphere with its (voluntary/ non-profit) associations as well as on community and the family” while recently they are burdened with financial constraints as well as more responsibilities of need provision (pp. 176–178).

However, propositions for an understanding of contracting civil society and the desire to privatize provision of social services are in stark contrast to feminist views. In fact, writing *On Welfare*, Mariarosa Dalla Costa (1977/2019) suggested that attention should be paid to the socialization of domestic tasks that were previously only performed by

women by the creation of the “so-called third sector” and social service workers have had to become the “collective wife and mother” (p. 176). According to a social reproduction perspective, capitalism has retrenched public services while externalizing care work to families and employing women more in the workforce at the same time; demanding their time and capacity to perform reproductive needs (Arruzza et al., 2019, pp. 77–78).

Phillips (2001) emphasized how when social policies shift; caring duties are fulfilled by voluntary citizens while celebrating a vibrant civic culture and active citizenry. However, this “community” often refers to women and their capacities of assuming caring responsibilities for the members of their families and communities. “This requisitioning of female labor may not be what most theorists have understood by civil society, but the term has undoubtedly come to carry this additional connotation” (Phillips, 2001, p. 82). According to Phillips (2001), where private and voluntary associations fit in within this organization for provision of needs by the civil society is the least developed part of the argument (compared to the state or the economy) and depends on which theoretical inclination one embarks upon (p. 84).

Some more questions arise due to a conceptualization of NGOs as care actors and NGO workers as caring subjects from a social reproduction perspective. I believe that sexual divisions of labor that permeate both paid and unpaid work for the distribution of tasks within society are very important for such a discussion; therefore in the next section, I try to analyze third sector work with a gender lens and as socially reproductive labor.

2.3.2. Gender Division of Labor within Third Sector Work

The purpose of exploring third sector labor with a gender lens requires some preliminary thinking on the construction of civil society and the general organization of labor and reproduction in our societies as well as how women’s labor has been employed at both public and private spheres. I attempted this with the first two chapters on feminist conceptions of civil society and an examination of social reproduction theory, followed by an understanding civil society as a site of social reproduction as I laid down the groundwork for this section focusing more specifically on a gender-based understanding

of civil society work. I will continue with tracing the connections in social reproduction and feminist literature by focusing on the themes of women's organization in civil society such as the feminization of third sector labor to understand its emancipatory potential for women or occupational segregation within the third sector. Then I will focus specifically on two dimensions of gender divisions of labor relating to third sector work; these are the *care work and emotional labor* that NGO workers perform, as well as the *gendered nature of volunteer work and the voluntary dimension* of NGO workers' (un)paid labor I identified as components of social reproduction that takes place within civil society.

Just like their exposition of the gendered nature of reproduction relations in the family, the economy and the state; feminist thinkers have already developed methods to interrogate the gendered interconnections between the family and civil society (Howell & Mulligan, 2004, p. 7). For instance, in spite of its own restrictions and discriminations against women, engagement with civil society still may provide a more accessible terrain for women in comparison to state employment; even though there is still discrimination in the civil sphere, "there is nonetheless a powerful strand that views the self-governing, voluntary association as more accessible and contestable than the male-dominated, rule-bound state" (Phillips, 2001, p. 78). This constitutes a feminized view of the civil sphere whereas it may presume "a background of some degree of caring relations rather than of merely competing individuals" (Held, 2006, p. 17).

These emancipatory explanations of women's involvement in civil society are mostly invoked by liberals in a gender-loaded usage, even though some still recognize and deal with the effects of patriarchy on civil society (Phillips, 2001). However, from a leftist materialist point of view, it is a central thought that actions pertaining to social reproduction and the sites where it takes place have been historically devalued by patriarchy and capitalism both in social and material senses. If we are to understand civil society organizations as social reproduction actors but also as employers, we need to deepen our exploration of their place in the world of work and how women exist in it.

It is important to note that these organizations may sometimes serve to fill the gaps behind the welfare services previously provided before by the state; but may instead offer a loose alternative in the meanwhile loading the responsibilities on the shoulders of women who

are employed or volunteering within these organizations. However, this is the least developed part of the analysis of how responsibilities are distributed between the family, state, market and civil society (Phillips, 2001, p. 84).

Social reproduction perspective offers an expansive definition of labor than the dominant value-productive understanding of labor and integrates other forms of labor that sustain processes and institutions that mitigate production needs of humans and capital's labor reproduction needs (S. Ferguson, 2017). In such an understanding, the global working class consists not only of those who work for wages in factories; but equally central are the workers in the fields, private homes, the service sector, in hospitals, nurseries, and schools; in the public sector and in civil society – the precariat, the unemployed, and those who receive no pay in return for their work (Arruzza et al., 2019, p. 25). According to Bhattacharya (2017), even when spatially separated, the spaces of production and reproduction (e.g. the factory, the home, and the public centers) are theoretically and operationally united where they may also occur in the same place, like the public schools which function both as workplaces and spaces of social reproduction (p. 75). Following the same thinking; we can conceptualize civil society organizations as both places of production and reproduction because they employ workers and produce goods, services as well as values that aim to satisfy individual and social needs of our societies.

Dean (1992) emphasized that agents in civil society construct our perceptions of others and contribute to the shaping of norms, values and how “difference is created, destroyed, attributed, claimed, valued and devalued” which points to the transformative (active) power of civil society (p. 398). The exploration of third sector employees' work will serve the purposes of enhancing the activities of civil society organizations as well as the lives of workers employed in them which will contribute indirectly to the people whose lives they touch directly or indirectly, as they assume responsibilities in the making of the populations, i.e. the ‘global working class’:

Beyond the two-dimensional image of individual direct producer locked in wage labor, we begin to see emerge myriad capillaries of social relations extending between workplace, home, schools, hospitals—a wider social whole, sustained and coproduced by human labor in contradictory yet constitutive ways. If we direct our attention to those deep veins of embodying social relations in any actual society

today, how can we fail to find the chaotic, multiethnic, multigendered, differently abled subject that is the global working class? (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 74)

From a feminist perspective focused on the understanding of labors of social reproduction, the analysis of how laboring activity is performed and social relations arise out of this laboring activity requires that gender division of labor which prevails in every hitherto society is a central category (Young, 1981, p. 52). The nature of what is termed *women's work* is defined by the joining hands of capitalism and patriarchy for denigrating female-typed labors to low-paying and low-status base; leading to wage differentials between caring and nurturant professions (Hartmann, 1976, 1979; Reskin & Hartmann, 1986). In care-oriented jobs, women repeat their roles at home as female characteristics and social needs are devalued; women are looked down on as emotional and irrational and constructed as dependents by designation of their work as secondary (Folbre, 1994). The sexual division of labor endorses jobs that are appropriate for women's roles as nurturers such as teachers, welfare workers and health workers; as women perform "often the very jobs they used to do only at home-food preparation and service, cleaning of all kinds, caring for people, and so on" (Hartmann, 1979, p. 25). These gendered categories of labor have traditionally been neglected in comparison with the productive and valuable types of work defined in the public sphere.

Women's involvement in civil society was also based on the notions of women's nurturing qualities (Dean, 1992, p. 398). This reflects women's more intensive employment in the service sectors of the economy dedicated to social reproduction where public and non-profit institutions play an important role in health, education, child care and elder care provision (Folbre, 1994, p. 3). In addition, women's crowding into certain professions lowers the pay in those sectors and skills are culturally defined and devalued which aims to explain the iterative process of the pay gap (Folbre, 1994, p. 91).

Brenner & Laslett (1991) argue that even though the organization of social reproduction varies over time and across different societies; a gender division of labor has always been central to it (p. 314). The consideration of social reproduction processes, allows feminists to discover the basis of denigration of women's work in its caring and emotional nature. For example, Ann Ferguson and Nancy Folbre (1981) analyzed what they termed as *sex-*

affective production or *sex-affective labor* to define the basis of restrictions on women's options, choices and remuneration available to women at work by an extension of their mothering role in the societal level due to their presumed specialization at this type of care and emotion-based labor. The so-called *feminization of labor* creates the conditions for devaluation of women's labor and skills and it *deskills* entire jobs or sectors which predominantly employ women (Arruzza & Duggan, 2013).

This feminization of labor may also apply to the case of civil society, as many studies on the gender composition of NGO labor show. For example, according to McCarthy (2001), whose collection of essays explores women's influence within civil society and philanthropy within a wide geography, "anecdotal information suggests that women probably comprise a majority of volunteers and NGO workers in many, if not most, countries" (pp. 2-3). Also, Lanfranchi and Narcy's (2013) study in France emphasized that "some of the most "female" occupations are more frequent in the public and nonprofit sectors, including teachers, nursery assistants, and low-level administrative employees in civil service" (p. 52). Beyond the occupational segregation effect, they also found that 1. family-friendly policies such as part time jobs, shorter workweeks and working hours affect women's choices, 2. women and men have different attractions where women attach less importance to compensation and more to intrinsic motivations 3. women experience less pay gap in non-profit work (Lanfranchi & Narcy, 2013).

Starting from an understanding of data that shows nonprofit sector as a more female-intensive sector in comparison with the public and for-profit sectors in the USA; Hirsch, Preston and Macpherson (2018) focused on an industry and occupation based explanation of job characteristics and emphasized the caring dimension of nonprofit work to understand women's domination in the sector as more than a choice:

While there are likely to be gender differences in preferences for nonprofit versus for-profit employment, it is unlikely that such preferences are the principal reason for the gender employment pattern. A far more likely explanation is the nature of the jobs in the for-profit versus nonprofit sectors. For example, a large share of jobs (occupations) in the nonprofit sector involve "caring work" – jobs that involve caring and helping others – as readily evident in health care, education, and social service jobs, sectors with high levels of nonprofit employment. (Hirsch et al., 2018, p. 14)

Themudo (2009) also highlighted the constrictive situation that women workers may be facing as they are disproportionately attracted to this type of work traditionally constituted as women's work because they lack the same opportunities and flexibility in the other sectors or because as second-earners, women are the only ones able to make the choice to work in the nonprofit sector due to lower wages (p. 666). Themudo (2009) deduced that although it sounds simplistic to rely on an explanation based on women's preferences towards more equity, collective goods for all and altruism; his findings are consistent with this general trend in social sciences (p. 677). Because the conditions of NGO jobs are generally seen as more flexible; the phenomena of women's dominance in the sector is also suggested as a determinant of market forces as women's jobs are gender-typed to imply that they require less skills and provide more intrinsic satisfaction (Hirsch et al., 2018). However, Lee (2014) from the USA suggests that having children in the family *decreases* women's probability of working in the non-profit sector more than men. Thus, explanations regarding women's overrepresentation in the nonprofit sector which refer to flexibility as a main factor that affects women's choice for nonprofit employment requires careful consideration.

Following this overview of gender division of labor within third sector literature, I will focus on categories of labor with social reproduction characteristics which exist frequently in the NGO workplace and may have either paid or unpaid characteristics, or in some cases they may be intertwined. These categories of my literature review are *care work and emotional labor* and *volunteer work and voluntary labor*.

2.3.2.1. Care work and emotional labor in NGOs

As I mentioned several times, feminists have used the terms care and social reproduction interchangeably; while the delineations of care labor and emotional labor are also subject to change. Therefore in this section, I will focus on the explorations of care work and emotional labor that happens within NGOs. I will build on the understanding of emotional labor as an invisible and gendered labor category and continue with a feminist conception of civil society where women are included in this sphere *as women*. I will survey some

works on women's inclusion in NGOs based on a continuation of social reproduction duties for sustaining social relations with the types of caring jobs they perform (Dean, 1992). Following a brief overview of the literature on emotional labor and care within NGOs; I will focus on similar works to my exploration of emotional labor in NGOs from a social reproduction perspective (Baines, 2004; Baines et al., 2020; Bandali, 2020; Hamilton et al., 2021) and mention some related works regarding the exploration of emotional labor in civil society organizations (Costakis, 2021; Eschenfelder, 2012; Mastracci & Adams, 2019)

Firstly, the concept of emotional labor offers some promise to explain the occupational differences based on the gender of the worker. Hochschild's (1975, 1983) emotional labor theory originated in the American private sector, while Guy and Newman (2004) later introduced it to public services and administration; but its research in the NGO setting has been little and the literature remains scant (Mastracci & Adams, 2019, p. 12). According to Guy and Newman (2004), emotional labor is the missing link between occupational segregation and wage differentials between men and women which is made up of tasks that are naturalized for women in that they are caring and require emotive skills; but are made invisible and left uncompensated (p. 289).

Himmelweit (1999) argues that paid carers were found to feel a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their clients and were willing to extend their work contract by engaging in activities of 'informal care' such as involving their own social capacities and relationships in their work while undermining their self-interest (compared to noncaring workers); thus they become more susceptible to exploitation, especially by the employers who are willing to freeride on this (Himmelweit, 1999, pp. 29 – 36). In Himmelweit's (1999) understanding, caring has two aspects that consist of the *motivation* and the *activity* for caring for other people. She believes that during the activity of caring, a relationship develops between the carer and the cared for and because of this, paid caring may not be so different from unpaid caring for our loved ones; even though the institutional and gendered separation of home and work by industrialization distinguished the activities that relate to employment. Rather, it should be understood that caring occupations are not fully commodified *because* workers have motivations beyond

monetary gain and they care about the results of their work; as caring is not necessarily rewarded explicitly and frequently *unrewarded* whereas traditionally *labor* is an activity done for an extrinsic reward (Himmelweit, 1999, pp. 27–28).

From the point of view of social reproduction, within a context of sexually divided and feminized sectors affecting women's experiences at paid work; employment ends up becoming not necessarily a liberating option for women; but the conditions of women's employment become important as well. Feminists emphasized that women have not been fully included in the workplace and civil society because they repeat their care-giving roles and continue to be perceived as supporters of the male activity; meanwhile being restricted based on their reproductive capacities and caring roles in access to employment opportunities (Dean, 1992). The current institutions of state and economy do not offer solutions that will allow the basic conditions for women's equal access to opportunities; but instead freeride on their activities that replenish our societies, while externalizing care work (Fraser, 1997/2013) and further dispersing a 'double burden' on women and communities (Arruzza et al., 2019; Bhattacharya, 2017; Folbre, 1994).

Accordingly, Baines et al. (2020) offer a critical feminist analysis of civil society in conversation with feminists who worked on the issues of social reproduction and/or civil society such as Nancy Fraser (1997/2013, 2016), Iris Young (1990) and Bezanson & Luxton (2006) whom I have cited before. Baines et al. (2020) argue that carework is a component of civil society and this work embodies a set of social relations which sustain social bonds in a way that the pressures of postmodern neoliberalism coexist with the gendered, altruistic and aspirational arena of nonprofit carework. In this view, nonprofit care work is similar to women's unpaid work in the home and community; while the capacity of workers to care is regarded as endless and they are expected to put in long hours of work as their own care and social reproduction duties are not calculated;

The nonprofit social services are a highly gendered arena with female and female-identified people making up the majority of workers, service users, and volunteers... rather than leave needs unmet, many workers in the nonprofit care sector participate in a unique, gendered, and contradictory form of resistance against uncaring funders, governments, and employers, namely unpaid care work. Alongside other care aspects of their work, they remake the social glue that

tenaciously, though increasingly tenuously, sustains civil society and other sites of social reproduction. (Baines et al., 2020, pp. 5-6)

In another study; Baines et al. (2020) explored the dynamics of paid and unpaid nonprofit care work by employing feminist political economy (FPE) and feminist civil society theory, drawing on qualitative data of 120 interviews on nonprofit carework in South Africa and Scotland. This study's participants were overwhelmingly female (80%) and they reported that they care about the needs of, and the impact of their work on service users while they reported their own disempowerment due to depressing wages under conditions such as lack of resources and funds. Participants also reported hopes and ambitions to bring positivity to the community as well as the use of personal skills and relationships to achieve impact at their work; which are evidence of their emotional labor. Even though they find meaning in their work; NGO workers also reported "emotional prices" including co-traumatization, unending workdays, financial constraints, stress and feeling like they have to work even when sick (Baines et al., 2020, pp. 7-10). The participants underlined the gender division of labor that goes hand in hand with the porous nature of social reproduction beyond the confines of paid work; blurring the boundaries between work and private lives of nonprofit workers (Baines et al., 2020, p. 13).

Another study which also resembles my perspective is a book by Hamilton et al. (2021) that adopts the perspective of social reproduction in their analysis of women's caring labor in civil society as they propose "that work on the Women, Peace and Security agenda undertaken by civil society actors can be interpreted as a form of care labour that nourishes and sustains the agenda" for the effective implementation of UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 regarding the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). This study is based on the scholarship of feminist political economy that understands reproduction as an integral part of production and its research is built on conversations with women NGO workers about their labor and focuses on how it *felt* for women as they do this job, their motivations and commitments to their work and gender equality in general which is characterized by the authors as a "*labor of love*" (Hamilton et al., 2021, pp. 1-7). Hamilton et al. (2021) see care labor in civil society; especially women's work as both paid workers and volunteers (or both) within NGOs, a necessary component of social reproduction for which our resources have been depleted while caring relations are

disinvested from due to pressures of changing welfare regimes and they pay attention to the wider provision of social reproduction at the site of civil society which is sustained by women's labor as gendered expectations force them to 'pick up the slack' (pp. 18-19). Participants in this study reported emotional exhaustion due to continuous precarity, despair and demands for resilience; as well as coping strategies to replenish their emotional and physical reserves that were depleted while performing the undervalued and invisible jobs in civil society (Hamilton et al., 2021, p. 56).

In a similar vein, Bandali's work (2017, 2020) also recalls my effort of understanding the situation of NGO workers in relation to their emotional work in NGOs. In her doctoral dissertation based on Hochschild's emotional labor framework, Bandali (2017) exercised a gendered reading of non-profit/NGO work, even though her exploration of feminist economics does not delve into much detail on the theory of social reproduction. She studied the experiences of women working in Malaysia's women NGOs to explore their situation at home and work as caring and emotional work is expected of them as well as how these women find meaning in their work and feminist activism in NGOs (Bandali, 2017). In later work, she focused on the labor conditions of NGO workers and advocated for better conditions for women NGO workers who form the mainstay of workers in care professions, who also lack the self-care that is needed within the context of gendered expectations for time and energy sacrifice on their side in the form of overwork but also satisfaction from the proposition that "their work is good" (Bandali, 2020).

There are also other works I want to mention from diverse theoretical frameworks and country contexts such as India, Italy and Canada that focus on emotional/caring labor and the gendered, invisible nature of work in NGOs. These studies and the ones I characterized above as theoretically more similar works, informed my reflection on women's situation in the NGO workplace, but they were either theoretically dissimilar or too narrow in frame of field. Thus, I mention them in individual contexts to show how care work and emotional labor in NGOs have been studied.

For instance, Das' (2024) small research (n=11) advocated for recognition of women's emotional work within the context of sex-trafficking NGOs in Kolkata, India and adopted Hochschild's (1983) emotional labor framework. She found demonstrations of

normalization of women's emotional labor and care work, vulnerability and emotional distress and positive effects on identity and empowerment (Das, 2024, pp. 673-676).

Kosny & MacEachen's (2010) analysis of three case studies also advocated that the invisibility of women's caring and emotional labor within the NGOs creates risks for workers' health and safety; in the female-dominated (80%) nonprofit services sector in Canada as they uncover the invisible labors within the NGO workplace depleting workers' welfare.

Also, Scrinzi (2019) analyzed the competition between paid care workers with migrant care workers within the context of nonprofit domiciliary services in Italy and critiqued the naturalization, feminization, devaluation and deskilling of care work from a feminist perspective in the context of its provision within the nonprofit environment.

There are some other studies that may contribute to discussion as they focus on the nature of emotional labor in nonprofits even though they don't have a specific social reproduction or even gender perspective but offer a critique of emotional labor in NGOs and insight into labor conditions of NGO workers especially in relation to the provision of caring and emotional labor. For instance, according to Beth Eschenfelder (2012) who provided an analysis of the nature of nonprofit work from an emotional labor perspective; the way emotional labor involves the need for an amount of empathy with the service recipient recalls the type of behaviors we would expect of a nonprofit worker from an ethics of care perspective and they also have an impact on the workers' performance, identity, relationships and satisfaction on the job (pp. 174–176).

In another effort, Helena Costakis (2017) performed a quantitative study with 529 nonprofit employees for her doctoral dissertation on the relationship of emotional labor to job satisfaction, burnout and turnover for nonprofit human services in the state of New York. Even though gender is only taken as a demographic factor in this study and it is based on the emotional labor framework attributed to Hochschild; 80 percent of this study's participants were women. The findings show that emotional labor has a positive correlation with job satisfaction and burnout in employees whereas emotional labor is relevant to job category as well, as it is most significant for front-line and psychosocial

service workers and participants have also shown characteristics of strategies towards emotional labor management; while women have shown different emotional management strategies (Costakis, 2017). Even though participants in this study reported levels of satisfaction and love in relation to how their job makes them feel or that it's necessary even; they also reported exhaustion, need to act, expectation to give a lot of feeling and effort, financial stress and the feelings of not being valued enough as they were required to provide so much for very little compensation (Costakis, 2017, pp. 106-108).

Mastracci and Adams (2019) also explored emotional labor in the context of NGOs by expanding on theory and building on narrative analysis (n=5, interviews with women NGO directors) and conceived NGOs as part of the broader social sector. They posit that NGOs engage with clients face-to-face and voice-to-voice; and suggest that; “the nature of NGO work demands a similarly-wide range of display rules, from tough love to detached professionalism to compassionate and caring emotional displays. Suppression and expression take their toll on staff, however.” (Mastracci & Adams, 2019, pp. 3-4). They also find that there are display rules in the form of consequences or expectations from workers and volunteers to display certain feelings and beliefs such as self-awareness, commitment to self-care, no judgment or looking down on clients (Mastracci and Adams, 2019, pp. 5-6) which are evidence of emotional labor.

All in all, care work and emotional labor in NGOs have been subjects of empirical interest with or without a perspective of gender; although an outright social reproduction based understanding is not common in the literature.

2.3.2.2. Volunteer work and voluntary labor in NGOs

In my attempt to conceptualize civil society from the perspective of social reproduction; I reserved the last part of this chapter for the so-called *voluntary* dimensions of NGO work. I found it meaningful to focus together on the dynamics of the unpaid work of NGO volunteers as well as the unpaid (voluntary) dimensions of paid NGO workers; works that are performed under the guise of volunteerism within the NGO workplace. This section offers neither comprehensive nor structural definitions of volunteer or voluntary work;

but will specifically focus on their *unpaid* and *gendered* nature in relation to social reproduction and refer only to their performance within the NGO setting.

To start with, it is important to note that the *voluntary* dimension of activities within civil society are at the forefront in many conceptualizations of NGO work and the labor of paid workers as well as unpaid volunteers. When we look at prominent works that deal with major definitions within the sphere of civil society delineating activities and work performed in this area; we see that the very existence of volunteers in the field; i.e. volunteer employment is one of primary defining characteristics. Voluntarism is often implied as a characteristic as well as a factor of motivation, not considering the volunteers *per se*, but when the paid workforce in the NGOs is concerned (Anheier et al., 2003; Salamon & Anheier, 1992). For example, in such definitions, categories of work in the nonprofit sector are listed as *paid work* and *unpaid work and volunteering* in relation with their compensation or voluntary nature (Anheier et al., 2003). The definition of International Labor Organization (2011) is also useful for my purposes as it features volunteer work as *unpaid work* in nature and also *separated from work done in the private sphere*: “Unpaid non-compulsory work; that is, time individuals give without pay to activities performed either through an organization or directly for others outside their own household” (p. 13).

On the other hand, another umbrella organization, the UN Volunteers Programme (2021) also published a report focusing on the gendered nature of volunteering via an analysis of macro level data by ILOSTAT on the Global South, including Türkiye. The research behind this report shows a gendered division of tasks in volunteering:

Men and women often perform different roles during volunteering, and their participation differs also regarding the type of organizations and activities they commit their time to. In most contexts, the work that male and female volunteers undertake corresponds to wider attitudes in society about what is deemed appropriate for each, with female volunteers only interacting with other women and girls” (UNV, 2021).

Regarding gender divisions in volunteering; Themudo’s (2009) findings are also consistent with studies in the US and Europe which find that women tend to volunteer more in social services and health organizations (p. 680). Aiming to uncover the role of

gender and women's work within the nonprofit sector in the US, he pointed out that in numerous studies women have been found to be "...more public spirited than men, volunteering more and giving a larger share of their income to nonprofits. Yet in the theoretical literature on the nonprofit sector, the role of women has been largely neglected" (Themudo, 2009, p. 663).

In relevance to gender divisions of labor in volunteering, Lee (2014) also referred to the "preference for helping" as a determinant of intrinsic motivation for sector choice for nonprofit employment and volunteering while referring to the way that literature suggests that men and women are involved differently in helping behaviors as women are expected to take the role of caregiver; resulting in the overrepresentation of women in the nonprofit sector in the US in general (p. 560). On the other hand, Rotolo & Wilson (2006) used the spillover and contrast theories to examine the prevalence of sex segregation in volunteer labor and highlight the existence of both *horizontal* (different tasks for men and women as women perform caregiving, office and service tasks in fields like youth and human services) and *vertical segregation* (men are more likely to hold positions of authority) in the sector. Also, Wymer's (2011) findings show the presence in females a stronger sense of helping people in need, of working closely with infants, young children and teenagers and in roles that allow them to develop relational ties; in organizations characterized by consensus, participation and community. On the other hand, males were shown to prefer volunteer roles that may put them in danger or risk; more prone to conflict and confrontation and prefer positions of authority (Wymer, 2011, p. 844).

Having given some institutional and empirical works background, I will turn the attention away from liberal, and psychological conceptualizations of volunteering and move towards a feminist conception of civil society which would allow us to critically question women's existence in volunteering and their predominance in service and care based occupations as well as unpaid work. A feminist political economy approach led me to explore the concept of voluntary labor as an unpaid dimension of NGO work that is structured by the constraints of gender divisions of labor. For example, from a feminist standpoint, Baldock (1998) emphasized that volunteerism is treated as an extension of women's roles in the private sphere by feminists; but that volunteer work takes place in a

different sphere , “on the cusp between public and private spheres”, the theorization of which is a challenging task for feminism because;

Questions regarding the sexual division of labour within volunteer work or between paid and volunteer work, as well as the consequences of privatisation for volunteer work, cannot be answered easily by existing feminist theories on volunteer work. There is only a small volume of such writing, produced mainly in the United States... Especially remarkable is the total invisibility of volunteer work in the writings of socialist feminists: these authors have written extensively about the exploitation of women in paid work and in domestic labour, yet they have had nothing to say about volunteer work. (Baldock, 1998, pp. 20–21)

In that regard, according to Benería (1999), women’s work has been underestimated historically; while women’s unpaid work traditionally dominated sectors such as the subsistence sector, informal sector, domestic work as well as *volunteer work* which were not measured economically before; but are still underestimated even though some unpaid labor has now been recognized and problems vary for all the four categories of work. A significant shift has taken place in the conceptualization of economic activity that now includes some tasks which contribute to social reproduction and are generally not connected to the market; therefore remain unpaid such as volunteer work (Benería, 1999).

According to Benería et al. (2015) household and volunteer labor are necessary in meeting the basic needs and providing services necessary for our society; yet they are invisible in the same way – which is *economically* (p.179). Sometimes boundaries between volunteering and domestic work may be difficult to draw in the case of volunteering for the neighborhood or the community (Benería et al., 2015, pp. 185–186; Benería, 1999, p. 293) as some labor forms such as volunteer work may remain non-market and relational. The increase in unpaid work tends to put more work on women’s shoulders as gender norms and market reforms require women take up additional unpaid labor in housework and volunteer work as resources for social services and government provisioning shrink (Benería et al., 2015, p. 211). Women are said to be especially active in soup kitchens and voluntary networks of care in their neighborhoods in countries such as the US, Greece or the Andean countries where marketized relations or structural adjustments diminish women’s abilities for social reproduction (Benería, 1999, pp. 293–294; The Care Collective et al., 2020).

Referring to the gender divisions of labor in different fields in terms of volunteering; Baldock (1998) mentioned that in the case of Australia, there's a high incidence of women volunteers especially in areas of welfare, community, education and training; while women are more involved in service or care-providing fields where she concluded "there is, then, evidence of a sexual division of labour within volunteer work, as there is in paid work. And, importantly, there is also a sexual division of labour between paid work and volunteer work" (Baldock, 1998, p. 20). She questioned the feminist silence on the issue of volunteer work as her critique focused on highlighting women's caring labor and informal care; as perhaps volunteerism was associated especially with middle-class philanthropy and rendered invisible in previous feminist accounts (Baldock, 1998).

From a feminist perspective, volunteer work has also been studied as a form of unpaid work in Australia in a way that highlights the unpaid nature of volunteer work in a different vein which resembles *paid work* instead of household labor (Overgaard, 2016, 2019; Overgaard et al., 2018). Overgaard and colleagues' research focused on the deeply gendered and systemically unequal nature of volunteer work which draws women more to the sector as their choices are constrained by societal expectations for their altruistic and caring behaviors, fewer options in paid employment and neoliberalism. Also, according to Taylor (2005), reduction of all unpaid work in the public sphere to voluntary work enacted by the middle classes obscures the class and gender differences and the changing relationship between paid and unpaid work in contemporary societies. The volunteer is a product of industrial societies as well as gender relations; as understanding the social and economic position of volunteers is crucial in understanding their labor processes because just like domestic labor, volunteer labor also needs to be supported financially (Taylor, 2005, p. 135).

Building on these suggestions of conceptualization of volunteer work as a form of unpaid labor, a relevant and highly important debate considers the voluntary dimension of civil society workers' paid labor. This *voluntary* dimension of paid work within civil society organizations points to a type of unpaid work that is characterized as gendered and a subject of exploitation in the NGO workplace. Again, Donna Baines (2004) examined unpaid work in nonprofit social services in Canada in the form of expanded use of

volunteers as well as the volunteer labor of paid employees as expectations from workers, especially women workers, to perform *volunteer* work are heightened in NGOs. She claimed that workers in public and nonprofit social services operate under conditions of coercion and compulsion where they do not refuse increasing unpaid work as their motivations are tied to their altruistic and caring behaviors but their employment is somewhat (financially) threatened under funding cuts in Canada; factors which highly correlate with gender structures that define the value of these labors. “This overlap of naturalized female, and professional skills and identities, coupled with the civil society traditions, make social service workers an easy target for the sector-wide imperative to expand unwaged work” (Baines, 2004, p. 289). According to Baines (2004), this line of work is continuously deskilled under conditions of increased reliance on unwaged work.

Another concept which resembles the donative labor hypotheses I explored before, is proposed by Knutsen and Chan (2015) who aim to explain the ‘hybrid’ activities that straddle both paid work and volunteering in the phenomenon of ‘staff volunteering’ or *SV* “in which self-selected, paid nonprofit employees, motivated by volunteerism, willingly volunteer to perform work that is perceived to be unpaid by the employee. *SV* enriches our understanding of volunteerism and the nature of nonprofit work” (pp. 962 – 963). Referring to the blurred boundaries between paid and unpaid labor in NGOs emerging from the literature of caring work, emotional labor and women’s work as well as the shortcomings of labor donation; Knutsen and Chan (2015) distinguish a *psychological contract* that is the reason why workers voluntarily perform extra, unpaid work. Their participants report that Staff Volunteering enjoys a norm-like status that is inseparable in the NGO setting as volunteering is taken for granted (Knutsen & Chan, 2015, p. 977).

Having explored civil society as a site of reproduction and the gender division of labor that takes place in it; I will move on with the last chapter of my literature review focusing on civil society and social reproduction within the context of Türkiye.

2.4.Civil Society and Social Reproduction in Türkiye

This section of my literature review reflects on a feminist conception of civil society and social reproduction in Türkiye and it follows the previously laid out ambiguity of civil society in the presence of a dominant public-private dichotomy. It deals with the effects of patriarchal structures and sexual divisions of labor on the nature of NGO work and women's work in civil society in the country. It is important first to briefly discuss the unique historical and legal background of Turkish civil society.

In this chapter, first, I discuss the development and transformations of civil society in Türkiye. Here, I lay the foundations of an understanding of civil society as a social reproduction site and focus on its changing functions in a new division of labor towards provision of social needs in the country. Then, I will continue with feminist conceptions of civil society while paying attention to the public/private debate and its historical transformation in the Turkish context, as well as the feminist contribution to the civil sphere and its theorization. I will build on the effects of patriarchy and capitalism in the country as I focus on women's paid and unpaid work as well as occupational segregation that hinder women. Finally, I will bring my focus to women's work in NGOs and try to offer a social reproduction-based understanding of paid and unpaid labors that take place within the civil society sphere and the NGO workplace as a whole in Türkiye.

2.4.1. Development and Transformations of Civil Society in Türkiye

The development of a vibrant civil society in Türkiye corresponded to the aftermath of 1980 (Çaha, 2005). This is both due to internal developments within Türkiye such as the period of political and economic liberalization following the military coup of 1980; but is also in close relation with the economic trends worldwide. Even if I look at the historical development of civil society in Türkiye over the course of this literature review, my conceptualization will be based on its modern understanding, i.e. the period after the vitalization of civil society after the 1980s.

Corresponding to the understanding of civil society as an institution of the public sphere, many authors have focused on its contribution to democratization and its unique characteristics; particularly whether civil society exists in the Turkish case as an emancipatory sphere. For example, according to Heper and Yıldırım (2011), even if we assume that Türkiye has a consolidated democracy, most studies have either focused on the effect of a ‘too strong state’ or the nature of civil society as a challenger to the state policies and the alternative policies that civil society might develop as a contribution to public policy-making (Heper & Yıldırım, 2011, p. 2). While providing an analysis of impediments and prerequisites for Türkiye, Heper and Yıldırım (2011) outline the specific nature of Türkiye’s civil society and point out that despite the effect of EU accession negotiations on the positive development starting from 2002 and in spite of the efforts to better regulate it with the renewed Law of Associations in 2004 (and the Law of Foundations, in 2008); Türkiye does not host full-fledged civil society groups with considerable policy impact vis a vis the state.

In the literature, there were some efforts to define the boundaries and provide definitions of what is included in the civil sphere. Also, CSOs in Türkiye have formed their own written history by the organization of several symposia in the beginning of the 2000s (Akyüz, 2010, p. 65). By performance of field research and evaluation of their impact, NGOs have contributed to the theoretical and practical understanding of the field. For example, İçduygu et al. (2011) defined civil society as “the space created by individuals, groups and organizations outside the family, the state and the market to develop their common goals”; this definition also suggests that the boundaries of what remains inside or outside of it and between the public, private and civil society sectors are subject to change (p.12). Yabancı (2019) also characterized civil society as a social sphere composed of registered associations, foundations, NGOs, women’s organizations, local community groups and social movements (p. 288).

According to Acı (2008) the third sector consists of NGOs such as foundations, associations, civil initiatives, etc. that enable individuals to voluntarily participate in the realization of basic social services (p.10). In order to narrow down my definition, I will take into consideration a third sector definition similar to Yılmaz (2020) where

organizations primarily have non-governmental and non-profit character and reference is made to the combination of third sector, voluntary, private, independent, philanthropic, charitable and tax-exempt characters of these organizations that range from small and local to wider and more professional institutions. I also rely on an extended definition of *issue-based* organizations as a form, since my research focus is also on issue-based organizations that focus on diverse fields and serve some type of care, support, assistance, aid or intervention in engagement with respective target groups:

[allowing] voluntary (non-forced) participation (and leave) [as members], working for a public good (not self or member benefit) without imposing this opinion upon others, being issue specific (such as human rights, youth participation and empowerment, environment and nature conservation, education, women, children's rights) and establishing non-hierarchic relations with other organisations as well as being open for new memberships. (Tekeli, 2000, as cited in Akyüz, 2010, p. 67)

According to official numbers¹; associations in Türkiye are categorized in 21 fields, the first three types of which comprise around 65% of associations; namely professional and solidarity associations, sports and sports related associations and associations for the realization of religious services². It can also be observed that associations devoted to education and perpetuating communal culture/values occupy a significant area in Türkiye's civil society activities (YADA Vakfı, 2023, p. 12). In Türkiye, CSOs are concentrated in three big cities: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir and they are mostly active in the areas of "social aid, education, health, religious services, sports, business and professional organizations, development, democracy, law, and human rights (including women's rights, Kurdish and minority rights, and LGBT rights" (Doyle, 2017, p. 248).

Following the removal of barriers against associational activity in 1995 by constitutional amendments; Türkiye witnessed an NGO boom (Atalay, 2019, p. 5). The number of

¹ Statistics are not available anymore in the General Directorate for Civil Society Relations website: <https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/>

² See YADA Vakfı (2023) for detailed statistical insights not reported by state sources.

associations “*derneks*” increased significantly, especially after 2010^{3,4}. Also, the number of *vakıfs* is steadily increasing^{5,6}. It is also important to mention that Türkiye’s EU accession process was instrumental for the development of CSOs as it served as a catalyst in enhancing the autonomy, agenda-setting power, institutional capacity and legitimacy of NGOs in Türkiye (Rumelili & Boşnak, 2015); transformed their impact, visibility, activities, and engagement which had an impact on the professionalization of civil society and its access to political power and grassroots activism (Ergun & Kazanoğlu, 2024, p. 477). However, civil society’s experience with short-term, and outcome-oriented project-based work via EU funding has been criticized to have transformed it in another way by turning CSOs into service providers as it excluded non-activity based CSOs; which in return contributed to depoliticization of NGOs (Zihnioğlu, 2019, p. 513). The emergence of professionalization and paid positions in civil society has transformed project management into the main component of organizational management and NGOs have specialized in project-based functioning and fundraising; neglecting the labor processes behind it as well (Akyüz, 2010, p. 61). There are important turning points that relate to Türkiye’s civil society regulation in recent years. After the relaxation of the post-coup restrictions in 1980, the 2010 constitutional referendum that gave way to sanctions against associational activity and the increase of extensive intervention following the 2013 Gezi

³ Between 2010 and 2020, the number of associations increased by 50 percent. According to data from institutions that regulate activities for different types of civil society organizations in Türkiye, as of 2020, there were 121,720 associations, 5,775 foundations, 604 trade unions, 3,003 chambers and 53,259 cooperatives. In total, there were 184,361 civil society organizations in Türkiye (İLKE Vakfı, 2024). The number of associations has been reported as 101,351 in July 2023; down from 120,659 in 2022, demonstrating a substantial decrease in the last years attributed to the changes that were made by a law regarding sports clubs effecting sports related associations which are the third largest category in terms of number of active CSOs (YADA Vakfı, 2023).

⁴ Data reported by İLKE Vakfı was accessed on August 8, 2024. Archived version available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20241102202715/https://ilke.org.tr/sayisal-gostergelerle-sivil-toplum-kuruluslarinin-genel-gorunumu>

⁵ According to the latest figures, there are approximately 6,100 vakıfs (foundations) operating in Türkiye (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2024). Retrieved from <https://www.vgm.gov.tr/vakif-islemleri/vakif-istatistikleri/yeni-vakiflar>

⁶ As of 2023, the sectoral distribution of vakıfs comprising the majority of foundations shows that 25% operate in education, 19% in social assistance, 10.9% in health, and 10.6% in social services. Retrieved from https://cdn.vgm.gov.tr/genelicerik/genelicerik_945_290519/11--sektorel-bazda-yil-icinde-gerceklestirilen-faa.pdf

protests are important developments; but the real turning point was the failed coup in 2016 after which some CSOs have experienced activity restrictions as some were shut down (Yabancı, 2019, p. 291). As a result, even the organizations that assist the state with social services may be perceived as politically motivated and they may be constrained to 'less-politicized' issues, such as the environment, disabled, children or the animals. In the meanwhile, pro-government NGOs enjoy a better opportunity for association and work with the government for the advancement of AKP's policy, especially in more 'politicized' areas such as women's rights (Yabancı, 2019, pp. 292 - 295). According to Yabancı (2019), civil society's expansion was experienced in two-ways. First, the number of CSOs has steadily grown under AKP's rule, a part of which is attributed to EU candidacy process but it has continued even after that process somewhat came to a halt. Second, NGOs' reach, structure and functions have diversified (Yabancı, 2019, p. 285). This conflicting expansion can be explained by the regime's desires both to contain and make use of civil society by fending off dissidence and increasing the reach of pro-governmental voices for the promotion of their agenda, especially in important social policy areas like youth, women, education and family (Yabancı, 2019, p. 287).

Even though there has been an increase in the development of new social spaces for identity in issue-based NGOs with a focus on critical issues such as LGBTQ+, disability, gender or environment in parallel with the economic deregulation under the AKP, the regime intensified its efforts to structure the social space in its favor, which affected women's NGOs, in replication of the essentialized debates between secularist and Islamic worldviews in Türkiye (Kazanoğlu & Ketola, 2022, p. 606). Under the auspice of AKP's conservative politics and the neoliberal attack on the public sphere, "matters once deemed public have been transferred to the domestic and the intimate spheres" and individual rights and liberties have been left to free market mechanism which led to the "negation of the social sphere" as economic, political and social spheres were separated and social justice was replaced with concern for charity deeds; especially in conformity with ongoing Islamization (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017, pp. 11–12).

During the ensuing 1990s, the function of civil society organizations as partners of local governments in *filling up the gaps* in social provision left by a retreating state increased

in a ‘governance approach’ that recruits civil society organizations as a ‘third sector’ for the provision of development and social service needs (Acı, 2008, p. 1-2). Even if the primary role of public provision falls on state institutions, civil initiatives still assume important roles in social aid as they provide assistance to groups like the elderly, disabled and women who do not access support; even though NGOs are not helped by the state like their counterparts in similar welfare regimes (Şentürk, 2014, pp. 286–290).

The ongoing migration influx and the recent earthquake in February 2023, urged many NGOs to implement projects focusing on social assistance and psychosocial support especially in the southern and eastern regions of Türkiye. The earthquake recovery is still undergoing with the collaboration of state, civil society and private actors. A recent report remarked the impressive work of Turkish and International CSOs during the Syrian crisis where especially CSOs such as İHH (with government ties) and Support to Life were praised (Keyman et al., 2017, p. 28). The government in Türkiye is also working with international NGOs (INGOs) such as UNHCR, UNICEF, and Save the Children to meet the needs of the refugees; in addition to the Ministries, specialized state institutions and the Turkish Red Crescent (Özel, 2022, p. 844).

According to Türkiye Third Sector Foundation– TÜSEV’s Reports in 2006, foundations in particular have played an important role in providing benefit to the society as well as lessening the burden on the state as private institutions that endow larger facilities such as universities, hospitals, and museums, are generally ‘approved’ by the government (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a, pp. 110–111). A limited number of foundations hold a large part of finances and build modern facilities in disadvantaged regions that are then donated to the state (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006b, p. 26). Even if NGOs do not have significant impact on public social policy; they are increasingly involved in the provision of social services whereas public perception that NGOs are successful in performing these services remain quite high (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a, p. 111). NGOs in Türkiye have been characterized more service-oriented rather than rights or advocacy oriented (İçduygu et al., 2011, p. 14).

Correspondingly, the proliferation of civil society organizations in Türkiye has been attributed to the filling of the “social vacuum left by the absence of a full fledged, mature

welfare state” as a meteoric rise has been observed in the number of charity and philanthropy organizations, NGOs and community movements as the AKP government subcontracted social assistance to private charities (Eder, 2010, p. 179). These studies emphasize that since its rise to power, while insistentlly promoting the family’s role in care to relieve the social burdens of the state; the AKP has “systematically promoted non-state actors, the private sector and voluntary initiatives, especially charity mobilized through nongovernmental organizations and municipalities, as leading actors for poverty alleviation and the provision of social services” (Yazıcı, 2012, p. 110).

YADA Vakfı’s (2023) research shows that nearly one-quarter (23%) of CSOs reported that they provide services that are supposed to be provided by the public sector (p. 83). Indeed in official statistics, the number of Non-Profit Foundations with Non-Profit Facilities and Establishments seems to have increased between 2015-2018; especially in the field of services, despite fluctuations (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2023b). Recently, Yılmaz (2020) analyzed some statistics of Türkiye’s *vakıfs*, the numbers of which have increased as civil society actors have taken on more responsibilities in social policy as they serve groups of youth, children, poor, women, old, disabled and ill people as well as look after communities and the environment with services in dormitories, guest houses, childcare facilities, elderly care, hospitals and shelters they operate.

With the exception of some gray literature (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a; YADA Vakfı, 2009, 2015) and some organizations’ analyses (İLKE Vakfı, 2024); data and research on the composition of NGO labor and its position as a career branch in Türkiye seem scarce. Also, studies on the provision of different social services by civil society organizations are centered around target groups and functions of NGOs in their fields; issues in focus of researches are more restricted like NGOs’ role in areas like protective childcare (Akbaş & Dal, 2020) or social aid in case of poverty (Özaydın, 2015). There are also some case studies more similar to my research area which focus on the views and experiences of NGO workers regarding the work and impact of NGOs in their respective fields, for example, on women’s NGOs such as Morçatı and Şefkat-Der who provide shelters for women (Sallan Gül, 2017). Therefore, my analysis of paid, unpaid, caring and emotional labor processes within NGOs from a social reproduction perspective will remain based

on the limited research available on Türkiye's civil society organizations. I summarize below my exploration of some studies on the differentiated functions of NGOs in several social areas where they take part in the provision of necessary services for the overall social reproduction (or societal reproduction) of Turkish society:

For example, Altun (2021) studied the activities of NGOs in social policies and services towards the elderly, stating that the provision of social services in Türkiye are centered around "care" and "assistance" comprising of home-based and institution-based care within a combination of state actors such as ministries, as well as local governments and civil society organizations. Altun (2021) emphasized that even if the state is the primary actor due to the social state character in Türkiye, contributions of the local governments and civil society organizations should not be ignored; as NGOs provide necessary and complementary activities (p. 31). Based on desk analyses on CSOs in the field, this study aims to emphasize their role of providing facilities, as well as informative and advocacy activities in improving policies and services in the field (Altun, 2021, pp. 41–42).

Similarly, in a study of NGOs that are active in the field of refugee crisis; Atar et al (2023) posed a question to directors and team members at Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) as well as government bodies and experts who play a part in providing humanitarian support: "What role do the NGOs, INGOs and CSOs play in refugee crisis management and service delivery?" (pp. 232-233). Their results show that INGOs are very important in filling the gaps in handling the refugee crisis in several areas such as providing assistance in health, education, shelter, food and nutrition, finding work and creating livelihoods for the refugees; whereas these organizations start to show both characteristics of *rights-* and *service-based* NGOs (Atar et al., 2023, p. 234).

Also, Yeter (2018) studied the activities of NGOs towards homeless people in a qualitative research covering 5 organizations. This research found that, in addition to the services NGOs offer to meet the basic needs of the homeless such as health, shelter and food; they also provide psycho-social support, job and vocational training and assist them in access to state social services such as health and poverty relief; in addition to in-kind assistance. An important emphasis of this study based on a participant observation method

is that the associations surveyed in this field have “evolved from social assistance to a social service approach” to ensure the sustainability of their work; even though their capacity and coverage of homeless population remains very low. It was also found that NGO workers and volunteers have adapted a caring and empowering approach for the community they serve. According to participants in this research, NGOs provide a haven for homeless people as they provide socialization and community spaces (Yeter, 2018).

Having listed these studies related to my perspective and research area, I want to continue with a discussion of feminist conceptions of civil society in Türkiye.

2.4.2. Feminist Conception of Civil Society in Türkiye

It is important to start with the fact that women’s involvement in the public sphere; including not only civil society, but also politics and labor market have interested scholars for the study of women’s situation in Türkiye. In fact a lively public sphere debate centering women has been present since the foundation of the republic as women’s citizenship was viewed as the “backbone of Turkish modernism” (Göle, 1997). Türkiye’s considerably early adoption of women’s rights and the later successful feminist organization around long-enduring debates of women’s reproductive, labor and civil rights (Çaha, 2016) as well as the headscarf issue and the entry of conservative women to the area of civil society (Akman, 2016) led to continued interest from different strands in women’s involvement with civil society.

In Türkiye, the so-called *separation* of the public and private sphere were only possible after 1980 when rights-focused and diverse societal groups have transformed the public sphere into a “multicolored realm” in the post-coup period (Çaha, 2005, p. 20). Indeed, the flourishing of the public sphere and the feminist efforts of “politicizing the personal” coincided in Türkiye in the 1980s; giving way for feminists to voice their demands as an organized movement (Acar-Savran, 2002, p. 298). Feminists of the 1980s considered family as the sphere of reproduction and perpetuation of patriarchy and believed that the public sphere constituted the main floor for the emancipation of women. They agreed on the necessity for the provision of sexual and reproductive freedom and wanted to

influence public authorities to offer alternative institutions as spaces for women such as shelters and libraries to increase women's presence in the public sphere (Çaha, 2016, pp. 229–236).

According to Arat (2001) women advocated for a concept of citizenship that took gender into account, brought attention to and politicized their social problems as women; gendering citizenship as a category. Feminists argued that egalitarian laws are not enough: a fair concept of citizenship requires pushing for civil and social rights that recognize women's special needs (Arat, 2001, p. 166). Several studies focused on such a use of civil society by women to increase their power in the public sphere, such as the type of organizational structures sustained by women's NGOs (Karaman & Dalkıran, 2021) as well as their use of NGOs for services to women, and rights promotion (Sallan Gül, 2017).

A feminist theorist, Göle (1997) explored the gendered nature of the public sphere in Türkiye which differs from the Western European traditional liberal bourgeois understanding as a space that excludes women, since within the Turkish modernist project, women's visibility and rights have been endorsed; however closely monitored by the state elite and the regime from the beginning. Göle analyzed that the gendered and authoritarian intervention of Türkiye's secular elite marked a radical shift from the gender roles framed by the Islamic religion that became visible in the veiling movement in the 1990s; a debate that ironically put women again in the center of the public sphere debate “while recalling women's modesty and role as guardians of the communitarian morality—reinforcing the idea of a sphere of the forbidden” (Göle, 1997, pp. 63–73).

Thus, both political Islam and Kemalism have made women's existence in the public space “a symbol for their revolution”; while Kemalism has simultaneously enforced the *citizen mother* stereotype and consolidated women's responsibilities in the domestic or private as the ruling elite aimed at the so-called emancipation of women sphere (Acar-Savran, 2002, p. 256). In the early years, women were invited to participate in the public sphere as equal, responsible citizens and modern women; but their value stemmed from their role of raising the next generation and equality in the private sphere was not achieved either. This understanding of women's inclusion via ‘state feminism’ was abandoned in the multi-party period (Sallan Gül, 2017, p. 203).

According to Çaha (2016), the earlier feminist movement in Türkiye which successfully guaranteed women equal citizenship didn't have to endure a long struggle like in the West as Turkish women attained their political rights as part of modernization of the early republic. As a consequence; the Turkish Women's Union was one of the only three non-governmental organizations that existed in Türkiye, together with the Freemasons' Lodge and Türk Ocakları in the early 1930s before the government outlawed their activities a few years later (Çaha, 2005, p. 18).

In her effort to uncover the historically patriarchal nature of relations between family, civil society and state; Saraçgil (2013) dealt with the failures both the Ottoman and Turkish modernizing elites. She claimed that civil society was not relevant in Ottoman society as well as the early republic as certain rights were recognized but the existence of gender conflict and paternalism continued where constituted as a 'male space' home life was based on traditional division of roles which continued throughout Anatolia in later years. The Kemalist regime failed to place family, civil society and state in a virtuous relationship which could have permitted the growth of a flourishing public sphere but instead it exhibited patriarchal characteristics (Saraçgil, 2013, pp. 214–215).

According to Arat (2001), it is true that Turkish women acquired citizenship rights and formal equality earlier than counterparts in Europe, however their experience of citizenship varied over differences of class, region or piety. Arat's (2001) analysis dealt with the gendered nature of Turkish women's *social contract* and the different contracts that women in different social positions are forced to enter as they partake in society. For example, until 1990 women required their husband's permission to work, and men were cited as the family head until 2001; before changes were made to the Turkish Civil Code. Therefore, feminists after 1980s have insisted that "personal is political" in the Turkish context as well, as they diverted criticisms towards the civil code and other legal constructs and asserted that "a fair concept of citizenship requires pushing for civil and social rights that recognize women's special needs" (Arat, 2001, pp. 160–165).

In Türkiye, women from the leftist organizations have been the first to vocalize women's issues from an independent feminist perspective (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017, p. 4). Following the 1980 coup d'état and the banning of leftist and socialist organizations;

the second wave feminism in Türkiye emerged and occupied a significant position within civil society (Kocabıçak, 2024, p. 183). Leftist women have voiced that with the advancement of urbanization and industrialization, patriarchal culture disregarded ‘*womenly issues*’ and contributed not only to women’s exclusion from paid labor; but also to lesser power and say in business and organization matters within the labor power as well as exclusion from public matters and the creation of gender blind social policy structures which are demonstrated in civil society space in the form of overwhelming male control of worker’s unions, or syndicates (Atasü-Topcuoğlu, 2016, p. 42).

Especially starting from the 1970s but accelerating in the 1980s and 90s, political and social developments allowed the flourishing of feminist movement in the civil sphere as well as divisions within the movement. In this context; primary divergences emerged between Secular/Islamist, Kurdish/Nationalist feminisms; in addition to a more classical conflict between liberal and socialist feminist stances (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017, p. 4). Even against divergences, women were successful at organizing within civil society around the identity of womanhood and expanding the sphere via advocacy for women’s rights and policies (Sallan Gül, 2017, p. 223).

As a leftist feminist, Acar-Savran (2002) reflected on the public-private dichotomy and stated that a future feminist explanation should absorb different definitions of the public sphere and civil society than their understanding as spaces contradicting the private which have been available to Feminists since the 1970s. This is true for the Turkish case, especially since main concepts of public sphere and civil society are sometimes used synonymously and their problematization revolve around whether they exist strongly or weakly; as well as the common understanding of civil society with the help of concepts such as being an *active citizen* or *public subjects* (Acar-Savran, 2002, pp. 258–259). Acar-Savran (2002) also contributed to a critique of public/private dichotomy in Türkiye and aimed to uncover the consequences of this separation. In agreement with Pateman’s (1998) analysis that women’s asymmetrical participation in the public space is a consequence of capitalist patriarchy; she concluded that it is a common structure constraining women where earlier institutionalization of women’s civil and political rights and equal citizenship were realized, such as Türkiye (Acar-Savran, 2002, p. 268).

Kandiyoti (2001) also referred to the patriarchal structure of civil society while dealing with women's situation as caught between the state and civil society; contesting the liberating understanding of associational life since entry is restricted to women (pp. 56-57). More recently, she critiqued the politics of gender under conditions of patriarchy and neo-liberal governance whereas the sphere of civil society has been recreated under a new understanding of citizenship that redefines women as *welfare recipients*. While women's NGOs representing the women's movements have been suppressed, the burden of resistance and the task of seeking justice for women have been left on the shoulders of women within civil society; at the same time, the sphere has been appropriated by government-organized NGOs – *GONGOs* (Kandiyoti, 2016).

Concerning a feminist conception of civil society, Kocabiçak (2024) argues that key institutions of Türkiye's civil society are predominantly exclusionary based on gender. Kocabiçak (2024) adopts an inclusive definition of civil society which covers issue-based and rights-based non-governmental organizations as well as civil and political participation to movements. From a political economy perspective, she underlines that poorer women are more likely to be excluded from civil society and participation in social movements, due to their gender (p. 133). In her analysis of political economy of patriarchy, Kocabiçak (2024) focused on the exclusionary nature of the public sphere and civil society in Türkiye as gender, economic situation (or *class*) and race intersect;

The case of Turkey implies that the dynamics of gendered oppression and inequality cannot be subordinated to the capitalist system. On the contrary, patriarchal property and labour relations are important in shaping trajectories of capitalist transformation, including capital accumulation strategies and, as such, have implications for state formation and civil society. (Kocabiçak, 2024, p. 165)

From another perspective, a look at limited available statistics in Türkiye shows that civil society participation remains gendered especially when considering civic participation and membership as a part of social organization in the traditional sense of civil society as an institution of the public sphere. According to official data from 2020; the ratio of association membership to population is 1.65% for women; while it is 7.36% for men

(Kap, 2020)⁷; as for *vakıf* membership a gender-based membership distribution data is not available. Also, in terms of women's representation in association management; the ratio of women elected for management remains low, at nearly 19% according to official data from 2018; representing the unequal distribution of men and women in terms of authority and power in civil society (Keskin & Açikkol, 2020).

In addition, the role of NGOs in promoting gender equality in civil society remains limited. In TÜSEV's 2006 survey, 72% of participants mentioned that civil society is not an equal place as it still exhibits similar characteristics with the areas of politics and labor market where women either remain excluded or discriminated against as they are assigned 'assistance' roles while men are assigned to leadership roles; however, civil society is also understood as a more equal place than the public and private sectors (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a). The results of this study also emphasize the importance of women's organizations as they represent the most active part of civil society and contribute immensely to women's empowerment (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a).

Indeed, the development of feminist civil society has had an important impact on the provision of women's needs. Sallan Gül (2017) points to how the feminist movement's expansion and activism against violence within civil society has moved women's issues from the confines of the private sphere into the public and political sphere as feminist activity has concentrated on the provision of facilities for women such as educational programs, libraries, shelters, consultations and awareness-raising activities (p. 204). Even though women's organizations are not part of the official institutional categorizations regarding *derneks* and *vakıfs* by state authorities; the existence of women's NGOs had a more transforming effect on Türkiye's public sphere beyond civil society. After the 1980s feminist movement remobilized women on the basis of a social movement as an element of civil society where women formed organizations to advocate for women's rights as they started to build a feminist version of civil society where they provided safe spaces for women's association and solidarity (Çaha, 2016, p. 14). Prof. Dr. Ömer Çaha

⁷ See Derya Kap's (2020) interview with Prof. Dr. Ömer Çaha and NGO representatives, citing official statistics; translated as "*Women as the most active subjects of civil society*".

mentioned that in the last 40 years, the most effective civil society movement in Türkiye has come from the women's movement as women with different worldviews and political stances have voiced the need to problematize women's issues from multiple dimensions and created the basis for sensitivity towards their problems (Kap, 2020).

Even if they are not a part of official categorizations, women's associations are an important category within civil society. We can see this in the details provided by NGOs according to which there were 1.012 associations in Türkiye whose working field was women's rights and 2.369 associations have mentioned that women are within their target groups resulting into the placement of women as the third most popular field where NGOs serve (Bircan Altınsoy, 2020). This is the same in the case of *vakıfs* where women are the third most numerous field after children/youth and the poor; followed by the elderly, disabled and those with illness (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2023a).

The realization by some researchers that women's organizations also encompass activities for other groups which women are in close relationship with; such as children and disabled, in addition to tending to women's problems is also interesting (Yeğen et al., 2012, p. 117). For example, Ergun and Kazanoğlu (2024) have recently studied in their qualitative research among representatives of 30 women's NGOs that are engaged in awareness-raising or welfare delivery in 5 major cities. Establishing partnerships with local governments due to financial constraints, NGOs provide services focusing mainly on violence, childcare and employment creation whereas some operate kindergartens, some promote the employment of women as they create spaces for the empowerment of the disadvantaged (Ergun & Kazanoğlu, 2024, p. 483).

In Türkiye, the institutionalization of the feminist movement started in the 1990s; marking a period of 'marketization-cum-civil societalization' or 'project feminism' that connotes the workings of neo-liberal free market values for the pursuit of women's rights and hosts "the neoliberal policies toward the dissolution of the public into the private—into the market, the family, and the community" (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017, pp. 7–8). This period in Türkiye was characterized by "Islamist women's mobilization around the 'headscarf issue' in the 1990s along with the overall emergence of identity politics and a professionalizing civil society landscape (or NGOization)" (Dursun, 2022, p. 14). Even

though the ruling AKP made significant progress regarding the headscarf issue in the public sphere; it is the same party that brought women's traditional roles such as mother, wife and housewife and implicated unfriendly abortion, reproduction and flexible employment to the forefront of policy-making that aim to exclude women from the public space (Ersöz, 2015, p. 81). Also, via neoliberal mainstreaming, women's organizations "were either turned into a harmonious part of acceptable civil society or in case of failure to do so, they were marginalized" (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017, p. 10).

Dursun (2019) stated that, this type of 'NGOization' is not exclusive to the types of services (or institutions) run by the women's movement and women's organizations; but the interest in the provision of these services by civil society organizations has been increasing (p. 242). For example, according to Kazanoğlu and Ketola (2022); provision of childcare which always relied on a mix of governmental, nongovernmental and market providers is another example of this trend, since childcare is not recognized as a statutory right in Türkiye where faith-based organizations have recently started to join rights-based organizations who have been providing these services for some time (p. 608).

According to Acar-Savran (2002), the more recently developed understanding of the public sphere in the world and in Türkiye as *a network of civil society organizations* is regarded as weak or non-existent against a very strong state that does not allow civil society to develop (p. 284). Referring to Fraser's understanding of the structural feature of modern-capitalist patriarchy; she emphasized that this positioning of civil society and the public sphere excludes the economy and the private sphere from the discursive space of public opinion and contributes to their eventual depoliticization, de-publicization and deprivation from publicity and debate-ability (Acar-Savran, 2002, p. 285). This dichotomy covers up patriarchy and disregards the sexual division of labor between the spheres by establishing participation in public sphere as women's salvation (Acar-Savran, 2002, pp. 257–261).

Looking at the intersections between gender and civil society in Türkiye; recent research also focused on the effect of various types of women's organizations have had on the civil society landscape. The role of conservative women's organizations and Türkiye's unique neoliberal patriarchy represent an especially common interest for feminist analyses; while

these studies mostly focus on the interactions between welfare and gender regimes; specifically under current conditions of neo-liberal and conservative patriarchy and authoritarianism that reduce women to their reproductive abilities via exploitation of their labor and naturalization of gender roles in the public and private spheres, as well as civil society (Acar & Altunok, 2013; Adak, 2021; Atalay, 2019; Buğra, 2014; Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017; Dursun, 2019; Kandiyoti, 2016).

For example, from a feminist standpoint, Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu (2017) tackle with the ways public and private have been redefined by the ruling maleist elite of the AKP in power. As such, the role of conservative women's NGOs in the reproduction of family policy in a gendered and conservative moral discourse contributes to the construction of highly gendered relations within civil society; "often augmenting the division between a patriarchal state and a civil society restricted to 'feminine preoccupations'" (Kazanoğlu & Ketola, 2022, p. 615).

Kandiyoti (2001) addressed the growth of women's NGO sector in the Middle East which was stimulated by major international donors who exerted pressures over national governments meanwhile the virtues of Muslim domesticity were also being promoted by Islamist organizations. However, recently the coalitions of NGOs that achieved the previous reforms for women's empowerment are marginalized and funding flows are now directed to 'government approved' civil society (Kandiyoti, 2016, p. 107). According to Buğra (2020), conservative NGOs that promote culturally rooted differences between men and women help the government sustain the traditional division of gender roles; such as *Women and Democracy Association* (KADEM) in which the President's daughter herself is active (Buğra, 2020, p. 458). According to Akkan (2018), AKP's welfare mix based on a culturally conservative and economically liberal politics led to a system where faith-based charity organizations and the private sector have become partners in poverty relief; meanwhile conservative, government-organized NGOs 'GONGOs' have become advocates of AKP's gender regime and social policy agenda by highlighting family values and marginalizing NGOs or groups with a gender equality agenda (Akkan, 2018, p. 75).

Within this conjuncture, Dursun (2019) empirically studied the extension of the private sphere into civil society via conservative women's associations. While the Islamic

humanitarian and charity landscape and the related academic literature are focused on male-dominated, mixed-gender NGOs; conservative women's charity organizations "hold important insights into how the gendered politics of charity help constitute neoliberal-conservative patriarchy in Turkey" (Dursun, 2019, p. 953). This process of private sphere's extension is juxtaposed with the way feminists aimed to politicize previously 'private' issues (Dursun, 2019, p. 956).

In sum, feminist movement had a big impact on the development of civil society in Türkiye (Arat, 2001; Çaha, 2005; Göle, 1997). Also, the impact of macro structures such as the intertwined effects of welfare and gender regimes which carry authoritarian, conservative, neoliberal and patriarchal characteristics were scrutinized by feminists (Acar & Altunok, 2013; Acar-Savran, 2002; Buğra, 2020; Kandiyoti, 2016; Kocabıçak, 2024). Lastly, the marketization of civil society and reliance on project culture which augment gendered inequalities were the main loci of feminist critique (Coşar & Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2017; Dursun, 2019; Kazanoğlu & Ketola, 2022).

2.4.3. Women's Work and Sexual Division of Labor in Türkiye

The traditional gender division of labor is reflected in the Turkish legal and social security frameworks which assume the reconciliation of work and family lives as a problem that pertains to women only; whereby the labor laws offer short amounts of time for paid maternity leave rights (and even a shorter one for paternity leave) and daycare is only compulsory for workplaces with more than 150 *women* employees. As the state and the employer are freed from the responsibilities of childcare and education; women's primary roles as mothers and wives have increasingly been emphasized under the AKP's discourse (İlkkaracan, 2012b, pp. 14–17). Although a mild increase in women's employment rates has been observed, the increase in rates of unemployment and precarious employment have been striking as women are expected to join the labor market in flexible ways that do not challenge the gender-based division of labor in accordance with neo-liberal and conservative policies since the AKP came to power in 2002 (Toksöz, 2016, p. 64).

The lack of gender-related data for Türkiye makes it difficult to study women's labor for which time-use studies have become useful (Ecevit, 2013, p. 4) but these have discontinued since the year 2014-15. According to the latest survey, women spent 4.5 times more time than men on household duties and care for family members (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2015)⁸. Gender gap in unpaid care and housework in Türkiye has been reported by OECD for latest available year still as 4.5 times more for women compared to men (OECD, 2021).⁹

The employment statistics provided by TÜİK – Turkish Statistical Institute also fall short of exhibiting women's situation in the labor market because the unemployment statistics do not include those who have not been seeking employment in the last 6 months; and this may be exclusionary to women who may not be seeking work, working more flexibly and/or have domestic and childcare responsibilities. According to TÜİK, the number of women not included in the active labor force between the ages 15-64 are 2.6 times more compared to men (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2023b)¹⁰. OECD (2021) reported for the same age group that labor force participation in Türkiye stands at 40% while it is 78.2% for men. Other striking statistics are that the employment rate of women between the ages 25-49 remains at 28% while it is 90.5% for men of the same age group and in 2023; 74.9% of divorces resulted in women receiving custody of children¹¹ exhibiting the strongly gendered division of labor in Türkiye regarding unpaid and care labor which also hinder women's access to paid employment (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2024).

On the other hand, a latest survey on reasons for not participating in the labor force uncovered that one third of this population are those who are busy with household labor whereas a breakdown of this category is not provided for men (it's listed as zero); but only for women. In 2023, it was reported that 83% of those who are not in the labor force due to family or personal reasons are women (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2023b). Women

⁸ Turkish Statistical Institute's Time Use Survey, 2014-2015 was accessed from the bulletin available at the Institute's website.

⁹ OECD's Gender Dashboard was accessed from the organizations's website.

¹⁰ Turkish Statistical Institute's *MEDAS* Database was accessed.

¹¹ Accessed from Turkish Statistical Institute's bulletin titled "*Women in Statistics*".

also face more burden when they work. According to TÜİK's 2015 Time-Use Survey results; women who worked spent 211 minutes while men in the same situation spent 46 minutes; amounting to 4.5 times more time for women in the household related tasks.

Even considering the recent shortage of gender-related data on time use, there is a strong interest in women's labor in Türkiye and an abundant literature with diverse foci has developed such as concerning paid labor and social reproduction experiences of women in female dominated sectors such as textile and garment production (Arslan, 2023; Ecevit, 1990), as well as women's labor processes in relation to gender roles and family labor (Dedeoğlu, 2009), experiences of caring labor (Akkan & Serim, 2018; Çoban, 2023; Ünlütürk, 2023); spanning an interest in class relations concerning women's work, specifically focusing on the cases of domestic workers (Erdoğan & Toksöz, 2013) and migrant women's role at home-based services (Bora, 2005; Dedeoğlu & Yaman Öztürk, 2010, p. 10) to name a few.

Indeed, women's labor force participation has always been problematic in Türkiye and the unequal distribution of unpaid work and the limited access available for children and elderly-care services as well as the sexually segregated cultural division of work has been suggested as some of the leading reasons (Öneş et al., 2013, p. 58). The increasing role of women especially in informal and flexible employment as well as the increasing care and unpaid labor expectations from women under privatizing and shrinking social security and service conditions, led to the experience of double burden and feminists have criticized the naturalization of gender division of labor by assigning all social reproduction labor to women (Yaman Öztürk, 2010).

The effect of changes to social reproduction structures in Türkiye is not limited to women's labor force participation. According to Kocabiçak (2024), while the majority of women (in 2021, around 70% of working age women in Türkiye) are excluded from labor in non-agriculture sectors; women with higher education are increasingly subjected to the double burdens of paid and unpaid labor which indicates, that domestic patriarchy is still predominant in Türkiye even though women's access to paid employment, advanced education and political representation have increased. Market-led strategies for access to childcare exclude women from participation to paid employment while the state and the

Ministry impose family and home-based care for elderly and disabled people that confine women to their place in household production (Kocabıçak, 2024, pp. 118–120).

According to Dedeoğlu and Yaman Öztürk (2010), the way women's labor is used exhibits characteristics of patriarchal control and supervision by men over women in the public space which is shaped and articulated with capitalist production relations and they point to statistics that show women's labor is mobilized as unpaid family workers within the agriculture, as well as small-scale businesses in service and industry sectors (p. 10). They deduce that evidence in Türkiye is in line with the intertwined relationship of capitalism and patriarchy regarding woman's social situation as the boundaries of their labor market integration are defined by the extension of their domestic roles of motherhood or wifehood (Dedeoğlu & Yaman Öztürk, 2010, pp. 15–16).

Arslan (2022) also asserts that the articulation of the neoliberal doctrine with patriarchal conservative politics has significantly weakened socio-economic conditions for women, especially for working-class women, regarding production and reproduction relations (p. 1899). During the 2000s, flexibilization and informalization have gained ground on women's employment policies (Dedeoğlu & Yaman Öztürk, 2010, p. 9). Already having lower labor market participation and higher participation in precarious work, women have been subordinated in production by concentration into lower-paying and labor-intensive sectors with more insecure jobs via labor flexibilization policies which manifest unpaid labor expectations from women due to patriarchal stereotypes and reproductive obligations attributed to them (Arslan, 2022, p. 1902). Feminists underlined that there is a need for improvement of Türkiye's social reproduction regime in a way that recognizes the value of women's paid and unpaid work and gender-based inequalities in the divisions of labor for women's social and economic empowerment:

In terms of social policy, balancing work and family life is necessary but not sufficient. We also need transformative care, a transformative social reproduction system, and a transformative citizenship and welfare regime. In short, we need a transformative reorganization and facilitation of social reproduction based on human rights. (Atasü-Topcuoğlu, 2022, p. 83)

While stating that the amount of research on this issue is limited since the value of unpaid labor has been ignored by economists, Memiş and Özay (2011) actually expand the

definition of unpaid labor beyond household and home care by including labor in informal sectors, subsistence labor and voluntary labor; offering an alternative categorization for 'unpaid labor'. Analyzing the results of TÜİK's first Time Use Survey in 2006 which only report household labor and care; they believe it is possible that the other types of unpaid labor exhibit the same characteristics (Memiş & Özay, 2011, p. 278). Indeed, the results of the next survey in 2015 also report that women in both the working and non-working group spend more time than men for voluntary works and meetings. However insignificant the difference (20% and 8% respectively), it should be taken into consideration together with women's overall participation to civil society. To conclude, feminist economics in a developing country such as Türkiye should be interested in the production of survival needs independent of where it takes place, whether in the home or outside of the home, performed within the processes of production or reproduction and as paid or unpaid (Memiş & Özay, 2011, p. 257); categories of labor which I explore below.

2.4.4.1 Paid work and occupational segregation

Buğra (2014) explains that the labor force in Türkiye has been transformed along with the techniques of production and the demand for temporary, part-time and often informal labor of women increased. Female-attributed characteristics such as docility and subordination as well as the non-consideration of women as primary bread-winners as legitimization for lower-pay for women made their employment desirable by the employers to replace the core full-time, stable male workforce (Buğra, 2014, p. 157). Under the AKP administration's efforts for conservation of the gender based division of labor via work-life reconciliation policies instead of decent work, women's employment in informal jobs and the demand for their cheap labor increased. (Toksöz, 2016, p. 75).

Women are also included in the labor market differently; experiencing occupational segregation in terms of sectoral distribution which determines the types of labor processes they partake in as well as their valuation. For example, in İlkaracan's (2012) analysis, women's sectoral contributions are concentrated in the community, social and personal services sectors; constituting 37% of women's jobs (and only 10% of men's jobs) even

though they constitute only one third of overall employment generation. The evolution of women's employment in Türkiye through the course of nearly sixty years of economic modernization highlights the interactions between patriarchy and capitalist growth and their gendered outcomes (İlkkaracan, 2012b, p. 30). These sectors which offer the so-called "pink-collar jobs" (Fraser, 1996) were followed by the trade, restaurant and hotel sectors by 29 % and manufacturing by 19% which together host more than 80% of the bulk of female labor (İlkkaracan, 2012b, p. 10).

Looking at more recent data, TÜİK only reported details for 9 vocation groups according to which 23% of working women are in service and sales, 19 % in professional vocations and 19% are employed as unqualified laborers. While there seems to be equality between male and female workers in professional vocations; there is inequality in management as the ratio of managers in the male and female workforce are 7.14% and 3.38% respectively and only 19.5% of all managers are women (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2023b). It is important to note that data have not been provided to OECD for the Gender Wage Gap statistics since 2018 by Türkiye which seemed to be decreasing between 2010 and 2018 in favor of women. However, according to World Economic Forum, Türkiye ranked 131st of 149 countries in terms of economic participation and opportunity in the Global Gender Gap Report 2018, with a worsening gender pay gap (Arslan, 2022, p. 1902).

TÜİK reports on gender earnings gap and gender wage gap in Türkiye. According to these statistics; median gap in earnings is 6.2% and in wages 5.7% and the gap has been kept in favor of men in all education levels, while the biggest wage gap is reported in the higher education group. However, it is important to note that these may vary extensively according to occupation; for example, in the professionals category, there is up to 20.9% and 21.2% gaps in earnings and wages respectively, in favor of men.

Analyzing the growth of female labor and informality in several sectors, Toksöz (2016) highlighted that the fastest growing subsectors for women's employment are human health and social services as well as managerial and support services. According to UN Türkiye (2020), women constitute 50% of doctors, 70% of all healthcare workers, and 100% of midwives while women make up 70% of all health and social services sectors (cited in Akkan, 2021, p. 40). However, according to an analysis of gender pay gap by

economic activity; women's earnings remain 16.9% and salaries 15.8% lower in human health and social work activities (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2023a) which shows that women's pay gaps remain lower than the median level for these occupations.

2.4.4.2 Unpaid work

In Türkiye, the new approach of the state to social reproduction covers the delegation of care-work to families and the low public spending level for caring services such as nurseries, preschools and elderly care facilities point to the little value attributed to care work as women are designated as family-based caregivers and domestic workers while their participation in the labor market becomes difficult (Acar & Altunok, 2013, p. 18).

Care work for the elderly, the sick and the disabled is provided within the family and almost exclusively by women in Türkiye; whereas the government does not take care as a public responsibility nor increase the institutional capacity for it even though they design policies that strive to govern relations of reproduction and control women's bodies by exaggerating the risks of an aging population (Toksöz, 2016, p. 78). Under this new system; the *realm of social assistance* has been expanded by the transfers made to poor families home care of the disabled, elderly and children which exhibit characteristics of strongly gendered social policy choices as women are principal beneficiaries of assistance and are constituted as natural care-givers (Akkan, 2018; Buğra, 2020, p. 454).

The institutionalization of care and its transfer out of the home are limited and late developments in Türkiye where the responsibility for care is handled by the family as the primary institution (Çoban, 2023). Contrary to existing universal trends, quality and free care services have not been popularized in Türkiye and women remain primarily responsible for the provision of care duties within the home (Ünlütürk, 2023, p. 56).

Social policies in Türkiye are geared towards sustaining work-life balance via assistance for family-based care which leaves the responsibility of care within the confines of private sphere while traditional gender roles lead to divisions of labor and gradually marketized care services remain irregular, underpaid and informal (Çoban, 2023, p. 463). According

to Atasü-Topcuoğlu (2022), this creates a shadow economy of care where care relations are more privatized and relegated to the family, increasing informality of care workers.

In Türkiye, institutional care services are provided by state, local government, private sector, civil society and volunteers as the general provision of care in the country remains within the boundaries of the family and unpaid caring labor is performed informally by women. However, due to factors such as urban migration, women's labor participation and individualization as well as demand for institutional and formal care increased in Turkish society; in the meantime community-based care services geared towards assisting home-based care are pushed by policy due to high costs involved (Gül, 2022, p. 144).

Bora (2005) drew attention to some functions of modern society which were assumed to be left to institutions but are still handled at home or the networks surrounding the home. In her view, this should lead us to look beyond women's inclusion in paid labor to recognize that they have been employed as supporters of the male's primary function of providing for the family via housework, elderly and child care, winter food preparation, clothing production as well as taking part in social solidarity networks to improve the status of the family (Bora, 2005, p. 79). Likewise, Memiş & Özay (2011) also suggested looking beyond the processes of market's appropriation of what is produced personally and socially by assigning them monetary value based on market principles by questioning the invisible processes that sustain life, livelihoods and households that mainly rise above women's shoulders outside of the market (Memiş & Özay, 2011, p. 256).

All in all, feminists in Türkiye discussed women's work and sexual divisions of labor in a diverse range covering the effects of structures of social reproduction, welfare, politics and economy as well as their interaction with Türkiye's unique form of patriarchy.

2.4.4. Social Reproduction and Women's Labor within Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Türkiye

Regarding the performance of social services and caring functions by NGOs, a topic which I previously explored as 'total social reproduction' or 'societal reproduction' (Brenner & Laslett, 1991; Vogel, 1983/2013), literature revolves around the discussions

of the effects of neoliberalism and its interaction with conservative politics with a specific attention to the tensions and differences concerning women's organizations in Türkiye's unique socio-political and economic environment.

Research by YADA Vakfı (2023) on the functions of civil society organizations emphasized that CSOs make an impact, change and transform a diverse range of societal areas such as “science/technology, environment/ climate, children, youth, democracy, politics, education, animal rights, entrepreneurship, faith/religious identity, human rights, culture, and arts, LGBTI+, refugees/migration, health, etc.” and they are most active specifically in the areas of education, humanitarian aid/assistance, and faith/religious identity (pp. 27–28). Research also shows that NGOs active in the field of social aid are mainly motivated by religious concerns whereas in the field of social assistance, groups such as children, women, unemployed, unskilled, working poor, those in debt, those who want to get married, substance abusers, schizophrenics and the disabled appear as the most vulnerable in need of NGOs' work (Şentürk, 2015, p. 297-305).

Eder (2010) warns that Türkiye is moving towards a new institutional ‘welfare mix’ as charity groups, philanthropic associations and private sector take over some state functions of welfare provision duties and receive funds for social assistance programs which creates an enormous room for political arbitrage and clientelism (pp. 181–182). In the case of Türkiye, it is mentioned that the state is reluctant to cooperate with NGOs but they may fill the holes left by the public sector in social aid via quicker decision mechanisms (Şentürk, 2014, p. 296).

Türkiye's welfare regime is characterized as familialist, as the family is the primary responsible for the provision of care for its dependents (Akkan, 2018, p. 72); however the distribution of welfare exhibits a corporatist character due to the selective, unequal and hierarchical structure of social assistance (Dedeoğlu, 2013; Çoban, 2023) which in return creates pressures for women as their paid and unpaid labor are exploited in this gendered welfare regime. Tracing the way family-centered discourse and policies are promoted by ‘civil channels’; Adak (2021) attributes the *NGO boom* in Türkiye to the proliferation of NGOs working in the field of family and promoting “AKP's neoconservatism and initiating a familialist mobilization” (2021, p. 13). Referring to the rise in the number of

associations in the 2000s as the number of associations and foundations increased nearly 40% and 20% respectively, “this trend in fact began in Turkey in the 1990s, with emerging conservative NGOs adopting crucial roles as providers of social assistance alongside the rise of political Islam” (Adak, 2021, p. 4). Although the situation in Türkiye may be interpreted as a retreat from social services, it was mentioned by feminists that the state actually increases its power in the social arena via its relationship with government-approved NGOs (Eder, 2010). Kazanoğlu and Ketola (2022) draw attention to the intersections of gender, family and civil society in Türkiye where NGOs are viewed “as a conduit between community and family with the state” as the AKP shaped a “moral economy” with a specific focus on the case of conservative women’s NGOs (Kazanoğlu & Ketola, 2022, p. 604).

Studies on the social service providing institutions that are managed by civil society organizations; show that NGOs may engage in different forms of social service provision based on a need-based or a rights-based as well as a conservative, religious and charity-based perspective in the case of Türkiye. For example, Sallan Gül et al. (2017) look at two different organizations; Morçatı and ŞefkatDer, the former a feminist, women’s solidarity organization while the latter provides charity (a helping hand) for those in need, as they both provide support for battered women by providing shelters. Being based on solidarity and rights for women; these further services are offered by Morçatı, whereas ŞefkatDer handles women’s issues from a conservatism based, charity perspective where women are pacified as receivers of a type of ‘aid’ (Sallan Gül, 2017, p. 202).

From another feminist standpoint towards civil society; Özgür Keysan & Şentürk (2021) analyzed the different types of services that needs-based and rights-based NGOs offer to female refugees in particular in the city of Gaziantep. They characterized the services of need-based organizations as meeting more urgent and short-term needs while rights-based NGOs implement more sustainable and empowering assistance programs, even though their methods and views may differ. According to this study, the general discourse of the organization, i.e. having feminist orientation or not, also has an effect on the way their services are distributed; organizations may also contribute to the “liberal patriarchal

formation of society”, e.g. by way of offering family-based assistance and not empowering women as individuals per se (Özgür Keysan & Şentürk, 2021, p. 157).

I also want to refer to another strand of literature focusing on the experiences of women in conservative/Muslim women’s NGOs and organizations as well as faith-based and Islamic organizations. These works do not take into focus paid labor only; but handle it together with volunteering. For instance, even though her focus is on the civil society activities of conservative, Muslim women, Ayşe Dursun’s (2019, 2022) works on women’s involvement in civil society encompass a social reproduction perspective that pays attention to the processes of sexual division of labor. According to Dursun (2019) conservative women’s NGOs composed mostly of volunteers and some paid support staff take part in the privatization of issues of social reproduction such as poverty and social protection. She emphasized women’s natural care-giving roles as permeating civil society via extending the private sphere and depoliticizing women’s issues as a result of patriarchy which intersects with other vulnerabilities of women and curtails their rights;

In this neoliberal context, charity NGOs become active vehicles of poverty alleviation and operate as the extended arm of the paternalist state. The relocation of poverty relief to the third sector makes dependents out of rights-bearing citizens which results in the curtailment of social rights. Furthermore, because women are disproportionately affected by structural poverty, the privatization of poverty affects women – especially female workers and migrants, single mothers, transgender women and other multiply marginalized women – more severely. (Dursun, 2019, p. 950)

Looking at the conservative women’s experiences in these NGOs, Dursun (2019) finds that they emphasize their roles as loving and caring mothers and housewives while these communities become their extended families (Dursun, 2019, p. 954). Underlining the consolidation of patriarchy via involvement in NGOs, she found that some women perceived their work in NGOs as a ‘mutual transaction’ between the giver and the taker of the act of charity where one receives help and the other moral satisfaction and they emphasized their natural disposition for care, their motherly strength and understanding which allowed them to better serve those in need (Dursun, 2019, pp. 954–955). Dursun (2023) also found in another study on Muslim women’s organization and their civil society involvement that narratives of some women in NGOs involved signs of sexual

divisions of labor in the service of communities as well as divisions among women in NGOs based on their societal roles where homemakers in the private realm reconcile their public roles as “caring volunteers” and “professional women” contribute financially.

In another theoretically similar study, Atalay (2019) referred to the broader perspective of social reproduction theory which puts forth that the neoliberal welfare model relies upon community and family support to guard against the effects of marketization regarding the performance of social reproduction labor. In the specific case of Türkiye, while a social reproduction model depending on the family and traditional solidarity networks are portrayed as moral and economic guardians of society; neoliberal welfare programs are also legitimized by Islamic NGOs (Atalay, 2019, p. 2). The transfer of state’s responsibility to families and community networks also reconfigures relations of social reproduction and the reliance on women’s unpaid biological, emotional and care labor in the public and the private spheres (Atalay, 2019, p. 3). Based on an empirical study in faith-based organizations that focus on charitable aid, poverty alleviation, health services, orphan care, educational assistance, religious socialization, and vocational training, Atalay (2019) found that members of these organizations endorse a patriarchal social contract based on a gendered division of labor and oppose the feminist movement’s discourse for gender equality by promoting the idea of ‘gender justice’ which essentializes women’s true nature as motherhood as men and women contribute to these organizations by “mobilizing their innately unique skills and abilities” (p. 7).

In the beginning of this chapter of Türkiye’s civil society, I paid attention to the changing role of NGOs in Türkiye’s social sphere as they assumed more responsibilities in a way that they support the state in the provision of society’s needs for development as well as care. Now, after shortly exploring a conceptualization of Türkiye’s civil society as a place of ‘societal reproduction’, I will try to look at the paid and unpaid (or voluntary) labor processes of workers in civil society, as well as the case of volunteer work and the emotional dimensions of work.

2.4.4.1. Paid labor and its unpaid dimensions in NGOs

In general, the literature on Turkish NGOs has focused on their place in civil society ecosystem, numbers, fields and case studies of particular organizations, as well as the effect of politics and discourse, the impact of globalization and the 1999 earthquakes; whereas paid-work in NGOs has not been a main focus (Akyüz, 2010, p. 65); even though professional and voluntary NGO labor have become subjects of discussion due to increased professionalization in civil society (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006b). Most studies focus on the governance and efficiency aspect of civil society employment; whereas looking at the processes behind this type of labor and how workers have agency, develop meanings and experience their labor is less studied (Akyüz, 2010). However, the demand for labor and number of people employed in the sector have increased, especially after the Syrian refugee crisis (Özel, 2022, p. 850).

Paid work and professionalization in NGOs have become common practice, especially due to the effect of EU-funded projects which brought in more resources and demand (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a, p. 57); however, its effect has been ambivalent due to the ill-functioning mechanisms of EU accession as well as the inherent problems of Türkiye's socio-political and civil society culture (İçduygu, 2011). Also, this trend has changed recently due to a cool off period in Türkiye's EU negotiations and a de-Europeanization process, especially concerning civil society (Ergun & Kazanoğlu, 2024; Rumelili & Boşnak, 2015; Zihnioğlu, 2019).

Professionalization is stated as one of the biggest problems of CSOs in Türkiye, together with the provision of participation. Human resources of civil society comprising of paid professionals and volunteers is less developed; where it was reported in a survey in 2009 that nearly 60% of NGOs did not have a paid professional while many reported not having sufficient numbers of both paid and volunteer personnel; more than 60% of those employed were responsible for subsidiary or assistance roles such as secretariat, cooking, cleaning etc. and half of employee-having CSOs had only 1 or 2 paid personnel in total (İçduygu, 2011; Yeğen et al., 2012). In 2023, it is reported that "CSOs continue to exist with a limited number of human resources and volunteers" (YADA Vakfi, 2023).

It should be noted that NGO workers are employed like workers in the other sectors and are bound by the same Labor Law (TÜSEV, 2014, p. 88) income tax and social security applications and NGO work is recognized within industrial branch no.17 (Commerce, office, education and fine arts) and 3 different trade unions have been authorized to represent the workers (Akyüz, 2010, pp. 64–65). There is no employment policy regarding NGOs and the statistics that are provided by STİGM¹² and VGM¹³ are not completely reliable as well as available (TÜSEV, 2014, p. 88). Statistics provided on the number of full-time, part-time, project-based paid personnel and volunteers especially in the last two decades show a substantial increase in all these categories, whereas especially the high rate of increase in the project-based employees creates a factor of precarity among civil society workers (Keskin & Açıkkol, 2020). Data on civil society workers have mostly been discussed in grey literature of organizations which work toward the advancement of the field and emphasize the need for professionalization of paid and volunteer labor in NGOs (Bikmen & Meydanoğlu, 2006a; İçduygu et al., 2011; YADA Vakfı, 2009, 2015, 2023).

There are some reports which surveyed NGO workers and volunteers' working conditions as well as their motivations and experiences of civil society jobs. For example, a comprehensive report based on a qualitative study (n=58) by Universitas Social Research Center detailed the conditions and consequences affecting personal experiences of NGO workers by inquiring about problems they face in labor processes within the civil sphere and their solutions (Keskin & Açıkkol, 2020, p. 13). Even though more than half of participants in this study reported that their organizations implement rights-based approaches, some mentioned that the wellbeing of NGO workers are not paid importance

¹² According to the latest data by STİGM, as of 2020 there were 41,189 full-time, 4,194 part-time, and 32,554 project-based employees working in associations. See *Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum Çalışanı Olmak-3: Sivil Alanda İK Politikalarının Önemi Kavranmadı*, Sivil Sayfalar. Retrieved from <https://www.sivilsayfalar.org/2021/06/15/turkiyede-sivil-toplum-calisan-olmak-3-sivil-alanda-ik-politikalarinin-onemi-kavranmadi/>

¹³ According to VGM's (2024) current figures, foundations employ nearly 412.000 paid and 22.000 volunteer personnel. See *Vakıfların Üye ve Görev Alan Kişi Sayıları*. Retrieved from https://cdn.vgm.gov.tr/genelicerik/genelicerik_945_290519/07-vakiflarin-uye-ve-gorev-alan-kisi-sayilari.pdf

to as the volunteer dimension of their work leads to exploitation, contradicting the rights-based image of their NGO from the outside (pp. 6-7). Overall, 70% of NGO workers reported there were good practices in their NGOs' human management (pp. 8-9).

Participants in this study reported on the contexts of labor exploitation, hierarchical organization and decision-making processes in NGOs; where age hierarchy, ambiguity in job descriptions, flexible working hours and lack of full participation were prominent problems (Keskin & Açikkol, 2020, p.14). NGO workers also reported other conditions such as precarity caused by lack of job security, overtime pay and wage equality and number-oriented targets within the organization as well as the experience of secondary trauma which have an effect on their job motivations, depending also on the job position and its place in organizational hierarchy (pp. 15-22). These findings show pressures of paid and unpaid work on NGO workers' labor in different forms such as voluntary and emotional labor.

Field research also shows that the lines between work and private lives may become blurred for NGO workers but this may not affect their labor motivations. While a vast majority of NGO workers report not being paid overtime and having to take on extra responsibilities beyond job descriptions; still their satisfaction with the work environment remained high (YADA Vakfı, 2023, p. 4). However, index scores for the employee welfare may show this is an area that NGOs are lacking in (p. 43).

Another ambiguity emerges between volunteering and paid employment in NGOs within civil society work. This was addressed in Erdoğan and Uyan Semerci's (2021) study with volunteer coordinators which reported blurring of the lines between paid and unpaid/voluntary work from the narratives of NGO professionals where they expressed working beyond their shifts and feeling like working for 24 hours. This study uncovered controversies that arise within paid and unpaid work in NGOs in forms of volunteer and emotional labor. It was reported that while workers are expected to "act like volunteers", volunteers are also expected to "act like professionals" creating ambiguities in labor processes as well as secondary traumas, exhaustion and faster circulation (Erdoğan & Uyan-Semerci, 2021, p. 91).

For a discussion of gender distribution in NGO labor in Türkiye, there is no available open-source or quantitative data on pay balance in NGO labor based neither on position nor gender (Keskin & Açikkol, 2020, p.5). Here, I turned to YADA's latest Civil Society Index (n=1002 CSOs) for some gender-related insight and to understand the characteristics of professional civil society staff in Türkiye:

Organizations with a high professional staff capacity exhibit a profile where the gender distribution is predominantly women or otherwise equal, individuals are under the age of 35, have at least an associate degree, education level, and operate on a national/international scale. (YADA Vakfı, 2023, p. 40)

Even though there are some academic works on women's labor participation in terms of gender equality as well as women's leadership in NGO settings; these do not correlate with my purposes directly. However, it is an interesting situation that even when women are said to be found more common, especially in NGOs providing services for vulnerable populations, they are less represented in leadership positions in both professional or volunteer involvement. For example, it is emphasized by progress reports on Turkish civil society that women's participation to CSOs remains low; as 63.5 % CSOs have male-dominated leadership (YADA Vakfı, 2023, p. 3). In this way, civil society is characterized as a sphere that is dominated by middle-age, male decision-makers (Keyman et al., 2009; Yeğen et al., 2012).

Looking at the division of labor, Yeğen et al. (2012) focused on four thematic fields of women, disabled, environment and youth found that civil society is still a gendered sphere even when their research included nearly 50% women managers, which is only because of the effect of dominance of women in management positions in women's NGOs. For example, they found that around a quarter of managers from youth and environment fields were women; while two thirds of disabled NGOs were run by women – which was attributed to the disposition of those involved in women and disabled fields; based on providing care and support for the disadvantaged peoples (Yeğen et al., 2012).

There are some studies that focus on the personal experiences of NGO workers and the labor processes behind their work as well as how these workers find meaning in the work they perform, although they don't necessarily adopt a feminist political economy perspective. The closest research with a similar purpose to my attempt of understanding

the social reproduction situation of NGO workers, is a master thesis focusing on the experiences of mothers who work in civil society (Sezer, 2020); however, in spite of its focus on the mitigation efforts of NGO worker/mothers between their public and private lives, this study does not provide an analysis of the distinctive effects of civil society employment on the lives of women. Here, participants (n=26) commented on their working conditions, home life, sharing household responsibilities, work-life balances and adaptation efforts. The only civil society specific finding from this research is that participants reported that they are happy with their working conditions, especially in terms of working hours in comparison with other sectors; but it does not study the possible underlying effects of this situation in relation to NGO employment and gender.

Another related master thesis was submitted by Önen (2020) with a gender equality focus on NGOs. In relation to the factors behind the choice of women in employment by NGOs, participants in this study reported that their choice is in part determined by the working field of the organization. Even though participants in Önen's study (n=10) felt treated equally in their NGOs; women employees were said to be chosen for emotional labor-intensive processes such as for working in the field of children based on a perception of women as more inclined for this type of work (Önen, 2020, pp. 59–60).

In addition, there are some studies performed with NGO workers attempting to uncover labor conditions in civil society or where the majority of participants of which were women – even if their main frameworks were not based on the study of gender differences in NGO labor. Such a study is Akyüz's (2010) doctoral thesis with a focus on sense-making and labor process of professionals in issue based NGOs in Türkiye. This study suggests that workplace conditions, power structures and sense-making processes of employees in the field need to be studied from a labor process frame. It traces the sense-making processes of NGO workers in a non-profit environment where tensions may appear as non-material rewards are (or have to be) prioritized over material ones; whereas some participants of the study reported that they are actually exploited materially with the adoption of “we are half volunteers” discourse (Akyüz, 2010, p.198). Even though there is not an explicit gender focus, the study finds that power structures based on gender (or age) within society are reproduced in the NGO field (Akyüz, 2010, p. 222).

In Akyüz's (2010) understanding of what constitutes "work" in our societies; reference is made to forms of work in our societies that may not be recognized as such "like domestic work, community work or social service, public service, volunteering, political action, parenting or other forms of domestic care" and the nature of paid work in civil society is defined as a "very special intersection between work/labour, citizenship and political activity fields" (p. 103). NGO workers in this study also reported that the boundaries of work and non-work have blurred for them both regarding daily-time division as well as distinction of their personal and work selves whereas;

The non-profit type of work doesn't ultimately produce profit (to be distributed to shareholders) by production or service, but influence and social change which often can not be measured by economic terms. This type of work and job satisfaction on the side of professional paid staff of NGOs have not been investigated accordingly. (Akyüz, 2010, p. 174)

Since lately migration is the main field attributed to the expansion of civil society and the increasing number of NGO staff, there exist some academic studies and reports on the wellbeing of civil society workers in this field. In such an effort of understanding the situation of NGO workers in the migration field, Bir İZ Derneği (2019) surveyed both professional and volunteer civil society workers (n=58) to discuss their needs and personal experiences where nearly 65% of the participants were women. With regard to their labor and personal experiences, participants noted that their NGOs had turned into service-providing organizations while they complained about the 'marketization' of the civil society field leading to alienation of workers (Bir İZ Derneği, 2019, pp. 14-15). Participants also mentioned uncertainties and problems in terms of labor rights and working conditions where there is a lack of definition of "who is an NGO worker where job descriptions are unclear, multiple tasks are taken on by workers and there are problems regarding the flexibility of working hours, project-based work, and job security as well as rights violations (Bir İZ Derneği, 2019, p. 25). They also reported personal difficulties due to hard stories encountered and variant emotional reactions such as not being able to talk, feelings of helplessness, and never-ending work; as well as the necessity but the insufficiency of supervision practices (pp. 31-35).

Yıldız and Karataş (2024) also performed a case study on the employees of an NGO with 140 Children's Houses (n=20, 65% of participants were women) where a model for care and psychosocial support of children in need of protection is implemented. Some participants in this study reported that while their work is challenging, they go beyond what is expected by their job definitions and feel motivated for better serving the children. It is important to note the negative consequences of this work on staff as they reported that due to extensive workload, they may feel overwhelmed and experience burnout as well as deteriorating personal and family relationships (Yıldız & Karataş, 2024, p.126).

To sum up, an overview of literature on paid work in NGOs based on limited level of official statistics and empirical studies showed that this is a more recent area of research as a result of the growth in number of staff in recent years. I can summarize from this survey that literature on paid work in NGOs revolves around efforts to understand the working conditions, personal motivations, financial compensations, emotional labor and the voluntary (unpaid) dimensions of NGO work. At the intersection of civil society work with gender, some studies focused on the gender composition of NGOs, while women were reported to dominate especially in NGOs where services are provided for vulnerable groups; whereas the lack of women's equal participation to decision-making were also mentioned.

2.4.4.2. Volunteer labor in NGOs

Previously, I discussed the ambiguity of the boundary between paid workers and volunteers within NGOs. In this section, from an understanding of volunteer labor as unpaid work; I will try to provide an overview of volunteer labor within Turkish civil society organizations and offer a gender perspective to the issue as well.

Voluntary labor; is a relatively new and western concept for Türkiye and NGOs are the first sector that comes to mind when voluntary labor is mentioned since their existence depends on the availability of this type of labor (Memiş & Özay, 2011, p. 160). In Türkiye, the lack of important elements such as participation, feeling of responsibility and sustainability form the main characteristics of Türkiye's volunteering environment

(Erdoğan et al., 2021; İçduygu et al., 2011; Memiş & Özay, 2011; Yeğen et al., 2012). In addition; after economic problems, insufficiency of volunteers was listed as the second source of organizational problems in NGOs characterized by a perceived immunity of volunteers from responsibility (Çalışkan et al., 2005; TÜSEV, 2013).

There is not one reliable source regarding the number or the ratio of volunteers in Türkiye, however their number in NGOs remains low, even though they are employed by CSOs to compensate for the limited human resources, while half of organizations incorporate 30 or fewer volunteers (YADA Vakfı, 2023, p. 33). The lack of a legal framework that regulates the relationship between volunteers and the institution has also been reported as one of the major problems in the area; leading to a blur between the boundary between voluntary and paid work in the NGO setting (TÜSEV, 2013). Erdoğan et al. (2021) emphasized that the definition of volunteering as an activity connotes its performance within the boundaries of civil society field and/or NGOs; noting the need to redefine its relationship with the civil and the public sphere. The non-existence of financial profit and the purpose of social benefit appear as the main characteristics driving volunteer labor; while one or the other may be brought at the forefront of the argument by the organization in question (Erdoğan et al., 2021; TÜSEV, 2013).

However, the narratives of NGO workers from the field may present a different picture regarding the boundaries between paid and unpaid labor. For example, Erdoğan and Uyan Semerci (2021) found in their survey that the majority of volunteer labor takes place during the working shift from 9.00 a.m. to 6 p.m. and it does not appear as a type of flexible employment as it may be thought (p. 12) while volunteers also appeared to share the physical and emotional risks of the work like a paid employee (p. 34).

Volunteers in another study reported that the identification of voluntary labor as a type of ‘unpaid labor’ by NGOs may lead to labor exploitation and create intra-organizational hierarchies and resource-oriented mindset that may feel as compromises from rights-based approach of their NGOs (Keskin & Açıkkol, 2020, p. 6); signaling economic and social power structures that aim to control unpaid labor. The unrest of NGO workers

regarding the ambiguous boundaries of their paid work and voluntary dedication attracted the attention of experts in the area ¹⁴.

At the intersection of gender with civil society work in Türkiye, voluntary labor in NGOs is characterized as a space where women participate in the public sphere; however, women's participation in this type of labor has not been critiqued by feminists from an *unpaid labor* perspective. Regarding the relationship between voluntary labor and gender there is not much available data either.

The most recent UN Volunteers Programme (2021) Report done on the state of volunteering with a specific focus on the effect of COVID-19 on volunteering found that in Türkiye men carry out more volunteering; while women were as likely to have helped a friend or neighbor. It emphasized the gendered nature of volunteering in the international context, which applies to countries like Türkiye with strong domestic patriarchal characteristics. However, looking at the issue from a labor perspective; Memiş and Özay (2011) pointed to the gap between men and women according to the time-use survey results of 2006; where women dedicated *more time* on voluntary works and meetings than men and they emphasized the need for research on the distribution of voluntary labor in Türkiye and its causes and consequences (Memiş & Özay, 2011, p. 160). As they suggest, a look at the latest results from TÜİK's (2015) time use survey (see Table 2.1.) the picture shows both non-working and working women dedicating more time to volunteering than men:

Table 2.1. Distribution of Time for Men and Women

Gender	Activity	2006/minute	2015/minute
Men	Non-Working	57	58.2
	Working	28.8	25.8
Women	Non-Working	61.8	63
	Working	31.2	31.8

(Source: *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2023b*)

¹⁴ Kap, D. (2021, June 15). *There is tension between NGO employees' voluntary dedication and their rights*. *Sivil Sayfalar*.

I also found interesting that participants of some volunteering surveys are mostly composed of women. For example, Erdoğan and Uyan-Semerçi's (2021) research was composed of 68,4% women among 1.016 participants in total who volunteered to participate, even though they caution that this survey does not represent the whole population of volunteers. Digging deeper into this data; it is interesting that the median for women volunteers increases from 68,4% to 76,4% when it comes to volunteers who work for NGOs that operate in the field of children; and this is explained by the choice of volunteers primarily from university students in fields like child development, psychology, social service where females are represented more which points to horizontal segregation of women in occupations (Beyazova & Durmuş, 2021).

A similar situation is also observed in the education field where most of the volunteers that participate are women. For instance, while TEGV's 2008 research on the general state of youth, volunteering and social capital found that volunteering appeals "mostly to men, higher educated, working people or students" within the 18-35 age group; when results were compared with the TEGV group; 68,9% of volunteers that participated in the study turned out to be women (Erdoğan, 2012, p. 30).

Some studies on women's involvement as volunteers in NGOs adopt the perspective of their participation in women's organizations and their psychological or social motivations while referring to underlying conditions of patriarchy and sexual division of labor that contribute to this situation. I will now look at such empirical studies that may be relevant for the intersections of voluntary labor and gender.

An empirical study done by Kızılelmas (2019) who focused on female NGO workers in humanitarian aid takes women's volunteer work from the perspective of their motivations and the gender-based division of labor within NGOs. Kızılelmas (2019) found in her study (n=11) of women volunteers from a local NGO, that women's motivations for volunteer work in NGOs are listed as "mercy", "humanity", "empathy" and "responsibility", as women's activity in social aid associations is primarily based upon their conscience and religious emotions (p. 74). She also found that as women become involved with emotional motivations (like their care-based emotional labor within the family); they are also subjected to a gender-based division of labor that recruits women

for jobs that require social relationships and men for jobs that manage the financial, economic and official procedures of the NGOs (Kızılelmas, 2019, p. 75). This study cited the personal experiences of women in NGOs who were often expected to devote a range of emotions as well as personal time to attend to the needs of the populations and show constant attention, compassion, psychological support and guidance, *like “mothers”*, as their active work in the field remains invisible but men are able to showcase their work in front of the public more (Kızılelmas, 2019, pp. 78–79).

In a different study, focusing on the political socialization of women, Yazar (2015) emphasized women’s larger role, especially as volunteer participants to civil society organizations in an environment where the increasing volume of NGOs employed in the provision of social aid fills the gap left by the retreatment of state institutions from social welfare provision with a perspective of feminization of caring labor and social reproduction. Suggesting that the participation of women in CSOs should be handled with a critical outlook, Yazar (2015) emphasized that women’s interest in these organizations are especially towards poverty-based NGOs which reinforces their gender roles (p. 41).

All in all, I attempted a conceptualization of volunteer labor as a type of unpaid labor which pays attention to its interactions with gender and labor structures.

2.4.4.3. Emotional labor in NGOs

The performance of some NGO work involves emotional labor processes, and this dimension of NGO labor in the Turkish context has attracted the attention of some researchers. For example, Çarpar and Göktuna Yaylacı (2023) pointed that even though there have been numerous studies on understanding the effect of NGOs in their fields; personal difficulties of NGO workers have not been well studied in rights-based organizations; including jobs with a service angle such as outreach workers, caseworkers, legal counselors, psychologists, and social workers who are in direct contact with the target groups (Çarpar & Göktuna Yaylacı, 2023, pp. 778–779). They uncovered external challenges faced by NGO workers such as prejudice, stigmatization and exposure to violence; as well as internal challenges such as burnout and alienation stemming from

management and donor problems as well as exposure to excessive and emotional workload, time pressure and stressful working conditions. It was reported that NGO workers were involved not only for “money”; but for political concerns as well as a sense of being useful to society and touching the lives of the migrants; however the ‘business concerns’ of the field caused alienation while secondary trauma and mental-health problems were experienced (Çarpar & Göktuna Yaylacı, 2023, pp. 780–782).

Another research in this area was conducted by Özel (2022) with the staff of migration where she focused on the consequences of emotional labor for field workers in NGOs, under current heavy influx of migration. This research centered on the concept of *emotional reflexivity* where NGO workers’ reflections on their emotions and behaviors were coded under psychological and social awareness, and coping strategies where fieldworkers mentioned getting traumatized and mental health affecting their social life. Also, while some participants mentioned personally distancing from the refugees; others cited developing bonds as a necessary part of jobs. Some reported coping mechanisms to deal with the burdens of emotional labor, others reported none whereas many reported not being supported by supervision and personal sessions while they were engaged in promoting human rights and social justice via their work (Özel, 2022, p. 848-851).

This exploration of emotional labor within the context of NGO work concludes my literature review on civil society and social reproduction in Türkiye. Throughout this section, I explored the development and transformations as well as a feminist conception of Turkish civil society. Then, I traced the concepts of women’s work, paid and unpaid work – including emotional and volunteer labor categories from the context of sexual division of labor in the country as a whole, as well as within the NGO setting which highly relate with the results of my own research. In the next chapter, I present my findings and analysis.

FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

This chapter sets out the findings of my qualitative research based on in-depth interviews with civil society workers with a focus on the main research themes of this thesis. The analysis is organized under three foundational themes I identified, namely; *Gender Division of Labor in Civil Society*, *Social Reproduction in Civil Society* and *Work/Life Reconciliation of NGO Workers*. Here, I explore their implications through the perspective of social reproduction theory situated within the framework of feminist conceptions of civil society. This thematical analysis aims to address my main research question, which is; “How do gender and care structures interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of women working in civil society organizations, in relation to their social reproduction labor across the public and private spheres?”.

The following sections are organized around the main themes and their corresponding ‘sub-themes’ which emerged from the fieldwork and they are presented in an analytical order. I delved deeper into each subtheme by focusing on tendencies, patterns and trends that emerged in their discussion while continuously referring to striking participant statements via direct quotations as well as points of agreement and disagreement. Throughout the analysis, when I refer to *participants* as a general category I mean women participants; as I mostly report on my findings from interviews with male participants separately to discuss the findings in question from a wider context and offer gender-based insight, mainly when necessary. Also, I tried to reflect field conditions in the writing of this section in a better way by trying to make sure that connections between emerging patterns are easily recognized throughout the text. Thus, I *italicized* common tendencies as well as trends that stood out as I went through each sub-theme and their content –given the complexity of the analysis involved. Before moving on with the analysis of my findings, here is a brief overview of the main themes that I will discuss in this chapter:

The first theme from my findings report on *Gender Division of Labor in Civil Society* for the discussion of which I identified three subthemes where I also reported on the points of agreement and disagreement among participants, especially since subjects relating to

gender's relationship with labor structures invited a lot of discussion. In reporting this theme, first, I grouped participant statements on gender divisions within NGO work starting with the subtheme of *Women's Work in NGOs*. As it was very common to define the third sector as a female dominated area and civil society work as *feminized*; both women and men participants listed certain characteristics of civil society which appeal to women more than men. It was reported that women are in the majority in certain fields which particularly involve direct contact with people and caregiving responsibilities. Women's involvement in civil society was also mentioned as a consequence of their social role as *caregivers*, but it was also common among participants to perceive women's employment in civil society as *empowering*; focusing on women's strong wills to take initiatives for change, instead of a gender division of labor based on the wider social distribution of care labor. Also, women's role as *secondary earners* was mentioned as one of the reasons of women's more frequent employment in the often *flexible and precarious* NGO jobs which offer lesser rewards and job security; rendering NGO work as women's work. In addition to the *gendered composition* of certain jobs where there may be social, regional and religious conditions at play; many participants also brought up the issue of *glass ceilings* in civil society as a response to questions about gender divisions of labor. Lastly, participants reflected on the causes and consequences of presumable gender divisions of labor in civil society and focused on *other underlying patterns* which contribute to the labor division with a focus on the gender based effects of wider systems or earlier experiences such as *education, volunteering and prior professional choices* with an effect on women's work.

Second, participants talked about *Men's Work in NGOs*; especially within the context of socioeconomic roles that are attributed to men which affect their labor motivations and career choices from more of a financial aspect. As a female-dominated field, participants mentioned *how men are found less in NGO jobs*, as there are less applications and there are less men who stay in NGO work. Here, participants especially focused on the different motivations of men, in addition to the economic constraints of the *bread-winner role*, but also men's more *career orientedness* and less interest towards *materially less rewarding* civil society jobs. Another common trend from the field was the characterization of men

in civil society as *different than other men* or *similar to women* as more sensitive males with whom women reported less conflicts with in the workplace due to common values.

Third, and last, I observed that *Gender Equality* was widely discussed in the fieldwork within the context of the feminized space of NGOs. This analysis shows how gender equality and elimination of discrimination are fostered in the sector as well as challenged by persistent gender divisions of labor in civil society. Participants frequently reported tensions and conflicts, while also engaging with the *conceptual* dimensions of gender equality they observed; commonly giving informed evaluations of *policies and discriminatory practices*. In general, civil society was mentioned as a *relatively more equal sphere* by participants, noting that organizations are more sensitive to issues of gender equality and policies in place that were perceived as more *satisfactory* compared to other sectors. However, there were also reports on several forms of material and immaterial *discriminations based on sex, age, religion* as well as being disregarded in the workplace by men in positions of power.

The second theme of my research findings is *Social Reproduction in Civil Society* which I discuss under 2 subthemes. I begin this section by presenting findings related to one of the central aims of my research: exploring the role of *NGOs as Caring Actors*. Within these discussions, NGO workers tended to emphasize the essential role of NGOs in *filling in the gaps*, while also expressing concerns that *too much responsibility* was being placed on NGOs in the process of solving social problems. Following this, I present my findings on the *social reproduction (care) labor of NGO workers* based on my analysis of their own perceptions of their labor and their job descriptions situated within the broader context of care labor reported to be performed by civil society actors. These social reproductive or care activities comprise psychological and social support, livelihood support, personal support and connection. There is an emphasis on the gender related aspects of these activities in relation to their performance in civil society.

Furthermore, while discussing the subject of NGOs and civil society workers as caring actors, two patterns emerged from the fieldwork, as they were not primarily included in my research questions. Here, I found out that *Conditions in Different NGO Types* as well as the overwhelming effects of *Crises* should be considered when discussing the role of

NGOs and their workers within the wider structures of social reproduction as these dimensions have an effect on both the labor conditions and work/life reconciliation of civil society workers.

As a second subtheme, I present the social reproduction labor of civil society workers by discussing what happens *Beyond the Boundaries of Paid Work* in NGOs, in line with my main research purposes. Here, I report my findings within the context of social reproduction labor categories which I identified in my literature review and theoretical framework sections; but I adapted these concepts to my findings in the field. From an overview of these discussions which focus on the *unpaid aspects of NGO work*, I identified three main categories as participants reported engaging in *voluntary/extra*, *invisible* and *emotional labor*. An extensive amount of time spent on *voluntary/extra* labor performed willingly was reported as a result of participants' motivation as NGO workers. However there were also disturbances with *expectations of unpaid work* being framed as voluntarism, specifically centering around the critique of what some referred to as being *half-volunteers*. It was a tendency in the field to adhere to a practice of extra work as an extension of job expectations as civil society workers; however they were also bothered by the perceptions of their work to be performed voluntarily and in an unpaid manner since these contributed to making their labor and their demand for proper compensation *invisible*, while diminishing the value of this socially essential work. Furthermore, in accordance with the main purposes of my research, I found that *emotional labor* is the foremost unpaid dimension of NGO work as a result of the care work that is performed as participants reported extensive experiences with emotional aspects of their work such as *self-responsibility*, *negative feelings caused by work*, *secondary traumas*, *mental labor* and need for employment of *emotional control and self-awareness* when they were performing their jobs.

The third and last theme of my research is *Work/ Life Reconciliation of NGO Workers*. Since this is the main theme which consolidates the results of my research, I handled here the highly diverse state of NGO workers in the midst of their work and private life under four subthemes. In accordance with one of my main research purposes, I started with reporting on participant narratives based on their experiences and observations about the

Making of Meaning and Motivation for Third Sector Workers. I focused on different aspects of these processes in line with my research questions as well as meaning and motivation resources that were brought up by participants; comprising of *caring as a motivation*, *gender effect on motivation*, *financial motivations*, *third sector motivations* and *working conditions*. From an overview, participants were commonly motivated for their jobs as they found *meaningful caring for others and addressing their needs* as well as derive *job satisfaction from the impact* of their work. Furthermore, participants commonly carried a high motivation toward the sector as they saw themselves fit in the *culture* and the work aligned with their *career expectations and purposes* in that they found NGO work beneficial for their personal development; however, a lot of conflicts were reported in terms of *financial compensation* as well as *a lack of financial motivation*. Also, working conditions represented another challenge as workers commonly reported experiences with *heavy workload and overtime*, as well as a rising *precarity* and dissatisfaction with *private sector-like* practices such as number-based performance expectations and management problems unfitting their civil society expectations. However, many workers still reported being able to mitigate the negative effects of their work in the sense of struggles that arise in financial and labor aspects because they assigned *value* to it while some workplace policies helped. Lastly, *the effect of gender on motivation* was a point of divergence among participants as there were inclinations to refer to its strong influence; but also to stay more neutral or state that it was not related at all, which I also handled in more depth later.

The second subtheme I identified relates to how *mitigation of private life* takes place for NGO workers, as I provided an overview of NGO laborers' private lives by breaking them down into patterns and trends, related to the organization of life outside of work and how they provide their own needs. Here, I reported on participants' situations in terms of their *living situation*, *relationships*, *responsibilities and supports*, *how they allocate time* and *the effect of private life on work* at the NGO, if any. I tried to depict how participants' lives are constructed and their reports on the kinds of conflicts and mitigations that arise within the processes of social reproduction in the lives of NGO workers as a whole. From an overview of this subtheme, even though participants reported many *challenges especially in the areas of having enough time, energy and mental space for their own*

needs as well as their relationships; with the help of widely mentioned *support systems* and management mechanisms they set up, they were able to mitigate their own social reproduction needs to a point. To note, especially younger and single participants reported more challenges in this area.

Then, I continued with the third subtheme, namely *the effect of NGO work on private life* where various effects and conflicts of work over private lives were reported. Here, I focused on situations that arise as NGO workers try to establish balance between their work and private lives with the help of *supportive systems* that are available to them to *mitigate their responsibilities* as well as ameliorating and constraining *effects of their work responsibilities*. From an overview, participants mentioned how their work affects their *personal life and relationships* as well as present *financial constraints* and struggles due to extensive and *continuous communication*. They also mentioned the social effects of their work as they are forced often to *sacrifice personal time* for the sake of work as well as the *identity and attitude shaping* effects of their work. The effect of crises on NGO workers' lives was also observable as an extension of their job as civil society workers as NGOs were highly involved in crisis interventions undergoing in the context of Türkiye, especially after the 2023 earthquake. Lastly, participants reported on the negative and positive impacts of *workplace policies and job requirements* by referring to common issues such as *overtime, flexibility, work from home (WFH), vacations and extra leaves* as well as a characterization of NGOs as *understanding workplaces*.

Fourth and last subtheme of my thematical analysis consists of *emotional management and support systems* as a part of NGO workers' work/life reconciliation. This subtheme is concise, since I will have already dealt with the issue of *emotional labor* in length as a pattern of NGO workers' unpaid labor. But I underline the kinds of *supports* mentioned by participants in their work/life reconciliation. Here, the essentiality of access to social supports *via work and/or personal resources* were very commonly brought up by participants as systems of support were highly needed; such as *supervision & psychological support, emotional support and attachments and boundaries* as mechanisms that aid workers manage their emotions due to performance of NGO work.

Now, I will present my thematical analysis centered around the subthemes I identified, in accordance with this overview of main themes. As needed, I will include introductions for relevant sub-themes or for their further breakdown to put the discussion into context; as the depth of patterns from the field may highly vary.

3.1. Gender Division of Labor in Civil Society

Here under the first main theme of my analysis, gender division of labor in civil society, I will report on my findings under the three subthemes that emerged from the field. These are *Women's Work*, *Men's Work* and *Gender Equality in a Feminized Space*.

3.1.1. Women's Work in NGOs

To start with, while discussing a presumable gender division of labor; almost all participants agreed on a description of civil society employment as a *female intensive work* as they reflected on their work environments. This was a common pattern; although the degree to which it was agreed differed, as participants also mentioned that this *depends* or it may be *near equal* when considering all factors. Nevertheless, the discussion of women's work in the sector revolved around the prevalence of women in the sector and the causes and consequences of this situation.

Other related tendencies in these discussions were the following: Participants tended to mention that *women care more*; therefore they take on more civil society work. As *secondary earners*; women are able to take on the flexible and precarious jobs that are available in the civil society sector. Some jobs in the sector were reported as gendered, as there may also exist certain cultural dispositions that need to be taken into account in the distribution of NGO work, leading to horizontal segregations, meanwhile vertical segregations in the form of *glass ceilings* were also reported. Lastly, participants mentioned that the effect of gender on the choice of NGO work by women and their preference may relate to further structures beyond employment choice, as they may stem from the influence of *wider systems such as education* and earlier experiences of NGO

workers such as the prevalence of women in volunteering which also highly affects chances of NGO employment, in addition to prior profession and education choices.

Below, I continue with the further exploration of these 5 trends on the issue of *women's work in NGOs* and I will focus on their explanation from the different contexts of their (non)existence, agreement and refusal in individual participant narratives.

3.1.1.1. NGO work is feminized and women intensive

To begin with, participants mentioned that the majority of NGO staff; more specifically field workers and office workers, volunteers and also job candidates, was almost always and somehow naturally composed of women. For instance, when asked about the ratio of men and women in NGO employment, one participant said "...Women, all women... Yes, all women. In all the foundations where I worked, if there are 10 people, 8 of them are women" (5K39). Acknowledged as a more female-dominated sphere; civil society was also seen as a more equitable place by nature; for women, men and LGBTQ+ individuals who altogether prefer to work in this sector which offers an alternative where they said "If we approach via binary gender system, I've run into more women. If I include gender identity and sexual orientation...I don't think there is a very unequal environment. This is just an observation, there is no numerical data" (10K28), or;

I observed that there are more females in NGOs or places where LGBTI individuals prefer to work. They may be thinking that it is a more empathetic environment... Regardless of the scope of the association, I saw that women and men workers have almost the same point of view. 3K31

We used to be a foundation where only women worked...Now it is more evenly distributed; men also come. I honestly think it is an egalitarian organization. I mean, there is no such thing as women can't do this, men can't carry this (no)... I see it as a field where women carry boxes and men use manual dexterity. 2K33

Participants also mentioned that the dominance of women or men in terms of the number of people involved; changes according to institution type or field of work. Women were said to be working more in NGOs that raise awareness and target disadvantaged groups, women, children, or the disabled fields, as well as within less institutionalized, smaller and local NGO types – especially formed as associations (*dernek*) and foundations (*vakıf*).

Also, the fields of disaster recovery and humanitarian aid were mentioned as workspaces where labor division may play out more in favor of men since manual labor may be required. It was also mentioned that men hold positions of power:

I think associations are always female, that is, in disabled, children's fields, women are predominant. Environment is a little different, disasters and such are a little more mixed. For example, all hometown associations are men... (But) all people around me are women, I mean only the presidents are men... Especially in federations that are more traditional, male population is higher... (If) Work is activity-based, in other words, if it is heavy, there are women there. 16K40

Maybe I can answer by classifying civil society into two sections. Institutions that are more institutionalized such as ASAM and Kızılay...should be evaluated separately... If we look at the medium and small-sized CSOs, you know, national or local, there is a concentration of women, I observe. 8K30

I don't know what happens with humanitarian aid or with like going to a war, or post-war zone. I don't think there is an obstacle in ecology. Generally in our field, women work... Likewise, our executive positions are also balanced... But when I look around in a meeting; everyone, the board director is a woman, the general manager is a woman, I am a woman, generally teams are women. 12K35

A common pattern among participants who did not state strong opinions about the existence of a gender division of labor within civil society was that women's dominance within civil society work was seen as a more *natural occurrence*, as a result of other structures. In some cases, even if the predominance of women in the sector was acknowledged; direct connections between women's choices and gender roles were avoided; not agreeing with a general attribution of civil society functions to women. One participant working as co-director for a community-based education NGO referred to the natural occurrence of female-dominated occupations in the third sector where women apply for these jobs more than men, said; "I think that women also predominate in those applications, I guess completely and naturally" (13K39) and therefore get selected while there are no visible effects of women's predominance in her organization.

On the other hand, among the participants who affirmed civil society as a female-dominated sector, *because* women do have different motivations that are constructed by their gender identities; there was a tendency to emphasize a more *active type of involvement* on the side of women workers within NGOs. In these views, women's more frequent involvement in civil society stemmed from their *power and determination*

towards recognition of rights, provision of needs and addressing injustice for all, and themselves. In this way, *women's involvement in civil society was portrayed as integral for the realization of NGOs' functions in providing solutions to social problems:*

I think there are more women, as far as I observe, but it changes in the whole CSO field...I guess women have more warrior spirits. More fearless. That's why I think more women work more, they are the ones addressing the difficulties. 6K37

It is women-intensive because CSOs have the function of redressing injustice and fulfilling needs. And in this country, unfortunately, because women suffer the most from that injustice, it's a more female-dominated group. 7K48

Even though civil society was commonly categorized as female-intensive, this may not reflect on the distribution of management roles in civil society organizations. Some participants saw civil society as another place where women and men are not equal in power, even if women's prevalence is higher compared to other works (14K29). It was mentioned that "women are really in the majority, but with one difference, men are more in executive positions" (8K30), or they said "I don't think there is such a majority on management. It is at most equal; maybe more men...While women dominate numerically, there are losses on the management side" (14K29).

In the case of male participants, they were employed in an institution where gender equality was pursued as a policy; they reported a lack of gender based labor division as women and men were represented in management. However, they all agreed that their workplace was women-intensive, giving statistics such as 90 percent for some jobs and 70% for overall (18E30, 19E33). They provided different reasons for women's predominance, ranging from economic explanations determining men and women's choices and women's preference for more gender equality practices as well as flexibilities for reproduction, such as in cases of pregnancy which are more equitable in civil society:

Women may actually prefer this space because of working conditions. Yes, it is economically a bit lower, but the working conditions and benefits are clear... We hear that there are organizations saying "why did you get pregnant?" but there is no such situation here. Civil society organization, since the wages are not very high economically, women's work is a little more intensive. 19E33

Take simply, the pregnancy process. We can be much more flexible in terms of leave, such as facilitating rights and so on... In many positions, I can say that our

organization is supportive and has no discriminatory role in that regard, on the contrary, it has a more facilitative and pioneering role. 20E32

All in all, the view of *civil society as a female-intensive sphere of work* was one of the most agreed upon situations among participants, even though their approach to the causes and consequences of such female dominance varied.

3.1.1.2. Women care more and take on more civil society work

Another trend frequently mentioned was that *women take on more civil society work because they care more*. Some participants mentioned that the current understanding which depicts *caregiving as women's job* may lead to influence women's motivations for working in this sector. Participants offered a variety of explanations as to why women care more, too. Some participants reflected on the distribution of caregiving in societies which leads to delegation of civil society work to women, seen as an extension of women's caregiving attributes. Participants commonly aligned the caregiving in civil society with social service while they criticized the naturalization of care work as an extension of women's compassion; as a result men were seen as separated from the act of caring which reflects on civil society and its characterization as a female sphere:

Culturally we have given women the responsibility of being caregivers. I think we look at social services and civil society from the same place...I guess we think that women's compassion (*şefkat*) is more important in civil society, but I think it has nothing to do with the subject. 16K40

There is still no gender equality in the family. I accept that women are only seen as cooks and caregivers, but really men are also given that role. You can't go to the hospital and cry. When we look at it, woman is oppressed but the man doesn't even realize he is oppressed...I saw this while working in this field. 2K33

The perception of *caregiving as women's job* may lead to economic and social consequences, but also offer space for empowerment and self-realization as well as economic participation whereas reasons of advocacy may be more appealing to women:

I think women in the sector are basically involved in this caregiver thing again... Also, I mean, making money while advocating for rights, it sounds a bit ugly when you put it like that, but when you look at it practically, because of the win-win situation, let's say that we are more inclined towards this field. 1K28

Some participants were more embracing of this caring characteristic, as they mentioned that women may find more opportunities in the third sector *because* their caring attributes play a role. Moving beyond a concern for gender equality, some participants suggested caring may be embraced by women as a strong suit instead:

Of course, gender equality, but at the same time, justice and accepting femininity through newer feminist movements. Just because we are equal, we don't have to think like men in everything. If we have a care-giving instinct, of course..., trying not to experience it just to not conform to those standards and norms is a further inhibition, I try to stay away from it. Therefore, I think that this is a field where women are more common due to this frequently encountered situation. 11K36

I think different hormonal qualities such as sharing, being supportive, being caregivers may also lie on emotional levels of women. Sometimes we have this positive quality, too. I tend to see women in a more benevolent condition. 4K31

Approaching the relationship of care and NGO work, there were references to women's more active role in developmental activities performed in the context of civil society. Women's giving nature, nurturant qualities and maternal instincts as well as their aptitude for more self-development were mentioned; "In my opinion, meaningful fields like providing a remedy for the bleeding wounds of the society are mostly embraced by women. Maybe this is due to feminine characteristics" (13K39). Women's activeness in civil society was seen as an extension of efforts to change their environments by taking on more responsibility in the solutions of social challenges; by taking up NGO work and volunteering more— a point that also came up in men's narratives:

...If we talk about the volunteers; for example, if we are giving trainings, there are only a maximum of 2 male volunteers in every 2 trainings, for example, in this specific field... When I think about this, all three of my (women) teammates were our volunteers. 2K33

In professional work in civil society, we can see men, but they are less visible in more voluntary works. It's like 5 women to one man. In terms of volunteering, yes, I just asked this, they think that they cannot 'do it' as a volunteer in this field, but when we launch a vacancy, everyone applies. 4K31

Still, it was a point of divergence among participants whether to accept or reject women's identification with caregiving and its effect on NGO workers' motivations; an issue I discussed further under the pattern of participants' *caring motivations* as a part of their work/life reconciliation and the discussions of *NGOs as caring actors*.

3.1.1.3. Flexible and precarious jobs; women as secondary wage earners

Some participants had a tendency to label NGO work *as flexible and precarious work* that is appropriate for women. Those who thought that compared the desirability of NGO work for both men and women in terms of financial retributions, job security and upwards mobility where they characterized NGO jobs as being more in line with *women's secondary position as wage earners who are able to take on flexible jobs*. NGO work was commonly perceived as an *insecure and low-paying* type of employment which women were socially perceived as more suitable to tolerate the lower wages and lack of job security as secondary earners. Especially the *flexibility* argument for women's labor was brought up by many participants as a point of critique for its precariousness, devaluation and lack of prestige while it was also stated as one of the causes of feminization of NGO work. Due to less expectation from women than men for income generation, women were said to be able to choose civil society work, whereas men cannot:

It is a precarious, flexible field where relative salaries are not enough to sustain a life. In fact, when we look at our society as a whole, it seems as if women's labor is an additional income for the household. It feels like a man cannot work with such uncertainty... Men who have worked in civil society try to leave after a point, to get more secure jobs. Of course women do this, too. But the number of men is decreasing every moment. 17K34

As I said, society has expectations from men for a more income-generating, more established profession. When you say that you work for an NGO, the society looks down upon it more... Women find a place in that machine more easily... Both financially and in terms of having badges on your shoulder. There is a perception that being an NGO worker is more fragile, more feminine, but it is not. 7K48

Regarding this angle of *flexibility*, there was also caution about branding the whole sector flexible. For example, Participant 9K27 said that civil society was *not as flexible as thought*, while another pointed out that not all NGOs may offer flexibility; “Well, I honestly thought..., about flexible working hours and working style. I think this can be a reason for women, but this is not something that exists in all organizations” (1K28).

This brings us to the next pattern about women's precarious employment within civil society – the difficulties reported on the provision of labor rights, job security and access to equal opportunities in the cases of recruitment choices, pay conditions; especially

stemming from the prevalence of project (or contract) based employment in the sector, as well as cases of wage inequity and maternity leave problems:

Men are being paid more. In the recruitment process they think "now this person is pregnant and cannot stay until the end of the project. Therefore, let's not include her in this project right now". And when we try to discuss this from a rights-based perspective, the organization says "if she goes on maternity leave in the middle of a one-year project, it will be disrupted. We try to provide sustainable support to people, so it actually affects the quality of the work. 17K34

Some institutions are very sensitive about this (gender) issue, but unfortunately some institutions are not. About management or about leaves. (A colleague) wants to go on maternity leave, for example, for 6 months and her contract is also for 6 months. So people may experience problems like that. 9K27

Participants emphasized that NGO work is delegated to women and deemed as women's work leading to the devaluation and invisibility of their work. They mentioned that NGO jobs are constructed as women's jobs by naturalization and undervaluation of women's labor while third sector is reflected as a more caring and less prestigious line of work; as they said "It is not prestigious to work in civil society. It is seen as a woman's job... Even if you are the general coordinator, you are still working in civil society" (4K31) or;

Sometimes I find civil society to be very sexist, because everyone is so accepting of being a woman and caregiving...this is not only on our backs, don't be ridiculous, because I don't think it's fair, all the social problems in the world, are (left to us) women after all. 16K40

Lastly, the lack of financial sustainability in the sector was mentioned as a limitation on the ability of NGO managers to protect female coworkers from precarious conditions under conditions of lack of state support even if women in NGOs provide social good as one participant said "these measures for women should remain in place, but the state should offer support for NGOs...At the end of the day, civil society works for the public good... Therefore, yes, the state should allocate funds for this" (8K30).

In sum, participants categorized civil society as a sphere of work where women can get more flexibly employed as *secondary earners*, but are also susceptible to the challenges of *precarious* forms of employment that are prevalent in the sector.

3.1.1.4. Gendered jobs and glass ceilings in NGOs

Even if there was some disdain among participants to view civil society work from a gendered lens and the range within which participants agreed on its implications varied; certain *gendered patterns in the distribution of NGO work* were mentioned. Participants cited cases where women and men were preferred for roles according to their perceived physical, mental and emotional capabilities as access to leadership was also brought up. Participants said that fieldwork and contact jobs were formed by women in majority, whereas men filled support, technical, management and manual labor requiring jobs as well as more sustainable and decision-making positions as they said “men are more in the role of trainers and on the management side in civil society. I can't remember if I met a male psychologist in civil society; but I met a lot of women” (2K33). In the experience of participants, a majority of *psychologists, social workers, HR, reporters, evaluators and field workers*, were women; it was said “There are no men in the team, everyone is a woman, and they are all psychologists, social workers and all women... Therefore, yes, I think that some jobs are now attributed to genders” (15K29). Women were characterized as the “faces of the field, doing the community work” (17K34); supporting people *directly*. NGO workers especially shared observations from the vast recovery field in the aftermath of January 2023 earthquake:

Earthquake recovery was a site where men were really needed, and again, most people there were women... In NGOs, at least HR and such are women. IT and other parts are all men. There are women in the report writing parts like us in M&E... (Men) are directly in decision-making positions. But again, most people working in the field who try to provide support are women. 4K31

If there is something specific meant for men, men are hired; but psychosocial support, working with children, providing psychological support to adults, there is a high concentration of women in these areas. Social workers are also dominated by women. Men are a little more on the support side; procurement, logistics, finance...these are generally sustainable jobs. 17K34

Some participants did not agree on a gendered definition of jobs within civil society, in line with their previous understanding of civil society as a more equal place where jobs that are performed within NGOs can not be attributed to a gender. Jobs requiring physical labor were characterized as the only place where there was a preference for male

employment; “we said that we are all women as staff. We need a man, to benefit from his physical strength and finishing skills. Such a person has been hired” (6K37).

Still, there were more reports of cases where *women (or men) may be chosen for certain NGO jobs*. Several factors were listed, for example, women may be preferred in education for *children’s security reasons*. Also, there may be *cultural and religious factors* behind the choice of NGOs to employ women workers since they serve populations, and they have to be in contact with them and share spaces as “this is an unwritten law, but only women can provide support in hospitals...Therefore, at some points, women are selected for some of our services, but this is completely related to the population we serve” (2K33). Women were also said to be preferred as a *less risky choice* since they are perceived as having inherently the necessary skills and attitudes for better job performance; such as *the ability to nurture, nourish, be more open and have social sensitivities* as well as for fieldwork involving visits to private homes, hospitals and contact with different populations such as children, parents, health workers, conservative families. Meanwhile men were also mentioned to be needed in the field for contact with at-risk groups, and general male populations as fieldwork has its own requirements:

I don't want to confront a man with a child... There is already a widespread belief that women can naturally work better with children...Let's say there are 2 psychologists to recruit, we usually prefer a woman and a man. If we receive applications from 2 men, we don't hire. We say that one of them should definitely be a woman. If we receive 2 female applications, we hire 2 women because we think that women are more open in this field, more comfortable working with groups and so on, because of their social sensitivities. 17K34

When talking about 2 people in the field, it should be a woman and a man. Because the person you meet in the field, you go to their house,...women talk to women, men talk to men. This is our social rule, basically. I don't think this leads to the thinking of women being more appropriate for fieldwork. 1K28

It was also stressed by participants that management jobs were gendered – hence, the existence of a *glass ceiling* in civil society was frequently discussed. In NGOs, while women can be found as medium level managers; they were reported as more scarce in the

upper management. Referring to a Turkish pop song¹⁵, one participant voiced her frustration about gender segregation in the management level as “We got calluses from crashing into those glass ceilings” (15K29). Participants mentioned that women are in intermediate management positions such as coordinators, while they said “in higher level management, for example, I encountered men more often” (2K33) or “even if there are women in management, when I attend meetings, I observed that they don't act without consulting men” (4K31) while others said that;

Women are more visible in intermediate management. When we look at senior managers, there is a little more male concentration. Something gets stuck in the glass ceiling there, also in the field of civil society. Even though visibility is high, I wonder how much women are involved in decision-making. 17K34

I see women more in roles serving the community, also among managers...So, they have us manage projects, work as operations directors, program quality managers and so on...Only if we gave up (segregation) and aim for the inclusion of women in such positions as country director, board of trustees, etc... 11K36

Male participants also reported similarly as they said the content of jobs may require gender preference, like theirs requires that male colleagues are also hired to meet the needs of the target group (addicts), or there are social prejudices which make it harder for women to get accepted in certain environments. However, they reported that hiring males may be challenging, especially in smaller cities, due to predominance of women in certain social fields. In sum, participants mentioned that NGO jobs may be constructed in *gendered* ways; whereas there are *glass ceilings* facing women in civil society.

3.1.1.5. Gender effect on prior education, volunteering and profession choice

One last finding about women's work and predominance in civil society was that these may be explained by more systemic causes affecting labor market choices. Accordingly, it was common to suggest that *prior education, volunteering and professional choices* reflect the current female intensive condition of civil society work as the skills and

¹⁵ Zeynep Casalini, *Duvar* (2004): “Biz o duvarlara çarpa çarpa nasır tuttuk” [“We got calluses from crashing into those walls”].

experience that most NGO jobs require are provided within education departments which are also female dominated; they said “It’s as if more space is opened up for women... I think about which graduates we hire: social service, psychology or child development... that can be considered female-dominated. So a concentration of women feels normal” (17K34). The point of volunteering was specifically brought up as an important effect on civil society choice and women’s predominance in it was mentioned both by women and men participants as a factor of female majority of NGO workers.

Participants mentioned that NGO workers frequently come from *social sciences*. In the narratives of participants, many expertise-based occupations were mentioned as frequent among paid NGO workers. Participants listed departments such as psychology, social service, child development, sociology and social science, economics and management faculties and communication whose graduates are found more frequently within the third sector. As they questioned their own choices, it was also mentioned that women turn more to such occupations in civil society, but also in other sectors, too:

It has to do with the education process, but in general, when you look at the education and service sector, it's always women,... in kindergartens, colleges, health... It makes me wonder, why am I not a miner or a builder? 5K39

Graduates from economics faculties do not want to work in CSOs. But recently, as the fields have expanded a lot, graduates from social work, sociology and psychology fields are turning more towards NGOs. 6K37

The earlier *preference of women to engage in volunteering* was suggested as a cause of female majority. Also, participants emphasized that women from social departments form the majority of volunteers and their field experience from university get them selected first for jobs, as their emotional and communication capabilities are more developed, too:

Since the prevalence of women in these departments is also high, I think their later involvement in this work is likewise high. It is a very communication-based job, even though it has technical parts. 14K29

Yes, women are caregivers, more emotional, they will find a place in this field, but I think there is a little more there... While men only provide financial support, women take to the field and... join CSOs more quickly... I am speaking in general, but still (in the field of men) there are none. Not in psychology, anyway. 2K33

All of the male participants cited the effect of education and volunteering as determinants of women’s predominance, too. They mentioned that in their areas of psychology, social

work and communication, or more generally in *social sciences* women were in the majority. Also, the earlier and more common involvement of women in volunteering was cited as another reason for the different participation of women and men to NGO work:

Even when a man applies, it means that the number of people (men) who want to improve themselves, who are interested in this field, is really low, unfortunately so, I can clearly say that for work and volunteer activities... The way men see it, does that bring income or profit? That's basic logic of how their mind works. But women do not have that, they look at it as social capital. 20E32

To conclude, participants mentioned many ways that gender constrains women's labor in the third sector. Civil society was characterized as a female-intensive sector where women might be employed within a gendered construct of their labor relationship as they are expected to perform the often flexible and precarious jobs which involve more *caring*; but also *fighting*, for rights and needs. Women's inclusion in the sector was defined on a basis where civil society work was seen as appropriate by women and it might even be determined by prior, or underlying structures that determine their choices and selection. Even if women were able to access more opportunities in the third sector, still they lacked equal footing with men, especially in terms of wage equity and decision-making power.

3.1.2. Men's Work in NGOs

When participants were asked to think about gender divisions of labor within civil society, they tended to discuss men's work and focused on several dimensions such as labor market conditions and socio-economic gender roles which also effect men's motivations for employment. It was common to express that men have different financial, social and personal motivations from women regarding their labor due to societal expectations from them in terms of income and social status. The main trends that emerged on men's work were the following: Men are *harder to find* in civil society, as there is a *lack of interest* from men and there are lesser men involved in fields related to civil society. Men were said to have more financial motivations and characterized as *bread-winners*, more *career-oriented* and value financial rewards while men in civil society were said to be *different*.

3.1.2.1. It's harder to find men in the field

According to participants, a lack of interest from men in NGO work was apparent throughout the job processes from lesser applications to lesser commitment to jobs held. In general, this lack of interest was stressed by participants as a consequence of NGOs offering less financial rewards. Some participants reported struggling to find male colleagues in their lines of work, as they said “It is difficult to find male psychologists. I remember there were also 3-5 men in our class, and really few become psychologists and choose this field” (2K33). Participants talked about experiences of wanting to hire them; but could hardly find candidates or male colleagues in the field:

We wanted to hire a male employee... (Because) the target group we are working with is also a risky target group to a certain extent...It's a bit too traditional, but we said ‘at least there will be a man’. We couldn't find any, there are no male employees. I mean, there are applicants, but... 8K30

3.1.2.2. Men are breadwinners

Participants referred to men's socio-economic role as primary wage-earners or *breadwinners* by stating that men may have different financial motivations, especially while discussing women's prevalence in flexible and lesser-paying NGO jobs. This was related with NGOs offering less financial rewards as well as men's higher expectations in terms of pay that are not met by civil society standards. It was also emphasized that men *may not be in a position to choose* civil society work, to fulfil social expectations:

Women working in a local association may have been there for 10 years, but men are usually either new to the sector, or they are the founders of that association, or they are recent graduates. I feel like financial concerns or expectations are higher for a man. That can be just the thing. Again one of the sexist roles... the breadwinner role. 1K28

Expectations of income generation from men via *social norms* may limit men's ability to choose civil society employment and divert them to more “*rigid*” choices. While women are able to choose occupations such as teaching and NGO work; men are expected to be chemists, engineers and managers. Further, men's obligations which are reinforced by

social norms contribute to the characterization of NGO work as women's work because men shy away from the sector due to financial reasons:

As far as I see, men are obliged to perform more income-generating work due to this (norm), society imposes this on them. This is not so rigid for women... Maybe that is the reason why young men are numerically behind in this field. 7K48

Because of gender inequality or the obligation to bring money, earning more money makes men more attractive. You know, even when you meet someone. I 'm just talking about social norms, this is not my own stance. 4K31

Male participants also agreed that men and women may have different, mainly financial motivations towards NGO work in line with the different socio-economic roles that are expected of them. One participant said this is shown in the way that;

I think that men working here already have a certain economic level, so they don't have great expectations... Maybe if they gave a little bit more money, I think the rate of male applicants would increase many, many times. 19E33

3.1.2.3. Men are more career-oriented

Participants talked about different dimensions of men's social and personal motivations as it was common to state that *men are more career-oriented*. One participant said "Now that I think about it, my struggle to get into the sector is not the same as a male coworker. I mean, they are a little more career-oriented" (1K28). It was also voiced that men are mostly interested in civil society positions when they are able to hold more power and decision-making capacity; as they may not view civil society as a career field; or if they do, they may only show interest in higher positions. One participant shared her experience of a looking-down approach from men during job interviews and recruitment interactions:

In smaller associations like ours, I think men are okay for a managerial position in an association where 3 people work, for example. But I think they don't want a lower position, I think it can also be seen in their attitudes. 8K30

Some participants also mentioned that women colleagues were more caring, attentive and diligent at their jobs as a result of being a woman, how they were raised and personal values. Also sometimes, male colleagues were described as being too work-oriented and less caring, attentive and committed while women approach their work more seriously in forms as "being attentive to needs of people in documentation" while male colleagues

were more dismissive in such cases (1K28). One participant described this as “putting yourself into the work” (4K31), while most male colleagues tended to see *work as just work*. Participants like 8K30, 15K29 and 17K34 were also making comments that men are involved with their work in a *less caring way* since it is mainly women who perform the functions of caring within civil society:

When I give tasks to teammates, female colleagues do it by putting themselves more into it, like me, while male mentors or employees just do the job and move on. They see it as "did they come or not, did they call or not. 4K31

All in all, men’s relationship with work was defined more from a *paid work* perspective, whereas women participants reported dedicating themselves more to their work and on women employees’ having a wider range of motivations for third sector work in general.

3.1.2.4. Men in civil society are different

A last trend was that women were talking about the positive way they saw their male colleagues, as it was mentioned that *men in civil society are different*; that is more in solidarity and less in controversy with women’s issues and sharing their sensitivities. The field of civil society tended to be perceived as a space where awareness is higher than *the average men*; where men and women are on a more equal footing than other sectors. According to some participants, men who stay in NGO work may hold different financial, social and personal motivations than other men, too: “Men with a high level of awareness enter, but those who don't have a high level of awareness don't prefer CSOs” (6K37).

The state of awareness was seen as a trait that makes male coworkers in civil society different than other men; bringing them closer to the values of women. Men in civil society were said to be “the same model” as women, (12K35) therefore the difference between men and women in NGO work may be due to economic determinants. Even though in general men may have more financial expectations in terms of higher-paying sustainable and long term jobs, male colleagues in the sector show a similar devotion to the field; “People I have met are all devoted to this field, who love this field. So maybe it could be on such an economic stake” (12K35).

Reference was also made to the existence of *feminine characteristics* as a common denominator such as helping those in need; being more open or softer which influence the dispositions of men as those who prefer to embrace this field may possess more of these feminine traits: “Men can also take part, men also have feminine characteristics. Men a little more predisposed and open on that side may be able to prefer it more” (13K39). Whereas it was underlined that men who don’t have such characteristics and are more masculine, assertive may stay away, or even pushed back, in the civil society space:

Our male volunteer profile is like that, those who come, show more feminine characteristics, calmer, softer, in terms of tone of voice and so on... In that case, it may be about us, maybe we give an energy...I think this shows that those who can stand out and have a more assertive character, do not prefer civil society as much. It may be a bit related to financial satisfaction, but it is mostly women. 8K30

This concludes the discussion on the subtheme of *Men’s Work in NGOs*, which according to participants, is shaped as a result of wider economic and social structures, similar to women’s work.

3.1.3. Gender Equality in a Feminized Space

Another subtheme that came up was that workers were referring to gender equality policies in NGOs. A considerable number of women participants said they have not experienced a sort of gender-based discrimination within civil society as it was seen as a more equal and transformative sphere in terms of gender relations as a feminized field; as they said things like “we call it the third sector, compared to public and private sectors. It is different, in the end, it has a transformative effect due to higher number of female employees” (11K36) or;

Honestly, I have never had problems in this regard. In fact, we work in a way where this is not seen as a disadvantage or an advantage. So I don't think I was exposed to anything based on my gender. 3K31

The main trend was to report on the success of widespread gender equality policies in the sector; even though the real impact of these policies were questioned by many participants. Others cited some discriminations experienced by women based on sex, age and religion as well as a certain disregard for their skills, experience and opinions.

3.1.3.1. Gender equality as a policy in NGOs

The NGO field was commonly perceived as a more equitable environment due to shared values of those in the field on gender equality and policies implemented at the employer level. Participants gave diverse examples of workplace policies such as more options for leave, holidays or flexibility within the context of civil society employment. These improve gender equality and provide worker rights such as maternity, birth, fatherhood or period leaves which are gender-specific or other activities which indirectly improve gender equality both at the workplace and private lives of workers. Participants reported on their organization's policies where they said "There are maternity, period leaves for women. For men,... we tripled the official leave or so... I think we are balanced, everyone sees everyone as human beings. I think we approach from a place beyond gender" (13K39) and they said for their INGOs and local NGOs things like;

My own organization pays attention to this... I mean, I am not just saying this for the female gender. In fact, it provides support to the person with transitions, or I never had a problem as an administrative staff or as a manager. 9K27

Although participants talked about civil society more positively on gender issues, NGOs' policies were sometimes critiqued. A participant who agreed with the statement that NGOs are more equal places continued to question their efficiency in the provision of gender equality within the organizations or within the overall progress in the field:

Women are in abundance, but quantity or quality? Country directors I come across are still mostly men. There are some new concepts such as white washing, gender washing and so on. Like, international non-governmental organizations... bring a woman leader from the global south as head of the organization, but it still feels a bit like that (for show). How transformative is it? Scandals are still happening. Harassment still occurs... These people are not removed from their positions due to fear of losing funding and so on. 11K36

Funding resources were also said to impact employment policies positively as international funders prioritize gender issues. Especially at the forefront were international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), the staff of whom reported better workplace policies in terms of gender equality; but also better pay and career options in general: "My observations and intuitions are that women work more, considering the whole sector; but at the places where I worked, it was almost equal" (1K28).

Lastly, male participants shared a gender equality perspective of their own institution, as a reputable widespread NGO in Türkiye which already has gender policies in place. All participants were quite endorsing of ideas of gender equality as well as its implications in civil society as a more equal sphere giving women opportunities without constraining them based on their reproductive capacities. They still mentioned certain gender gaps between men and women, based on socio-economic factors as well as workplace equity, especially in the case of women's lack of equal representation in upper management.

3.1.3.2. Sexism, agism and discrimination

Participants recalled discriminations, even if they hadn't experienced it themselves, many mentioned having heard or seen the experiences of other women in the sector. They reported that practices of *sex, gender, age, faith and ethnicity-based discriminations* within the sector may still exist. A participant summarized her experience with multiple discriminations, especially when in the field in rural Türkiye:

It was said (for me) 'you brought a woman to this field, someone who is not Kurdish, and she is not even an Alevi'... When you are both young and a woman, another barrier is added. Because I feel that only women who are older and have more life experience can make more sense. 17K34

One participant looking from a non-binary perspective referred to a lack of diversity in certain NGOs, while she has been employed so far in the area of women and LGBTQ+ which have a gender equality angle and therefore not experienced discrimination herself. However, she heard of such discriminatory approaches based on hierarchies in gender identity and sexual orientation; "There are NGOs where the balance of women and men or the diversity of gender identity and sexual orientation are unevenly distributed, or there are people who report being subjected to mansplaining frequently" (10K28).

Participants reported that gender divisions of labor also give rise to horizontal segregation where some fields dominated by males are harder to enter. One participant described such an experience of discrimination in her main field of technology in forms of different wages, mobbing, not being assigned to certain roles or not being asked to give trainings in her expertise while male colleagues are favored (4K31).

In addition to the effect of gender, some participants reported that women were subjected to further discrimination *based on religious views*. My only veiled participant brought up the issue while discussing her gender experience in NGO work within the contemporary civil society in Türkiye. As a sphere mirroring the socio-political fractures in the country; she felt she isn't only *a woman*, but always a '*veiled woman*' who sensed prejudice and discrimination in this civil society dominated by the secular segment:

I also think that being a woman is different in terms of what kind of woman you are, which segment of society you are from. Because in the civil society we work, the secular community is more dominant, there are not many veiled employees... So the moment I put on the headscarf, I am already taking a stance... In this secular context, although it may seem as though women are supported, I think no, somehow men are still in the decision-making position... Like how a manager said 'we hired her because no one would refuse to grant funding to her'. 8K30

The same participant reported disappointment with an experience with international partners from when she and a female colleague were disturbed by the intrusive behavior of an older man with former authority who targeted them with sexist accusations, as she said "When you look at it, it is very integrated with gender norms, so he thinks he can strike us with that" (8K30). Participants reported disappointment with how discrimination is handled under the unwillingness of NGOs to take complaints seriously and work the mechanisms that are in place; leading to further alienation of women. It was reported that "religion-based discriminations may occur" (3K31); as women may be discriminated based on their features such as being veiled which increase the vulnerability of women in the workplace:

Many people have these kinds of experiences. Or there is a very male-dominated environment and women feel excluded, subjected to sexist expressions... Especially if they are veiled. Their experiences are minimized in the civil sphere, and these people complain, institutions have mechanisms. But they never want to be associated with this. So complaints are ignored or covered up. 17K34

3.1.3.3. Women are disregarded

The last dimension of gender equality and discriminations within civil society was reported on a more abstract, immaterial level in the form of a general *disregard* of women's attributes; diminishing their skills, expertise, opinions and contributions in more

subtle ways. Many participants, reported having felt that their knowledge and expertise did not matter because they were included *as women*. Participants also reported on how certain characteristics, such as being women *and* young, worsen their situation in cases where they said; “If a man speaks, it is more acceptable. If a woman speaks, of course it is less acceptable” (17K34), or,

When you are a man, your word has much more value. First, you are listened to much more, decision-making mechanisms are male. And that male to male listening state, even if it’s like "babe, bro, this is not working" or something like that, it is very tiring. 15K29

Participant 17K34 detailed how she strategized using this as an advantage when dealing with men, by leaving presentations and work discussions to male colleagues to achieve results with her work. Another younger participant cited women’s position as undermined by the male-serving ideas of power which characterize female inclusion in the sphere of civil society, questioning one conflict with an intern by asking “would they have done that if I was a 30-year old men with a suit?” or the period that they were not taken seriously where she considered gender as a whole issue “engraved in the fabric of people’s minds” (8K30). She summarized the constrained position of women in conflicts especially with older, more powerful males:

I realized that if you are an obedient and compliant female employee, there is no serious problem, but if you try to take a lead, take a stance, unfortunately, you face very serious consequences both in civil society and your organization...You will take a stance against a male person, who is bald, has charisma and is known by the association? Those are a bit difficult. 8K30

Women who work with the public sector also reported experiencing challenges in that area as women, for example, one participant referred to the infrequent situation of dealing with women decision-makers from the public sector while having to work with male managers with who she struggled to be taken seriously as a manager herself (9K27). Another participant also talked of a similar gender-based hierarchy with such encounters that place the NGO worker in a less-respective position against the public sector:

Being a woman worker in the public sector is very different from civil society. When you are in the public sector, for a man from another public institution or a man from an NGO, you are Ms. X. But when you meet those people through civil society, the second time it's “What's up X? 1K28

All in all, even against relative gender equality and policies, women were said to still experience discrimination in NGOs and become subject to sexism as male decision-making mechanisms do not allow space for women's assertiveness and voice.

3.2. Social Reproduction in Civil Society

Here, I will present my findings under the following 2 subthemes. First, I will discuss *NGOs as Caring Actors* where I will report on participant narratives about how civil society plays a role in the provision of social needs of our societies and the types of socially reproductive labors that take place in the NGOs. Then, I will discuss participant reports on what happens *Beyond the Boundaries of Paid Work* and their experiences with their own labor, focusing on its unpaid dimensions within the civil society context.

3.2.1. NGOs as Caring Actors

In our discussions of this subject, participants reported on several dimensions of social reproduction, i.e. care within the civil society context. While a majority of the participants agreed with a presumable definition of civil society as an intermediary of caring in our societies and gave examples of such situations from their own jobs or activities of civil society where care is provided; there were some who did not agree with such a definition of NGOs as caring actors. In such cases of disagreement, participants cited that caring does not correspond with the functions of civil society; whereas some mentioned that caring is a small part of what is being done in the sphere as a whole. I will continue to explore points of convergence and divergence as I go through each trend below.

3.2.1.1. Filling in the gaps and too much responsibility

Civil society was positioned as distinct from the public and private sectors, i.e. as a *third sector*, within the provision of social care. It was commonly perceived as a *bridge* between sectors or as a separate sphere where issues and needs left unattended as well as the *gaps in between* were addressed. Participants also gave perceptions of the actual role

of civil society within wider social structures; “certain gaps concerning all of us which are worthwhile and necessary to find solutions for, are perceived by CSOs” (13K39). They explored NGOs as necessary components of social care structures where:

NGOs cannot exist on their own, unfortunately, because they will need income and their work (needs to be) supported... What happens is a bit more about the politics and such in Türkiye, from the point of view of the current government, no matter which party comes to power... In fact, NGOs are in a position that lightens the burden of the state a lot, so they should exist. They can quickly and actively take over places where the state should not even bother with anymore. 3K31

According to a participant from women’s economic empowerment field, NGOs are coming to the aid of public sector which is drowning in a wide range of issues and “pouring resources all over the map” (7K48) trying to come up with top-down solutions to problems. Instead, cooperation can take place because while the state actors are busy solving the problems of infrastructure, NGOs address the needs of people in the field, like their elderly care project, for example, where they plan to perform home visits and safety trainings for the elderly in lieu of the public actors:

The municipality has no power, money, or time to do this and it is very difficult to find experts in this field. That's where the NGO says “My friend, I can do this. You support me.” At that point, it becomes really easy to work together. 7K48

It was common that the responsibility for the infrastructure and the macro organization of society’s needs were attributed to public actors due to the insufficiency of financial resources; but NGO workers still saw civil society as an integral part of social services. The way they offer services was viewed differently than especially the public sector; where civil society *filled the gap* for more human-centered service provision:

Absolutely, this is a very, very essential field in terms of providing a common society,... actually filling the needs that the state or many public institutions cannot provide. I think there is no other type of work or sector that puts people and social benefit at the very forefront, and that is why it is so important. 4K31

Civil society is a space where people support each other, where real needs are met, but unfortunately there are those who abuse it... If the state did its part, there would be no need for civil society... If (NGOs) weren’t in such a quest for financial resources, maybe they would continue to provide services or offer ideas to improve things, but they wouldn't need to be so service-oriented. 2K33

This type of provision was viewed as unsustainable because it may create dependent relations between beneficiaries and NGOs which provide services and aid as they may keep NGO workers accountable but also because societal needs need more collective solutions. Besides, the expansion of NGOs' service coverage may allow the state to freeride on these activities and it may end up relegating these activities to civil society:

I think there is such a perception in the public as well. Expecting everything from Ahbap (Association), as if it's the state... It's an NGO, should it do all these?.. I think the state has a perception like, 'there are people doing this and they are being held accountable, we are not accountable, let them continue'. 14K29

Even though NGOs fill gaps by providing necessary services for vulnerable populations, care-based approaches were questioned on the lack of sustainability. Strengthened implication of social services beyond caring and above NGOs' capacity were needed:

Where the state cannot create resources, CSOs fill this gap. When you look at it like this, yes, there is a care-giving situation in NGOs, but as I said, this only works when it is long-term and sustainable... In other words, we need to discuss social service, not PSS¹⁶, in this country, we need to strengthen it. 5K39

One participant who is a social worker at an NGO in the LGBTQ+ field felt astonished with the amount of service required from them as she said that “this amount of workload and full responsibility shouldn't necessarily be on our shoulders” (10K28) and mentioned how state actors were even referring beneficiaries to them, in spite of having more resources at hand. While discussing civil society's functions in taking care of society's needs, a male participant who worked as an assistant manager also referred to a state where too much responsibility is on the shoulders of NGOs. From a very similar vein with female participants, he was critical of the over expectation from NGOs; observable in the disaster zone where NGOs were taking primary role of supporting people:

Everything was so overwhelmingly on the shoulders of NGOs at some points. Because there are so many NGOs, I saw that the state could not really catch up with things. I think at these points, NGOs should of course serve and do what they can at the point of support. But they should not be primary. I think the first priority should be the state, the state should support this process. 18E30

¹⁶ PSS stands for Psychosocial Support or Psychological Support Services

All in all, civil society was seen as an *indispensable pillar* because the system falls short. Participants were concerned about gaps in social service and provision of societal needs while frequently questioning the effectiveness of NGOs' caring, supporting and aid-providing services as well as the lack of advocacy and ineffectiveness of social policies which have consequences on the labor situation of NGO workers who struggle to meet the expectations of their work and beneficiaries under pervasive financial constraints.

3.2.1.2. Social reproduction (care) labor of NGO workers

Participants brought up several dimensions of NGO work and listed a wide range of activities performed by NGOs which corresponded to caring activities. Also, I identified patterns from participants' own reports on the caring dimensions of their paid work in NGOs and analyzed their job descriptions from the outlook of care. Overall, several caring features were attributed to NGO jobs such as *giving support, empowering, listening, guiding, mentoring, protecting and contributing*. Also, within the narratives of participants on care-based approaches; NGO labor tended to be perceived as a *necessary, essential, natural* and *voluntary* labor; whereas the motivation and effect of *personal responsibility* was a dimension of NGO workers' relationship with their labor.

To start with, there were participants who directly associated NGO labor with caregiving and identified with this definition by reflecting on how their own motivations and activities at work and their private lives intersect on the basis of a caring approach both towards work and family:

PKO: would you say that (your work) is a kind of social form of care giving?

Yes, I would definitely say that and I realize that it's more than work and that sometimes it doesn't feel good, but like in a family, it needn't feel good all the time. We are mutually supportive and I try to be supportive as much as I can. 4K31

Social care giving? Yes, why not. For example, when we focus on teachers, prospective teachers and families as such, we can say that we are undertaking a kind of care giving by equipping them with competencies pertaining to their well-being and the areas they occupy and intersect with in their lives. 13K39

NGO labor was seen as a *necessary* labor; as an intermediary in the realization of our common needs where NGOs and workers embrace that necessity of providing society's needs via self-responsibility:

If there is a society, it needs many things. But not everyone can meet these needs. There must be different NGOs so that those needs can be met... I am also involved in this, so I think it is very effective and important for the NGO field to do such things and it is good for people. They feel that they are not alone. 6K37

If I see it, hear it, know it, I'm also responsible for it. So, I think everyone embraces these places according to their own tendencies...We have natural tendencies. So not everybody can own every issue. 13K39

One participant highlighted the amount of care and mental effort they put into their work and the *empowering* dimension of their labor which motivate them; however in terms of labor requirements, they were struggling under that burden. NGOs provide more flexible environments where they are *doing the best they can* to answer real needs; but the public sector's relegation of social work to NGOs result in a never-ending workload and burnout:

I am very, very, very busy because the public sector is not doing anything... I can say, "Look, there is such a need. We need to do something about this. Let's find resources for it..., demand something". While we can do these things, they don't allow it in the public sector, (they say) 'stay in your seat'. 10K28

A range of *caring attitudes and approach* to the performance of work, based on attributes such as *being attentive, thoughtful, empathetic, initiative-taking and support-minded* were mentioned by NGO workers. Caring approaches were often in the form of taking personal time and initiative to help beneficiaries via communication and directing personal resources to their service. For example, Participants 2K33, 4K31 and 5K39 reported that they had developed supportive materials and training programs to support the people in the field by own initiatives. Especially Participant 4 was dedicating a lot of personal effort for disadvantaged groups such as women, refugees and youth while she was engaged in a plethora of supportive activities within civil society outside of her work.

Participants reported thinking about their beneficiaries' needs, but also of those around them and how to help them in the best way on their own time. For example, Participant 3K31 who works with addicts as a social worker talked about how she strives for her clients' and their families' wellbeing. Also, Participant 6K37, as a teacher, reported being

attentive to the needs of her beneficiaries who are children sick with cancer and their parents needing her constant support for which she continues to engage in communication and show support. Participants 11K36, 13K39, 15K29, 16K40 and 17K34 also reported approaching beneficiaries by being attentive of answering to their needs, by empathizing, listening and being there for them:

“I had to collect bread from the garbage.” This is actually a very heavy story of poverty and desperation... I could have just brushed it off or said “how did that make you feel” and not dealt with it when the woman left. But I think this is where being a civil society worker comes into play. Yes, I may not take her by the arm and to the market or something, but I refer her to case management, I follow...When there are such shocking stories, I feel the need to get support from someone. Because I feel very helpless at such times. 15K29

Participant 8 reported that as a result of intensive emotional labor as they provide social support to children and youth under protection, she felt like *the mother of all children under protection* and engaged in a caring; as well as right-based approach to her work. A caring approach was also extended to coworkers, especially in the case of managers, such as participants 2K33, 5K39, 8K30, 12K35 and 13K39 where they reported caring for and protecting the wellbeing of their colleagues, too.

On the other hand, there were some participants who did not want to define civil society labor as caring, even though they may agree that an amount of care or a similar service was provided. For example, Participant 9K27 working in M&E¹⁷ field after having done some field work with immigrants and she did not believe that their labor in NGOs corresponded to caring. She had a motivation based on taking part in changemaking areas of advocacy and policy-oriented work. Similarly, Participant 12K35 did not define civil society as a caregiving area *per se*, because caring would reflect a limited function of civil society, which was solving problems, even if she thought it may be defined as caring in its broadest sense. Her civil society motivation also revolved around the idea of making a difference through her work. Lastly, it was stated by one participant that even though

¹⁷ Measurement and Evaluation, or MEAL: Monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning

NGOs do not provide care; beneficiaries may sometimes expect that kind of approach, as in the case of LGBTQ+, where limitations need to be shown:

We are not caregivers, but clients may try putting us into the position of caregivers...They want us to support them under all circumstances, to meet all their needs and they think that we have unlimited powers. At this point, we try to explain the field we work in and the facilities we have. 10K28

It was also emphasized that caregiving or a care-based approach to work depended on the groups of people that workers were in contact with and type of services provided. Especially those who were working with children demonstrated a caring motive in their work relationship. The emotional labor and hardship of setting boundaries at work with children were also mentioned. Some participants mentioned that it was hard to separate work from private life; both because they chose to engage in caregiving or because it was hard for children to respect the boundaries, too. Mainly, participants who were working with disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, disabled and migrants were reporting a care-based approach:

It's partly because I embrace what I do because of my nature, but also in the field of children and youth under protection, of course there is more ownership because they are younger in terms of age and it fits perfectly. 8K30

Lastly, in the case of male participants, the association of civil society with care did not resonate poorly, as they mentioned care as something that “NGOs should have” since they work for public benefit (18E30), or they agreed with this definition and gave examples where they thought caring may be happening in civil society, even though they heard this for the time (20E32) or it didn’t define their own job function (19E33):

In other words, we are actually trying to keep them away from these risks by creating awareness through preventive work or healthy living or life skills training. So this is actually care. It is to give the ability to protect oneself from evils, diseases. We are doing this only in this field, but many NGOs are also doing this. An NGO working in the field of education also does this. 20E32

Furthermore, after an overview of work functions and views of participants, I identified 3 patterns of carework commonly performed in NGOs; *psychological and social support*, *livelihood support* and *personal support and connection*.

3.2.1.2.1. Psychological and social support

This was the most commonly reported type of caring work performed within the NGOs. Almost all participants engaged with a level of social support for their beneficiaries. NGO workers were often providing social services such as psychological support and counseling as well as social service consultancies to support their beneficiaries:

I work in one-on-one contact, because I am a social worker, this is my field. And we are not a large team. We are basically a team of 3 people...We offer psychological support to young people raised under protection and we have a network of psychologists. I am also actively involved in their supervision. 8K30

We provide counseling to LGBT+ people...I provide social work counseling... I convey to (clients) that we can stay in touch or they may want to come out to their families, but they are undecided. At that point, I say "Let's think together then", thus, I am offering social support. 10K28

It was mentioned how in some cases, the guidance aspect of NGO work may “transform into caregiving” (16K40), as one participant referred to her experience with hearing impaired women and seniors who she helped in this way; as well as her volunteering experience in a prominent education NGO working with children where they were looking after kids when their moms were shopping and such:

It becomes such an absurd situation almost as if I take them by the arm and take places... The other day there was a woman who had a fight with her husband and we got lawyers to get a protection order. We needed an interpreter, had to accommodate her to an hotel... Inevitably, we turned into caregivers. 16K40

As a social service expert, one participant reported that her work can be difficult, especially while taking care of clients, their dependents and families. Her work included organizing workshops and consultancy services in the field of employment as well as guidance to psychosocial support structures available publicly and in the organization:

One of your clients might be abusing their own child unknowingly. Because they are an addict but children live with them and are exposed to substance... This is a place where you have to stand by the client, but you have to protect the child's best interests, yet the systems to make this happen are very slow. 3K31

Participant 2K33 also reported about the heavy toll of her emotional labor as a psychologist/coordinator working with child cancer which led her to eventually *stop conducting individual sessions with children and families*, especially after having a child

while her previous duties included contact with hard situations as she still provided psychological counseling to diverse groups around the issue of child cancer:

I also provide psychological support to people in the field of cancer who come into contact with children, including the foundation staff... I try to increase the motivation of staff, because civil society is a very difficult field, especially ours. Nevertheless, I organize group workshops, and I give monthly supervisions to units, such as family houses, and the financial departments. 2K33

Participant 5K39 also reported now as a team leader, she is experiencing the aspect of caring for her colleagues who are having difficulties, especially due to working conditions in projects. Her career spanned through her interest in the field of supporting children with play, learning and creativity; as her experience ranges from being a clown to offering speech and play therapy. After working in the earthquake field in Gaziantep where she “stuck to every kid she could find” (5K39) to play as a staff of a travelling caravan; and experiencing a burnout, she switched to a team leader position recently where she empathizes with colleagues who are earthquake survivors:

I try to support my teammates because I went through the same process as them and conditions are very difficult...I have been on the field for 15 months, so I can understand and anticipate everything they do and think. 5K39

Participant 13 also identified her work as a social form of caregiving as they work to provide social competencies and support to teachers and families in the education field; but she said that this needs to be from an “unpatronizing place”. Their NGO works to provide community engagement, social and psychological support, coaching, learning and disaster relief programs to rural teachers and families while their beneficiaries, teachers may be demanding:

Teachers love (the organization), they feel they belong. The activities transform their lives, but they may also have extra expectations... but even if (the organization) hears teachers and tries to meet their needs, it does not mean that it will respond to every need 100% immediately. 13K39

The job of Participant 15K29 as a psychologist supporting earthquake survivors, is *opening up a space for women to talk* about the increasing violence in containers and then focusing on psychological self-care. She underlined that she aims to provide women safety and prioritizes *listening* with her work in women’s support circles:

I think we have a lot to learn from women's stories and I think they need to tell their stories too, without being interrupted, in a safe environment, knowing that no one is judging. So yes, it's not that I don't speak at all in the social circles, but I am a bit more interactive with women, (I progress) by listening to them. 15K29

Other participants also reported on dimensions of their work including provision of psychosocial support. For example, one participant was very involved in the lives of beneficiaries and she provided spaces for young women getting into technology field in her hometown Adana, mainly via personal initiative and mentoring (4K31). Another worked as a teacher in a child cancer NGO was working with children one-on-one for supporting their development via play and learning (6K37). Another participant was working with the hearing-impaired, especially women, and supporting their access to health and social support as well as creating safe spaces and advocacy (16K40).

Lastly, since all male participants were employed in the same foundation, they all reported that their NGO provides psychosocial support to addicts, as 2 of them rose up from being social workers and psychologists in the organization; while the other male participant took on a supportive, communicative role as a public relations expert.

To sum up, the pattern of psychosocial support was very strong in the field as NGOs were performing a plethora of social services that aim for the wellbeing of diverse populations.

3.2.1.2.2. Livelihood support

Many participants reported that their work supports individuals to ease their access to basic needs via economic and social empowerment. These livelihood supports were mainly designed as *sustainable solutions* to empower individuals to make their own living. They were mainly directed at removing the barriers in front of people by making them socially stronger and therefore able to join economic activity. For example, Participant 1K28 reported working to provide a sustainable life inclusive for all groups, including refugees and locals while they were engaged in rehabilitation, empowerment, and fieldwork with people. Her career spanned through an early interest in women's issues and migration while she provided several supports and humanitarian aid to different groups, now working at an INGO in migration, she said:

Our goal is to provide income generation for refugees and locals; we try to support them to build a sustainable life...We carry out rehabilitation-based empowerment in areas accessible to whole society... We work mostly in the field and conduct visits and one-on-one meetings with beneficiaries. 1K28

The work of Participant 7K48 also revolved around livelihood support to empower women's cooperatives which are completely independent women's groups. Currently involved as a Project Assistant with nearly 20 years in the NGO; she is in contact with all stakeholders of the organization. Her involvement in civil society is based on a *solidarity* principle as she values caring for all women stakeholders, which led to a burnout after the pandemic due to being very concerned for women's needs, but also for her own safety.

I realized that livelihood support projects are mainly realized in INGO and humanitarian aid NGO settings via *projects* which are mostly funded by international donors; mainly in the fields of migration and women. Participants with that sort of experience mostly agreed with a caring definition of NGO work, especially fieldwork, with some exceptions. In particular, with a lively career in INGOs and local NGOs, Participant 11K36 reported having performed livelihood support functions via development projects, in women and migration fields. Participants 4K31 and 17K34 also had similar INGO experiences where they were working with women, migrants and youth to provide various psychosocial and livelihood supports. However, Participant 9K27 with a similar career in INGOs said that NGOs are only mediaries to people's access to their needs; *not caring actors*.

Lastly, the perspective and work function of Participant 12K35 as an environmental NGO worker in the area of protection and intervention may be mentioned. She cited describing her work to her daughter as "protecting the nature; the rivers and trees like a superhero" (12K35), whereas she somewhat agreed with a caring definition of civil society as long as care is taken in its widest sense and we don't diminish NGO functions to caring.

3.2.1.2.3. Personal support and connection

It was another important finding from the field that NGO work requires an extensive amount of personal resources from workers especially in the form of personal support and connection with people. Participants reported many situations in which they took

initiative and time to support their beneficiaries personally. They talked about cases where they provided different kinds of support like *caring for, listening, talking, mentoring, giving advice, talking or messaging on the phone*, etc.

Even just listening is very important... There is no one to guide or listen to them. That's why I try to return phone calls etc. and I often feel like I am a caregiver. It's not just care, but also like mentoring... We created a space where 150 women can exchange messages and get support in software. Even this is very valuable. 4K31

You establish a bond with the child... The child always calls me, I always call when I miss them or I am available... Not only for children, but also for families. Because it is one of the best things for them to have a little time for themselves, to have someone thinking about them and planning activities. I can deduce these from observing the families, communicating and exchanging information. 6K37

While acknowledging that they work in the *difficult field* of child cancer, Participant 2K33 also talked about an extension of her services to all groups, where as a coordinator, her focus is expanded to her colleagues via psychological support and to blow off steam and have fun as a team (2K33). Participant 1K28 also reported that she never returns work calls outside of business hours, but she tells beneficiaries that they can “reach out anytime”. Lastly, Participants 4K31 and 11K36 were engaged in *mentoring*.

On the other hand, personal support and connection activities were both seen as motivational or as needing management of boundaries. For example, Participants 4K31, 6K37, 8K30 and 11K36 were more outspoken about their gladness to support people via personal resources by staying in contact, mentoring and creating safe spaces as a component of their job motivations. On the contrary, Participant 10K28 mentioned how her job followed her in other places as she was experiencing difficulties in managing her emotions as a subject of the field she works at herself, even though it felt motivating. Also, while Participant 8K30 reported being fine with providing support since her private life does not require much attention; still she emphasized a need for boundaries:

I mean, these children are already far away from social support mechanisms in terms of parental care, and what I offer sometimes goes there. Professional boundaries may get confused. I don't know, you support them in making a choice. They had an argument with their girlfriend, they are depressed, you talk about that too. So, what you give is a lot, but I feel responsible for all of them. So, yes, of course, I think this is a bad (aspect of) working in civil society. 8K30

3.2.1.3. Conditions in different NGO types

Lastly, while discussing NGOs as caring actors, it was a trend among participants to make distinctions among different types of NGOs in different categories such as *smaller, more institutionalized, local and international NGOs (INGOs)* as well as *humanitarian aid based* or *rights based* and *secular* or *solidarity* type organizations.

One forthcoming pattern of distinction was concerning the work and labor conditions in smaller and more local NGOs which were said to become more involved in hands-on caregiving activities; but less seen and rewarded, requiring more labor including manual labor and lesser financial reimbursements as brought up by Participants 2K33, 4K31, 11K36 and 16K40 working in smaller sized institutions since “small NGOs that have not become widespread, globalized or spread throughout the country are working by sacrificing so much out of themselves. The employees there don't enjoy the recognition of their value, financially” (4K31). It was also mentioned that smaller, less institutionalized and/or local institutions are dominated by women as they choose to work in these organizations more than men (1K28, 8K30):

In small and medium-sized civil society, I think you become everything. You call it coordination, but you are already everything that might be needed there. This sometimes requires accounting, sometimes cleaning the office. Sometimes you go to events, you need to be a carrier, you need to be a driver, you know. 16K40

Concerning the performance of caring labor another distinction was made between *humanitarian aid* and *rights-based* or *advocacy-based NGOs* which may have quite different but also mixed agendas; e.g. where rights-based NGOs may engage in needs provision. The field of activity characterized by need provision, humanitarian aid and good deeds was often seen as a female dominated area; while women's inclination to voice concerns about the provision of rights were also mentioned as another dimension of women's predomination in the sector in the context of rights-based organizations:

In humanitarian aid foundations, the structure may be based on good deeds. Some associations receive grants to meet people's needs, to relieve their victimization and to earn good deeds. Women here may be a little more care-giving, but in other NGOs that work more in the rights advocacy field, even if care-giving is not a

characteristic feature, women can work on establishing systems that operate those channels that provide care. 3K31

One participant employed the *aid*, *service* and *rights-based* typology of NGOs to address that such relationships based on caring are not sustainable as she distinguished NGOs' activities ranging from more acute functions of caring, service and basic need provision to rights advocacy within a perspective of a *hierarchy of needs*:

From time to time, yes, (there is caregiving) but ultimately I think organizations built solely on this function and maintain this relationship for a long time do not serve a long-term solution. For example, after the earthquake there is an acute process... People have no houses, water, heating or shelter... But if this relationship continues to be established after long time has passed, I think there is a problem. There are still certain points it continues in this acute phase, but from now on, it is (needed) to make some things (rights) visible. 14K29

INGOs were seen on a separate level and ostensibly distinguished from local NGOs; characterized by streamlined procedures, policies and more resources which highly affect labor conditions; especially women's labor. For example, one participant gave her opinion that while women in activist NGOs (i.e. rights-based) were more benefit-minded, women in INGOs were more careerist as "Women and men working in international or UN organizations look at the sector from a more careerist point of view. But for example, women who work at more activism-based organizations such as KEDV¹⁸ are more benefit-oriented" (1K28).

3.2.2. Beyond the Boundaries of Paid Work

In line with my main research purposes, I tried to identify patterns related to *unpaid labor* within the context of social reproduction in civil society. Many NGO workers reported on unpaid work performed as extensions of NGO jobs, especially depending on their occupations and job descriptions. Here, the *unpaid dimensions of NGO work* were

¹⁸ Kadın Emeğini Değerlendirme Vakfı, "Foundation for the Support of Women's Work"

reported in such forms as *voluntary/extra labor*, *invisible work* and *emotional labor* which I will delve deeper in the following sections.

3.2.2.1. Voluntary / extra labor

One of the main trends which arose from conflicts that participants reported with regards to unpaid work, was related with the ‘voluntary’ or ‘volunteer’ perceptions of civil society work; concepts I will use interchangeably. Also, I used together the categories of *voluntary* and *extra* as sometimes their boundaries were vague where extra labors may be performed in a volunteer fashion but there is a distinction of *extra* work as it may not always be taken up *voluntarily*. Participants cited cases where they willingly took on additional work and time to perform their jobs better while they also complained about the amount of works expected of them by managers under the guise of ‘*voluntary spirit*’ which affected motivation.

From an overview, with regard to compensation for extra work, none of the participants reported receiving overtime pay while it was common in NGOs to mitigate extra work with additional holidays or flexibilities. Still, work was commonly mentioned as so busy that some extra work was performed anyway. Likewise, participants cited several situations that surpassed their job descriptions; but it was a common standpoint that *the idea of showing voluntariness was not opposed*, but there was willingness to draw necessary boundaries between expectations of voluntarism and labor relationship. Extra labors within NGOs were diverse, such as overwork, overtime, working on holidays when needed, attending extra events, performing unsolicited activities to improve the work, taking on extra responsibilities, raising money, donating/putting to use personal skills and knowledge, and intensive communication and socialization with counterparts. Participants especially underlined that they perform these extra labors for the sake of their work which in the end benefit their beneficiaries; as one said “My developing institutional communication with Malatya, attending meetings, learning who does what, have made it very easy for me to reach the beneficiaries directly” (IK28). Participants reported taking on extra responsibilities for the improvement of their work and for organizational

development; whereas these extra responsibilities which increase the wellbeing of beneficiaries and colleagues remain *nameless* (invisible):

I have some sort of role as a hotline volunteering coordinator, but it is not named... As I started to work closely, my responsibilities began to increase... The work I do here is shifting a little bit to project coordinator, but again, there is no name for it... We are creating a very comprehensive data system... That was also something that happened with my effort. 10K28

Sessions were halted because the project was completed... But I said, I'm not stopping, don't write it in the reports if you want. I'm not doing this for the reports anyway... I'm actually giving my labor without compensation; only thing I get in return is satisfaction and the change in the lives of those women. 15K29

Participants engaged in social and supportive activities with their beneficiaries and colleagues on voluntary basis, and performed activities to improve their NGO, like raising funds via sales. They were more accepting of these voluntary dimensions of work, as these were seen *as a part of the job*:

Since it's an association, we have to engage in many things, not just one. I also supported the NGO a little bit in sales. We made jewelry and sold them... I am an employee here,...but it is usually included in this salary, it is voluntary. 6K37

We organize social events once in a while, I attend them and don't record this as overtime. At (NGO), we count the events we attend as overtime if they are after working hours..., but I actually go there as part of my job. 10K28

Two male participants who were managers also referred to the frequent situation that NGO workers need to perform work *beyond the shift* in a volunteer manner as well as an inherent understanding of the NGO worker as someone who needs to put in that labor as one said; “if you are working in civil society, it is also important to know that there is a volunteer side to this work... it is used very often. Professional volunteer, partial professional” (20E32), or;

There should be a concept of overtime where there is professional work, but I think it is necessary to put overtime aside in voluntary activities when necessary, that is, if it is something that can be beneficial. And we do that. 18E30

Some participants who cited this voluntarism as a part of the job; mentioned that NGO workers should have a preconception that this is “not just work” (10K28) and they should look from a point of view beyond job descriptions and financial expectations as “of course, wages are lower than outside” (2K33); there is a moral satisfaction which derives

from the voluntary aspect of the work. However, many participants also reported that boundaries need to be drawn there. One participant also brought up the topic of a “good society” (14K29) with its definition by Michael Edwards and related it with the performance of volunteer work and paid work in NGOs which share the same purpose but need boundaries drawn in the case of labor relation to prevent exploitation:

To do something good for the benefit of society, I think volunteering is like that, working is the same way. (Yet) there are many differences from volunteering. Otherwise you are exploited a lot, and you can be approached as a volunteer. But it still feels to me as though they share a common goal. 14K29

Such a practice of *voluntary aspect of NGO work* was also critiqued by some participants. As I already underlined, participants were complaining about the employment of *volunteer/professionals* or *half volunteers* discourse within civil society, and they felt manipulated or exploited in the NGOs due to unjust expectations of sacrifice from them as paid workers under the guise of voluntarism:

Let's talk about salary again, this is a sacrifice that (my organization) expects. Because they consider us as volunteers, as "volunteer professionals" which leads to the view that salary should not be a source of motivation. This can also be spoken as a policy: “We are sorry. You are already volunteer professionals. Therefore, you cannot do this job without being a volunteer. If the salary expectation is higher elsewhere, you can work there.” 3K31

Even though we were paid employees, they used to say to us. “You are putting your volunteerism into work. If you say you are not doing this, the beneficiary will be affected, think like that.” Fortunately, many places don't use this rhetoric as easily anymore, because I think we are now able to say, “Yes, we prefer to be in this field voluntarily with an internal motivation, but this is our professional job”. 17K34

One participant (16K40) who joined from the private sector especially mentioned being *furious* about the voluntarism perception of her work because workers need to be compensated as laborers properly. She felt that she needed to make this understood all the time and that perception was the basis of NGO laborer's exploitation and why the third sector is left undone. Participants also marked the point that this sort of exploitation of NGO labor will lead to “ineffective and unsustainable solutions” to our society's problems “as if these problems can be left to the hands of voluntary efforts” (11K36):

If you argue that civil society is a third sector, if you call these people laborers, you need to compensate them for their labor...Are we really going to leave the solutions to those problems to the efforts of volunteers?. I think everyone in civil society does everything voluntarily. So at the end of the day, you don't mind the money you get. If you did mind the money, you wouldn't be working anyway. I don't mind people or me doing it voluntarily, but that people who are considered experts have the luxury of saying 'let's do it voluntarily' (I mind that). 16K40

It's value is increasing, but of course it does not receive the value it deserves, I mean, people are like 'are you working as a volunteer?' as if these are things that are supposed to be done voluntarily... 11K36

Participants voiced quite a lot of dissatisfaction about this *voluntary* discourse that undermines and depreciates their labor as their work was characterized as *unpaid*. Therefore, when asked questions such as “So now, are you a volunteer? Do you get paid?” (17K34) they displayed diverse emotions of being angry, upset, bothered and defensive while struggling to convey the value of their work which was important to them. They were annoyed with comments like “get a proper job” (8K30), “why don't you do something you can earn money instead? Are you the one who will save the city (of Adana)” (4K31) or “why work for this salary, you have many qualifications” (7K48). Many participants said their work was belittled, even by own families and friends of NGO workers, to which they reacted negatively, feeling stuck, not understood, not taken seriously, and were sometimes losing motivation:

The need to constantly explain yourself... Because on the one hand you think what you do is valuable. It feels like it would have been more meaningful if you were working in a bank. I guess that is also effective on motivation. 17K34

Of course, the precarious processes are also effective, but we are never taken seriously as a worker in civil society. It's as if we don't have an official job. 8K30

NGOs work by giving from themselves, and workers do not get the required financial value, causing them to be belittled by their families. I have friends who were told 'come be my secretary, do this and that' by their own families. 4K31

In sum, even though there were many participants who mentioned that as NGO workers they willingly perform extra labors and many already reported putting in an amount of voluntary effort; it was another strong tendency to complain about unpaid conceptions of their work, especially in the forms of half-volunteers perceptions and their treatment as volunteers by the general public.

3.2.2.2. Invisible work

Almost all participants reported a form of unpaid labor performed; but more specifically they reported that some parts of their labor somehow remains *invisible* (therefore, unpaid) due to a range of conditions. Here, participants cited their ordinary job responsibilities, the contribution of their work, the additional working hours, efforts or the mental labors they dedicate outside of paid labor which go unnoticed and uncompensated as they struggled be recognized for their labor. Recognition was also understood as *immaterial compensations* such as *appreciation* which may replace a desire for material compensation. Also, non-financial practices such as reimbursement of overtime with leaves of rest were mentioned; but the general lack of compensation was a negative motivation factor in the absence of regularizations:

Of course, (long) working hours and not being compensated for them are always a problem. I mean, I don't see a problem with working overtime while working in this field. Then again, I don't expect a financial return, but I think it should be in terms of leave and rest. Right now, I am in a place where I can do this, but my manager may change or I may get a different job, there may be a different culture there; then I may not get it again. The fact is this is so unregulated. 14K29

NGO workers reported that they struggled to make their work seen and understood both within the sector but also within the wider social systems – such as the economy or the labor market. There is an amount of work in NGOs which tends to remain unpaid and invisible as fieldwork requires working beyond regular shifts; which are not uniform, defined or measurable as other sectors, and therefore not properly compensated. While in the private sector “people work extra shifts and get paid 2-3 times extra” (3K31) or it’s like “putting buttons on an iron and leaving when the job is done, but that’s not the case in civil society sector” (7K48). Working in this area was characterized as requiring intricate skills and an approach of hard work where a lot of invisible labors are performed:

(Unpaid dimensions of the work) I think there are too many...We can conduct group therapy at the end of the day, because clients cannot come during working hours, and we do not receive extra allowance or vacation. This is the simplest example. I am sure many NGOs are doing much more and not getting paid. 3K31

Yes, it is a very invisible area. It is also very difficult to carry that burden. You spend the same effort to please the donor who donates 50 TL, and the funders

from the EU...In civil society, you don't have the chance to say I don't care about this, or we don't do this as an approach. 8K30

The performance of invisible work may also resonate with gender due to gender divisions of labor and glass ceilings. One participant mentioned how her picking up the work of a vacant manager position was *worth nothing* as management positions are always filled by men as women's work are always kept invisible in the background:

Women, no matter how much you do, how much you execute, somehow they are still in the background, on the can't do, can't handle side. Even though I've done everything so far, where do you get this reference that I can't do it?.. But this is already a gender role that always forces women. 15K29

All in all, participants talked about several unpaid and invisible dimensions of their work which go beyond the boundaries of their paid work.

3.2.2.3. Emotional labor

Participants discussed the conditions in NGO work that call for the performance of emotional labor and its consequences for workers, especially in terms of long-term wellbeing, but also the financial (non)compensation of emotional labor. They engaged in a criticism that specifically focused on the unpaid and invisible characteristics of emotional labor. Therefore, there are many overlaps with the previous categories of *voluntary / extra* and *unpaid / invisible* labors, as the activities of emotional labor may inherently carry these characteristics; but the involvement of feelings and emotions by the worker were identified as separate patterns.

In this section, I report on my findings in a structure that follows the *motivation*, *effects* and *management* processes of emotional labor. Overall, all participants reported having engaged somewhat with emotional labor on a level of either one of these three dimensions. Before going into the details of these dimensions, I want to underline some important tendencies in the field which frame the discussion.

I identified forms of *emotion work* performed within the context of emotional labor in NGOs, more commonly and in an integrated way. It was reported that *NGO workers*;

1. Engage in fieldwork where they are exposed to harsh stories,
2. Take part in extensive communications and contact with several groups,
3. Carry responsibility and conscience burden as they work tirelessly for solutions,
4. Feel a strong need for self-awareness and exert emotional control and management.

NGO workers commonly reported on *the emotional nature of certain work activities*; as they require *engagement* with counterparts, in the *office* and *fieldwork*. Participants talked extensively about cases requiring such a level of *communication* where they listen to and answer needs by *working tirelessly to find solutions* while dealing with *hard-hitting emotions* themselves. They also reported that the situations they witness via their work have an impact on their emotional wellbeing and *mental health*, which call for intensive *self-awareness* and *emotional control* mechanisms to be maintained by the worker as there is a need for *emotional management* with their work. Some participants were motivated by such requirement of *emotional development*:

When I leave children's shelters, I have a tearful crisis the next day because some things you hold in professionally, come out as a human being next day...One of our woman friends left her job, ..and said; "I can't handle this. It's an incredible burden, an emotional burden". But when I cried the next day, it was not a motivation to leave, but of "then I have to work more in this field, I have to do something, if these children and youth need such support, I can't stop, I have to work". That motivates me a little bit, and I like to improve myself like this. 8K30

While answering to the needs of the people, participants reported frequently engaging with beneficiaries by *listening* to them, connecting, sharing, understanding and reaching out to them in the forms of communication based on sincerity, kindness and compassion. Participants mentioned that "just being there" (16K40) and "showing care when in communication" (4K31) make differences for the people whose lives they touch:

Sometimes they (women) tell us some incidents and it really makes you terribly sad. You can't comprehend how that happened. I usually try to show compassion,...I just listen... You are saying, "I am here for you and I am silent. 16K40

I am very open to whatever mechanisms I can support with, I can do things for people that I wouldn't do for myself...When someone calls, I always care about being in good communication so I don't drop them out. 4K31

When asked to engage with the emotional aspects of their work activities, participants also brought up *emotional management as a requirement of work* and explained the personal mechanisms they deploy to manage the emotions but also get results at the job by tapping into psychological resources such as character strengths and insight. They reported that it may be hard to control their emotions as there may be “emotional outbursts” (9K27), but in the end they manage to come back and finish the job. In the sector, the constancy and “urgency of social issues” force laborers to work tirelessly; there is a need to “keep going and learn to manage your psychological state” (12K35):

There were many cases where I had to hold myself really hard while talking, situations I slipped into that emotional dimension... Call it ethical, moral stuff, business responsibility, I don't know, but I activate a stubborn state especially in my own cases... I try to find a solution until I exhaust myself. If there is no solution, frankly, I get demoralized, but I can say that I tried everything. 9K27

You have to manage your psychology all the time, to work on this...I think in civil society, even if we get tired from time to time due to the urgency of the issue, we have to keep going. You know, this is the most negative aspect. 12K35

Another general tendency on the issue of emotional labor was in the form of a critique from the perspective of unpaid and invisible nature of such work in NGOS. Even though it was mentioned as a main constituent of jobs, there was a struggle of workers to show, prove and be compensated for it. They think this labor is *rarely seen*, if not at all *invisible*:

So this aspect is something that is invisible, unprovable and open to continuous development: My emotional labor. In my own mind, this is my choice. Yes, it penetrates into my life, occupies my life, but I learn from my work and I learn from my personal life...Our way of working should be different, or it calls for inclusion of emotional labor, since remuneration is definitely not given on this basis and working hours are not calculated accordingly. 17K34

A serious space of emotional exploitation is created... We compensate our working life as wages in exchange for labor, but I think our most basic labor, for all sector employees, is our emotional labor. We are not just doing the work, we also put emotional labor into it. If they tried to pay for my emotional labor, in an ideal arrangement, I think they should be paying me 10 times my salary. 1K28

The gendered patterns of women’s emotional labor contribute to the discussion of emotional labor. As such, a participant made reference to women’s *emotionality* as a component of civil society labor (2K33) whereas other participants (1K28, 9K27, 12K35)

were quite against such an understanding of civil society work based on women's emotionality and caring even though they agreed with the female majority in the sector:

I think emotionality is valuable and it comes into play. Also, women use it a lot. Of course, I accept that it is instinctive. Since men have suppressed it until today... There are fewer positions that require this like directors or instructors, but being in the field requires more emotionality in civil society, and it is very understandable for men to run away because they were raised that way...Where emotions are not involved, no real work emerges in civil society. 2K33

No one expects more empathy from me because I am a woman... The fact that I care about people in the field and the people I encounter, is about me empathizing with them. For example, my manager is a man. He is also like me. 1K28

Lastly, all male participants identified an emotional labor dimension of their work as their work with addicts required contact with hard situations and they reported that their work affected them all to a point; but they all reported that this was in a more manageable state now. Especially one participant who had previous experience with the migrants talked about how he learned to manage them because "sadly, the stories repeat themselves and you learn to avoid the feeling" and said "this is not just a part of the job, this is the main part of the job" (19E33). Other participants also mentioned that "it is a mentally tiring work" (18E30) where they deal with difficult cases all the time, or that they had experienced "intensive impact where hard emotions don't leave the body or the mind" (20E32) but they all reported being able to cope via support systems.

Having covered how the finding of emotional labor was represented in the field, I also want to mention the components of its process. As a whole, I identified that participants tended to report on three dimensions of their emotional labor, based on its *motivation*, *effects* and *management* which I think point to a process.

Firstly, representing the pattern of a *motivation* for emotional labor from the field, I identified the pattern of *self-responsibility* which was reported frequently. Many participants adopted a discourse that centered around feeling responsibility towards others while some felt this overwhelming state needed intervention later. The patterns of *personal awareness*, *knowing yourself* and *establishing boundaries* were commonly mentioned as limits were realized via internal cognition of own psychological resources and they sometimes got help in this process; especially to take control of their caregiving

aptitudes, effecting their work and private relationships. Participants cited *being prone* to prioritizing needs of others, which they had to learn in time to control.

Characteristically and genetically, I have a lot of this caregiving (sense). But I realized quickly that this was a job. Before, I used to take this as a burden and just feel sad and stay there, but now it is a more solution-oriented space. I try to set boundaries where I make sure they understand me, in friendship, dating and family lives. In my work life, it's in a place that doesn't exhaust me anymore. 3K31

Even if a person in my close circle didn't need something, I needed it on their behalf. This is a violation of boundaries, but the other party was not unhappy either. And I realized that it didn't concern me and that was good for me. 5K39

Participants reported that they were feeling a lot of *self-responsibility*, but they also mentioned that through their work and the situations they faced, they learned to take control of their intuitions and started asking *is this really my responsibility?* as in “These should not be up to me, social state should be able to solve them. If I feel responsibility in areas the social state isn’t enough, I have difficulties.” (16K40), or:

It's also a bad thing. Of course I’m not responsible. Because feeling responsible brings burden and sadness. After the earthquake of February 6,... I was really shocked and I blamed myself a lot... I'm a civil society member, I work in the field of children, with children at risk, I should have thought about it. 8K30

The feeling of self-responsibility due to *being a civil society member* brought some participants to the field, especially during the earthquake (5K39, 17K34), “because social receptors are more open” (12K35); but the ensuing emotional burdens were sometimes too much. The earthquake relief efforts were seen by participants as a place they should take part in as NGO staff. They reported on the many feelings that they felt; feeling responsible and guilty; even though some had to shy away because conditions were too hard for them. Participants reported having felt *needed*, *they had to* help people get their wants and needs and leaving work in the field via abrupt, personal decisions; “When the earthquake happened, I spurted ‘this is my professional responsibility and I have to go’... The reason I left the field was also (sudden) like this” (17K34) or they said;

Going to the earthquake site was a very sudden decision for me. Maybe you experienced the same feeling, when the earthquake happened we were exposed to it so much on social media that after a certain point I started to feel very powerless. Then one day I turned off the TV, I started not listening or looking at anything

because I needed to pull myself together, I needed to feel good, because I felt that one day someone will need me. 5K39

I was like 'I should go, I am a civil society member, too'. When I went and came back, I felt... It's very traumatic... You know, I don't even dare to work in some areas, psychologically. 12K35

Participants were also reporting situations of *doing everything they can, trying to do their best* and *applying themselves to their work*. One such participant mentioned a possible state of over-empathy where *battles are fought on every corner*, but she still tried to be as supportive as possible, including emotionally:

Let's say the family came for economic reasons, but when you listen to the story, you hear completely different things. You hear neglect, violence, health, education. You try to work every corner, frankly. At that point, maybe I act empathetically, from an emotional angle, but at least I try to provide as much support as possible. I try to come up with all the solutions I can, without crossing the limits and my job description, of course. 9K27

Secondly, under the context of the *effects* of emotional labor, participants reported mainly on the three patterns of *negative feelings caused by work, secondary traumas* and *mental labor*. Fieldwork was especially mentioned as where these emotional labor effects take place. Participants spoke about diverse emotions they felt such as being *sad, sorry, anxious, disappointed, helpless, exhausted, and burnt out*. A common tendency was that in such challenging situations, workers were less bothered by negative emotions for which they had developed adequate mechanisms to manage. Instead they were reproachful about the *helpless, desperate* and *disappointed state* they found themselves in due to being unable to provide adequate services and systems – both due to insufficiency of mechanisms within their NGOs, but also within the wider public or social organization. *Negative emotions*, were specifically mentioned within the context of direct communication as a component of emotional labor. As a response, some participants had developed secondary emotions or emotional management mechanisms via strategies as *solidarity, sharing, supporting each other* and *humor* among counterparts.

A state of *sadness* was commonly cited by participants who encountered people's challenges face-to-face and weren't able to help completely to the young people, children or colleagues, leading to situations like "not being able to get over it" (1K28) or "pulling over the car and crying in the middle of the highway" (5K39). Being in contact with

vulnerable people and witnessing their hardship, such as in the case of child cancer (2K33, 6K37), participants reported having a hard time keeping their emotions inside, too; “that moral burden of not being able to help in the way you want to help is very sad” (11K36).

Once, we were unable to provide support to a really needy person within the scope of a project. Like, I couldn't get over it for probably 2-3 days, but I tried to find alternatives, such as referring them to other institutions and so on. In such a situation, it obviously has an emotional liability such as sadness, etc. 1K28

I think the biggest emotionality is the state of illness you're in. Because it inevitably demoralizes you. For example, you want to hug the child. They come and ask if they could kiss you. We cannot get physical, there is no intimacy, there is no hugging or snuggling with the child. 6K37

Feelings such as sadness may also lead to further emotive reactions from NGO workers in such cases where needed impact wasn't created, as they were left *feeling helpless, disappointed* and even *angry* while they may be left with *burdens on their conscience* and lingering feelings of *responsibility* about the problems.

I also think this is not exclusive to me, because from time to time we experience great backlash both in terms of work and institutions. Or we set out with a goal, but we cannot find that enthusiasm in women we work with. There is anger, sadness and distress for a day or two. From the moment we can solve it slightly, we can somehow humorize it. 7K48

Hardships and struggle are experienced due to not having the capability to help as systems to work are insufficient and do not respond to needs. Participants reported this is very consuming for them as they are faced with situations where they cannot answer the needs of their clients and those around them, such as getting support in forms of protection from violence and discrimination, empowerment and access to basic needs or when clients' anger is turned towards them as they are held responsible:

Sometimes clients hold us responsible like "I'm on the street. You are in one of the most important LGBT plus organizations in Türkiye. How come you can't find me a house, a place to stay, provide economic support? Surely you will show up when we die. Are you interviewing me right now so that my corpse will not be left to you?" etc. In fact, they turn their anger against Türkiye, their family, their partners, their friends and many other people towards us and we are exposed to these. Or some cases are very difficult, meetings take a very long time, and they can drain your energy and so on. 10K28

NGO workers encountered intensive cases of vulnerabilities, like really young children under protection where they thought “I couldn't protect, it didn't work, it was useless” (8K30). They may witness extensive states of poverty, like encountering women who picked up bread from the garbage to feed their kids (15K29) or for managers, the misery of colleagues who are earthquake survivors they can't help due to organizational constraints (5K39).

An especially extensive amount of secondary trauma was reported for the earthquake zone where people from disadvantaged groups were severely affected. In addition to the effects of earthquake on NGO work; civil society work in other fields where work is done with migrants, battered women, LGBTQ+, children and youth under protection and such were places that secondary traumas may take place in. It was also mentioned that cases in the field run the risk of triggering workers' past traumas, issues, fears and anxieties:

In 2022, when I gave birth, I went out on the field once, but I realized I couldn't continue. Because I decided that I cannot do one-on-one sessions in the field in hospitals with the fatigue of years and the emotionality of being a mother... In fact, everyone working in this field, including nurses and physicians, identify it with themselves after a while. 2K33

There are many things you have been exposed to in your development. Even if not, your dynamics are very different, and when working with disadvantaged groups, inevitably there are things that trigger you. Especially if you work in psychology, if you work on trauma. 5K39

Although it feels good to support, it is a bit challenging in terms of triggering my recollection of my own processes... Even if I do not reflect this,... there are some issues that affect me very badly in the aftermath. Especially when I have an experience with sex workers and children, these affect me much worse. 10K28

Secondary traumas were commonly mentioned together with the need to heal from them as there was a strong demand for assistance to overcome their traumas, whereas the “only remuneration available is in the form of psychological support” (1K28); but in many cases, this was nonexistent, as workers recognized the effects by themselves after the events were over. Participants were quite aware of the secondary trauma effect of their work and were citing this among the top negative aspects of NGO work:

After that I felt, 'oh wait a second. Actually, going through a fire and a big job like this, it's a trauma for a field worker'. Survival mode opens up, you do that job, then it falls back,... you are left alone with your real tired self. 12K35

Let's say there was a woman at the police station, an interpreter would go with her, and I would go with her. I directly witnessed the events and experienced all of what we call second trauma...As one of the negative aspects of this work: People who work in this area suffer a great deal of secondary trauma. I see it myself from time to time. 4K31

Also, participants reported on *mental labor* as a type of activity that goes on outside the boundaries of paid work and in the mental capacity of a person, and I categorized here the kind of mental activities that participants said they dedicated to their mental and cognitive abilities to the performance of jobs. Situations of being *mentally tired* and *exhausted* were reported. Participants tended to refer to the mentally challenging aspects of jobs as *tiring*, *volatile* and *unstable* but they also tended to become stimulated by the challenges and show their *creativity*, *flexibility*, *resilience*, *agility*, and *ambition*. For example, one participant stated: “it makes me tired, I mean, I get very tired mentally, but I get ambitious” (8K30). Other mental aspects were also reported to be activated as NGO workers do their jobs; such as flexibility, agility and resilience to answer the challenges in the civil sphere as things are sometimes based on assumptions:

Flexibility is very important because it is not as it is idealized... In civil society, everything is an assumption, it is not like engineering. It is not that if I put this, this happens, it wants constant redoing on the path. That resilience and agility. 11K36

Another participant also employed a similar comparison to industrial production to refer to the flexibility of solutions offered by the sector. She referred to the challenge in the NGO field as her job is “not producing lighters” (7K48). She mentioned being forced to come up with different solutions to each case, as parameters are also constantly changing and she thought that NGO workers feel the need to keep up with such flexibility, which also creates the “mentally tiring aspect” of the job.

Third, and the last piece of emotional labor processes in participant narratives related to its management comprising of *emotional control* and *self-awareness* as highly integrated mechanisms. These were very commonly skills or capacities that NGO workers should have; not as a *labor per se*. The performance of such emotional control and self-awareness

was also mentioned in two ways. Firstly, participants were talking about the *emotional control* mechanisms that protect their wellbeing as NGO workers. Here, they underlined the motif of *self-awareness*; a state that is the pre-condition of the emotional management and control. Secondly, participants were also talking about practice of emotional and behavior control and self-awareness in order to guarantee the smooth functioning of their jobs and increase their work impact, without causing harm to work itself. One participant cited, for example, how important it is in her work to engage in “proper emotional and behavioral control in their communications” (8K30) with other organizations and with the target groups, especially. NGO workers were said to require a self-improvement mindset because if their purpose is to heal the society, “they should heal, support and empower themselves first” (4K31).

Also, participants talked about their situation as people they work with *look up to them*, therefore they exert an amount of emotional control to show up in front of them at their best which again they practice through self-awareness; as they said “I have to go there in the morning and really leave everything and I have to be (me). I have to be a person that can support them, that they define this way” (4K31), or,

I don't want to enter the classroom with the slightest sadness, I need to smile all the time. Because they are just starting life. My sadness or my grief, my pain, my unhappiness should not pass on to them...First of all, they (NGO workers) should know themselves, what they want, their feelings very well, otherwise they may not be very effective in the NGO field. 6K37

All in all, there was a lively discussion in the field on the emotional aspects of NGO work and their effects on the civil society workers as they reported on many dimensions of emotional labor. This concludes the discussion on what goes on *beyond the boundaries of paid work* in the NGO setting.

3.3. Work/ Life Reconciliation of NGO Workers

Here, I will delve deeper into the understanding of NGO workers' conditions within the context of their NGO labor as well as their private lives. I categorized this main theme

under four sub-themes which comprise of different dimensions of NGO workers' work/life reconciliation.

As I go through this analysis, I will try to follow a path which begins with the motivational factors that bring the NGO worker to the field and continues with their motivations for staying in their jobs. Then, I look at their situation at their private lives; and after that I will report on how they mitigate the effects of work on their private lives. And lastly, I will focus on their social support systems as they mitigate the emotional effects of their work on their psychological wellbeing. I categorized these into separate sub-themes which will be easier to follow. Before engaging with these subthemes, I want to provide an overview of the main tendencies that emerged from the field.

As a whole, participants tended to focus more on the challenges of their NGO labor as they tried to reconcile their work and private lives. Even though the level of motivation towards NGO work was high among NGO workers, as they reported many sources of motivations; a main trend was that *NGO work is hard* and it requires a lot of personal resources, dedication and *mitigation efforts from the laborer*. Common challenges were especially reported in the areas of *financial compensation, work conditions, management and leadership, work-life balance, overall health and emotional wellbeing*.

In addition, NGOs were sometimes seen as *a more appropriate choice of work* to some participants, which correlated with the commonly observed *personal motivations* of NGO workers who often referred to their individual skills, tendencies, views, characters and perspectives. Also, some other aspects of NGO work were brought up as possible motivation factors for sector workers in general. For example, in many cases, participants reported that NGOs offer more *flexibility* and are more open spaces in general. It was also common among participants to employ comparisons with the public and the private sectors, as they frequently characterized the NGO workplaces as spaces where they felt more *belonging to*, referring to the harmonization of their work with their *identities*.

All in all, participants reported an intense amount of effort towards work/ life reconciliation and adopted a diverse range of work/life reconciliation mechanisms. They were sometimes reporting positive attitudes like feeling *motivated, valued and safe*; while

other times their negative connotations. Also, while some participants adopted distinguishable attitudes of either endorsing or criticizing NGO work from the perspective of work/life reconciliation; there were those with more neutral attitudes who felt more trapped between their choices and their consequences as they reported both motivation and dissatisfaction patterns. There were many interacting factors that determined participants' approach to their work/life reconciliation; their situations ranged within further layers such as their personalities, financial state, living situation, relationships, personal responsibilities, location, NGO type, position, location, and many more factors which showed great variation in participant biographies.

The following discussion on sub-themes which relate to work/life reconciliation follow this structure: *Making of Meaning and Motivation for Third Sector Workers*, *Mitigation of Private Life*, *Effect of NGO Work on Private Life* and *Emotional Management and Support Systems*.

3.3.1. Making of Meaning and Motivation for Third Sector Workers

It is important to note that there was a high level of biographical diversity among participants in terms of their age, locations, relationship status and other characteristics which play a role in their meaning and motivation making processes. Also, there were differences in terms of education, organization of their own social reproduction and private lives in general; as well as job-related differentiations such as the type, size and field of NGOs, occupations and job expectations. Therefore, I broke down the meaning and motivation making processes for third sector workers into 5 patterns which relate to different aspects of such processes that I derived from my research questions and participant narratives, namely; *caring as a motivation*, *gender effect on motivation*, *financial motivations*, *third sector motivations*, and *working conditions*. These aspects also interact with each other as among participants, there was a tendency to report on more than one meaning and motivation force.

Before going over them, I also want to underline that there were also tendencies to argue for or against some of these motivations, especially in the case of the initial two patterns

I identified as *caring as a motivation* and *gender effect on motivation* which correspond directly to the main research purpose. I mention the divergences that do not associate with the respective patterns, especially *gender* and *caring* aspects of meaning and motivation making processes as they come up.

In addition to caring and gender based motivations which were some of my main research subjects, I also found out strong *third sector motivations* which signal workers' particular motivation for civil society as a sector of choice, especially due to its aspects relating to the *higher sense of meaning derived from work*, based on a *sense of creating impact* which were very commonly stated. In fact, even though participants were citing more negative aspects regarding *financial motivations* and *working conditions* which created challenges; they were mainly mitigating the dissatisfactory aspects of their work with the motivation they derived from the value of their work while they saw themselves fit the workplaces.

Lastly, financial motivations and working conditions were also dominant as negative factors of civil society as almost all participants brought up that *salaries are low* and *working conditions are tough* in civil society.

3.3.1.1. Caring as a motivation

Within the discussions of *caring as a motivation*, there were many participants who agreed with this perspective, as they were citing common patterns of NGO workers' motivations which centered around the desire of *touching people's lives*, a state of *being aware of others' needs* and a sense of *self-responsibility* as some reported that such caring motivations may have guided their employment choice in the sector, together with other personal and social influences. Even though some participants mentioned that this was not the case for them, still they tended to agree on the caring nature of NGO work which may bring people, especially women, to the sector on that basis. All in all, some participants reported outright that caring motivations led them to the sector and this impacted the meaning they find in their work as one of the bases of their motivations whereas for some others this was a more complicated construction.

For example, one participant talked about a caring approach of workers in civil society as for her and for others who have a “muscle that developed elsewhere, maybe in early years” and this is “the transformation of that drive into a profession” (11K36). From seeing trucks marked with UN (*flour* in Turkish) as a child and thinking there are people who really need help; she talked about how choices are built around caring:

Of course, it's really a space of care giving...Not everyone of course, but I can read it in men and women alike, who are drawn to this field. They approach it with that care-giving motive... Like when I saw the UN tank, that sadness inside, a childish feeling of 'is there a hunger here'. 11K36

Some level of caring motivation was also cited by participants who were not in agreement with understanding civil society as caring, too. One such participant suggested since the whole experience of “seeing people’s hardships and trying to support them through such state even though efforts may not always be successful; there is still a part of it that makes people feel good” (9K27). However, she was quite clear in her opinion that this was not related to caring because this is a part of her “work” for which she gets remunerated for, while underlining that it still feels good to engage in this advocacy.

One distinguishable tendency among participants who reported a caring motivation was that they were particularly working with more vulnerable groups, such as children, women and the immigrants. In relation with this, they tended to report on the many different reasons as well as personal attachments which were the basis of caring for such groups; referring to the effect of their personalities and the course of their own personal development. Out of these groups, the fields involved in work with children came to the forefront as caring was especially encountered there. For example, one participant who said that she entered the field to work with children in the first place, reported that her relationship with kids has “always been good”; but after crossing paths with play therapy via work, she realized that her “needs towards giving and receiving both healing and caring” were surfaced and she was deriving motivation from this as she believed she is also good at it (5K39). Similarly, another participant reported that her choice of teaching profession was related with her desire to work with children and do her part in doing good for others as a “humanist” (6K37). She was motivated to work in the field of children with

cancer and provide their needs while her motivation towards the field was rooted in her loss of her father to cancer:

As a society, we ignore these children who are undergoing cancer treatment or struggling with serious illnesses, so I thought about the need to create an environment and services for them... We are definitely preparing them for life and I have an influence in that... 6K37

A desire to emancipate the situation of children and especially those who remain invisible to society was also mentioned by another participant who reported being so attached to the field that people were asking “if she grew up under protection”, too (8K30). She stated her belief in the importance of her work:

Aside from my own financial concerns and sustainability because I am an employee, I believe that something really needs to be done in this field. We see that these children and youth are not really seen; they suffer serious rights losses. 8K30

The motif of supporting children was also seen in the narrative of another participant who identified personally with the effect that her work in the education field had on children. She stated that by supporting the education system in a transformative way; she is glad to be supporting children and feels as though she is “helping her childhood self” (13K39).

In addition to work with children, *motif of supporting women* was also mentioned as something participants cared about and identified with. As women themselves, helping women with their issues and addressing their disadvantages were common motivations. For example, one participant was currently working with women in the earthquake region, after some period of trying to take up work in the sector, and she talked about how it was always her dream to be “on the road; working with women and children in war-torn or disadvantaged areas” (15K29). She also emphasized the effects of her personal characteristics such as *caring about others’ needs*, seeing risks and taking action which brought her closer to NGOs. Another participant was also motivated to work for women’s empowerment throughout the course of her volunteer and professional experiences in civil society via extending support to women (also youth and immigrants) beyond the limits of her paid work; she said “both in terms of work and social life, by generating goodness, I open up a space for people to be happier, especially for women.” (4K31)

Other participants (1K28, 7K48, 10K28, 11K36, 16K40 and 17K34) also carried motifs of wanting to help, guide and support women. For example, one of them was citing her experience of leaving the private sector for the search of meaning and joining the civil society sector and how her current work feels spiritually satisfying:

I never had the mentality of being satisfied with money... This deaf women's rights project is very soul satisfying. Because you come together with fellow women and you can support a woman who doesn't know what to do in the divorce stage.
16K40

In a similar manner to how gender was considered as impacting women's education and profession choices (in section 3.1.1.5), caring was also suggested as a possible motivator for NGO employment. For example, one participant responded that her strong "caring reflex" may have influenced her to choose Social Service as her field of education. Building on this, she met civil society as a student volunteering for children under protection while she was motivated to improve the wellbeing of children and services. She realized that she needed to work in NGOs as their "good impact is more visible in the individual lives of target groups, even though it may seem small" (3K31).

Participants were also referring to their desires of *touching people's lives* with their work, as they valued activities that bring them into contact with people. For example, one participant who stated that it is her biggest source of motivation that in the NGO field she can completely touch and change people's lives; that this is like having a "magic wand" and she got great joy from her work "as if removing the rocks from people's ways" (4K31); activities which carry immense emotional meanings for her. Other participants also mentioned that aspects of their work which *touch people* and where they can "accompany them in their journeys" (9K27, 13K39) were very motivating as they could feel in this way being "useful to society" and derived "spiritual meaning" from there (13K39, 16K40). Especially *direct* and *face-to-face* communication was one of the most motivating factors as workers get to hear their impact directly in beneficiaries' stories and these were cited as the most motivating aspects of jobs:

One of our beneficiaries, a tailor, sent me a photo and said. 'God bless you. Thanks to you, I can sew very beautiful curtains and clothes. Thank you very much.' I said, this is what I am really doing this job for. I was happy about this for 3 weeks.
1K28

This direct contact aspect of NGO work may provide comfort for some NGO workers through hard times; on the other side of the coin, the distance from the field may contribute to burnout and loss of motivation. For example, one participant who worked as a psychologist in the field for years remembered as when she is down, she could be picked up simply by a sick child's asking "big sister, are you going to come back next week?" (2K33), for example. Another participant was also talking about her personal experience of staying distant from the field within humanitarian aid organizations as fieldwork was left to partners. This led her to experience burnout as she was "exposed to the stress of the job still; but cut out from the motivating aspects" (11K36) of her work in the form of touch; seeing the impact of work. The aspect of *hearing thanks* was reported as motivating for participants; but when it's lacking, motivation can still exist:

Calling to say 'thank you, you were good for me', this happens rarely...They say 'thank you for the follow up calls' or 'I am getting stronger with you'. These keep us balanced. And it makes me feel nice to be in this field; to do my job well, to listen and professionally manage a case that most people cannot listen to. 10K28

It gives a real sense of achievement. Looking back, when I was reading the very nice comments under posts in *Ekşi Sözlük*; that's pleasing, while the story itself (the fire) is sad. It's positive in that regard. If you don't have that feeling, you can't do that job... It's very nice that people appreciate it, but would I do it even if they didn't? It's a state where I believe this is right. 12K35

The pattern of touching people's lives was also observed in the case of male participants, as they were also highly motivated by the impact of their jobs on people:

Small touches at many points in many people's lives, because they are not in a position to change things, because again, people are the decision-makers in their lives. But at least when we give them opportunities, I think it is an important issue to be able to make them healthier or at least better mentally and to reduce other problems so that they can think healthy...Being one of the people who makes that happen and being part of such team makes me feel good, honestly. 20E32

Another pattern was a state of *being aware of others' needs* which corresponded to NGO workers' construction of motivation. For example, one participant was quite determined to stay in the field and rise to decision-making positions to always be reminded of and advocate that "they are working for people, not numbers" (1K28); to make sure that they are supporting people in the right way as she is highly conscious of their humanly needs.

Participants also tended to take into account systemic dimensions of how people's needs are provided. In such a case, one participant reported acting on the basis of *altruism* as a main perspective in a way that "we are all responsible for each other" and "there is a whole balance of giving and receiving inclusive to all living and non-living beings, in a systemic way" (11K36). A male participant also spoke of such *altruism* which led into him to develop a perspective of being attentive to people's needs:

Seeing the difficulties and situations that people live in, developing altruism with them, seeing many things on the spot and listening to that problem actually brought that approach of seeing the problem and gaining a perspective on it.
20E32

Acting on a *consciousness* about the "concrete results" (7K48) of their efforts on groups of people such as children, families, women and those who are suffering, many NGO workers cited a sense of *self-responsibility* with the guidance of their conscience, hard work and resilience to help people and create social benefit via work. A requirement for the willingness of NGO worker to take up extra (unpaid) work also came up. A participant mentioned being guided by a principle of "not asking why she is working at such hour, if she's able to help even one child" (2K33). Another cited that her work until 2 a.m. in the night, taking meetings and covering up for her less present manager means that "someone gets access to a support kit" (4K31) – which is why she worked so hard.

From a more general outlook, participants reported on NGO workers' processes of turning *self-responsibility* into a social perspective and a personal motivation. They held a belief of taking responsibility to contribute to society, show motivation for action via *resilience*:

I believe we can take on problems and solve them. For something good to happen in society, you must be doing something good. It is about social sensitivity, the state of thinking that being present in society can be via personal benefit. 16K40

Maybe it's a motivation of thinking more about what we can do to empower 'that woman' more. It turned into that. Working in this field has shown that there is pain, but we can see this with beneficiaries. Some people can creatively transform that pain into something productive by showing resilience, so how can we transform pain into productivity? 11K36

To sum up, even though women and men participants referred to the effects of caring on motivation from a varying degree, I identified the aspects of caring motivation as *touching people's lives, being aware of others' needs and boundaries and self-responsibility*.

3.3.1.2. Gender effect on motivation

Gender's effect on motivation reflected with participants on a range from agreeing completely, more moderately or an outright statement that such association with their gender was not applicable at all. As an overview; I think the divergence of attitudes can be summarized by these four general tendencies:

Firstly, some participants tended to agree that their gender had a visible impact on their motivation for involvement in NGOs. For those, gender attitudes were constructed as a part of their identity while childhood views of the world, ways of bringing and other developmental phases were characterized as the origins of such gender-oriented motivations. Participants *1K28*, *4K31*, *7K48*, *8K30*, *10K28*, *11K36*, *15K29*, *16K40* and *17K34* were spoken about the effect of gender on NGO motivation, as well as theirs.

Secondly, there were also some participants who referred to the effect that gender has had on their motivation processes not in such visible, but in more subtle ways. In those cases, participants gave examples of cases where their gender had an influence on their emotional labor. Participants *2K33* and *5K39* adopted such narratives referring to gender as a background mechanism that affects women indirectly.

Thirdly, another tendency stemmed from having constructed gender identities from a more equal approach while being aware that there are certain inequalities in the general organization of labor. Exhibiting this common characteristic, participants *3K31*, *12K35*, *13K39* and *14K29* engaged with the issue with reference to cases where gender may in fact be motivating for some people who struggled with their gender to commit to NGO jobs; however, their gender experiences had no apparent impact on their employment.

The last tendency was that gender was not related at all with NGO work. This approach was displayed by Participants *6K37* and *9K27* who adopted a more personal approach to their motivation in relation to NGO work based on their values as workers. This was also the approach of *all male participants*, none of whom reported that their gender had an effect on their motivation whereas they all agreed on the female majority composition of the sector but did not tie this with gender.

While engaging with this subject, it was common for women to cite occasions where they derived motivation from their gender, as they got to *engage with women's issues and help those in the field* via their work. Civil society was characterized a space where women could derive strength from *womanhood*; as they got to voice out problems of women and be a part of solutions. In relation with the experience of womanhood as a social standing; it was seen as impacting women's characters in a way that they are more prone to *speak out, empathize and engage in advocacy*. Participants cited this as another reason for women's predominance in civil society work. The experience of such *womanhood* was explored in several socio-economic dimensions, such as in relation to *women's social situation in labor as caregivers*, or their *biological and nurturing qualities*, as well as *the effects of bringing up and social roles*.

One participant said that her involvement in the sector was a direct result of being a woman as she believed this to be the best place to build *solidarity and support* people. She cited that "being a woman means having to put on a fight in every corner of life" (1K28) and this is why women are drawn more to the sector; which was for her a "result of being a woman, my political stance... my personal experiences". Another participant mentioned that due to her high internalization of gender issues, she may be drawn to the field of hearing impaired women in particular, as this is "her soft spot" (16K40) which she believed should exist in every NGO worker. In these cases, work in civil society was a representation of women's belief in provision of gender equality and in *solidarity*.

Civil society was seen as a way of acting for gender equality; as one participant said; "this is a form of struggle to change things related to gender, and civil society is a source of this struggle, a pillar. For me, of course, this is a great motivation" (15K29). This was a common pattern among women workers to be in the field to continue *the fight* with their work, as they identified with women's struggles from a point of empathy and acted on behalf of equality by looking back at their own gender experiences. They made reference to certain aspects of work which allow to make voice for women's issues, social problems and be who they are. Participants reported of social restrictions due to their assigned genders as women, and now being able to express their gender identities in civil society (10K28), as well as to fight for the issues "engraved in their skeleton" (17K34):

The simplest thing is that housework is only on women, for example, when my mother was complaining about us cleaning and washing the dishes late all the time, I remember asking why she didn't ask my brother the same, but she laughed it off. Now I think I can walk more easily and protect myself better, so it feels good to support others in this regard... I love my body, but I find it difficult to define it as completely female. Again, I can express this comfortably at work. It also feels good to be in solidarity with other subjects. 10K28

I think about where and how the experience of being a woman hurt me and what emotion those bruises aroused in me. Then I created a motivation in my life based on that emotion and I am here today... As (that emotion) turned into a movement, it found civil society as the most comfortable space for itself. 17K34

More emotional or caring aspects were also reported in the forms of *social support*, *awareness*, *protection*, *safety* and *nurturing* as common characteristics of women's civil society motivations. For example, one participant stated that "women have a higher awareness towards giving and social support which is why women are predominant in civil society" (4K31). Similarly, another participant shared her observation that women seem to form the majority of workers, which may be based on the socially constructed gender roles as "women seem more prone to act on their conscience and to take a step to solve problems when they encounter them" (14K29). Gender roles were mentioned to lead both to women's predominance in social fields, as well as the reverse situation where men are shied away from occupations requiring emotional expression and communication as they are "similarly socially shaped, as in the case of giving toy cars to boys and not the girls" (14K29).

Several participants mentioned that they make use of certain aspects of their personality, which they view are more developed as a result of being brought up as a woman. They referred to the *maternal*, *supportive*, *protective*, *safer*, *sensitive* and *self-conscious* attitudes that women bring to the performance of civil society work.

I see that self-actualized people work more in civil society. I think women understand this earlier. Hormonally or emotionally, we have certain hormones and we need to care and support; we are raised to be more open than men, in a care-giving model. Taking care of babies since childhood. I am sure there is a psychosocial basis for this. 4K31

For example, if a baby cries over there. Of course, there will be men who will be interested, but it will be the women here, whether they have children or not, who will really be meaningfully interested in the needs of that baby. 11K36

Also, another participant referred to her *maternal* and protective instincts as a woman which she believed contribute to her staying in the field; while taking up the role of a “big sister” (8K30), she is able to be there for children and youth under protection. In her case, beneficiaries were said to feel safe because she is a woman, and that her protectiveness stemmed from womanhood, as she defines herself as a maternal figure; reflecting on her motivation as she felt like “the mother of all children under protection” (8K30).

Participants also mentioned that men may have different motivations. For example, according to one participant, men choose their employment based on material considerations (see 3.1.2.), “they come because they find a job” (1K28) whereas women;

We have always been raised as good children, maybe by our parents, but at the very base of it, I have a brother. Even the way we look at society is fundamentally very different... That's good to think about, thank you, I never thought about that.
1K28

It was also emphasized that men do not choose NGO employment, because they may be thinking that “it won’t lead to financial gain” and these jobs “don’t have much effect on the needs of society” (6K37), or they choose other sectors such as the private sector and may quit their NGO jobs to meet financial expectations of theirs (17K34, 8K30). Women were said to perceive expectations differently as they may be able to stay at their NGO jobs because they are more concerned with supporting people and put off thinking “getting a separate home or securing a man” (4K31).

As a last point, I want to emphasize how the consideration of gender as a factor of motivation reflected with the participants who had a negative or neutral stance of their experience in civil society with gender. For example, one participant stated that “being a woman is not even the last reason for her involvement” (12K35) in the field. Being a “provider” in her family, the only situation that her *womanhood* may have had an affect on her situation at work, she said was the aftermath of birth when she was grappled by mental health and family relations while in a state of overwork under COVID lockdowns.

Other participants (3K31, 9K27) adopted attitudes against gender based considerations of motivation from a point of view that “men and women are the same when it comes to this work” as they characterized civil society motivation on the basis of personal

characteristics that are found in individual men and women, while it was also said that men and women are the same model (12K35).

I think it actually develops depending on how much of your needs are met during your parenting relationships in the society you live in. Because maybe, I think that if I were a man, I would probably still do this profession with these characteristics. So I think it is independent of gender. 3K31

There were also participants who mentioned that even though their attachment to their fields was not affected by their gender, they cited cultural conditions of Türkiye where women find civil society as a space of expression and advocacy (2K33, 13K39).

Overall, *gender's effect on motivation* was one of the widely discussed issues in the field where varying experiences were reported by participants.

3.3.1.3. Financial motivations

One of the strongest trends from the field was a consideration of *financial motivations*, which were almost always reported as lower or non-existent. Participants were commonly emphasizing the insufficiency of remuneration available that does not compensate for the hard work as *salaries are bad* and *there are no side benefits* in civil society. Workers were reporting ways that they mitigate their financial situation by *not being motivated by money* and instead focusing on the meaning of their job to reconcile the negative effects of their job – a shared mechanism. Other patterns were also reported such as *being happy with their earnings* and *needing support systems to work*. Some participants reported that they take extra *sideline work* to compensate for the lower earnings in the sector.

Most participants expressed that they found their salaries unsatisfactory and even insufficient to make a living, especially under current economic constraints. Participants also turned to comparisons with the public and private sectors, based on pay grades and the non-existence of side benefits in the sector. It was commonly emphasized that NGO workers are not compensated enough considering the amount and importance of the jobs they do. For example, while they referred to the “very bad state of salaries for all laborers in Türkiye” (1K28) and that NGO salaries follow the same pattern as they erode under high inflation; it was stated for NGO salaries that they are lower, especially in smaller

NGOs; “I think it was always low in NGOs. It’s even lower if you work in a small, medium-sized organization like me. I mean, around the minimum wage level. Because you are working in a small NGO and are already consuming certain resources” (16K40).

The *lower* level of salaries were compared with the equivalent work in their public and private counterparts while they also stated that salaries don’t compensate the volume of work; as in “when I think about the compensation for the work I do and the conditions of survival, the salaries were always very low” (10K28). A participant compared salaries with those in *elderly houses or daycares* and mentioned that they are placed in a grade higher than private sector; but “now remain lower than their public counterparts” (3K31).

The financial compensation aspect of NGO work was related with participants’ perceptions about the value of their work. For example, when asked about the pros and cons of civil society work, one participant who was actually very motivated stated that “salaries and secondary traumas” (4K31) were first negative aspects. She mentioned that workers do not feel that their “their work is valued” in the sector; especially those who do a lot of good work in the field, but are not compensated in smaller NGOs, while others like the UN staff earn in dollars but do not feel attached to their work.

In such a case of different financial compensation, one participant mentioned suffering from a wage loss in her more local and smaller NGO whereas in an INGO she would be able to get much more; as “if you found the right place it can be financial satisfying, too” (8K30). Another participant also reflected on her experience of wage loss as she transferred from humanitarian aid organizations into more local conditions. She was also critical of employees who come for financial opportunities of “being paid in dollars” (11K36), but mentioned that lack of financial compensation may curb people’s inclusion:

Sometimes people do voluntary work at university, but they may choose a private sector career because they think they cannot make money in this field... This is not something I'll point a finger at; but I've also seen people who enter this field to be paid in dollars. 11K36

There was also another visible tendency among participants to focus on the non-monetary aspects of their jobs as many participants reported a situation of *not being motivated by money*. Civil society was characterized as a place where financial motivations can’t exist:

‘I entered civil society for money’, it is certain that such a thing cannot happen. You don't enter civil society for status. You can only join civil society because, as in many associations now, ... either because you have a relative, or the subject is in your field of interest, or you are a fellow countryman. 16K40

Therefore, a tendency to *disregard* or adjust financial expectations and focus on other aspects of work were common. This was visible with the 6 participants who reported having walked out of private sector jobs which could pay more; in search of more meaning, stated as “putting one’s head lightly on the pillow” (2K33) or “choosing to support people rather than make bosses richer” (4K31) and chasing peace of mind and self-realization (13K39). As one said, “if I did it for money, I probably wouldn't be doing it... At the end of the day, I am very sorry, but (workers)... cannot really work in an NGO if they are money oriented” (2K33). One participant also brought up a “moral compass” (11K36) which may get clouded with financial expectations. Participants reported they would be making more money in the private sector, but they wouldn’t really find the meaning they were seeking: “I could probably be the vice president who drives around with a chauffeur, but that's a secondary thing really” (12K35). Participants were motivated by *meaning*, instead of *job security*, or *money*.

Male participants also cited a lack of financial satisfaction which they were mitigating with the meaning they derived from their work (19E33) as well as opportunities for development at their work (20E32). One of the male participants cited how coworkers who come to work in civil society leave after some point because there is no financial gain where he said “they claim people make 2-3 times as much in the private sector” (19E33) whereas in his case he mentioned being able to reconcile this and the lack of side benefits such as bonuses which are available in the private sector.

While many participants made remarks on the non-existence of financial motivations; there was one participant who exceptionally said that “she has to work and earn money” (5K39) and it was the circumstances that led her here. However, during the course of her work after the earthquake, she stood deeply affected, “healed”, as “no job has ever been this satisfying”, and “this has nothing to do with money” (5K39).

It was also mentioned that in order to be able to afford the insufficient level of financial compensation in the sector; some workers said it is essential to have *support systems* to

ensure that they subsidize their wage loss to a sustaining level. For example, referring several times to her situation as a young, unmarried woman, living with her parents and without big financial concerns; one participant was quite outspoken about how this is the only way she can get by with the low level of salaries she and her colleagues make. She suggested that civil society work is not feasible under financial pressures (which is why men don't want to be in this field as they look for security, and she said; "Even as a conscious person in the area of women, because I work in this field. But even I say... I want my husband to be rich" (8K30). Another participant also relied on family support, as they live together with multiple siblings and asked "if it wasn't for my family's support, would I be able to work in the NGO field as much? I don't know, to be honest, it may not be enough to sustain yourself" (6K37). She also said that even though the work feels good at NGOs, "you don't receive a high salary; you're working as a half-volunteer" (6K37).

Two participants who were married with kids also spoke on this as "it would not be as easy to search for meaning if people were still focused on their basic needs" (12K35). Another participant stated that due to her being more financially stable and taking a sideline she was able to continue doing this meaningful work (2K33). Having sidelines were mentioned by other participants, too, who said otherwise they "wouldn't be able to work in civil society" (4K31). One participant mentioned that her husband was supporting the home more, financially (16K40). A male participant also mentioned having a sideline before being promoted to management for his salary was not enough to get by (20E32).

Lastly, even if they had previously talked about the lower level of salaries in NGOs, as a result of their personal adjustments of their expectations and other motivations, some participants reported that they were *happy about their earnings*. They mentioned feeling lucky (7K48) or being satisfied with their NGOs' financial compensation policies (4K31, 5K39, 9K27, 12K35), as one of them added for the sector-wide condition that; "I hear a lot of talk about labor exploitation in other NGOs. So there is a lot of fatigue. Too much labor, unmet needs, after a while some turn into project foundations" (7K48). These participants still referred to the sector-wide situation as well as the general economic conditions which constrain NGO workers, as one participant said; "Of course I wish salaries were better and higher because we really deserve it" (9K27).

All in all, financial compensation was one of the fundamental aspects of NGO workers' meaning and motivation making processes, mostly cited in a negative way; even though it was commonly mitigated with the employment of meaning.

3.3.1.4. Third sector motivations

The trend I categorized as *third sector motivations* reflects the strong emphasis of workers who kept referring to their motivations of *always wanting to work in this sector* and that *it is more meaningful*. This is the foremost approach in the narratives of participants who said that they derive *satisfaction from the meaning of their work in civil society*.

In general, civil society employment or *third sector* was constructed as *an alternative*; as opposed to the private and public sectors which were viewed as *rigid, profit-oriented* and *competitive*; civil society was characterized as a more *flexible* space which allowed workers to be themselves and work in a culture of *solidarity* to put into effect their *motivations to create change*. NGO workers also talked about a *civil society culture* defined by values and motivations while their involvement and prior *volunteering* stemmed from a *sensitivity for social issues and rights* as well as a strong desire to *be the voice of people and engage in advocacy*. The dimensions of *impact, value perceptions, solidarity* and *flexibility* were mentioned to contribute to meaning and motivation making processes. The level of *personal and professional development* were enjoyed from a career aspect, as well as the *flexibility* that jobs offer, and participants were motivated for their *fields*. I also found out that even though most participants reported that they want to *stay*; still there was some desire to *exit* from civil society due to emotional and financial reasons. Lastly, the effects of *individual characteristics* of NGO workers that brought and kept them in the job, as *personalities, values, skills* and *experiences* were seen as personal factors that contribute to workers' motivation making.

To begin with, civil society or the *third sector*, constituted an *alternative sphere for employment* in the perceptions of participants who wanted to dedicate their labor to *meaningful, impactful* and *socially beneficial* work. As one participant said "if I were to have another chance, I would work in an NGO again" (7K48). There was a strong

tendency among participants' motivations towards the sector as a whole, which in many cases was reinforced by other motivational aspects. Civil society was seen as a *third place*; an alternative choice for employment. There were some who knew from the start or had learnt earlier during internships, in the public sector especially, while there were others who left private sector and joined civil society for *meaning*, mainly.

In general, public sector was seen as a more rigid, less flexible and monotonous structure (7K48, 3K31, 11K36). There were also tendencies not to prefer the way work is done in the public sector as *bureaucratic* structures and the *not-so-caring* attitudes of public sector employees get in the way of desired impact. There were obstacles of getting appointed to public sector via Turkish public service personal selection exams (KPSS) and interviews, too. Also, participants tended to see themselves as *not compatible with the profit-making, demanding, busy and hierarchical* organizations in the private sector either. There was a strong tendency not to act by the values of the public and private sectors, as some participants had come to the sector with high motivation; but were disappointed due to emotional labor and lack of financial compensation rampant in sector:

Actually, the sector was a little attractive. Because I didn't want to work in the private, or the public sector...I had a hard time accepting, to be honest...that you're going to be involved in this wheel of order in some way, but civil society seemed a little bit more like a third field, like an alternative field when I was at university. But when I got into it, I saw that it was exactly the same. 1K28

Some participants had prior experience in other sectors, like participants 14K29 and 15K29 who had internships and realized that they were not cut out for public jobs. This was also shared by a male participant who is a social worker in origin in that he also knew from his internship and said; "I don't like the cumbersome nature of the public sector, its bureaucracy" (20E32). In addition, all male participants referred to the distinct nature of civil society work in relation to the other sectors, as for example they emphasized the lack of financial compensation in NGOs compared to the private sector but they were also motivated to be working in this sector which suit them (18E30, 19E33).

Among participants who transferred to the third sector, the common motivation was to *find meaning* in jobs. Regarding this, one participant remembered from the private sector of having witnessed a cliff between minimum wage earners and "yacht-buying bosses"

(4K31) after which she realized she didn't belong there. Another participant from the education field emphasized the lack of solidarity and the higher level of hierarchies, competition and target-oriented structures in private sector for her reason of leaving (13K39), whereas another left her job at a bank for "a non-white collar civil society job" in flexible and smaller environments where she could work in the disabled field for which she was motivated (16K40). One of the male participants also reported finding meaning in his previous NGO and building on it in his current employment, for which he left a job in a bank with sales pressure (19E33). Another participant cited as an LGBTQ+ individual that she might be exposed to more discriminations in the private sector, as she heard of such cases from friends and beneficiaries (10K28).

Also, labor conditions in the private sector were not liked by NGO workers. One participant found in civil society what was missing in the private sector, since "NGOs see their employees as humans, as opposed to the private sector where you can't even say that you need to take your kid to the doctor" (7K48). She added that she found forms of solidarity in her current NGO, sharing their troubles and having fun, unlike the competitive private sector (7K48). They also cited that the "financial conditions were the same, even if not less" (6K37) or weren't attractive enough (14K29) in the private sector; but this was not enough to choose it as they were mainly motivated by meaning and impact, especially for the public good.

There was a general disinterest with public sector employment, seen as *less flexible, routine, rigid* and *hard to get* while NGOs were more open spaces where workers can enjoy working towards *creative and effective solutions*. One participant said "(civil servants) were just coming and going to work, without any dreams and goals to contribute. That's why I thought that NGOs could open this space for me more" (3K31). Positive aspects of public sector were also brought up as a more *regular life* and having *power and resources to transform* from above:

There are good sides to the public sector, actually. You know, being in decision-makers, a more organized life. A more intimate life would be nice after a certain age... These conditions are sometimes attractive, but at the same time, stability does not go with my character. 9K27

Second to its *alternativeness*, the most dominant tendency on third sector motivations was the identification of what I characterized as a *civil society culture* as NGO workers referred to the mediation of two aspects of their work motivation: *to create change* and *derive meaning and satisfaction* where most participants had met civil society via volunteering and/or when they were younger; in university, or involved from *grassroots* level, getting involved in political organizations, especially women's solidarity groups. A small number of participants had met civil society first as professionals; some were referred by their networks.

Participants displayed a motivation to create change with their work and adhered to the meaning of their jobs: "Of course, there were periods when I was very tired and looked for a job. I just couldn't break away from civil society, every time I said I would leave, I stayed" (2K33). There were further dynamics that contributed to their motivations as many participants reported internal drivers such as a *sensitivity for social issues and rights* as in "sensitivities about inequalities and rights", especially with the issues that got them involved in civil society and political organization (15K29). Another participant suggested that NGO workers *need* to have certain sensitivities which drive them, because it won't be the monetary compensation of their labor driving them (16K40). Participants made such comments as *feeling good, healed and empowered* and *excited* while providing for people's needs, and were proud of their impact and feedback. For example, one participant said that this was like "a need" and that she "might not experience this much job satisfaction" in other jobs (4K31) while it was said that "creating social benefit is one of the most positive aspects" of their jobs (12K35) as well as the feedback:

Thanks to me doing this, 10 more women received leadership training, or 15 more established a workshop or started earning income, or children had a toy library... In that sense, civil society is a field that satisfies you emotionally, too. 7K48

There is never a good case in our lives. Very rarely, there are people who thank us or say that it feels good, but it is a difficult field. It feels good to be able to touch people's lives at a difficult point, to see those changes. 10K28

When I get the feedback, I say I'm glad this happened this way and I approached them this way. I came across someone in great need. It satisfies me a lot in that sense. 3K31

Participants talked about several cases especially where they came into contact with children, women, teachers, LGBTQ+ and young people in the field and witnessed how their work changed lives via *healing, accessing support, feeling happy and heard* and *becoming empowered* by their supports. They also talked about being able to touch people in the *field*, and their desires to do something on the ground by providing *spot-on solutions* or by *having the power to work for the people, to the benefit of society*:

I can improve myself, and after that I can communicate and touch people, but at the same time, it satisfies me spiritually... Because I am a character whose social sensitivity is somewhat at nirvana. 16K40

Male participants also cited the *meaning of work* quite often, as they all mentioned (18E30, 19E33, 20E32) deriving meaning from the work they do for the people, their families and the overall society:

When you accompany the stories, when you support, or when you personally observe the healing process of a mother or a client, the spiritual side of this work is much more outweighed, I can really say that. One of the things that keeps me in this field is that we are trying to do really good work. 18E30

The more we contribute to the development of a healthy society, the more we contribute to the existence of our own family in a healthy society. There is also a multiplier like that. 20E32

NGO workers also made reference to the value of their work in many cases where they mentioned that “it can’t be measured by money” (5K39, 7K48). It was also a common view that this was “not just a job” (2K33, 3K31); one participant even likened her job to a protective “super hero” to get her daughter to embrace it, too (12K35). There were also other cases where participants reported that even though their work is very valuable, they need to “manage their boundaries” (10K28, 14K29). The positive feedback received motivate NGO workers as they mentioned they wouldn’t be able to do the work “if it weren’t for those feelings and appreciation of their work” (12K35), to make it worthwhile.

When the subject of covid comes up, those women say they received full support from the foundation during that period. They say we never left them alone, even for a day... So this creates something that no bonus, no overtime pay, no reward can compare with. 7K48

In contrast to such situations where participants reported that they get satisfaction from *feedback and appreciation* from people they helped, there was a strong tendency to be

highly disturbed by the way NGO work appears from the outside. Participants commented that the foundational reason for this was a lack of *general* awareness towards civil society in Türkiye, as the public didn't know and therefore often mixed paid work in civil society with unpaid *volunteering* work which highly affected their motivations, as it was said:

I think civil society awareness does not exist in Türkiye... Even among my relatives, when I said I work in an association, they asked me if I was a volunteer, how nice and so on. Someone even asked for Ramadan packages. I don't think that what we're saying about the impact of this on the welfare of the society, why we're doing this; this doesn't reflect well. 16K40

Furthermore, it was also emphasized that civil society may have negative connotations in people's minds, leading to stigmatization of NGO workers as *anarchists*, *immigrant lovers* and '*funded*' people who were viewed in cohorts with international competitors in line with populist and conservative views, especially within the migrant field.

Our only job is thought to receive funds and distribute to Syrians, this includes my own family... I usually hear negative things: "Funder", "Arab lover", "You don't do anything for Turkish citizens."...I never heard anything good about my profession. 1K28

Not only because I work in civil society, I have worked with asylum seekers for years and my family looked at me with a prejudice. My friends, too and I got a lot of feedback like 'you are feeding them, you are doing this and that'. 4K31

Work in civil society was often *belittled* which was taken to heart, especially when it came from close circles. Participants mentioned that these contribute to devaluation of their work and they get tired from always having to explain what they do, why it's important, or just having the space to talk about it, as one shared "In our friend group, 'For God's sake, stop talking about the NGO already, enough, we're going to throw up. It's the same thing every time we sit down' and so on" (15K29).

On the other hand, there were some participants who said they heard such things from others because *it's a good but tough work*. When people take notice or are made to understand their work, it became motivating; like one participant said "we get many prayers from mothers or children. We also talk about this in our team. We lay our heads on the pillow comfortably. Honestly, that aspect of helping is peaceful" (2K33). These appreciations empower workers on the job; even though it's hard, as one participant put it, they were still motivated for it; "there are facts of life. Every job has its difficulties. Of

course, my job, too. But it needs to be done, you, me, or them. Otherwise there would be no one left, so someone needs to work in this field” (6K37).

Another pattern of third sector motivations was a state of *solidarity* where the work environment was perceived as *less competitive, more supportive* than especially the private sector, as one participant from a women’s empowerment NGO said “Our relationships are more friendly than professional, we have a shoulder-to-shoulder rapport with the people in the foundation and with the women we work with” (7K48). Even though there were differences based on fields and NGOs; there was an understanding that civil society was a space where *like-minded* and *purpose-driven* people created impact together; “One of the motivating things is that if your teammates are nice in civil society, you really enjoy it. It's not like that in the public (sector)” (14K29).

(One positive aspect) can be colleagues, in general, because people who share the same mindset come together. In NGOs, people who are not like that may either want to change jobs or they may not be able to work hard. But since it is where people who think the same and want to act in the same way come together, your colleagues can also improve you. 3K31

The last pattern related to meanings of work and satisfaction was a common referral to a *flexibility*¹⁹ which corresponded to participants’ motivations about their working styles as they frequently expressed a desire to be *free and creative* while performing their jobs. Managers and workers believed that flexibility increased impact and the job improved with creativity and initiative, as they were able to offer spot-on solutions this way and navigate bureaucratic structures; a pattern that corresponded to a motivation of being able to use time more freely and guarantee a space for regeneration, too:

People here are really in the mindset of civil society and I met with the real civil society where things don't work with money, but to the benefit of the human being. So I started to get that satisfaction again from the field. 4K31

Actually, flexible work, there is room for development and evolving into different areas; initiative... It gives me the freedom to be a bit crazy... I am the General

¹⁹ *Flexibility* as a pattern was mentioned from very different angles in relation to the work/life reconciliation by referring to its freedom, initiative and time dimensions as a working style which I handle under section 3.3.3. It was also commonly mentioned as a skill/capability referring to *psychological flexibility and resilience* of NGO workers.

Coordinator and if I want to write a project, if I want to apply for it, I do it, I meet with whomever I want to meet. I have a very serious flexibility." 8K30

(I said) "No one interferes with my case management. I am also taking therapy, can you show some flexibility with this?" They told me that we can take compensatory leave. I am very happy that I came (here), from the first day, even before I started working. 10K28

Lastly, on another level of civil society's functions, participants were very frequently speaking of standing up for others by fighting to overcome challenges, pointing to wrong practices and ineffective mechanisms stemming from a state of *caring about others' needs* and a desire for *making voice for their issues* which relate to advocacy. As one participant put it "I already like to fight, and it's good for me to do it as a job and get a salary on top of it, to continue my life with this" (10K28). Another participant was also deriving her main motivation from this:

I actually like it a lot when someone, somewhere raises their voice. Frankly, it was pleasant for me to be able to step in and say that there are problems, at the points the public sector says it can't be done; being able to advocate. 9K27

As another dimension of third sector motivations, we talked about participants' *career development and future motivations*. From an overview, it was a tendency to report feeling somehow committed to jobs, even though the level of satisfaction varied. First, as a factor that brought employees to the sector, there were *motivations towards the field*. While talking about their third sector careers, participants engaged frequently with their motivation towards their respective fields via anecdotes, reasoning with their personal and emotional development processes, looking back at their education and work preferences, their work experiences and career expectations. Some mentioned how they wanted to follow their interest in the civil society context, as seen from statements like "I worked very happily, peacefully, because I wanted to work in the children's field" (5K39) or "the area I really wanted to work in was LGBT+" (10K28).

It was very common to state *motivations towards the field* in relation with the target groups; interests were either determined in young ages, or as a result of life experiences, as well as personal characteristics. For example, one participant explained how she "always wanted to work in civil society and towards human rights", even though after a long period of not being able to secure employment in NGOs, she finally found one which

fit her interest towards “fieldwork and trauma” (15K29). Similarly, another participant said “since childhood, I had the desire and the knowledge that I was going to do something related to people's access to their rights” (11K36). Another participant had made her choice to focus on helping migrants when she realized that “geography is destiny” (1K28), as a resident of Türkiye’s Southeast region.

Male participants also reported an amount of motivation for the field which especially grew after meeting with the sector and their field of work via their job which they came to embrace (18E30, 19E33) whereas they also cited earlier motivations and life experiences such as family history and volunteering (18E30, 20E32).

Participants also mentioned the space NGO job offers for connection as well as *personal, career and emotional developments* that they highly value (9K27, 15K29). They tended to believe that the challenges of civil society were contributing to their growth because the job was hard, but also rewarding, exciting, flexible and engaging (14K29) and that they were attached and loyal (2K33). Male participants also referred to a willingness to stay at their jobs, especially in the cases of two managers who reported a well amount of support for career and personal development opportunities. They cited the professional experience and organization’s support that they could access (18E30, 20E32).

While discussing their *plans to stay or exit* their jobs; there was more of a tendency to *wish to stay*; however some participants weren’t completely sure due to sector conditions. There were several reasons which may cause them to leave their jobs, or the sector, especially due to financial reasons of *job security and sustainability* concerns due to volatile sector dynamics because “the sector is shrinking” (8K30) or there are “not many job opportunities” (3K31) in their fields. While some were more confident that they were going to stay or that they can’t leave, even if labor conditions are not ideal as one participant said “My perspective is very different because I come from a white-collar background... I think I will be a 'sharecropper' rather than a career. I will continue to be a 'maraba' in civil society Pelin...” (16K40).

There was also a very common tendency to wish to stay in the sector; but *leave the fieldwork* due to immense emotional labor and being exposed to hard field conditions for

a long period and eventual *burnout*. While saying this job can't be done in the long term, some workers wanted to *leave the sector completely* one day. Even when they were wholly committed to their jobs and involved from grassroots since youth, they said things like "this will be my last work in this field. After that, I will leave civil society, I mean, I will find a way and I will leave" (17K34) or "I'm thinking about being completely out of the field, at least at some point...I need to give myself a break" (4K31). They were also saying that they may have to change job functions at some point like "leaving MHPSS²⁰" (15K29), or to change their NGO or field, to advance to more senior /technical/advisory positions (11K36), or very commonly, *get employed in INGOs* (1K28, 10K28, 3K31) as;

After a certain age, you may not be able to work with children at the same pace. I would like to, but my physical condition may not allow it. At that time I would like to continue support in a different position. 6K37

Maybe after a certain point, providing this one-to-one service, dealing with all the arrangements, it will be tiring. After that, I want to position myself as a technical expert, ...to develop the best projects... social policies; to advocate for them. 11K36

I always want to be in civil society, but taking cases is very tiring, at some point, maybe I can leave the case taking to others and make a change as a supervisor or in other positions. 10K28

I also realized a separate pattern that workers in manager positions saw more of a career opportunity for themselves as they believe they can make a living and/or keep advancing in the sector (5K39, 12K35). Male participants also said that they want to stay in the sector; however their decisions were more based on opportunities available. Still, one participant said that he "probably wouldn't take up a job in the private sector after this point" (19E33). The other two participants were managers who wanted to continue their careers as long as it still made sense for them and offered opportunities, like it is now.

The last dimension of *third sector motivations* was that some participants believed that their *personality, values, skills and experience* had a strong impact together with the more structural reasons. Here, participants talked about how their family histories,

²⁰ MHPSS: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

developmental stages, the way they were brought up and saddening experiences like losses affected their choices and motivation. Personal experiences and character attributes were mentioned to contribute to value processes which brought them to the sector. They also referred to character traits such as being loving, patient, caring, emotional, sensitive, beneficent/helpful, emotional, empathetic, hungry for growth, value-ridden and human-centered, which had effects on their NGO employment as well as earlier education and occupation choices. Participants were often talking about how they apply their character traits to their work and how the work is in sync with their character. They reported several mechanisms and traits that NGO workers apply to their work that stem from personal resources and comprise the *NGO worker's toolbox* such as, thinking about others, fighting for rights and justice, insistent/stubborn, human-focused, in solidarity, facilitating, active, solution-oriented, empathetic, good listener, open to communication, facing challenge, desiring growth, self aware, able to manage stress and crises and free of prejudice:

It's because of my father...we are 3 sisters who grew up with that sharing culture...It strains me, when someone, like a child is outside picking up garbage literally and we just drive past him. 2K33

I had a nature that was more people-oriented, solidaristic, listening, inclusive of everyone's thoughts... 13K39

I have a very movement-based life. I can't do static and stable much, I need to move. It is good for me to be in something and to intervene one-on-one. 5K39

If you are prone to thinking about improving yourself, learning new things and fighting against all difficulties, civil society is a very nourishing factor in this regard... Someone from the field of social sciences... Someone who knows their rights... It is not a more stable life, but someone who is open to change and development. They should be a better listener with the people they meet. I can say more empathetic. 9K27

I think for one thing they need to be combative, solution-oriented. Fast, because social problems really don't wait around... They need to have a solid psychology... From my point of view, to see and serve the big picture, to do things not for people to like me, but because I love people and I love nature. Of course, the need to be useful. 12K35

Stress management, the capacity to cope with crisis. To be developed, resilient, flexible... Communication is indispensable...if working with the target group, coming from a place of inclusion. 14K29

A civil society worker should have come to the conclusion that I am not helping people, I am a facilitator of these people's access to their most basic rights. 15K29

All in all, participants underlined many ways civil society *suit*ed them as they perceived it as an alternative place where they improve lives by solving social problems.

3.3.1.5. Working conditions

Working conditions were one of the most scrutinized aspects of NGO work that often downplayed workers' motivations, similar to financial motivations. However, there were also some workplace policies that mitigated their negative effects such as *flexibilities, understanding workplaces, extra leave opportunities*²¹ in civil society work. Employment conditions largely varied as there were differences between NGOs, jobs and fields of involvement; therefore workers reported on very different dimensions that contribute to their meaning and motivation making processes.

Here, participants mainly referred to the impact of working conditions on their motivation in a negative way to the point some called civil society work a state of *labor exploitation*. Frequent patterns were based on the influence of *overtime, heavy workload and overwork, private sector-like practices* and the risen *precarity* in the sector. A diverse range of factors which deteriorate workers' conditions in the sector were mentioned as work got more and more *project or contract-based* which create lacking conditions of *job safety, security, sustainability* and *create risks for worker wellbeing*. These were reported to be exacerbated with the effects of *crises*. Further disappointments with the sector as it stays in the hands of *unfit managements and coworkers* who approach it as *KPIs and numbers* and practice *mobbing* from time to time were also mentioned.

Still, practices of civil society were commonly mentioned as “treating people as people” (11K36) where values are defined on the basis of trust, support and protection. The regular NGO workplace was perceived as a more understanding and peaceful environment when

²¹ I mention these and other social motivators in more detail in Section 3.3.3 on the Effect of NGO Work on Private Life.

compared with an average private firm, for example, frequently characterized as more competitive, untrusting and pressured environments (7K48).

Before going through with the patterns one by one, I want to mention that all male participants who were from the same reputable NGO did not report many challenges due to working conditions. They said that their work was quite routine (19E33) or that they had worse conditions before, especially due to overwork; but now as managers they had a better work-life balance (18E30, 20E32).

To start with, there was a common tendency among participants to report that they were generally happy about regular *shifts* and working hours, while the practice of *work from home* (WFH) was quite frequent in civil society as an amenity. However, it was cited by some that their working style required their physical presence, due to requirement of face to face contact for communication with target groups; therefore they can't WFH. Many participants also mentioned that their workplaces were generally understanding when they had private matters to attend to and offered space for flexibility. The working hours, shift arrangements and working styles were mostly satisfying parts of NGO work:

I think our working hours are actually quite good compared to other institutions, in fact, we have a 35-hour working schedule excluding meal times. 13K39

We usually come full time and if we have an errand, we can be flexible. But if this flexibility happens 2-3 times a week, it is deducted from our annual leave. I come 5 days a week. I have to come because my job doesn't allow it. 6K37

It was reported by many participants that COVID had an impact on their working styles, and some organizations kept home-based or hybrid practices which were also motivating for many participants, although they had their ups and downs with the practice. Hybrid form of work was the most common and although WFH was still practiced by some, there were some cases where it was seized by management (1K28) while others were more flexible in terms of working place or hours (4K31, 8K30).

However, problems were occurring since work was mentioned as very busy and it tended to stretch as *overtime*. Participants reported that in those times boundaries were becoming blurred, WFH also had that effect. They mentioned that they were struggling under heavy *workload and overwork*, as they were getting very tired within a never-ending tempo and

constant act of communication (8K30) or not leaving home (14K29) the whole day, especially during WFH and not being able to take a break from work, too.

Actually, if I take breaks or lunch breaks during the day, maybe I will actually have to work overtime. But I work without overtime because I cram the whole day... my day is spent at the desk, never leaving. 13K39

A majority of participants mentioned having to work *overtime* while none of the participants reported receiving *overtime pay*. Being aware of financial constraints in the sector, they were actually not demanding this; but were underlining that it does not exist as in the other sectors “you get paid for overtime at least” (7K48). The only form of compensation reported for overtime was very popularly *taking an off day instead*, but even this was not practiced from time to time as participants had experiences of “finishing work at night and coming back to continue in the morning” (14K29). In general, since *travel, meetings and events* may routinely take place in NGOs after working hours and on weekends, (2K33) many participants mentioned their jobs require a level of overtime by default. But also, there were participants who didn’t need to or didn’t choose to work overtime by establishing boundaries (6K37, 12K35).

Under a *heavy workload and overwork*; participants very frequently referred to having too much to do and not being able to catch up with tasks, like having too much case density, or back to back interviews during the day (10K28). One participant mentioned how it was overwhelming that the problems they deal with just keep growing instead of being solved, as there are persistent social problems in Türkiye and NGOs are really active in the field (12K35). Work was often busy, as one participant said:

It's a really intense tempo, civil society, there is not a relaxed mode as it is thought, frankly... Maybe I could have had such an observation from my university days. But we are really doing a lot of work in the field. 9K27

In many cases, NGO workers reported that, due to *heavy workload and understaffedness*, they had to practice overtime and take on extra responsibilities; for issues requiring constant attention, uncompensated (3K31). They were also having to work by themselves without backup, coworkers and management support (14K29) and overcoming a heavy workload for more than one person. This can be tiring, and sometimes get to a point where

they can't take leaves even if they have unused vacation days; but still due to high motivation they might be not bothered:

It is easy to obtain leave, but not so easy to use it. For example, I can never take leave for 2-3 weeks in a row. I have a lot of leave, no one can stop me, but this comes from working with a small number of people. But it is good, civil society, an open road. 8K30

Also another common pattern was to refer to civil society's demotivating dimensions by expressing that *it's like private sector* in a way that market characteristics were attributed or certain practices were associated with the private sector. It was stated NGOs and sector workers may seek profits, while private sector values may be fostered where civil society turns into a *market* and/or *private sector*:

It is a sector, a market...I don't think there is such a civil society in Türkiye, except for small local associations, I think that all civil society organizations that receive big funds and do big projects are just a sector and a company. Of course, its value is also decreasing, when you look at it like this, it's only about who gets which piece. Needs, humanitarian aid, our name is NGO, so-called non-profit organization. But I think the value of this business has decreased a lot because everyone is in the business for profit. 15K29

I thought I would be outside the system, but actually it wasn't like that at all... Because the sector is a private sector, basically. They turn it all into a horse race, we are constantly positioned in a race within the sector, women and men alike. Those ugly business dramas are going on here as everywhere else. 1K28

Some participants reported feelings of *disappointment with the sector and their NGOS* as NGOs had turned out like the private sector. However, they were expecting consistency from their NGOs to extend the care given to beneficiaries to employees. According to participants, such *disregard* for workers' needs as well as the lack of appreciation and value attribution presented *dilemmas* about NGO work which decreased motivations, such as participant 15K29 who expected solidarity as an earthquake survivor and NGO worker herself, and others who said:

We are trying to reduce this unregistered employment through livelihood (work), but when you look at it, we are the unregistered employment now. 1K28

As a subject in the working area of the association, I expected solidarity with me, but I was exposed to very opposite things. 10K28

(A coworker) says “I was very tired in the private sector, but I had financial gain. Here, I am very tired again. But there are moments I don't think I am valued.” 3K31

NGO workers also got demotivated when they came into contact with *unfit management practices and people* that don't comply with civil society culture. In such cases, the ways colleagues, managers and boards may engage with practices that do not prioritize the wellbeing and participation of workers were scrutinized where one participant talked about her experience as; “I realized the bad face of civil society. Someone who has nothing to do with it works here, and if they don't, we don't get that funding. How can this be?” (4K31). Workers were also disappointed when funds were *not allocated properly* for the betterment of employee's wellbeing, instead of things like meaningless corporate gifts as one participant brought up “instead of a candle, send us to our families” (5K39) or when employee needs are not seen or provisioned:

I think it was Edwards who said a 'good society' is the main goal and we come together under this, but when I come across people who don't fit at all... and see people who pave the way for this, I get demotivated... There is a manager-employee relationship, there is work going on. You can only say so much. 14K29

A managerial decision can be taken much faster, the whole management and staff can change from top to bottom very quickly. Of course, this can also cause your loyalty to your work or what you believe in to disappear in an instant... so (friends) feel worthless both materially and spiritually. 3K31

Not being able to get feedback... When you say 'let's take a break, we are very tired, we are very worn out', for example, sometimes you wait for one or two weeks. Now there is tension during those 2 weeks and at the end you get a rejection. 5K39

Under unfit management structures, it was mentioned by participants that *mobbing* and other forms of workplace stress and harmful practices may occur in civil society. It was interesting that all mobbing cases were relating to women's NGOs; as 2 younger women participants who previously worked in women's NGOs both reported being subjected to mobbing (1K28, 10K28). After these, they stayed away from women's NGOs as one said “there was very serious mobbing. Honestly, I promised myself not to work in any women's organization after that” (1K28). While others cited cases involving women, as they said “from time to time we hear about mobbing, about women mobbing women; overworking them. But still it is more legitimate to talk about it in an NGO” (7K48), or;

Mobbing, manipulation, we had to go to her house... She was in her sixties, above middle age. She is the one who founded the association and has always been the chairperson of the board of directors... She spoke in the imperative. She was always throwing responsibility on employees. 14K29

The prevalence of *KPI/number-oriented* and performance based working styles were also cited as demotivating factors not suitable for civil society. Participants cited being unhappy and leaving jobs due to feelings of distance and alienation from the field which had a transformative impact on motivation as they made them “lose sense of who they are responsible to and lose touch” (5K39). These approaches were not liked because numbers do not represent the uniqueness of people, nor are they accurate to measure the impact of work as they said things like “the sector took away my belief in providing direct support to people in need... It turned into reporting work, you know.” (1K28). In such cases they did not enjoy feeling like they were being monitored, “like a child, a student, our work performance is constantly monitored” (3K31); constantly getting asked to provide numbers, targets and report on KPIs, which sometimes they found odd and hard to understand (5K39, 7K48). This number-orientedness especially occurred in the context of INGOs and in relationships with private funders where participants shared experiences when “organizations have strange expectations. When we are writing up a project and say... 800 women will be trained, it’s like ‘we thought it would be 1,800.’” (7K48). They further mentioned that the higher you go in the organization, the more tasks turn into *keeping track of KPIs and numbers* (4K31, 5K39):

From a spiritual point of view, being away from the field while working in our international organizations... these take people away from the profession. 11K36

You used to deal with the child, but now it is your superior who wears you down or the team that you cannot find solutions for... We are constantly asked for data, for example. “How many children came, how many people did it reach?” 5K39

Some coworkers who were not in the field really saw people as numbers. It bothered me a lot because there were people we waited for at the police station at night. 4K31

Lastly, but very importantly participants spoke of such patterns of work in civil society which correspond to a situation of *precarity* in the sector. A number of participants listed as a top factor, the conditions of financial instability due to prevalence of *contract-based employment* that contributes to demotivation by creating insecurities and constraining

workers' options for staying in the sector. Many participants mentioned their work was devalued while they live in "constant uncertainty and anxiety" (8K30, 10K28, 14K29) for their projects ending, being out of a job when their contracts are over, always be looking for jobs as they may also be *deprived of social security* benefits:

First, there is no economic stability. Today there is a project and I have a salary, but 3 months later is not clear. Also the changing economic conditions in Türkiye... I mean we are conducting this much work, but who is conducting this work? Somebody is doing it, and these are people who also need money to live. 8K30

The first thing that comes to mind is that there is not economic sustainability and project-orientedness... Always going on, that anxiety you live with, as to what will happen when my project is finished. 10K28

Our employment can be terminated very easily because our contract is over. So it's not really a secure sector, and it probably won't be a secure sector... You have to work in our organization for one year to be included in the pension system... and I can't get it because of downsizing. So I can't be fixed term. 1K28

Some participants mentioned that most work in the field took a *project-based* form; hence the work in civil society was becoming more trivialized and losing sustainability. For example, one participant mentioned that as a result of the voluntary understanding of civil society "everything turns into project" (16K40). The contribution of workers' expertise to success was disregarded; leading to less financial compensation for professionals and their eventual exit as one participant said "the work of psychologists, translators, social workers, field workers is professional work; but are usually at the bottom of projects. Therefore, people cannot see this as their main profession" (17K34).

Participants commonly acknowledged that their employment and compensation were very connected with the *lack of sustainable financial resources in the sector*; as the nonexistence of funds created a volatile condition for job security, especially for those in smaller organizations, as one participant said "When we don't have funding, of course I will continue to volunteer, but not at this performance and level. It is a very serious thing, we are always worried" (8K30). However, project-based works may also pay *more handsome wages*, especially when they were funded by international donors or they were done in INGOs – in which cases foreign currency based salaries of projects may be a motivating factor for employees as the only upside of project based work, getting paid in

dollars (14K29). A retreat of foreign funds was mentioned which led to layoffs in INGOs (1K28) and worsening conditions in more local and smaller organizations:

We are already working in a precarious and flexible field. We are all project-based, organizations say this very easily. 'You are project-based, you'll leave anyway, you are replaced by a new one'. The sector has shrunk, projects have decreased a lot. Therefore, if someone tries to defend their rights, they are directly stopped. 17K34

There is no tenure, I don't think anyone in civil society has it. Because everyone works on a project basis. The projects are also based on funds. I'm talking about local organizations in particular. (this creates) intensity and uncertainty. 9K27

Conditions were reported as even more challenging in local civil society organizations in terms of *precarity*, especially due to understaffedness where financial opportunities are lesser than INGOs and their staff are involved in more tiring jobs. Smaller NGOs' workers do more work and/or work alone – i.e. with less people and money.

There are never enough employees in local NGOs because of the lack of resources. One person can do the work of several people at once... Maybe seeing it as a temporary period,... can keep you in this business. 11K36

I worked alone for a very long time. Since no one works in the field, people came and left after 10 months... I worked alone for 2-3 years and it was a huge burden, in fact, I was very exhausted at that time. 2K33

Another common pattern reported regarding the *precarity of NGO work* was the *harsh conditions, risks and emotional damages* that workers were exposed to; which created feelings of unsafety but also physical and emotional consequences. Participants tended to express that their job was hard and they were able to take it to a point; but due to long term exposure to risks while dealing with constant anxiety, their wellbeing was decreasing, whereas “the state of insecurity in the sector becomes more evident during crisis periods” (1K28). Some participants, especially those deployed in the earthquake field mentioned being left to themselves without provision of any sort of protective measures while organizations did not show signs that they cared (5K39, 15K29, 17K34) which led some participants wanting to change their jobs or leave the field altogether:

We are really being marched forward like infantry... And we cannot demand any security in return. I think this is very troubling. Precariousness is indeed more prevalent in crisis periods. 1K28

First, I'm on the verge of resignation. I work 12 hours a day with the commute... We work in a disaster area. Our profession involves very serious secondary traumatization... These are never taken into consideration by the general management. The commute is not included as overtime. 15K29

Also, participants reported regularly working in unsafe and risky conditions, in places like hospitals and disaster fields while having to stay and work in unsanitary conditions, like containers while being exposed to physical risks. They mentioned effects on their health as well as somatic effects:

Maybe I don't bring it as a problem now because it has been many years, but I know my fingernails being broken from standing up. It was constantly infected... At the end of the day, we are not working in a very hygienic place or we are exposed to chemotherapy... My hair was falling out very often. 2K33

Organizations send us (to the disaster area) as desk workers, but we are not desk workers. We have many risk factors and these risks will return to us... Because after I left the field, I developed 3 stress-related chronic diseases and one allergy. I can't even see the effect on my lungs right now, I will see it in 20 years. 17K34

...we were staying in a container, 4 of us. The compound I was staying at had healthy conditions. Only the field where I worked was a little problematic, but it didn't prevent us from working or reaching the children. It was unhealthy for the people there. Because we leave at some point. 5K39

In addition, participants reported their intensive emotional labor and the emotional damage from the field as they said "We still commute back and forth through the rubble every day, and wake up every morning wondering which basic need we will have a problem with today" (15K29) or they can't leave the disaster field at all. Participants mentioned harsh conditions and emotional labor were not accounted for whereby they said "regarding the emotional labor and disaster field, emotional labor should be kept separate and our category of work should be changed" (17K34):

Especially in the earthquake zone, it is very, very dangerous. In Hatay, you go out to the street, (because of the buildings that will collapse) you instinctively walk in the middle of the road... You need to buy self-care materials, rest your head, go to the seaside, but it is far away, you need a vehicle. You can't exit the field. 5K39

The most demotivating aspect of such experiences was that workers kept referring to how the managements don't care and *ignore their real needs and wellbeing*. Participants, especially in the earthquake zone, mentioned a feeling of being *left alone* to deal with their feelings after they witness so much and were exposed to secondary traumas but had

to bottle up their feelings. One participant stated about the wellbeing of workers “What about us? Nobody thinks about us, it's up to us again to take care of ourselves” (8K30). It was stated that there were no spaces to advocate for workers’ healing and wellbeing as organizations and managements constantly ignored them as the attention given to beneficiaries was not extended to staff:

This is not discussed by NGOs: 'I am doing things to strengthen the community, but what am I doing for the staff I employ?' Oh my God - just give us a break... 'Friends, let's take a break for 5 days. We're sending you there.' Just buy a plane ticket. These are not that difficult. There is a lot of money behind these foundations and associations. 5K39

Provide shelter for the beneficiary, yes, as if my need for shelter has been solved and everything is fine. I think this is from a place that does not prioritize employees, and not think about how not to exhaust them. 15K29

In addition to conditions relating to physical and mental health, there were participants worried about their safety from sexual harassment and sometimes didn’t feel safe as women in the workplace and in the cities they were assigned to. There were also worries about being made *scapegoats*, *targeted* or *being shut down* for marginalized NGOs:

Someone came and left a note on the door, it was incredibly unsettling... Sometimes I think it's not because I'm a woman... But I understand that the person who wrote it is not healthy anyway... Maybe our being women gives them extra courage, I don't know, but unfortunately we live this. 8K30

I had a very hard time in Urfa... You don't feel safe, let me say, I think it’s one of the most difficult cities for a woman, that was my boiling point. 9K27

You live with the anxiety of what will happen when your project ends. This is the first negative side, the second is that the state does not support and even targets it. That's why finding resources is hard... Sometimes we don't feel safe... An anxiety of being shut down and how much trouble will I be, if so. 10K28

To sum up, participants underlined the increasing insecure and flexible conditions in the sector and listed their needs and demands for the amelioration of their situation within the *working conditions* of the sector which is one of the main contributors to their meaning and motivation making processes as a whole.

3.3.2. Mitigation of Private Life

In this section, I will report on participants' situation regarding their own reproduction by focusing on various dimensions of their life organization, considering the effect of their NGO work. These dimensions are, namely; *living situation, relationships and support, time, household responsibility and effect of private life on work.*

3.3.2.1. Living situation

As the first component of reproduction of NGO workers, I will have a look at participants' living situations as a part of how they mitigated the effects of their NGO work, created more challenges or had no apparent effects on their work/life situation. However, since the conditions of NGO workers both in their work and private lives vary greatly, it is not possible to draw out generalizable trends from these. Instead, I will refer to them as a basis for the following discussions that relate to workers' own reproduction.

From an overview, participants reported 5 patterns in terms of their living situations. Other than the majority of participants who were living alone, participants shared homes with parents, roommates, partners and/or kids. The living situation of participants was also related to their financial situation, especially in the case of those living with their parents some of whom reported that while having an NGO work, it was hard for them to get a house by themselves. On the other hand, participants living alone or with roommates had more of a tendency to report financial challenges than others, especially those living with spouses who shared the financial burden.

Further, there were a few participants who had recently gotten out of relationships where they shared their houses with partners. A common characteristic of these participants was that they all reported that in previous living situations of partnerships and (ended) marriages, they had experienced serious problems with their partners in terms of work/life reconciliation as their approach to housework and common responsibilities had differed which contributed to the end of their relationships. But they also emphasized the impact

of their NGO work, the business of their jobs as well as partners' lack of understanding (10K28, 11K36, 15K29).

The most apparent effect of living situation on the social reproduction of NGO workers was represented in their attitude towards household labor and how they mitigate it with paid work. All of the participants I interviewed who were living with others reported that they experience less challenges in terms of work/life mitigation as a whole, when compared to those living alone. However, participants who were living alone were mostly happy about their living situation, even against challenges, as one said:

I have a tendency to handle my own business, I'm a bit controlling. I also find it hard to ask for support... I also love living alone... Even if I have dishes for a week, 2-3 days, sometimes I don't mind, I can't find that comfort in anything else. 9K27

Especially participants who were living with their husbands and/or kids reported having a rather organized life where they shared responsibilities with their helpful spouses. In addition, those living with parents did not report many challenges as well; as they were all positioned as *helpers* in the house and they got to share main responsibilities with their parents, both in the household and financially. On the other hand, those living alone or with roommates reported more challenges in household labor where they were often short of time and energy between home and work and let go or postponed them which created challenges in terms of work/life reconciliation.

I wish there was a pill for everything and we could consume it that way, from food to laundry to dishes...As for living alone, it's my first experience. It is very difficult to think through everything... Physically, I come from work, I am hungry, for example, this is a physical need, okay? I need to cook... 1K28

Nonetheless, the information from the field regarding *living situation* only makes sense with the rest of the patterns relating to the mitigation of private life for NGO workers which I'll continue to report in the following sections.

3.3.2.2. Relationships and support

Participants were asked to report on their *relationships and support systems* as well as personal *responsibilities* in their private lives and how they mitigate a work/life balance

within this context. It was seen that *the support of family, partners, friends and others* held importance as NGO workers talked about many cases where they were able to keep doing their work thanks to the support of their networks. These took *physical, financial and emotional* forms of reciprocal support. It was a more common tendency among participants to refer to their relationships in a more positive way; but still there were those who struggled when their parents, families and friends weren't being supportive or when they were not having enough time and resources spared for loved ones. Participants who were single, living alone and/or had recently ended relationships were more commonly reporting problems in this area.

The first pattern I recognized in the narratives of participants who were in relationships was the essentiality of support from spouses and partners. All of the married female participants, participants 2K33, 7K48, 12K35 and 16K40 were involved in long-term relationships and they reported that their husbands were understanding and supporting people who shared equally in responsibilities. Another common characteristic of married participants was that as they mitigated their work and private lives, they all saw their *husbands as their biggest supporters* at home and at work. Two participants had small children, aged nearly 2 (2K33) and 7 years-old (12K35), one participant had a teenager boy (7K48) and one participant and partner had chosen a child-free life (16K40):

(going back to work) It was perfect... I entered a serious work tempo. You see the effect afterwards, you are trying to support both the child and (work). You do both somehow, but the biggest supporter is the husband; my husband is a really good mother, as I tell him... He is someone I can talk to openly, who understands. 12K35

Especially for participants with children, husbands were the best support for childcare while there were also supports received for childcare from nannies and grandmothers which allowed them to focus on their work. Both participants with small children were attached to work and success, therefore they got the support needed to perform their jobs better in the form of babysitters and kindergartens. They were both management level and were able to financially manage their families and had various supports for childcare:

My daughter is 21 months old now, my husband is very supportive... since I work from home, it has not been a big problem... She has a babysitter... It feels really good to feel his support in this way. I can really fall asleep, whether I'm busy or not, my husband can play with her until the morning without complaining. 2K33

My mother-in-law also lives nearby and supports us in childcare. My child had a babysitter from the time she was born... After the fires in September, we realized that daycare center was an option. It was good, I mean in terms of work. *12K35*

In the case of male participants who were all married, situation was very similar with the married/ involved female participants. Among them, two were expecting babies (*18E30*, *19E33*) and one had a small baby (*20E32*); who all reported sharing in the housework equally. Especially those whose wives were pregnant, they were taking on the whole housework, but men were also active in parenthood. Similar to female participants, wives were the main source of support for all areas (household and emotional) whereas men did not report any other sustainable support systems, except for occasional help from larger family in childcare (*20K32*) as their wives were/planning to take primary care of children.

While performing their work, many workers said that having the belief of those around them was very important for navigating their work and private lives. In that, the support of husbands were mentioned again who were very supportive of their work while some even helped with the manual labor in the NGOs. Regarding the relevance of social support with NGO work, the most common pattern was that this job is hard and there is a need for support to continue doing it. Participants reported being able to mitigate the effects of their work with the help of loved ones who appreciate and support them; by being there for them both physically and emotionally:

Yes, that your partner has high empathy, is understanding. Because 'mister' attends all our activities, everyone knows him... I'm not alone, I don't feel lonely... Having a person with whom you can share life equally, but also someone who is sensitive to this field. *16K40*

He supports me, when I go out, if I need help with the office, if something needs to be moved. He has become our volunteer, and we received a lot of his support... My heavy workload, working for an NGO is really emotionally challenging and he has been a great supporter at this point...Social life and family support outside of work are very valuable. When you fall, because it is impossible not to fall in civil society. I'm talking about being in the field. *2K33*

My husband and my son (14) know that we are trying to support women and girls who are trying to create a space for themselves in Türkiye. The tolerance they show me provides one more thing for 10 women somewhere. *7K48*

My luck is that I have a family that accepts that I am happy with this, too. I have a husband with whom I share the ecological struggle. In the same way, my daughter (6) is a very mature individual in these matters. *12K35*

On the other hand, some participants who had more negative experiences with relationships reported letting go of relationships because partners did not understand their work and its meaning. Two participants had been divorced for this reason in addition to discontent with division of labor, amongst other problems of marital discord:

One of the biggest problems was that when I came home from work, things were expected of me and I was refusing to do them... At that time, since I was spending time for things like meetings after work, it was actually increasing the tension at home. Because I didn't spend enough time at home, I was living my life in there and all that...I would feel how far away we had become and I was like, yes, I'm leaving, because that's my way of making sense of life. 15K29

He cannot understand your stress, the difficulties you are going through, then there is an alienation, a process of distancing, a lack of dialogue after a while... Having to cook as soon as you get back from work, not getting support in cleaning, situations where the other party clears the table, that is, helps, not takes responsibility. I experienced that in my first marriage. I don't know if it's because I haven't come across a man who is that resourceful, but I'm not sure how many of those men there were, to be honest. 11K36

A participant talked about ending a long-term relationship before taking a field job in the earthquake zone, because she thought that “he wouldn’t be able to take it” (17K34) as they had such different worlds where her boyfriend had a hard time understanding her. Another participant also ended a relationship with a partner due to unequal division of labor which caused them stress between home and NGO work, where they said “I did everything... I was busy at work and I was running around cleaning and taking care of things. I've never been able to show this to them, but we lived in the same house” (10K28).

In addition, among single participants, it was also a pattern to consider being single *a good thing* at the moment because they didn’t need extra responsibility, wanted to focus on work or they had too much responsibility at work (4K31, 9K27, 10K28). One participant said; “I don't have anyone in my life right now, which is a very comforting situation sometimes. I don't know, there are both good and bad aspects.” (9K27) or they were cautious with allowing people in:

It is really difficult to explain this to an individual or a person who is not in civil society. They can't understand it at all and I actually sacrifice a lot from my private life. If we add it all up, I can say so. 4K31

Looking at the field from the perspective of having established support systems, a majority of (7 out of the 17) women participants had specifically reported that they feel safe in this area especially thanks to the support of their household composed of their husbands, children and their parents. Also, a number of woman participants, (8 out of 17) were living away from their parents and while they mostly said their families support them as best as they can; they were also experiencing having to spare time to visit and help with occasional health needs and other supports they needed. Still, none of the participants reported an extra responsibility for the care of their parents as they said their *parents were able to handle themselves*.

I support my family. I visit when there is a situation or there is always some problem I have to take care of. But there is no specific part that I personally show attention to. 9K27

There is need for my direct support at the moment. When they have health problems, they manage each other. I can only feel a responsibility and go visit in such situations. 14K29

Lastly, the pattern of having *friends*²² to share hardships with was also important in the field. Participants talked about spending time with friends and receiving their support, accompanied by occasional criticism of their work which also demotivated them.

To sum up, relationships and support for the realization of personal responsibilities were reported as fundamental aspects of NGO workers' private life mitigation whereas many participants reported that they had already established a certain network or system comprising of their partners, families and friends. Single and solitary participants reported more problems in that regard, but they also relied more on *friends*.

3.3.2.3. Time management

Regarding work/life reconciliation, one of the main patterns concerned NGO workers' problems with *time management* as they tended frequently to mention their feelings of

²² I will come back to the subject of friendships while talking about social life and identity in section 3.3.3.2.

not having enough time to catch up with all responsibilities. In relation to their own reproduction, participants reported struggles in three areas, mainly; *time for loved ones*, *time for errands* and *time for regeneration* that especially competed with their working time; or they felt divided between these responsibilities, trying to keep it all together.

The general tendency was to state that NGO workers fare relatively better in terms of time management, and NGO workplace was characterized as an *understanding workplace*. Many participants reported especially that when they have private matters to attend to, they were able to find that space in the NGO; as there is such a *civil society culture* that allowed NGO workers to feel in solidarity and have a more flexible, *humane* way of work. One participant mentioned how she experienced this during the loss of her father-in-law as she said “I was able to go to the hospital regularly, except for urgent work. I received a lot of support from civil society in this respect” (2K33).

However, there were some who struggled due to NGO jobs because work tends to be busy in the NGOs. Furthermore, many participants mentioned having meetings and events in the evenings and on the weekends, as something that occurs regularly in NGOs which can sometimes make it hard to juggle time; but they were able to balance these somehow:

If it's very busy and I have to work overtime, I can't spare much time for myself, my family, my loved ones. This can create some stress, as this happens to everyone, but it is periodic, so you can tolerate it. 6K37

Okay, you do something very meaningful, but just that can not encompass a person. That thought resonates inside, then I feel negligent. I feel I am not taking care of my life very much. That doesn't feel good, to be frank, I try to balance it. 13K39

Also, participants living with their parents seemed to fare well in terms of time management, especially those who did not have much responsibility in the household. Participants said if they *had husbands and kids instead*, they would be struggling more in terms of time, especially for housework and regeneration, but also finances as their life organization around work and personal time would need to change, too:

The question of flexible working hours is tiring, because as I said, I don't have someone to pay attention to at the end of the day; in the evening. But nobody wants to see their wife or mother working from 10:00 to 00:00 when they come home in the evening. 8K30

Because I'm single and don't have a lot of responsibility in the house, I can go home, take a shower and have a good rest. There's this though, if I had a child, a husband, then I don't know how it would be. It might be a little more intense. 6K37

Everything else will be difficult when I will be living on my own, I mean, I have difficulties in terms of fatigue, especially in terms of time. But we have responsibilities in life, we have to accept this reality. 15K29

Even the participants who said that they were managing thanks to their support systems mentioned that some struggles of trying to juggle responsibilities between work, loved ones and their own regeneration; especially for those who had kids and they reported that finding time and energy for enjoyment and selfcare may be hard sometimes, as they said “You have to learn to balance that too. I mean, I spent a long time on the word “pleasure”, for example. Thinking, ‘what did I used to enjoy?’” (12K35). Within the constraints of time between home and work, controversies arose especially in the area of *regeneration* as participants mentioned that they were struggling to make time for *self-care, rest, physical and emotional wellness*:

It is very difficult to spare time for myself at home, when you have a 21-month-old child... I keep saying I'm going to start Pilates; then I say ugh and quit. It's not about time, I think it's about working from home so much that I'm a bit lazy. 2K33

Their constraints of time management were also highly related with the physical and mental fatigue that they were experiencing due to the workday itself, as they said “During the shift you are already working at maximum capacity, even in the evenings. Then, you don't even have a space to rest, to be by yourself to allow healing” (17K34) or they mentioned further pressures such as overwork, overtime, emotional labor and lack of financial welfare. Working the evening shifts, having kids in the house, the hardship of leaving the house during WFH, feeling the need to catch up with work but also sparing time for self-development resulted in *a lack of prioritization of wellbeing among some NGO workers*, as they were unable to establish balance which leads to *ongoing fatigue and burnout*. Among younger participants, browsing on social media (10K28) when mentally tired and the constraining effect of low salaries on access to hobbies such as theatre or sports, were felt too:

You should not burnout like me. It's really a sprint and you need to use energy optimally, so it's not pampering or a luxury to have that private life balance, but

something we need to develop if we want to be more useful in this field; to be able to say no sometimes. 11K36

These wages in civil society and the increase in theater tickets really make it difficult for me to pursue this hobby...There is actually a lot of time after the shift. But sometimes there is such mental fatigue from work that I can't read a book, for example. My perception level has dropped...I can hang out on the phone instead of putting on a movie. 14K29

Some participants also reported that thanks to their lesser responsibilities in the household, or by simply prioritizing their wellness, they were able to create these spaces for themselves. Especially sports and therapy were brought up as ways to handle both aspects of health, and some participants made sure they spared time for these; whereas some couldn't. For example, one participant (3K31) mentioned how only after transferring to a smaller city (Eskişehir) from Istanbul; she was able to make time for therapy and sport. Many other participants mentioned that they *definitely make time for themselves* in different forms such as spending time with family, engaging with hobbies and artistic expression etc.:

I never neglect certain sports for myself, I take care of my health first of all. Because I am already one of the disadvantaged people (as a celiac patient)... I think sports improves your psychological health a lot... I also devote time to family. 4K31

I attend piano lessons... Ceramics, swimming... I try to occupy myself with something when I am not in a busy schedule and can find a balance. 9K27

Even if it's late, if I'm very busy that day and I'm very tired, both physically and psychologically, I still go for a walk. I use the sports equipment in the park. I'm probably one of the few poor people who use that equipment between Ortaköy and Bebek. Or I consume alcohol, that relaxes me a bit. I browse through videos, and have fun. I socialize with my friends, I order food and stuff. 10K28

I spare time for myself at the weekend, I do things I enjoy... I do my yoga once a week, even for 1 hour... In this second burnout period, I started dancing. 11K36

All in all, participants mentioned time management as one of the main conflicts relating to the mitigation of their private lives as NGO workers. However, a majority of participants reported their efforts to spare time for their own lives; especially for their loved ones and regeneration.

3.3.2.4. Household Responsibilities

Constraints related to *time management*, also comprise the area of household labor. Thus, I will try to provide here a clearer picture of participants' situations in the household which represent different dimensions of their day-to-day reproduction and regeneration as whole, such as the activities related to *cleaning* and *food preparation* as well as *household income provision* which take place in the private life of NGO workers.

Firstly, participants living with parents especially reported having less responsibilities of housework, specifically in cleaning and food preparation, even though they helped. In those families, it was mostly the parents who sustained the house *financially*. Mostly together with mothers, but sometimes only *fathers* were mentioned for budget; whereas *mothers* were mentioned for especially cooking and cleaning for the house. In these narratives participants and their siblings were mostly just *contributing or helping* around the house and they were mostly showing appreciation for such divisions of labor:

Everything you can think of about the house is done by my mother... I give most of my time and energy to work, so I'm kind of absent in housework... If I started to do these things myself, I would have to spare a lot of time from what I devote to work, that is, I would have to devote it to housework. I know that, too. 8K30

I do more of the cleaning of the house, but the cooking, is my mother's area... My brother usually provides material things. I also provide, but he provides a little more... when there are things that need to be bought, my father buys more. 5K39

Thank God my mom doesn't give me too much responsibility. They already live together and I am like a guest in the house... When they go somewhere, for example, there are things that I find as a workload. I have a pet. Caring for it, and then work, and then my social life, I realize that I get tired. 3K31

I used to have more financial responsibility. I handled more the house expenses, my siblings' education, thinking about them and all that. But thank God they have become self-sufficient. My mom does the daily chores, cooking and stuff, we do the big cleaning together at the weekend. Everyone has a responsibility. 6K37

My mother is still the one who cooks, tidies the house – the container, cleans it and so on... It's not my arrangement and it bothers me a lot. I don't want to do anything, but at the same time, it bothers me that everything falls on my mom. So I try more to take care of her important work outside the home. 15K29

Participants who were living with spouses reported more of a shared financial, as well as household responsibility. Among married participants, none reported financial challenges

where they were either main earners (7K48, 12K35) or the responsibility was shared (2K33), while in one case of the husband was bringing the main income (16K40). In the case of single participants, they were just making ends meet, which I'll handle in section 3.3.3.1. Concerning male participants, the main situation was that they were double-income households as their wives also contributed equally to the household, whereas one participant mentioned comfortably that his wife earned more of the income (19E33).

Out of household labors, *cleaning and food preparation* emerged as the main patterns of where most challenges occurred in the lives of participants. For example, especially among younger participants and/or those that lived alone for whom letting go of *cleaning* and postponing it was common; while avoiding food preparation and *ordering in* were also noticed and they found these as troublesome and meaningless.

Also, participants were voicing that maybe they are not “living in the cleanest houses” but “don't have a mindset of overthinking these things” (13K39), while often they chose to prioritize rest; because work was busy and they were mentally tired. There was also a tendency among participants to reconcile with the housework and to see it as an opportunity to relax, especially in the cases of cleaning and cooking; as ways of “relieving stress” (11K36) or “building a court and judging the day” (1K28); even though these may be bothersome:

Maybe I don't tire myself with such detailed cleaning as standard Turkish women. It shouldn't be that hard to sweep the floors at least once a week... As far as I understand, this is how it goes in western countries, too... After a while, you get tired of talking about it and start to think I'll do it myself. Chopping things quietly alone in the kitchen is actually rehabilitative on the one hand, and if I am very tired, I could order food or my partner would buy it. 11K36

The only conflict I can bring is an internal one about why the house is messy... My husband is like “if the house is messy, never mind, let's eat out”... Therefore, we don't have conflicts at this point, frankly. 2K33

The only good thing about cleaning, is that it helps me build the court. When I'm evaluating the day. I haven't seen any other benefit so far. 1K28

I clean during the week when friends are over, but I usually prefer the weekend... If I don't feel tired, I go home and make food. But sometimes I feel extremely tired and I just take a shower, order in, make coffee and watch something. 9K27

Also, participants who were living with roommates reported that sometimes housework might be left, especially due to workload; but both roommates did not make it a big deal. For instance, while Participant 17K34 said that since moving in, she had no time to spare for housework which made her self-conscious, Participant 14K29 mentioned finding this balance hardly, due to business of work.

The division of labor with regard to household responsibilities was a main pattern that especially characterized participants' relationships with their spouses and partners. A common pattern of such harmonious divisions of labor was that housework was being shared *on the basis of who is available when* while sharing responsibilities for all aspects of household management, such as finances and domestic work:

I usually manage the budget aspect of the household, but other than that, everyone handles what they can grab around the house. 2K33

If something is to be done, it is done jointly. By the way, I think the first 2-3 years of marriage are very difficult with regard to these things. 16K40

My husband runs the house, I do the cleaning, the laundry, but he asks me what to cook; this or that. 7K48

In the case of male participants, household responsibilities did not come up as a main area of conflict where they reported sharing responsibilities with their wives; especially when they were pregnant (18E30, 19E33) or when they had a small baby (20E32). They were reporting on their household labor from a perspective of being *manageable* as they do the work necessary and share tasks according to abilities.

Lastly, two participants mentioned receiving support for housekeeping; although this was not common. Participants who mentioned that had a baby (2K33) or a chronic illness (4K31), as well as a need of time for rest; as one said "I get support, of course. Because when I clean, I lose the time I spend for myself for a day" (4K31).

3.3.2.5. Effect of private life on work

I also asked NGO workers how their private lives affected their work; to which they reported faring well in terms of managing the possible effects of their private lives on their work lives. Participants reported that the situation was *vice versa* for them as *their*

private lives didn't affect their work almost none at all; but they were dealing more with the effects of their job on their private lives instead they said “Yes, but this is usually in the form of work, reflecting on housework... For example, I have to clean, but I can't do it because I'm too tired” (1K28).

Still, there were some participants who reported such effects that their private lives had on their work. For example, two participants talked about the experience of *motherhood* as an area that affected their work lives. In those cases, Participant 12K35 reported that the aftermath of her birth was a very busy time at work which caused her stress for a period; but that she was able to manage with her husband and workplace's support. Whereas, Participant 2K33 also received similar support; another participant (4K31) reported on the health dimension of her life especially due to *traumas* such as the loss of her father, surviving brain cancer, and the following crises, as her NGO is understanding and allows her space at times she is decapacitated to perform work;

After becoming a mother, you are really affected in a very different way...The Foundation agreed with me, they said you got very tired for years... I work from home now, I was always in the field at that time, this is the biggest difference, I shouldn't overlook this. 2K33

My working schedule can sometimes get disrupted because of my health, for instance, I have celiac disease. Sometimes I can't even work from home, I feel uncomfortable and so on, but they provide me with that flexibility very easily. Or sometimes my second traumas are very heavy...At this point I get support, I go away for a while. 4K31

A more complex situation where private life and work intertwined was reported by another participant in the case of her simultaneous divorce, resignation and burnout:

These mutually affect each other. I'm sure the stress of work had a negative effect on the marriage (and vice versa)... At that time, not only did I leave my job, but I also separated from my husband... that was a burnout brought on by having to struggle with everything alone and I wasn't being appreciated by the upper management. 11K36

Also, I want to refer to the tendency of some participants in their characterizations of the NGO worker as a more *care-free, free from responsibility of care and affection* and *not financially challenged* person. According to some perceptions, in order to be able to mitigate the effects of NGO work on their private lives, it was mentioned that NGO

workers should have less financial and emotional constraints in their private lives, preferably. In terms of private life, *not having children, partners or people to take care of* were mentioned as mitigating factors that allow workers to stay in civil society. The situation of other workers, like “a mother, who is working in a local NGO under the pressure of work, motherhood as well as the homework such as ironing” (1K28) were mentioned to be different as they would be struggling with *overwork, exhaustion and time management* as well as *guilt*:

I am not married, I don't have a boyfriend. There is no one in my private life to offer extra attention and interest. Honestly, is it balanced? It is not. I spend most of my life on things related to civil society and my work. 8K30

I'm aware that it's somehow not possible for me to be this much giving for life. I have a single life right now,...but as soon as I start flirting, I feel bad because it takes a lot of time. I really prefer to spare my time (for work) right now. I prefer more comfortable relationships, but sometime I may really have emotional needs or I may need to see different people, travel places. I may need to leave or take a break. 4K31

I never wanted children, because I don't know how to raise them. We have a life around our garden and conversations and such. We are hanging out like this... I think having no worries and stress in private life contributes a lot in civil society. 16K40

Frankly, it happens in INGOs as well... the classic questioning of “motherhood” which can be carried out conscientiously, because it is very easy in Türkiye,... society pushes women into that maternity syndrome. 1K28

Lastly, I think the specific situation of one participant who stands as a good example of how an established support system and division of labor in the household makes a difference for the workers. As a *primary earner* in the family, Participant 12K35 reported that her husband's being more engaged with household and childcare matters allowed her to focus on work as a senior manager and balance her psychology following childbirth.

To sum up, it was seen that in order to achieve work/life reconciliation, participants were experiencing more problems in the management of the effects of their work on their private lives, rather than the other way around. They had developed adequate mechanisms to ensure their reproduction, or at least they were in the process. One participant's experience of a break up with her long-term boyfriend is characteristic of how some participants approached their work where boundaries worked one way:

A problem in my life doesn't affect my work much. I can draw (a boundary) there. My business and normal identities are different and I carry work into my private life. My boyfriend said 'Let me move to Adıyaman with you'. I said 'don't come, you can't handle it in the earthquake zone. I developed a mechanism over the years, but I can't drag you into it'. We broke up like that. Therefore, it affects my private life greatly... 17K34

3.3.3. Effect of NGO Work on Private Life

I will report on participants' narratives on the effects of NGO work on their private life by focusing on the following patterns, namely: *conflicts at home and private life, social life and identity, crises and workplace policies and job requirements.*

3.3.3.1. Conflicts at home and personal life

Participants reported on the sorts of conflicts that arise between their home and work lives which I grouped under three main trends which represent the effects of NGO work on *relationships and emotional lives, financial constraints and ongoing communications* that comprise the main conflicts NGO workers reported experiencing in their personal lives.

Firstly, in relation to NGO work's *effect on relationships and emotional lives*, participants frequently reported experiences such as *carrying their work into their lives*, especially negative feelings continuing in their personal lives. Field cases would follow them into their dreams, interactions with partners and families and they experienced physical manifestations of stress, especially when cases involved harm to kids:

A case comes when you least expect it and it's so that it's not like 'I won't remember it after 5:30'. You know, there are still cases I can't forget. 9K27

When I have an encounter about children, it affects me much worse. Later, it haunts my dreams or I can think about it all the time. I can observe how it affects me both psychologically and physically. There are times I feel weak, my back pain increases, etc. I attribute it to psychological factors and somatic effects. 10K28

Children pass away, coming back from there, getting motivated again... And surely you carry this into your personal life. You pout, cry. I remember from when my husband and I were lovers, there were children that I had a very difficult time with, that I cried a lot during the terminal period until returning home, not

speaking...It was either my wedding day or henna night when I found out that I had lost someone I had been doing sessions with for a really long time, it was very difficult. *2K33*

After work, the client's problems were on my mind a lot, but I realized that this happened more when I was working in the children's field at university. Contact with an abused child left much deeper (marks) in my life. *3K31*

They also reported other confrontations that happened on their emotional levels, such as being ashamed of their own routines like having something nice to eat or meeting friends and questioning their levels of tolerance toward their own loved ones. But they also reported situations where they were able to “heal through their work” (*5K39*) or were able to find where they fit, which felt good:

I am not as patient and tolerant with my family as I am with beneficiaries. Sometimes I wonder if I use up all my patience and tolerance there and run out of it here? But...I don't think it's that linear. *15K29*

No matter the mechanisms you develop, you inevitably carry the issues, problems you encounter, into private life. A belief that the world is bleak; you have to struggle with these a lot... I encounter a huge difficulty of life. Because of this, I am ashamed of my own routines... Say, I'll meet friends in the evening, drink and have fun. But to do that after a very difficult day felt like taking away other people's rights. *17K34*

Some single participants also reported not looking for relationships currently, unless with people who understood them and supported their work (*4K31*), because they wanted to prioritize that at the time. Some mentioned having such busy schedules that they cut themselves off from people and flirting, due to such concerns of sparing time, or being tired and wanting to focus on self-awareness and work instead:

When it is the right person, I think there is no problem...with someone who sees my life and supports my happiness here... Someone's life will be saved by my effort. Why not more? So, I devoted 2 months to this and I don't talk to people or I don't stay in Adana... I don't spare time for my family just because of (the project). *4K31*

When I think of our workload and NGO work affecting our private lives and so on... I only talk about my anger, my tiredness and I only convey the event; but there are other emotions I am feeling. I realized I need to focus on these as well... I do too much and get exhausted, and at this point I think it would be better not to have someone in my life. Because right now this is my agenda, my whole life; even outside of work I am engaged in work. *10K28*

A relationship between two NGO workers was also cited by a participant, who had gotten involved with someone who had developed problems with alcoholism due to frequent exposure to harsh experiences in the field when working as an expat NGO worker. However, she ended that relationship because she was also having challenges in the work front. She was understanding of her partner, but she was not in a place where she could manage that experience as they both stood affected by their work:

Maybe he was also in a different burnout process. He could understand me professionally...On the one hand, it was a period when I was very stressed professionally...and because I didn't want to have to manage several problems at the same time and I lost the belief that the other problem was manageable, that relationship was the first program I removed from my life. 11K36

Another way that participants mentioned work was affecting their private lives was *the way that their parents, friends saw their work* in a more or less negative way which as a result discouraged participants. In such experiences, they were citing such statements of their mothers, fathers and friends who were thinking mainly that they were sacrificing too much, or they made them realize things they were missing about their own health and lifestyles; but they still seemed determined to continue work. For example, Participant 3K31 talked about how she got the support of her father in time as he didn't think highly of her work before, while Participant 4K31 was struggling with the comments of her mother and friends who complained that "she is always busy":

My mom has many reproaches about this. She says 'you can't get married like this. You can't live like this. Don't give birth to a child'... or 'you can't sleep this little...you can't work like this' and so on... My friends have very big reproaches. 'don't come with the computer for once'... 'when you are with us, just focus on us'... if we are in a group of a few friends, they see each other more often and their reproach is always 'you are never there'. 4K31

It didn't affect my relations with family or friends, not a tension or sadness, but when my friends saw me, they were very sad... They didn't see me well. They all said that I looked like I was going to cry. They said my shoulders were slumped, my face was pouting. They said things I didn't notice or understand. 5K39

Lastly, I also observed that some participants were able to mitigate their work lives without having too many conflicts, as the NGO workplace was experienced as more understanding and humane in case of personal and relational needs (7K48) or because they had made peace with these occasions (16K40):

My son has a doctor's appointment. When I said that I would go...no one responded to me “look, this is our working principle”... In the private sector, there are such sharp lines that it is absolutely not possible. If necessary, you will leave that child alone in that house and take the key and leave. 7K48

I guess I don't have that much problem with work invading my private life. If I don't do anything extra socially and they don't demand it from me by force, I think it's fine. 16K40

In a similar vein, due to a state of having established a functional work-life balance and working in a more established NGO, male participants did not report many conflicts at home or personal life which are caused by their work. However, they reported occasional emergencies and their previous business, as well as the pandemic conditions where they experienced hardships in this area.

As another pattern in terms of participants' conflicts in their home and private lives, *financial constraints* were one of the strongest effects of NGO work on the private lives of workers; and participants reported many aspects of their impact. The financial status of NGO workers and mechanisms they apply in work/life mitigation showed variety. Here, I will focus more on the individual patterns.

From an overview, participants 1, 10, 14, 15 and 17 especially reported that they were experiencing the financial effects of civil society employment. I think it is important that all participants who were more fragile in that area were either living alone or with roommates. Participants reported that they have to “calculate everything” (1K28) as they were trying to get by with the low salaries and high living costs, especially reported for Istanbul. A participant who worked in the youth area reported that she is into theatre as a way of her regeneration; but salaries in civil society and the increase in ticket prices made her access to her hobby difficult (14K29).

On the other end, participants 2, 7, 9, 12 and 13 did not refer to the negative effects of their income on their lives in a dominant manner; but they were also in agreement with wages being lower in the sector as a whole. However, a further pattern was that even participants who reported considerably well incomes, were still handling money really carefully, especially to make it through the rising life standards in Türkiye:

Earn as much as you want, it's not enough in current conditions; but I can say that in Türkiye's average, a decent income enters the house. As the living standard changes, it's not enough at the end of the day; I can say that it is nip and tuck.
2K33

The remaining participants 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11 and 16 were more in the middle, as they did not report many personal struggles because they were able to reconcile somehow. However, they were acknowledging that salaries are lower in the sector and their own salaries were or had become lower, as well as the state of constant *financial insecurity*. Financial constraints of jobs were *mitigated by focusing on meaning and adjusting financial expectations accordingly*, as well as *having partners and families* to share responsibilities with. A pattern here was that their situations and mechanisms may not apply to all NGO coworkers who may have *different circumstances* like being married or having children (3K31); whereas their situation might also change if their circumstances changed, too:

I have a new relationship in my life now, so I don't know what will happen? It is serious, but I don't know what life will bring, but I wanted to leave my family at one point... But since it was not economically possible, I postponed this plan.
6K37

One participant focused on how NGO workers reconcile the financial constraints by employing other *safety nets*; and how NGO workers are supposed to have a convenience and a lack of struggle to make their living (8K30). By associating this situation with gender, she added that this is why women prefer working in the sector more than men as they may have more financial support mechanisms, such as those of their husbands and if they are single, living with their families.

I always say, 'as long as I work in civil society, I will not enter into any long-term debt'. Because I can only see the six months ahead, not after that. That is why it is very stressful. Finding the balance is very stressful in civil society... The common characteristic of our team is that one of us has a rich husband, one has a rich family, and one of us lives with her family (me) and we don't need money. I am very sorry; but that's the way it is. 8K30

The last pattern of conflicts in home and private lives due to NGO work, was a state of *continuing communication*, especially in the form of messages and calls received outside working hours which distressed workers. This state of communication was relative to the functions of NGO workers in their organizations and their respective fields, while those

who work with more vulnerable populations may have to spend more time on their phones as there may be *emergencies*:

I have friends who work in women's shelters. They have to keep phones with them 24 hours a day. In case of an emergency, they have to go. Their conditions are more severe. That's why I say that we are stuck between civil service and NGOs. 3K31

Indeed, in the field, especially participants 1K28, 4K31 and 8K30 who were working with groups like youth, children, women and immigrants reported being in contact with beneficiaries outside of working hours. For some participants, communication with beneficiaries was a part of their motivation and it was generally welcome:

I never pick up the phone when someone from management calls, but sometimes I see that a beneficiary sent a message at the end of the week, I answer theirs. On the contrary, I tell them they can call me whenever they want. I have established such a dynamic. Because if I don't do these things, I can't really hold on to the job. 1K28

At the bank, I used to work in a position where I had to work on weekends and be reached by phone every minute, so it doesn't bother me if someone from the association calls me on the weekend... I mean, they can call me for work reasons, they can call (my husband) too. I think it's about this, we can't balance it. 16K40

Participants employed mechanisms to minimize such communication by setting time boundaries and separating their business and private phones:

You have to learn to balance this too...If something very serious happens, call me on my private phone. There was a fire, this or that happened. Other than that, no one contacts anyone, I think values have changed a lot in the pandemic, too. It was a manifestation of those in fact, and it was balanced. 12K35

There is no such thing as the end of working hours. I have my own method to protect myself, I don't reply to young people who write to me after 8 p.m. I don't answer if they call... Constant messages and calls are very tiring. ... after a while you don't want to hear a human voice anymore. I say to myself that I have reserved this time for myself. I also recommend this to my friends. 8K30

In sum, participants reported on the many conflicts they experienced and mechanisms they employed at home and personal life due to their NGO work revolving around *relationships and emotions, financial well-being* and a state of *ongoing communication*.

3.3.3.2. Social life and identity

Participants often referred to social effects of their work in relation to how they dedicate personal time and resources as well as experience their social identities and relationships. They reported on the kinds of conflicts that arise in the area of social life, how they affect them and how they mitigate them.

Firstly, regarding how NGO work reflects on social life, the most apparent indicator was how participants frequently talked about their *social life in reference to their work*. For example, some participants mentioned that they met with colleagues from the NGO outside of the workplace as they went out or joined events together:

As a team, we go out almost once a month because as a small team, as a psychology unit, we all need to and we have a lot of fun together. 2K33

We already get together outside of work, for various events outside of work or we celebrate certain things like birthdays. Sometimes we sit together outside after work. So we also have those socializing spaces. 10K28

On the other hand, some participants reported that they chose to keep both their lives separate. Even though it was common to “socialize within the sector” (1K28); they chose to have boundaries and more diversity in their lives which may go against their identities in the NGO, like in the case of 3K31 who worked with the issue of addiction:

I don't have many friends in Urfa, either. I have 2-3 friends I meet outside. I only socialize with coworkers at work... In our sector, you socialize within the sector. This means when you meet friends in the evening, you talk about the sector. 1K28

I learned over time that work friendships and social friendships should be separate. Like, I have a lot of friends who use alcohol and cigarettes and even drugs. 3K31

Participants also reported spending time outside of work with beneficiaries at work events and gatherings and they created opportunities, too. Some were providing mentorships to women and youth in their projects they were involved in; *mentoring, guiding people and raising awareness* in their own time, too (4K31, 11K36):

I spend more time with people I work with, especially those I have one-on-one contact with, rather than work in the association. Like, a friend has a henna night next week...

– *I guess what you mean is that your personal life and work life are a bit intertwined?*

Yes, this is something I wanted. At that point, I can't expect the association to give me overtime... Because in places like Adana, it is a bit more difficult for women to work in certain areas, but... that they can overcome this is a great source of motivation. 4K31

Secondly, social activities of seeing friends, engaging with hobbies and self-development were employed as *regulating mechanisms* for the regeneration of NGO workers; however there were times that these were put off for the sake of work (4K31) or because they may sometimes “forget” (2K33) or have such busy days that it’s hard to engage with activities outside of work sometimes (13K39, 14K29). In such cases participants were reminded by those around them or they might push themselves.

Lastly, it was another pattern to refer to NGO work as a part of *social identity* which sometimes extended into private lives as a way of *expression of identities*. Regarding the interaction between a person’s social identity and their NGO work, especially one participant’s reaction stood out where she stated that for the NGO worker “it is not possible not to reflect” their personal values to their work in terms of their views on issues like human rights and discrimination since they work with disadvantaged people:

We get into a discussion like, “you can't do that, you are a social worker in an NGO”, and they say, “I don't reflect it to my work”. I don't know who came up with this work and private life distinction in NGOs but..., it is not possible not to reflect this or not to see the parallel of this in your work... Since we always work with the other, the disadvantaged; it becomes a little more important in civil society. 15K29

To elaborate further on such transitive form of NGO workers’ work and private identities; I found the experiences of other participants who reported showing up in their social lives as “that NGO’s worker”, appearing to their friends as representative of their fields (e.g. addiction, environment, etc.). In such cases, while one participant reported enjoying her identity for “field research” (3K31), another reported a more troubling state of overwhelm and feeling lost between identities due to a plethora of issues that need her attention:

When I lose the balance of work with family life, there are times like; what am I? Am I just a civil society worker? Am I a mother, a wife, a friend, who am I?.. We all drink coffee, and where in the world does it come from? When you go deep, you can't come out. 12K35

When I come to the table, I am always made fun of, called by [NGOs name] etc. But you know, for me, it is also like field research. So it doesn't wear me out too much. Being with people in this pattern (of addiction and substance use) in both work and social life. 3K31

Other participants also reported that their occupations and NGO worker identities shape their attitudes towards others. For example, participant 6K37 talked about how she kept being a teacher in her own life, whereas another was talking more about how even her social media accounts are full of her work as she sees, “NGOs, NGOs, NGO groups, women producers and collectives” while browsing her social media (7K48).

Further, one participant talked about realizing that work in civil society was shaping workers’ overall approaches to life (4K31); making them more open to giving and receiving. Branding this as “taking work home” but also “life-changing” in a way that affects her self-reflection:

I am a strong woman making her own salary, that is, I can earn outside of civil society. I am happy to be alone, normally at this age you are criticized for not getting married, not having a wedding, not having someone in your life. But I discovered that I am a person who can overthrow those criticisms and improve my environment and it is good for me to be good for the people... I feel happier than most people; my friends, my family or people in the private sector. 4K31

In addition to its harmonization with social identity, civil society was categorized as a more open space. One participant related this with their sexual identity as well as self-expression; to dress the way one wants, and talk about their partner at ease (10K28) were positive influences. Even though it felt nice to be in solidarity; this was overwhelming and tiring when work overflowed into private life; but they managed:

I can balance with professionalism, but it reflects on my personal life. Even if it is a very serious case for the clients, if there is nothing to do at the moment, I accept there is nothing to do. But if the problem is in my close circle, it’s a bit more difficult to accept... Also, when I encounter similar things outside of work, I get tired. I don't feel like dealing. 10K28

To sum up, participants reported many ways that their work affected their social relationships and construction of identities; whereas it was a common tendency to find a source of motivation in having both lives intertwined. Even though the need to *draw boundaries* was often mentioned, the state of being in solidarity with counterparts; coworkers and beneficiaries etc. were still an important mitigation mechanism.

3.3.3.3. Workplace policies and job requirements

While talking about their jobs; participants tended to focus on both challenging and ameliorating aspects of NGO work by taking into consideration job responsibilities as well as the mitigating effects of workplace policies. The first tendency to refer to *negative effects* stemmed from expectations of *overtime, work travel and relocation* and *time sacrifice* for NGO work. The other tendency to focus on the *positive effects* of NGO work revolved around the patterns of *flexibility, WFH* and *vacations and leaves*. As a whole, even though they frequently reported being challenged by the practice of *overtime* in civil society as well as being critical of management and lack of prioritization of physical and emotional wellbeing of employees, NGO workers generally inclined to view civil society as relatively better. NGOs were commonly characterized as *understanding workplaces* where work-life mitigation was easier, however in general, the emotional impacts of job were not reconciled as much.

To start with, some participants gave examples of workplace policies that deteriorate their situation within work/life reconciliation. For instance, the practice of *overtime* and *overwork* were mentioned, while none of the participants mentioned *receiving pay for overtime work*. Further, a common characteristic was that overtime was considered a natural extension of jobs and workers adjusted accordingly, especially since NGO work and events often take place outside work hours:

We have meetings and group activities that end around 23:00. I remember working on weekends for 1 or 2 months without time off. Of course, the foundation was new at that time and I remember not being able to catch up with things on many occasions; not being able to go where I wanted to go or I had to adjust my times according to the trainings. 2K33

While participants did not express that they demanded overtime pay, and even said they *don't expect the NGO to pay* for the extra work and time, especially when they are socializing (4K31, 10K28) as an extension of their jobs or by their own motivation, there were some who reported they got extra leave days for socializing events, too:

Because we don't say 'let's get up and go', we have dinner in the evening, we sit together at night, drink tea; there are times I actually spend 96, 48 hours with beneficiaries. So you are always together...We make up with vacation time. 16K40

A theme of demanding pay for extra work may not have emerged, since participants kept referring to the lack of financial sustainability in the sector, by demonstrating an awareness about there not being enough resources to be allocated. However, the general attitude about workplace policies regarding overtime was that it should be made visible and workers wanted their work to be compensated by *time* and *appreciation* rather than *money*, which was an underlying pattern. Participant 15K29 who reported having access to any of the compensations available, felt like an *NGO sucker*²³, as an NGO colleague puts it and actually stopped her giving behavior:

Until 8-9 months ago, I wasn't working with the concept of a shift. I was giving more of myself. Like, I can get calls at anytime, work at any hour. I stopped that... I'm not going to save the world. I'm not going to save my organization at all... If I had seen some return for this, morally, maybe I could have continued... I realized that this was taking a lot from me. And this sacrifice and the benefit is not really for the beneficiary but for the organization... I was feeling like I was being taken advantage of. 15K29

However still, in that regard, the most common approach was that workers were satisfied with how the issue of *overtime* was handled in NGOs as almost all participants reported that their NGOs offer some flexibility to compensate the extra amount of time worked, via *compensatory leaves* that are widespread practices in the NGO workplace:

We cannot get overtime as wages, we can get it as vacation time. 10K28

If we have worked extra,... we make sure to make up for it. 13K39

We are granted leave for working on the weekend. It is used during the week instead. We mutually support each other. 12K35

In addition, as an outcome of WFH policies, the time allocated for work travel was cited to be quite reduced for the NGO workers after the pandemic, since WFH was still common and it had ameliorated the home/work balance of many NGO workers:

²³ When I asked what an NGO sucker meant, participant replied with “An NGO sucker is someone who, despite not being expected or asked to do so, constantly tries to add something to the organization with their own internal motivation, constantly tries to implement new ideas and increases their own workload by 8 times because they take such initiatives, but they do not receive any material and moral reward for this.” (15K29)

I think the pandemic is a huge leap for NGOs. Because a lot of them actually went back to working from home. If you were doing this interview with me before the pandemic, I would list a lot of hardships, because you don't have a regular working hour. By the way, I still don't, but I have turned into a person who doesn't care about that anymore. 2K33

WFH may have made some things better, but it also came with challenges for work and life reconciliation; as participants reported working too much when working from home and not being able to leave the house after the shift, too. Participants talked about the space that this allowed, but also the kind of *lethargy* that came with it:

In other organizations you are limited... 9 to 5 routine is not what I want now. I do not want it mentally. Even though I am working at night right now. This is a little bit of a comfort, a little bit of complacency... I always say when you work from home, you are always working. There is no concept of working hours for me. 8K30

I love working from home, I don't want to go to the office all the time; but I work from morning till night and I don't have the energy. If I have plans with someone, I don't go out at all... like, we didn't leave the house for a week. 14K29

On the other hand, there were still some participants who were working from the office and having hardship for spending too much time on the road to and from work. This pattern was observed for participants 15K29, 12K35 and 9K27 who were reporting a range of problems such as time constraints and not being able to spend much time at home and for rest. Participant 15K29 reported more struggle due to the policies of her workplace which require her going back and forth from the field to the office. As a contract-based worker, she was also unable to acquire annual leave rights and needed rest. Her overall narrative was filled with criticism of workplace policies and sector conditions. She was on the verge of resignation when we spoke – I heard later that she did:

At 4 o'clock they call me back to (office) because my shift is not over. I go back from my own district, in that traffic. I get off, for God's sake, 10 minutes later the shift ends. I get on the bus and go back, and such, and I had my fill from fighting about it. This irrationality, nonsense... because I don't think I've ever been compensated for this either in terms of labor or in terms of wages. There is an attitude as if they don't earn with our labor, but they do us a favor, and this is an attitude that tires me and annoys me a lot. So probably after a while, even if I don't resign, they will fire me for fighting so much. 15K29

In fact, other than this case, I did not come across a situation where an NGO worker was that critical of their NGO's overall approach, at least their current ones, in terms of

workplace policies. In general, they were satisfied with how NGOs handled communications and safeguarded them. The majority of participants were allowed *compensatory leaves* for overtime; but they also mentioned a diverse range of workplace initiatives geared toward work/life reconciliation, such as *birthday leaves*, *menstruation (period) leaves*, *flex days* and *casual leaves*, a flexibility of working hours/shifts and an ability to compensate time taken for personal business:

For instance, we introduced menstrual leave...There is flexibility in civil society in working with women... When you compare with private or public sectors, it is easier to arrange part-time work in civil society, let's say when she has a child... 8K30

Since it is an NGO, when you say I have a business tomorrow, I won't come, I say I'll do it the next day or at night; the foundation is like that not only toward me, but toward all employees. 2K33

Working conditions are a little more flexible, our working hours start at 10 o'clock and that's how it is generally in NGOs... we have birthday leave. We have menstrual leave. Again, this has spread a little more to other organizations, and when I compare it to the public sector, it is nice to have it... If I have any business or if there is a problem, we can easily take time off. 10K28

We have a so-called flexibility compensation, say, I want to attend an event during the day, or go to the hospital...On the rest of the days, I work overtime and compensate...We have menstrual leaves. We grant birthday leave. 13K39

With regards to commonly reported practices of *flexibilities in civil society*, the fact that some participants who did not have them tended to refer to the *non-existence of such practices in their NGOs* showed that they have become quite the norm, but were still arbitrary and determined on the manager level, rather than the organization level:

Because we don't have any extra vacations, we don't have menstrual leave. Some NGOs have things like working from home on Fridays or taking one and a half days off a month or like that, we don't have them... even when you are sick, you go to the hospital, you get a sick report or something. 15K29

In civil society, you can get these vacations by agreement and compromise...In my current workplace I can do this...But (in my old one) there was no such thing. If we finished at 10 p.m., we would start work at 10 a.m. next day. 14K29

Also, many participants referred to a state of *solidarity* among NGO workers; colleagues and managers who cover for each other or allow the space to take care of personal business. Such situations where they were encouraged by managers and teammates to go

and take care of kids, or work from home were mentioned. Many participants talked about how the support and appreciation of managers, their sensitivity of rights and wellbeing as well as being able to openly communicate and share; were characterizing features of the *understanding workplace culture* within civil society which stood out as a pattern:

After the pandemic, since our foundation is a very small building, the number of our employees increased suddenly and my home is very far, they told me come to office one day a week... Our colleagues who work very hard...compensate for it. Because it's known that they are people of flesh and blood, who get up in the morning and sleep at night. 7K48

If I had a full-time job, I think I would probably quit, because I really miss my daughter... My teammates, including my manager, say, 'You miss your daughter, you go,' they are very supportive...In other NGOs, I don't see this often. But because we are a children's foundation, and work with good people. 2K33

The organization really provides a lot of convenience in terms of personal rights. The same for staff communication. 9K27

It was a period when all problems overlapped, it lasted for about a month. At that time, my managers were very (understanding); 'dear, there is a life outside. There are caregivers, you can hire them, make time for this, you take care of that and then we'll see'. Then the daycare arrangement happened anyway. 12K35

Civil society, was also characterized as a sphere where NGO workers felt like they could express themselves, talk about their needs, work towards the same goals like “empowering women” (4K31), be more open about vulnerabilities and get more support and feel valued; which they said may not be the case in other sectors:

At a civil society meeting, I can say ‘I'm menstruating today, I feel bad’ and I can get time off. But I don't think I can, in the private sector. I don't think it will be reciprocated. 8K30

I think generally NGOs are a little better in terms of our human aspects and mental health. When we are not feeling well, they try to support or give resting space. I think I can express myself more comfortably. When working in the private or the public sector, I think that if I tell my supervisor that I am not feeling well today, it wouldn't be well understood. 10K28

So the aim is to continue to be productive, to be able to do something without getting worn out and to convey a sense of value. Since these have been very open to talk about from the beginning, I think we have a good arrangement right now. 13K39

Lastly, Participant 15 was complaining about her humanitarian aid NGO in that regard, too. She mentioned how her workplace isn't understanding even when she had stuff to do to deal with her and her family's needs as earthquake survivors in Hatay:

For example, my demolished house is in the reserve area, (etc.)... Even in those 2 hours of leave, it's like 'what did you do, did you manage? Will you take another leave, I hope it's done'. And when the 2 hours are up and my coordinator calls me, to see if I'm back. 15K29

All in all, it was reported that job requirements and how NGO workplaces treat workers have an effect on workers' work/life balance. Even though participants tended to state that NGOs provide an *understanding workplace* where they are able to mitigate the *effects of NGO work on private life*, and there were many other relieving factors such as better flexibility; there were still many conflicts that participants reported having to manage.

3.3.4. Emotional Management and Support Systems

As a result of the emotional dimension of many NGO jobs, NGO workers reported on several *emotional management and support systems* as important aspects of work/life reconciliation. Related patterns were *psychological support and supervision*, *emotional support* and *attachments and boundaries*. Participants reported employing personal psychological strategies that allowed them to deal with their feelings to keep performing their work and to show up in their private lives as healthy people. Participants who talked about such emotional management showed a characteristic to implement their personal defense and self-care mechanisms to manage their wellbeing, by *taking personal time*, *using humor*, *practicing self-compassion* or via other means for relief:

Due to my character, I generally prefer to transform difficult feelings, sadness and pain into humor quickly and turn them into an object of laughter and move on. 7K48

Yes, I have difficulties. If I feel very bad, if I can't control my emotions, I don't work that day. I use mental leave because I need it too, you know. 6K37

To have compassion for yourself, to know the limits of what you can't do for yourself, I've always known this. I mean, I can't do this, I can do that, or I have the right not to do this... My biggest meditation, I usually go and hug a tree. 16K40

Two participants in particular underlined the necessity of the emotional management dimension of NGO work “as a sphere where there are caregivers” (2K33, 11K36). While one participant emphasized that taking care of oneself is important as NGO workers face communities day after day (11K36); another focused on the dimension of social support, by referring to the essentiality of social motivations of workers and good relations with teammates which make up a buddy system (2K33);

Emotional self-care... It is probably a skill that teachers have been developing for decades... it is a caring profession after all...but just as they renew their own energy and come to be beneficial to students again, it is important that we do this renewal when we go out to the communities we are facing and to our team. 11K36

I'm talking specifically about field workers in civil society, exactly the segment where the caregiver is directly present. I think definitely the reason why they can work is that they have good social motivation, one. Two, they have a good relationship with teammates. The buddy system, when that is broken; because it is really difficult to stay in this field. 2K33

Men participants also reported emotional management and control. Two of the participants were psychologists and social workers (18E30, 20E32), with experience of intense contact (prior to management) with the target group of addicts; whereas the other participant had had contact with immigrants before (19E33). Similar to women, men participants also mentioned employing emotional control, awareness and supervision; as well as social support, especially of their wives as ways to manage their emotional labor.

Apart from various personal approaches to work, NGO workers reported on the need for support systems, the foremost of which were *psychological support and supervision*.

3.3.4.1. Supervision & psychological support

A majority of participants talked about going to therapy regularly or when they need it, to establish control mechanisms or to control their *caregiving motives*. Generally, participants were affording therapy from their *own budgets* but saw this as a requirement of their work, since psychological assistance and supervision were not always afforded in NGOs. They were often talking about exposure to traumatic issues at work and they were

referring to therapy and supervision to control these situations from having an effect on their wellbeing and impact their work:

I've been going to my own therapy for about a year now, both because of my profession and because of what I've been going through. On the one hand, when this altruism schema gets too high, you start to spend time and prioritize others more than yourself. This is very tiring mentally. The other side is, of course, the satisfying side. I can take care of people's needs, support them, be in solidarity. This requires a capacity. I think being able to solidarize, support, etc... When I work with groups, it's a bit tiring of course, that's why I get supervision and therapy. 15K29

I don't receive regular supervision. So I have to manage some things on my own, I have my own therapy process. I don't bring work there much, I deal with my own problems, but sometimes I talk about work-related issues, too. 10K28

Psychosocial support, exactly. It is not easy to work in all fields here... I have a psychologist that I see when I feel bad. At certain levels and in my work life. I had to take it in the last weeks, to be honest. Because I felt bad. I thought, I'm working so hard for nothing? Then I continued again because I fixed it. 4K31

There are still cases I can't forget, frankly. We have colleagues who support us with psychological help within the organization...I never received it. I think about it...but I have friends who did...I attended group sessions they organized. 9K27

In general, participants were demanding support from their NGO workplaces for their psychological needs like access to *therapy*; but there was a simultaneous dominance of *supervision* demands, too. It was seen that in civil society organizations there may be some supervision structures in place especially for field workers, but this was not a very common practice and was said to be dependent on funds. Psychological support was also mentioned as a facility not offered by NGOs regularly, but highly demanded:

Your emotional labor is already very high, we talked about this. You carry it into your life; carrying on with that problem, and may not be able to get out of it. Many workplaces do not provide psychological support. 17K34

The missing part is the mechanism for us to discharge this emotional burden... Because civil society actors are not aware of this either... The reason for most of my attrition is my experience here. So yes, they have to support us. But there is no structured process or approach for this. I think there should be. 8K30

So there are various (emotional) effects. At this point, we actually need to request regular supervision, but while even our salaries are barely available, supervision is in second, third, fourth place and we cannot always get that support. 10K28

All in all, supervision and support were the foremost mechanisms in order to cope with the emotional dimension of NGO work and the most demanded support structure, as it was rarely available as a workplace facility.

3.3.4.2. Emotional support

Secondly, the importance of established *emotional support systems* for NGO workers, especially from families, partners, friends and coworkers were mentioned. In the case of married participants, it was mainly the *partners* support was drawn from, but in the case of single participants it was mostly *friends and family*. It was reported by some participants that the primary mechanism of emotional management is to have the spaces where NGO workers can unload and vent about their feelings within their own *social support networks* of families, friends and coworkers:

Not for every civil society worker, but when working with children and disadvantaged groups, especially on issues such as illness, death, if there is no support from family, do yoga, exercise, this and that (it's not going to help). I think the stronger the social support of the person, the more likely they are to stay in this field...because at the end of the day you return home,... and you say 'yes, I'm helping there, and there is someone who understands me too'. There is a source of motivation there, you unload your feelings, so you can continue the next day. 2K33

I am open to receiving support because this is important for me, but I also have a space where I can talk to my friends. 4K31

Usually with my family, maybe with my closest friends. I also talk to my friends here (at work). But I prefer to talk to my friends I am much closer to. 6K37

Also, *coworkers* were a part of emotional management, especially being in solidarity with a current or ex-teammate and colleagues from the field were common emotional and social strategies. One participant mentioned how such a need for psychological support especially arose during COVID when they were working remotely, and their need for support was recognized by a volunteer psychologist friend who supported them in the process (7K48), whereas receiving other emotional supports were also mentioned:

I talk about work-related things mostly with my friends. There is also a very experienced social worker I know. She graduated 50 years ago or something like that and she is very valuable to me and when I face difficulty, I consult her. 10K28

We've been very sad. We hugged each other a lot because of the stories we heard. Sometimes we left the caravan in the middle of the E5 highway... I think (my colleague and I) we supported each other a lot in that regard. 5K39

3.3.4.3. Attachments & boundaries

Third, and lastly participants reported both drawing from their *attachments* but also *establishing boundaries*. Some participants who were working with kids, especially reported how it was harder to establish those boundaries with them, while not being able to do it occasionally, even though they were aware of the need for management. A similar hardship of drawing boundaries was also mentioned in the case of LGBTQ+ people:

That's why we are in constant communication because you are a 'big sister' or 'teacher'²⁴... sometimes professional boundaries get confused there. 8K30

It's really hard to work with the LGBT+... You need to establish a more sincere bond. But I can still draw the line well. I'm there with my social worker identity. Not a friend, or a subject in solidarity, not someone you meet and chat up. 10K28

Let me offer enough service right now. Really, but let me draw the line just enough to sustain it. So if I am going to come here tomorrow or the days after that, I need to restrain my emotionality a little more. 2K33

Another participant working in the field of children with cancer talked about her emotional management system where in addition to taking *mental health days* she coped in her mind, too:

It is a difficult job, but you should not make it too difficult mentally... Those children need social support. They need support in their development, because during the treatment, it is interrupted in many ways. There is nothing to do more than what I can do. So, this is what I can do. I am actually focusing on this. 6K37

Still, even though participants reported many struggles with the mitigation of their emotional situation within their overall work/life reconciliation, I believe that thanks to the previously emphasized state of focus on *self-awareness* and *self-control* mechanisms among NGO workers, they were able to fare relatively well in that area.

²⁴ Hoca.

You know it's over at some point and are motivated accordingly. You do everything you can and the case is over or you hand over the responsibility... I can't be responsible for everyone in the world myself, I don't want to be, by the way. My responsibility is enough so far... I no longer get stressed out because some uncle somewhere didn't get a device. 16K40

This concludes my analysis of participant narratives from the field within the umbrella of three main themes of *Gender Division of Labor*, *Social Reproduction in Civil Society* and *Work/life Reconciliation of NGO Workers*.

Now, I will continue with conclusion of my thesis and discuss the key findings, implications and limitations of my research as well as offer avenue for future research before my concluding remarks.

CONCLUSION

This thesis explored a conceptualization of civil society work as social reproduction labor to understand how gender and care structures affect NGO work. It sought to provide a critical understanding of this sphere as a site of social reproduction by looking into diverse categories of labor performed within the confines of the third sector from a gender lens; including caring, emotional and voluntary labors along the lines of paid and unpaid labor. Guided by a feminist reading of civil society and social reproduction theory which both take into center the concept of sexual division of labor, the findings of present research draws connections between social reproduction (care) labor and the work done in civil society as well as analyze NGO workers' conditions in terms of work/life reconciliation.

This thesis contributes to feminist literature on civil society by exploring NGO laborers not just as workers in isolation, but as individuals located within wider social reproduction structures that span their homes, workplaces, and social relationships. Theoretically, it offers a social reproduction based understanding of the nature and functions of the work in civil society. Through an in-depth inquiry of women's experiences of labor, empirically, it reveals the labor conditions and mitigation strategies of NGO workers in line with feminist standpoint methodology's aim of giving voice to women and uncovering their experiences as subjects (Hesse-Biber, 2013; Harding, 1986).

Research questions of this thesis align with main themes that emerged from semi-structured interviews conducted with 17 women and 3 men from diverse NGOs and fields. Together, themes which correspond to different aspects of a conception of civil society work from a social reproduction perspective, answer the main research question that this research posed; *"how do gender and care structures interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of women working in civil society organizations, in relation to their social reproduction labor across the public and private spheres?"*.

Firstly, one of the most important findings was related to a Gender Division of Labor in Civil Society which answered the research question by revealing that civil society is perceived as a women-intensive work field. Overall, this key theme covered further

perceptions of NGO workers which refer to gendered understandings of *Women's Work* and *Men's Work* within the context of NGO labor, as well as a consideration of *Gender Equality within the Feminized Space* as it is observed for the sector. Illustrative examples from the lived experiences of participants clearly showed that civil society work in Türkiye is widely observed as a feminized space where women form a majority of the workforce, especially in certain roles and fields.

The analysis uncovered several conditions which may offer some explanations for the female majority within the third sector as socioeconomic factors and gender-based expectations were suggested to distinguish the work of women and men in civil society. These were listed as factors such as job motivations, work responsibilities, job security, compensation, financial expectations, career advancement, social sensitivities as well as other socioeconomic expectations attributed differently to women and men. In some narratives, there were opposite constructions of men as more career-oriented, breadwinners versus more caring, secondary-earner women generally perceived as more suitable for civil society employment, also because civil society jobs were experienced as flexible and precarious which suit women's socioeconomic positions as secondary earners. Horizontal and vertical occupational segregation structures were also mentioned as possible reasons, whereas men and women branch out into occupations based on different social, economic and motivational factors; including some occupations which may be socially perceived as *women's work* since they are branded as caring or emotional. It was another key proposition that wider social structures, determining women's choices even prior to civil society employment, such as education and labor market conditions may also be impacted by gender constraints. The consideration of a gender division of labor and its relationship with caring was also a point of divergence in the field, as caring and gendered associations of civil society were not welcome by some participants, or were agreed to a point that didn't seem constraining.

The evidence from the field which highlights *sexual division of labor* determining the distribution of jobs in accordance with gender and caring abilities among women and men in civil society work, are directly in alignment with the literature and the theoretical framework of this thesis. The way that women's situation in civil society work was

handled with respect to how caring duties and socioeconomic roles are allocated in our societies based on gender and caring structures that are also impacted by wider social and economic constraints; bringing into light the useful guidance of the organizing concept of *sexual division of labor* that serves as the operational link between social reproduction and feminist civil society, as this concept appears in feminist literature (Bhattacharya, 2017; Young, 1981; Pateman, 1980, 1988; Dean, 1992).

The second key theme of Social Reproduction in Civil Society serves to answer the question of whether civil society can be conceptualized as a social reproduction site where NGOs and workers perform as caring actors. Within the context of this research, an extensive empirical analysis was performed on NGO labor concerning the functions of caring and providing for the needs of our society as well as the nature, definition and boundaries of their workers' labor including how its value is defined. This analysis of civil society work from a social reproduction perspective established two further themes as findings of this research. These are *NGOs as Caring Actors*; which also made available the discovery of the sorts of *caring, emotional, voluntary* and *invisible* labors which take place at the NGO workplace. Therefore, the unpaid labors in NGOs comprised another key theme on what happens *Beyond the Boundaries of Paid Work* in Türkiye's NGOs.

The study offered insight into presumably social reproduction based functions of NGOs where it was discovered that a caring definition of civil society was generally welcome by workers as NGOs' role in filling the gaps left by the state was emphasized. Also, three common types of care work were distinguished via analysis of the nature, functions and job expectations *as social reproduction (i.e. care) labors* which take place in NGOs; in the forms of psychological and social support, livelihood support and personal support and connection. Conceptual differences among NGOs were also mentioned in relation to their target groups and categories such as small, more institutional, international, local; or such as humanitarian aid, rights, advocacy, grassroots, service, and issue based.

NGO workers' views on the distribution of tasks concerning social reproduction also uncovered that they view civil society as a sphere where an extensive amount of work is being done to provide the needs of our societies. These labors were said to be made invisible by social and economic structures which diminish the value of work by deeming

it volunteer work, for example, and leaving it on the shoulders of NGO workers, in other underpaid or unpaid manners where intensive burdens of extra work, emotional labor and secondary traumas fall on employees. At the same time, NGO workers underlined a complicated relationship with the state where there is a desire to both freeride on the activities of NGOs, especially with service provision in areas the state can not reach or care about; but also a lack of support and uncaring social policies in place which have implications on NGO labor as it becomes service oriented, precarity rises, downsizing happens; security and labor rights erode. These directly impact women's labor conditions who form the mainstay of workers in civil society; especially in parts where care is given. These findings directly relate with social reproduction theory which deals with the way structures of gender and the capitalist economy determine the value and distribution of tasks which guarantee the regeneration and renewal of our societies by assigning women and communities in often unpaid, underpaid or flexible ways, the role of taking care of needs which are left behind (Bhattacharya, 2017; Arruzza, 2019; Fraser, 1996, 2016).

Lastly, and most importantly, a key contribution of this study is that it found that NGO workers experience many hardships and implement various strategies to mitigate their situation, which consist the third theme Work/Life Reconciliation of NGO Workers. My empirical research uncovered the complex meaning and motivation-making processes of NGO workers which cut across gender and caring based motivations where I discovered that workers in civil society were mainly motivated by the impact of their work and derived satisfaction from touching the lives of people due to a strong awareness of society's needs as they were somehow able to reconcile the more negative effects of a lack of financial motivations and harsh working conditions via meaning. Here I termed a key finding as *third sector motivations* which corresponded to unique motivations where advocacy and self-responsibility came forward as women viewed civil society as an alternative sector and a tool for accessing the power necessary to make the changes they wanted to see in the world. This involvement of women workers in NGOs correlated with their gender, too, especially since some carried strong motivations for creating change where they had chosen civil society employment for better advocacy of women's rights, as well as the rights of other disadvantaged groups they mentioned caring about; such as children, disabled, LGBTQ+, immigrants etc.

This effort of understanding the conditions of NGO workers showed that they require an intensive network of support mechanisms as it is a physically demanding and emotionally challenging work. In terms of their own social reproduction referring to the provision of their own survival needs, NGO workers reported on the challenges they face and their mitigating strategies as they navigated work and private life on different aspects such as living situation, relationships and support, time management, household responsibilities and effects of private life on work. In terms of the effect of NGO work on private life; conflicts were experienced in the areas of home and private life including the financial aspect, social life and identity; workplace policies and job requirements. Lastly, NGO workers frequently reported needing extensive emotional management and support systems, comprising of their needs to access mechanisms such as psychological support and supervision, emotional support, and attachments and boundaries. Here, the key finding is that social supports, especially of partners, families and colleagues etc., as well as financial security were required for many NGO workers who mentioned that if not for their support systems, they would not be able to continue doing this work.

As a whole, the findings of this thesis allow us to understand civil society as a space of struggle for women workers who widely reported having limited resources and power to improve their work/life reconciliation. They reported a lot of struggles in terms of their overall life organization to guarantee their own reproduction, to mitigate personal resources, and to take care of their emotional, mental and physical regeneration for which strategies and support mechanisms were deployed – to manage the effects of work on private life, rather than the other way around.

I have acknowledged limitations of this thesis in depth under the Methodology section which refer to restrictions of qualitative methods, sampling, demographics and diversity as well as concerns regarding ethics and bias. To reiterate, while the empirical findings provide valuable insight into the experiences of female NGO workers, its reliance on qualitative interviews and a small sample size limits the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. On the other hand, a theoretical limitation was imposed by the empirical findings of this study is that it infers a need for caution while applying a social reproduction based lens of gender division of labor within civil society. This was

confirmed by the sort of resistance in the field as many women were inclined to view civil society as an active space where through advocacy and political struggle, social issues were solved through participation to civil society; while service provision was just one angle of the functions of organizations where caring and gendered understandings of labor were not prioritized. There was also some dissidence to a perception of *NGOs as Caring Actors* as it was found constraining for both the work done in civil society and for women's work in it. These findings also aligned with literature that warns against the dangers and constraints of viewing civil society as a harmonized space where it is diminished as a caring and gendered sphere where "runaway needs" are provided; devoid of its placement as a space between the public and the private sphere for the social and political advocacy for the general welfare of communities, including political participation and power (Fraser, 1990, 1996). These divergences in the field impose a limitation on the generalizability of the findings.

An insight into future studies with similar objectives is that the state of labor conditions needs to be better understood to support an understanding of civil society from the perspective of feminist political economy as well as advocate for the wellbeing of NGO workers. In the absence of official categories of labor and relevant statistics; further studies could focus on gender, financial and occupation based determinants (among some) which may help construct an understanding of civil society work where especially broader and quantitative work would contribute greatly. Quantitative studies would also contribute to uncovering nominal differences especially if they focus on determinants which help understand labor situation of workers such as working conditions, financial compensations, pay gaps and gender based experiences of NGO workers.

In addition, there are further research areas this research didn't cover in length but may contribute to an understanding of the work in civil society. First, an analysis from the perspective of feminist political economy on the perception of civil society as a *flexible and precarious field* where contract-based jobs lacking job safety and security exist, needs elaboration. Second, I believe further studies of unpaid work should elaborate on the way this research revealed about what happens beyond the boundaries of paid work, which may enrich a social reproduction understanding labor within the context of civil society.

Third, and most importantly, I believe that the situation of NGO workers who struggle to perform meaningful work under overlapping financial, political, social, organizational and gender constraints needs to be studied via more qualitative and quantitative studies to uncover their realities and lived experiences. The understanding of their situation will also improve the conditions of people they face and care for day after day.

In conclusion, this thesis underscored the importance of recognizing the social reproduction work that currently takes place in civil society organizations within the context of Türkiye. It centered around an understanding of gender and care based structures which operate via sexual division of labor via recruiting a female majority of workers in civil society for the provision of society's diverse needs. This reconceptualization of third sector as a site of social reproduction and of NGO workers as care laborers challenges the conventional public and private divide that confines women's care labor to the private sphere and contributes to theory. On the other hand, the ultimate empirical contribution of this research is that it made visible NGO workers' experiences from a perspective based on work/life reconciliation in order to ensure a more equitable work environment. This perception paid attention to dimensions which determine NGO workers' wellbeing as laborers, including the motivational and emotional aspects of how they manage their work's effects as well as the consideration of the positioning of work and private lives in a simultaneous relationship with each other.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Result of the Evaluation by the Ethics Committee

Result of the Evaluation by the Ethics Committee is available in the printed version of this dissertation.



Appendix B. Research Themes and Questions

How do gender and care structures interact to shape the experiences and meaning-making processes of women working in civil society organizations, in relation to their social reproduction labor across the public and private spheres?

- **How do gender roles and expectations impact the employment of workers in civil society organizations?**
 - How are the motivations of men and women shaped towards employment in NGOs?
 - How do NGO workers experience gender divisions of labor in civil society organizations? Do they experience it?
 - What strategies arise in the organizational and individual levels to mitigate gender structures in civil society?
- **How do women in civil society organizations perceive their paid and unpaid labor in civil society?**
 - How do they perceive the function of civil society as a caring actor in relation to distribution of social reproduction labor in the public and private spheres?
 - What kind of caring functions are performed by NGO workers within the boundaries of civil society?
 - Are there unpaid dimensions of NGO workers' labor in civil society and what are they? |
 - What effects do they have on workers' labor perceptions?
 - What are the factors that have an impact on the performance of unpaid work within civil society?
 - How does gender impact the distribution of paid and unpaid labor, especially in the forms of caring, emotional and voluntary labor within civil society?
- **How do NGO workers reconcile their work and private lives?**
 - How are NGO workers' motivations shaped in relation to their self perceptions and meaning-making of their labor in civil society?
 - How do workers' motivations relate with gender and caring structures?
 - How do NGO workers fare in terms of their own social reproduction considering their efforts to mitigate their private life responsibilities with their work life?
 - How do workers mitigate the effects of their work in different aspects of their private lives?
 - How do their personal and professional identities interact with each other in the processes of work/life reconciliation?
 - What conflicts and synergies arise in workers' reconciliation of their paid and unpaid labors, including the management of emotional labor in their work and private lives?

Appendix C. Interview Questions and Guide

1. Demografik bilgiler:

- Yaş, cinsiyet, eğitim durumu
- Sosyoekonomik Durumu: Katılımcı profiline bağlı olarak yöneltilecek sorularla gözlemlenecektir.

2. STK çalışma yaşamları

- Kurum? Hangi alanlarda ve ne tür faaliyetler gösteriyor?
- Pozisyonunuz/göreviniz nedir?
- Çalışma Şekliniz: Tam zamanlı/yarı zamanlı/ proje/ diğer
- Ne zamandır bu kurumda çalışıyorsunuz?
- Sivil toplumdaki ilk işiniz mi, daha önceden deneyiminiz var mı? Varsa kaç yıl? Deneyiminizi anlatır mısınız?
- Bir STK çalışanı olarak sizden şimdi ya da geçmişte ne gibi sorumluluklar beklenmiştir?
- Mevcut işinizi ya da sivil toplumda daha önceki işlerinizi düşündüğünüzde, bu işlerin olumlu ve olumsuz yanları nelerdir?
- Diğer sektörlerle kıyasladığınızda üçüncü sektörde çalışma koşullarını nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
- İşinizin geleceği ile ilgili ne düşünüyorsunuz? Endişeniz var mı? Kariyer ve gelişim imkanlarını nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?

3. Özel Hayata Dair Sorular: (Özellikle ev içi bakım emeği ve aldığı destekler)

- Medeni haliniz:
- Çocuk yetiştiriyor musunuz?
- İş dışında nasıl bir hayatınız var? Genelde nelerle vakit geçiriyorsunuz?
- Barınma durumunuz nedir? Biriyle ev paylaşıyor musunuz?
- (Biriyle yaşıyorsa) Ev dışı ve ev içi sorumlulukları nasıl paylaşıyorsunuz?
- Yakın çevrenizdeki kişilerin ihtiyaçlarına cevap vermeyi önceliklendiren biri misiniz? Sizce bu tür (kendiniz ve yakın çevrenizdeki) bakım işlerine ayda/haftada/günde ne kadar zaman ayırıyorsunuz?
- Bakmakla yükümlü olduğunuz birey(ler) var mı? Ne tür bakım sorumluluklarını yerine getiriyorsunuz? Ne yoğunlukta? Destek alıyor musunuz? Aile, kurum, vs, ne tip destekler alıyorsunuz? (Katılımcının bu konudaki paylaşımlarını açması sağlanmaya çalışılacaktır.)
- Bakım sorumluluğunuz işinizi nasıl etkiliyor? Yaşadığınız zorluklar neler?

4. Sivil toplumda çalışma

a. Motivasyon

- Neden bir sivil toplum kuruluşunda çalışıyorsunuz? İşinizin sizin için anlamı nedir?
- Günlük yaşamınızı düşündüğünüzde sivil toplum çalışanı olmak hangi yönlerden tatmin edicidir? Olumlu yönleri nelerdir? Siz için en anlamlı yanı nedir yaptığımız işin? Anlatır mısınız?
- STK çalışanı olmanın negatif yönleri nelerdir? Zorlukları nelerdir? Nasıl baş edersiniz bu zorluklar ile?
- Bu sektörde çalışma konusunda motivasyonunuz nedir?

b. Sivil toplumun işlevi

- Sivil toplumu nasıl tanımlarsınız?
- Sivil toplum kuruluşunuzun bir tür bakım verme görevi üstlendiğini düşünüyor musunuz? Öyleyse; bu görevleri yerine getirmeleri bireyler ve toplum için ne ifade eder?
- Sivil toplum çalışanı olmayı nasıl tanımlarsınız? Aile bireylerine bakım vermek ile tanımadığınız kişilere bakım göstermek arasında nasıl benzerlikler/farklar var?
- Aile dışı bireylerin ihtiyaçlarına cevap vermenin duygusal yükleri neler?
- Sizce sivil toplum çalışanlarının ne tür özelliklere sahip olması gereklidir? Siz bu özelliklerin hangilerini taşıdığınızı düşünüyorsunuz?
- Sivil toplum işiniz toplumun ve bireylerin refahına nasıl katkı sağlıyor?
- Gün be gün yaptığımız işleri düşündüğünüzde nasıl bir 'duygusal emek' boyutu olabilir?
- Bu duygusal emek koşullarını nasıl yönetiyorsunuz?

c. Toplumsal Cinsiyet

- Kurumunuzu cinsiyet eşitliği bakımından nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? (Görev dağılımı, karar mekanizmalarına katılım, tavır ve haklar vb bakımından)
- Sizce sivil toplum alanında daha çok kadınlar mı çalışıyor, çalışmak istiyor? Öyle ise neden?
- Sizce kadınlar bireysel ve toplumsal alanlarında erkeklere kıyasla daha mı çok bakım sorumlulukları üstleniyorlar?
- Yukarıdaki evet ise; Bu durumu kendi açıınızdan nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz, size nasıl etkiliyor?
- Sizce mevcut işinizi seçmenizde cinsiyetinizin bir etkisi oldu mu?
- Üçüncü sektör emekçileri arasında kadın-erkek eşitliğini nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
- Sizce sivil toplum 'kadın işi' ya da 'basit iş' olarak görülüyor mu? STK'larda çalışmakla ilgili görüşler sizi nasıl etkiliyor?
- Yukarıda konuştuğumuz, bakım, iş motivasyonu ve duygusal emek gibi konularla toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri arasındaki ilişki konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

Appendix D. Participant Profiles

No	City	F/M	Age	NGO Field	Job	Education and Personal Life
1	Şanlıurfa	F	28	Migration	Livelihood Support	She is a graduate of Political Science and Public Administration. She is single, lives alone in Urfa where she moved for work.
2	Istanbul	F	33	Children	Psychologist	She is a Psychology graduate. She lives with her supportive husband and small daughter (3 y.o.). She has a good system now but her work used to be more challenging in the field.
3	Eskişehir	F	31	Addiction	Social Service Expert	She is a Social Service graduate. She is single and recently moved from Istanbul, leaving overwork behind, to live with parents in her hometown. They have a pet.
4	Adana	F	31	Youth and Tech.	MEAL Officer	She is an Engineering graduate with a vocational background in technology. She is single which works for her since she may put work first. She mostly lives alone and travels, working remotely. She may experience physical and mental health issues from time to time, exacerbated by work.
5	Balıkesir	F	39	Education	Field Coordinator	She graduated from Social Service and Child Development. She lives with her family after leaving Istanbul during the pandemic. She is single and shares the house with her mother, father and older brother where household needs are shared.

6	Istanbul	F	37	Children	Teacher	She is a graduate of Preschool Education. She lives with many siblings and mother, where they all support each other in the household. She has a recent boyfriend and may think about marriage later.
7	Istanbul	F	48	Women	Project Assistant	She is a graduate of Art History; and worked in her current women's NGO for 17 years. She is married, has a teenage boy and a supportive household system but issues may arise due to work, especially in crises.
8	Ankara	F	30	Prot. Children	General Coordinator	She is a Social Service graduate, continuing her PhD. She is single and lives with parents and younger brother, relying on her family's support in the household. She dedicates most time for work as she says she doesn't have other attachments.
9	Gaziantep	F	27	Migration	Education Expert	She is a Social Service graduate. She is single and lives alone in Antep where she moved for work. She travels often and works a lot for which her solitary lifestyle satisfies her.
10	Istanbul	F	28	LGBTQ+	Social Service Coord.	She is a Social Service graduate. She just came out of a relationship and reported a lot of financial, personal, housework and work/life balance challenges, which are exacerbated by her work's requirements of workload and emotional labor.

11	Istanbul	F	36	Development	Program Coordinator	She is a graduate of International Relations and has Human Rights Master's Degree. She just came out of a relationship, preceded by her divorce which were both related with her work stress and overwork which led her to experience two burnouts. She pursued NGO career due to her search for meaning at work.
12	Istanbul	F	35	Environment	Assistant GM	She is a Sociology graduate. She lives with her husband and young daughter (7 y.o.) in rural Istanbul where they get family support for childcare. She always got support for childcare and has a supporting family which allow her to pursue work success as a primary earner, as she says.
13	Muğla	F	39	Education	Co-Director	She is a Business Administration graduate. She moved to Muğla from Istanbul for a simpler life, after trying to find herself at work and starting her NGO career 7 years ago. She is single, lives alone and is able to balance her life via some effort, as there are hardships due to busy work.
14	Istanbul	F	29	Youth	Education Expert	She is a Psychological Counseling and Guidance graduate. She is single, lives with a roommate. Her life may be challenging due to financial hardships and overwork, but it is better at her current NGO than her previous employments – she has a balance.
15	Hatay	F	29	Social Aid	Psychologist	She is a Psychology graduate. She and her family survived the earthquake; she moved into parents' caravan after her divorce. She is troubled with her heavy workload, non-understanding workplace and emotional labor and lack of compensation.

16	Istanbul	F	40	Disability	Coordinator	She is a Business Administration graduate. She is married, lives with her husband and pets in rural Istanbul; recently transferred to part time. She transitioned to civil society from private sector for more meaningful work and she is able to balance work and life because she is not bothered by blurring of boundaries.
17	Ankara	F	34	Localization	Forum Coordinator	She is a Sociology graduate, involved in civil society from grassroots via women's organizations. She ended a long-term relationship before the earthquake field, now lives with a roommate as she has been burnt out before; and struggles emotionally, still.
18	Adana	M	30	Addiction	Assistant Manager	He is a Psychology graduate with a clinical master's. He is married and expecting a child. He has a quite balanced life, even though work was busier before being a manager. His wife also works for an NGO. They share housework more or less equally.
19	Istanbul	M	33	Addiction	Public Relations Expert	He is a Communications graduate with previous experience in migration. His work requires, but he is able to manage emotional labor. He is married and is expecting a child. His life is more balanced as his wife works less regular, where he handles most of the chores.
20	Istanbul	M	32	Addiction	Assistant Manager	He is a Social Service graduate. He has a small baby where him and his wife share household work equally. His work may get busy, but being a manager has made it easier and things are manageable, outside of the times of crises.