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SINGLE PARENTING DURING THE PANDEMIC: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CREATIVE CAPACITY

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Pandemi Döneminde Tek Ebeveynlik: Yaratıcı Kapasitenin Rolü

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role parenting creativity during quarantine. Participants consisted of eight single mothers aged between 35 to 43. Interviews were conducted online individually which lasted through 45 minutes to 1 hour 15 minutes. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, resulting in four main themes; 1) perceived influences of quarantine, 2) creativity as an aid to challenges, 3) factors related to enhance parenting creativity, 4) factors related to inhibit parenting creativity. First theme consisted subthemes of perceived negative and positive influences. Second theme included subthemes of self-perception of creative capacity, co-creations, creative capacity as use of bonding, creativity providing adaptability. Third theme contained providing a holding environment and coping strategies. Last theme involved decline in quality of the relationship between child, constant availability, and financial responsibilities. The results revealed the experiences of single parents in pandemic and gave information on how they perceive and use parenting creativity during this time. Parenting creativity has been found to help parents to be flexible and has enabled them to use the resources they have in their hands in difficult times. Quarantines also appeared to have diminishing effects to capacity of creativity by worsening of relationship with their child due to both parties increase in duration of time they spent together. Parents own coping strategies and their ability to provide a holding environment was thought to enhance their creative thinking. The results were concluded with the previous literature, however since there was much less research on parenting creativity, current results were discussed with articles regarding other populations such as children, students, young adults' creativity.

Keywords: parenting creativity, quarantine, pandemic, single parenting, creative thinking

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, karantina sırasında ebeveynlik yaratıcılığının rolünü araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Katılımcılar, yaşları 35 ile 43 arasında değişen sekiz bekar anneden oluşmaktadır. Görüşmeler, 45 dakika ile 1 saat 15 dakika arasında süren bireysel olarak online olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Verileri analiz etmek için tematik analiz kullanılmış ve dört ana tema elde edilmiştir; 1) karantinanın algılanan etkileri, 2) zorluklara yardımcı olarak yaratıcılık, 3) ebeveyn yaratıcılığını arttırmayla ilişkin faktörler, 4) ebeveyn yaratıcılığını engellemeyle ilişkin faktörler. Birinci tema, algılanan olumsuz etkiler ve algılanan olumlu etkiler alt temaları şeklinde adlandırılmıştır. İkinci tema, yaratıcı kapasitenin kendini algılaması, ortak yapımlar, bağ kurma amacıyla yaratıcı kapasite, uyum sağlamayı sağlayan yaratıcılık alt temalarını içermektedir. Üçüncü tema, kapsayıcı bir çevre sunma ve baş etme stratejilerini içermektedir. Son tema ise, sürekli ulaşılabilirlik, çocuk ile kurulan ilişkinin kalitesinde düşüş ve finansal sorumluluklar içermektedir. Sonuçlar, pandemide tek ebeveynlerin deneyimlerini ve ebeveyn yaratıcılığını nasıl algıladıklarını ve bu dönemdeki rolünü ortaya koymuştur. Ebeveynlik yaratıcılığının, ebeveynlerin esnek olmalarına yardımcı olduğu ve ellerindeki kaynakları zor zamanlarda kullanmalarını sağladığı bulunmuştur. Karantinalar, her iki tarafın da evin içinde birlikte geçirdikleri süreyi artırması nedeniyle çocuklarıyla ilişkilerini kötüleştirerek yaratıcılık kapasitelerini de azaltıyor görünmektedir. Bununla birlikte, ebeveynlerin kendi baş etme stratejileri ve bir tutma ortamı sağlama yeteneklerinin yaratıcı düşünmelerini geliştirdiği düşünülmüştür. Tartışma bölümünde sonuçlar geçmiş literatürlerle beraber ele alınmış, ancak ebeveyn yaratıcılığı konusunda çok daha az araştırma olduğu için, mevcut sonuçlar çocukların, öğrencilerin, genç yetişkinlerin yaratıcılığı gibi popülasyonları ele alan makalelerle tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: ebeveyn yaratıcılığı, karantina, pandemi, tek ebeveynlik, yaratıcı düşünme

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the experiences of single parents during pandemic lockdowns while exploring the role of creativity in parenting.

Pandemic is a contagious and/or an infectious disease that quickly affects very large scale of people and reaching an international dimension (Porta, 2014). Covid-19 was declared as pandemic on 11 March of 2020 by The World Health Organization when there were 118,000 cases and 4,291 deaths were recorded in numerous different countries at the time (WHO, 2020). After WHO's declaration of pandemic, countries all over the world started to begin national restrictions and closures, suspending the human life in a way.

With this situation, people's lives have changed rapidly, and they have been affected in different ways. Before this unusual situation, single parents were already facing challenges and with lockdowns they are considered to have experienced tougher. Although there is research on single parenting in the literature, the experiences of this group of people in pandemic time has not been relatively studied yet. The main reason why research on single parenting is important is; before the pandemic, this population already experience different difficulties in domestic regulation, financial situation, social life and parenting (Boylu & Öztop, 2013; Demir & Çelebi, 2017), and with pandemic they may have lost the resources needed to overcome these challenges during the closure period due to the lockdowns.

Creativity is the production of new ideas which have practical usability and meaningfulness (Porta, 2014). Based on the single parent experiences mentioned above, it is thought that parents may have opportunity to overcome some of the challenges they faced by using creativity in lockdowns in the pandemic. Therefore, another research focus will be on to role of parents' creative capabilities have in their relationship with their children, and also on the impact have on their parenting experiences in the pandemic. The contribution of the research at this point is when the resources used by single parents are lost or inefficient, their creativity can be used as a feature which is believed to support them in challenging times and while also helping to guide the clinical population and single parents support programs

on use of creativity. As a result of the current research, it is believed that findings will help to discover the needs of single parents in clinical sense and establish appropriate support mechanisms for their parent-child relationships, while at the same time shedding light on efforts to learn more about their creative capacity.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. PANDEMIC

At certain times in world history, people have gone through a challenging period like pandemics. COVID-19 virus is one of those pandemics, which started at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, China, quickly took a global toll on people in various ways due to its symptoms and infectiousness. There have been a great number of physical, economic, social, and psychological results due to the pandemic and its effects are still going. Governments from different countries began to shut down one after the other because of the rapid spread rate and the fast rate of transmission. Because of these closures, almost all collective areas such as schools, offices, cafes, and so on, have been closed and people have not left home for a certain period.

For this reason, a new situation that enter to lives of people has been curfews and lockdowns. During the closure processes, people of all ages worked to cope with the psychological, economic, and physical consequences of this situation. Considering psychological effects, there have been periods when people of all ages had to cut off or at least limit their relationship with each other and environment. For this reason, some psychological conditions such as loneliness, depression, insomnia, stress have increased during home-lockdowns (Groarke et al., 2020; Bartoszek et al., 2020; Hwang et al., 2020) While some obsessive behaviors and tendencies have increased due to the hygiene measures taken, there has also been a great concern about the contagiousness of the virus (Banerjee, 2020; Tanir et al., 2020). Considering the physical effects; since gyms were closed in most countries and being physically active at home during lockdowns is limited, related to this situation some diseases have increased and an increase in obesity has been experienced in children during this period (Araújo et al., 2021). In the economic sense, small business owners and many sectors that provide human-based services have been interrupted, and there has been a decrease in their revenues and consumption (O. Kim et al., 2020). Since tourism and transportation between

countries are limited, there were records of losses in sectors such as tourism and aviation too (Debata et al., 2020).

1.1.1. Pandemic Lockdowns in Turkey

In Turkey, restrictions caused by the pandemic began by the government decision on shutting down schools and closing indoor businesses such as restaurants, cafes, gyms etc. as of March 2020. In the same month, people over the age of 65 were first banned from going out of their house which later continued with the prohibition of people under the age of 20. In April, full weekend lockdowns began, with the process lasting until June 2020. After a certain opening process in the summer of 2020, another closing period began in November with curfews again restricting people aged 65 and under 20, with re-closing of all indoor businesses. In April 2021, Turkey started to experience may be the toughest period of lockdown, with curfews imposed on all citizens in the country for three weeks straight. As a result of these restrictions, children and hundreds of young people started to remote their whole lives entirely from their house. The only group of people exempted from these restrictions were some of the authorized adult employees whom their work life had not returned to remotely working from home. So, one of the biggest changes in this novel lifestyle has been the transformation of social, work, and educational life into the virtual world.

The lockdowns and curfews have become more severe for two age group in Turkey; senior group aged 65 and over, younger population aged 20 and under. These two age groups had spent time at home more in number compared to rest of the population which affected them in various ways too. Particularly with the closure of children and young people under the age of 20, some developmentally expected tasks such as socialization, individualization and self-discovery have been disrupted. Especially for young people, such as 11 and for some even earlier, adolescence period starts, and process can continue into their 20s. Thus, these young people have an increasing interest in the world, their peers and abroad, rather than spend time with their families, and they are also often preoccupied with finding

out who they are, what they like (Santrock, 2019). However, they had to get in touch with their families more due to the closures and it had pushed them into the virtual world and screens. Ikizer et al. (2021) reported that more post-traumatic stress symptoms have been found in adults who had pandemic related increased social media use, longer duration of staying home and financial difficulties in Turkey. At the same time, it has been found that the way the pandemic is perceived by in Turkey was harmful, anxiety provoking and that they were more sensitive and concerned about issues such as its contagious to their loved ones (Bostan et al., 2020). Considering the socio-cultural structure of Turkey, religion has caused a social motivation for some people and in this culture, where family life and togetherness are highly valued, sociability has been tried to be met through digital means (Yamaç, 2021). Research in Turkey by Eyimaya and Irmak (2021) showed; although parents introduced a limit on their children's screen time during the pandemic, it has been determined that there has been a significant increase in usage during this period.

1.1.2. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Families and Children

With pandemic entering people's lives, all kind of age groups have been affected in different ways. One of these effects is that a large part of children's educational and social lives has moved into the online environment, and accordingly, the dynamics of relationships in the home have also changed (Iivari et al., 2020; Bhamani et al., 2020). During this period, by using different strategies families tried to overcome the challenges brought. Some of them include trying to keep their routines in place, doing some physical activities, sports in the home, being with friends and families through social platforms such as face-time, Zoom or Skype (Salin et al, 2020; Shockley et al, 2020). In order to overcome the feeling of boredom and feeling trapped in home, parents engage in many different creative activities with their children, thus they tried to keep up with these changes, both in their own lives and in the lives of their children. While parents tried to achieve a stable and healthy work-family balance (Fisher et al., 2020), it has had some

negative psycho-social effects on children and especially for young children, on socio-emotional development when there is social isolation (Urbina-Garcia, 2020). Regressive behaviors were frequently encountered for younger children meaning there was a return to some behaviors which is not expected from their age (Akoğlu & Karaaslan, 2020), while school age children exposed such risks as cyber-bullying (Thakur & Sharma, 2020) due to a very rapid and abrupt increase in screen use. In relational terms, children also pointed out that there were weaknesses and ruptures in their friendships; younger children shared their experiences as, particularly since they could not find a common subject to share even on a screen, and they did not know how to interact (Stoecklin et al., 2021). This relational difficulty can further reflected in the post-pandemic period in future as children show weaknesses in their social skills due to lack of experience in how to communicate with one another, thus possibly suffering a damage in their self-confidence later (Charney et al., 2021).

Distance learning was another area where screen use was seen; education could continue only remotely, with schools closed in almost every country in the world. This necessary change brought along many challenges. Technical problems arose as both teachers and students were new to this learning type due to lack of experience and not receiving a training before. From student's perspective, it took some time for appropriate arrangements to established online education and reported that they actually prefer to learn face to face with their teachers (Chakraborty et al., 2021). Moreover, while students use their computers and tablets at home for education, almost all of the family members have been together with them at home, causing numerous attention problems (Iivari et al., 2020). Due to attention problems, they have difficulty focusing on courses while the quality of their learning can also decrease. This can be especially true for children in the younger age group who still continue on developing their selective and focused attention (Santrock, 2019).

Another disadvantage of moving to distance learning has been the fact that low-income children have been hit hard. Unfortunately, distance learning has required the family to have at least one computer or tablet-like object to be able to

follow classes and programs in the house Therefore, families who were unable to get access or provide technological devices or internet were excluded during the education period in lockdowns because their choice of face-to-face education was lifted as their schools returned to compulsory distance education (Garbe et al., 2020). Concern, fear, and despair were at the forefront of the intense emotions experienced by children aged between 9-18 due to quarantine and many of these feelings were related to their financial situation of their families (Saurabh & Ranjan, 2020). Drop was observed in the passing rates of university students who showed similar results to other age groups who had online education (Casalone et al., 2021).

Further effect in children due to Covid-19 was related to their physical complaints. Children had to live a more inactive lifestyle since they were unable to access to their school, parks, sports halls. With such a lifestyle, children were deprived of the precious nutrients that are essential for their development, since they tend to consume tin cans and ready meals in lockdowns, so as a result, they become at higher risk of obesity (Araújo et al., 2021). Young people aged 11-17 in Germany, on the other hand, self-reported their psychosomatic complaints increase during the pandemic and that they suffer from sleep problems, as well as headaches (Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2021). The same research also shows an increase in the number of young people who report low health-related quality of life during the pandemic. The more inactive lifestyle is also related to screen time, the amount of time spent by children on screen has increased, this increase refers not only to online education but also to the increase of time spending by screen for leisure (Xiang et al., 2020).

In the case of parents, some experienced a constant stress related to COVID-19 (Brown et al., 2020) conditions such as depression and high anxiety also accompanied this stress. At the top of the list of parent's stress concerns about their children's development took place (Chu et al., 2021). While questioning the quality of education provided to their children, they were also worried about how they were affected developmentally since they are physically and socially distant from their peers (Calderon, 2020). Parents negative experiences related to covid-19 affected their relationship with children and increase their parenting in harsher way, while

also cause them to perceive their relationship with children more distant (Lachowska, 2021). One of the main reasons which made the families and parents worry is about the people they care and love, especially the older family members, would be infected and affected by Covid-19. This health concern has also been around the house, and for some time, an extreme set of hygiene rules and measures has been introduced, compared to normal life. Similar to the parents' worries, children were also worried that their parents may be infected by the virus and there was an increase in emotional problems such as separation anxiety (Zabcı & Karadeniz, 2021). Some children have also been afraid to go out for a while despite the precautions such as mask and social distancing. Due to information pollution, when the pandemic was first introduced to the world, people thought it was possible to be infected if they go out of their house and breathe the air outside, or virus can pass through almost any substance that comes from outside. This false information delivered the message to the children that the outside world was dangerous and anything that even comes from the others can possibly be lethal.

At the same time, there have been cases where these concerns have come true and the virus has passed on to them and/or to their loved ones, and some families experienced losses. In the U.S., study by Patrick et al. (2020) reported that mental health had deteriorated since the onset of the pandemic in 1 in 4 families, and the physical health had deteriorated in nearly 1 in 6 families. In the peak period of the pandemic where many losses were recorded, funeral ceremonies were very limited and people were not able to say goodbye, mourn and attend the funerals as they wished, since funerals were carried on with very limited number of people in Turkey. Another challenge parents face is the fact that the roles they take on for this period have suddenly increased and they have difficulty in balancing these roles (Vaterlaus et al., 2021). Meaning that other roles such as being a teacher or doing the household chores, have been added with their current responsibilities.

Whereas there are some positive situations stated by the families caused by the pandemic. Among them, feeling of gratitude comes to the fore (Chu et al., 2021), where for most people the possibility of a pandemic did not even cross their minds, people feel both a longing for their old order and life, and also a gratitude

for the opportunity and physical health they have at the moment. It has also helped families to have a deeper relationship, as the time they are physically at home has suddenly increased and the children are necessarily in much more contact at home compared to before the pandemic. So, children expressed closeness and finding new mutual grounds, activities with their parents in their relationship (Stoecklin et al., 2021; Öngören, 2021). Turkish parents also indicated the time they spent at home strengthened relationship between their children (Tarsuslu et al., 2021). In a study conducted in the US, fathers in particular spend more time with their children comparing to pre-covid and reported that they feel closer to them (Weissbourd et al., 2020). However, there were also families asserted that despite the increase in time spent with their children, there has not been any change in their relationship, and it actually remained stable (Vaterlaus et al., 2021).

1.2. SINGLE PARENTING

Family structures come with different variations in today's world, and these structural differences have impact on people within the family system and especially on development of children. Among the family structure types; there are traditional families, co-parent families and single parent families. Single parenting can be defined as a parent who takes care of her/his child on their own and when the parent is solely responsible for the care of their children due to various reasons such as divorce, death or decision of the family members.

In the statistical research, the number of single-parent parents is more women than men, in the report presented by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018), 17% of children between the ages of 6 and 11 grew up in a single-parent household across 27 countries in average, and %86 of this percentage is single mothers, it is also reported that unemployed single mothers are more stressed and upset than employed single mothers (Meier et al., 2016). The statistics on family report by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) revealed that there has been an increase in number of single parents since 2014 and today they constitute 9.7% of the society as of 2020, 7.5% of this percentage is

women. For this reason, the majority of single parents consists of single mothers both globally and in Turkey. There are various psychological, social and economic variables that affect the individuals within this family structure. However, when single parent is flexible, successful in maintaining warmth and keeping an accepting attitude in the household (Garfield, 2009), as in traditionally seen two-parent families, children can overcome some stressful moments caused by these challenges.

First, single parents reported to have more mental health problems than their peers, while also being more stressed than married couples (Evenson & Simon, 2005). In a qualitative study by Stack and Meredith (2018), the stress created by the sole burden of meeting all the basic needs in the single parent home was revealed. Single parents have almost every responsibility for their children. Following-up school assignments, getting nutrition, hygiene cover some basic and behavioral needs, at the same time, the emotional duties of giving a holding environment, acknowledging their emotions and being a container for their children (Whisenhunt et al., 2019). Parents must make some sacrifices from their own well-being and life in order to be able to cope with this responsibility alone however, due to economic challenges they spend most of their time working and the remaining time goes for their other responsibilities waiting at home which prevents them from receiving psychological help (Demir & Çelebi, 2017). In such situation, these sacrifices for economic welfare actually provide a negative return to mental health of the single parent. Most single parents also work more than one job to earn and make a living at home, as there is no income from a second adult which makes their working hours longer and cause various physical diseases (Nieuwenhuis & Maldonado, 2018). How this family institution is reached differs within itself, and the economic challenges change accordingly. For example, single parenting that took place through divorce involves the cases in which the biological mother or father provided alimony to support the education and other needs of the child. Thus, the economic burden of a single parent decreases. However, in general, single parents struggle economically more than traditional two-families (Stack & Meredith, 2018). Economic challenges are experienced especially by single mothers as well; while

access to the poverty level is riskier, the rate of employment is lower for them (McLanahan & Booth, 1989). At the same time, a report conducted in Turkey revealed that more than half of the participants who are divorced have not received the necessary help from an ex-husband/wife or an institution to meet the needs of the child and the household (Öztürk & Boylu, 2015). At the same time, low socio-economic levels of single parents, has an effect on their negative parenting behavior (Daryanani et al., 2016). Secondly, the relational problems experienced both at in and outside of the household exist in the lives of single parents. Conflicts and fights with the former spouse can be one of the difficulties if the single parent is in this family structure due to divorce and separation.

These economic, health and relational challenges intertwine and affect each other in single parents. A single parent who is experiencing mental difficulties may also have difficulty in providing stability economically at the same time. Single parent who has financial difficult may have struggle in accessing the mental health services she/he needs, too. Similarly, in-house problems in relational sense have a direct effect on the parents' own psychological well-being. As such, these problems are dynamic and are intertwined with each other.

There has been also a stigma against this type of family in the past, a negative viewpoint against especially on women who have decided to single parent and whose family structure has been achieved through divorce (Worell, 1986). Even tough today, women's freedom in business enhanced and economically they are not dependent on another person comparing to the past, negative stigma has started to decrease and single mothering has started to be encountered more frequently and accepted. Unfortunately, although the negative perspective has started to decrease, it is not completely gone as Pew Research Center shows, people view women who have children without a partner as bad for the society (Livingston, 2018). In cases, such single parents can withdraw or be deprived of certain activities, and they try to cope with problems such as being disturbed by colleagues at work (Talbot, 2021).

1.2.1. Children of Single Parents

Before elaborating about the effect single parenting has on children in this section, reason why a parent brings up and raises a child on their own also has an impact on the child itself. There can be reasons such as divorce, death, abandonment, or adoption. Each of these reasons has different effect on children. So, this section will focus more on the impact of being raised by a single parent on children.

Regardless of how the outcome of parenting alone occurred, it can create a certain degree of stress for both the parent and child (Evenson & Simon, 2005). The American Psychological Association (2019) also issued that single parenting can create a certain degree of stress for both the single parent and child that may not occur in traditional families. In a family raised by a single parent, children were found to be more likely to diagnosed with ADHD than those with other family structures, i.e., adopted children, children growing up with both of their biological parents or children who raised at state institutions (Behere et al., 2017). Single parenting can cause a negative and harsh parenting (spanking, yelling, hitting) due to the stress and problems related to being a single parent, and in connection with this, the child's own well-being may also be seriously affected by it (Jackson et al., 2010). There is more separation anxiety in divorced parent's children compared to other traditional families (Amorós et al., 2008). Children can experience confusion about the roles and boundaries within the home and have to cope with some negative emotions as a result (Boylu & Öztop, 2013). The confusion of roles occurs particularly in homes where there are no fathers, mothers who have difficulty showing authority and especially boys who want to have a say and power in domestic order (Feyzioğlu & Kuşçuoğlu, 2011). However, in the study of Barber and Eccles (1992), which looked at the long-term effects on children, it was revealed that children who grow up and completed their development with a single parent acquired and showed positive effects such as being more resilient and building up different adaptation strategies.

In the case of single parenting impact on children's education; there is a certain difference between single parent and two-parent families, in terms of children's completion of school, and this difference was found to be getting wider each year (Ziol-Guest et al., 2015). In some studies that found similar results (Amato, 2005; Azuka-Obieke, 2013), it was reported that there are fewer academic achievements and more cognitive problems existed in single parent families' children. For much younger children, there is lower academic performance in single parent families comparing to two-parent families (Mugove, 2017). From a social point of view, children in this type of family have difficulties in this area too, because they may associate having a single parent with shame, and therefore have difficulty in establishing or starting relationships with their peers (Feyzioğlu & Kuşçuoğlu, 2011). Considering the relationship between the parent and the child in this family structuring, there is more closeness and warmth, and at the same time, the conflict rate is also high, however ego functions that are required to solve these problems exist less than two-parent family's children (Walker & Hennig, 1997).

In the case of adolescents, one of the downsides of growing up with one parent means that there can be lesser parental supervision. This situation can potentially open up space for some risky behaviors such as delinquency or teen pregnancy (Barber & Eccles, 1992). Adolescence is a period in which family structures and gender roles are modeled on a one-to-one basis by parents and affected by these modeling. Therefore, in single parenting modeling effect has a great influence on their development of balancing work and family roles in teens, particularly for a mother-daughter combination. It has also been noted that different issues arise in the cases in which adolescents live with a single parent; in terms of education, they tend to repeat classes/grade while getting more suspension, furthermore they received therapy due to emotional problems more than their peers who live in traditional families (Amato, 2005).

There are contradictory opinions about gender differences related to single parenting will have different effects on the child. More individualistic theories assume that gender is a feature to be addressed since what kind of a single parenting will be provided to children directly change depending on the gender of the single

parent. On the other hand, structuralists views, who looks from a social perspective, argues that parenting the child will not change in terms of gender but single parent will behave differently due to social and gender norms in society (Downey et al., 1998). Growing up same-sex single parent has been shown to have no additional benefit to the child comparing to children who live with their opposite sex single parent (Downey & Powell, 1993). At the same time, since single mothers have more difficulties in socio-economic terms than single fathers (Azuka-Obieke, 2013; Dufur et al., 2010), they can experience more anxiety and stress, which also affects their children's psychological well-being, too. So, these possible problems may arise are not necessarily related to sex differences, but actually due to some difficulties arising from the single parenting situation, since only one person takes the majority of the responsibility being a caregiver. Biblarz and Stacey (2010), also stated that gender differences in single parenting would actually happen due to different effects such as the parenting style, child-parent relationship and not because of a causation relationship which arises only from gender of the single parent.

1.2.2. Effective Parenting in Single Parenting

Single parents may need to show an effective parenting to get away from the difficulties in the previous sections and some possible negative effects on their children. In order to ensure effective parenting, they tend to benefit from creating resources, self-care, maintaining routines, and communicating.

Single-parent families were successful in creating their own resources prior to the pandemic. So, before the difficulties, it is useful to talk about the areas how single parents try to be successful on balancing their household and work life on and create their own resources before pandemic started. According to Jones (2008), single mothers were successful in finding resources, same research also explored mothers' decision-making process which showed their will and constant persistence on creating different resources as they make the decision to parent alone by actively putting their autonomy on display, in spite of cultural and general environmental

pressures. Resources they use include maintaining an intimate and close relationship with a non-resident parent as much as possible, except in cases where single parenting is caused by death of the other parent as a result, the parent-related stress of a resident single parent decreases and receives support (Jackson et al., 2010). Strengthening personal networks within their immediate circle is one of the various strategies they use to demonstrate an effective and good parenting style (Brooks, 1981). In order to ensure a balance between the responsibilities with the children, especially for working single parents, they ask for help from a close neighbor, family friend, or their mother in particular according to their needs (Hamid & Salleh, 2013). Establishing social support networks has been a solid foundation for effective parenting, which has helped them tackle challenges in their single parenting lives such as home-work balance, relational issues, and their own mental health difficulties (Feyzioğlu & Kuşçuoğlu, 2011). Through these social networks, single parents are able to share their problems and report an increase confident in their parenting skills. In Whisenhunt et al. (2019) qualitative research, single parents indicated effective parent skills among the critical features that should be found when single parenting, and effective parenting was defined by openness to communication, being consistent and organized and finally trusting their own parenting skills.

Self-care is another important element in ensuring effective parenting which can be described as the sense of enhancing positive well-being of the person (Wise, 2012). These practices can include creative activities like painting, dancing, or hygienic practices such as getting manicure, taking a bath. It involves any kind of resources use which enhance the overall well-being of the person. Long et al. (2019) suggested single mothers especially know the importance of self-care practices and it enhances their relationship with others and have more positive mood changes. So, after self-care activities, they are able to improve their interaction with the people around them and, accordingly, be more effective in their parenting lives. However, there are some challenges including guilt, shame, burden of their responsibilities, for them to actively spare time on their own. At the same time, the most prominent factor among the strengths that single parents found in themselves was rapport and

harmony, which the family established within themselves (Ford-Gilboe, 2000). It was reported that families were actually more motivated against the challenges they encountered thanks to this feature.

Another suggested attitude to achieve good-enough parenting consists of routines and rules. No matter how much children try to cross boundaries and go over the rules, they actually feel safe within them. Children will not have an opportunity to discover the outside world through strict rules, and on the other hand if they don't have any limits on their wishes, they can feel alone and vulnerable. That's why it's difficult, yet important, to achieve a delicate balance in maintaining the boundaries. As with single families, if the other parent is in child's live, it's beneficial for two parent to share a common ground in making rules, so that the child will be subjected to the same or similar boundaries with both parents, thus creating a sense of continuity (Horowitz, 1994). The communication established by parents is the determining factor for determining and implementing the rules. It is important that the message given to the child is clear, and parents are open to new ideas coming from their child. In this way, single parents endeavor to keep communication with these specified characteristics in their relationship with the child and aims to be an effective parent and to maintain routine and rules. It was observed that single parents also perceive their children's opinions and include them in a decision that especially concerns the family (Crossman & Adams, 1980), which could be an asset in establishing effective parenting.

In addition to these strategies and plans, one of the most important resources preventing effective parenting is financial problems. Horowitz (1994) states that financial resources are at the forefront of ability for single parents to fulfill the main objectives of parenthood however they wish. As a result, single families struggle more financially and spend more of their time with work life, so they experience less quality time with their children. This almost creates a cruel cycle within itself, they try to produce financial resources with more work in order to meet the needs of their children, but it reduces the appropriate time for communication and interaction with their children.

1.2.3. Single Parenting During Pandemic

There is little research about single parenting during pandemic. However, it is thought that single-parent mothers and fathers experience difficulties in various areas of their lives in this difficult time. These challenges can be grouped under the following headings: psychological well-being, relationship difficulties, financial challenges, disorganization of domestic responsibilities and work life.

Lack of work-life balance was a challenge before the pandemic, but it has become even more difficult, especially with curfews and lockdowns. One of the main reasons for challenges are due to the school which was a safe and enshrined space around certain boundaries and rules for children, has been moved completely to homes. So, school life where children not only eliminate energy, but also has many opportunities to promote social life and cognitive development, has been compressed into laptops, computers, and other screens. However, this transition did not only apply to children, but single parents also had to bring their work life to home same way. In such a case, parents may have inadvertently entered the education life when school is usually one of the first area in lives that children get to experience separately from parents. For example; many parents were able to witness or hear the context of the online lessons meaning questions that are asked by the class teachers and how their child is answering (Novianti & Garzia, 2020). So, with or without intention parents were tended to interfere and give feedback on these classes which made students feel uneasy on answering and doing chores of their classes on their own and ask more help from their parents. As a result, responsibilities and duties that are managed by single parents have increased when business and school life come together in one house (Alon et al., 2020), and the pandemic has made it impractical to use networks as resources in these challenging times.

Another difficulty that single parents face during this period is that they cannot find time for their own needs (Hertz et al., 2020). In fact, this indirectly affects the relationship problems they experience with their children. Experts recommended self-care practices especially during this time, unfortunately single

parents had greater difficulty in making this time available to them. Families with single parents were found to have harder time opening up space for themselves and personal space, since they have to make sacrifices in order to catch up with demands of the household, their children and work responsibilities (Sanik & Mauldin, 1986). Families report that their mental health has deteriorated since the pandemic started, but this has been much higher for single mothers (Patrick et al., 2020). Particularly divorced families were seen to pose a risk to loneliness during the early closure period of the pandemic (Groarke et al., 2020). Economically, especially single mothers experienced a decline in their incomes due to sectors they tend to work in close their businesses due to lockdowns much more (Blundell et al., 2020).

Emotional ties between single parent and child become compelling factor as physical intimacy with children increased during pandemic. First, children's time at home increases, and so in return there is an expectation of more attention, care and communication. This was not only a challenging situation for single parents but also for other family structures as the responsibilities of business and other family life persist. However, it can be said that this situation is harder for single parents since they do not have a partner, another parent who will assist or share these difficulties with them. One of the most important resources, perhaps, used by single parent individuals in the pre-pandemic period was to ask family or close friends for help in raising children from time to time (Brooks, 1981). Unfortunately, for some single parents this resource was disrupted due to the pandemic, as some of them had to isolate their children and themselves with the risk and concern of transmission a family member with covid (Lightfoot et al., 2021). So, they lost the most useful resource they could use.

According to Hertz et al. (2020), single-parent mothers have struggled to create the right network for their children by formulating a plan, however, most of the network they had has suffered a loss with the pandemic. The result of the same research found that single mothers were not satisfied with their working hours and could not get the desired efficiency from the home organization due to dissatisfaction. Most of them stated that working on both work and children's needs at the same time caused this decrease in their productivity. Thus, single parents had

to focus and give their attention on these needs simultaneously. Single parents who had different difficulties in domestic arrangement, financial situation, social life, and parenting (Boylu & Öztop, 2013; Demir & Çelebi, 2017) even before the pandemic, now it is predicted that they had lost the resources that enable them to overcome these difficulties more easily with lockdowns due to pandemic. Among these resources there is creating a supporting network for their children and thus increasing the opportunity to fulfill their social, work and home life responsibilities, on the other hand, making efforts for children to develop in a safe and healthy environment (Hertz et al., 2020; Feyzioğlu & Kuşçuoğlu, 2011). Within this social support network there were kindergartens, trusted individuals inside family, neighbors; however, access to these resources has become difficult or completely cut off with the pandemic.

1.3. CREATIVITY

It is possible to put many different definitions and narratives when creativity is reviewed in the literature. Maybe the variety of these definitions makes the unique and subjective aspect of creativity evident at the same time. Nevertheless, most of the definitions commonly used and put an emphasis on the uniqueness and the usefulness side of the creativity. One of the definitions of creativity for instance; is the ability to use any resources that may be accurate in the face of a problem, and endeavor to reach the ultimate desired result by testing these solutions which are new, beneficial to the person's task or problem and show good quality relevant to the purpose (Kaufman, & Sternberg, 2007). Another definition of creativity is when a group or person utilizes their talents and interacts with the process and the environment to produce a product that is original and useful (Plucker et al., 2004). Moreover, Kaufman (2009) elaborated on definitions of creativity and argued that a single clear definition could not be applicable to all areas of it since it varies depending on which side and part of the creativity is approached from. In other words, he emphasizes that the perspective in which creativity considered is important, whether it is the product, skills or the just the process of being creative

changes the descriptions accordingly. Based on Kaufman's arguments, the current research interest involves being creative and creativity within people and especially parents.

On the history of creativity, Rhodes (1961) used 4P's in his definition, which includes person, process, press and products. He stated that these four main terms interact with each other and emerge as creativity, and each of these four domes influence creativity in the person. While Guilford (1967) conceptualized a theory that consists of also another four dimensions which are fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. He proposed that through these dimensions there can be a final score of a person's creativity through using more psychometric approach. There are also several articles investigating creativity based on personality traits. Some of the characteristics demonstrated by people who are creative are; flexibility, curiosity, willingness to move forward by resolving the problems and sensitivity (Cropley, 1990). So, it is known that there can be some mutual aspects of creativity in personal traits such as openness to new experiences, which is commonly used today among five factor model of personality that was found to show up on people who show elements of creativity (Kelly, 2006).

These traits mentioned in creative people also have an impact on mental health. When creative people are thought to be more autonomous, it is therefore possible for them to see novelty as a new opportunity rather than a devastating change. Cropley (1990) points out that characteristics of being creative have positive effects on mental health. People can find it hard to get out many intense emotions they feel of consciousness and creativity is regarded as a tool that can be used to express the difficult and intense emotions. For instance, writing poetry allows people to look at their essence and self, and thus serves as a beneficial factor for people with mental problems (Carvalho et al., 2021). Csikszentmihalyi (1997), who mentioned the "flow state", creativity often emerges when a problem is presented to an individual and they find different ways to solve it. Flow state occurs with focusing on the moment and experience great pleasure, while also have almost no concerns regarding the possibility of failure of the proposed solution to problem.

Shi (2004), who created a model for creative behaviors, mentions that creative thinking, habits, and actions are interrelated with each other, and that creative behavior emerges as a result of these interactions. Creative thinking, on the other hand, can be said to be a consensus model in the literature, especially about its functioning, the model consists of eight stages and includes steps such as collecting certain information and evaluating possible solution ideas in the face of the problem encountered (Mumford & McIntosh, 2017). Gregory et al. (2013), in his article, stated that it is possible to learn many different aspects of creativity thanks to the studies on creative thinking, and thus, one aspect such as the creativity of parents can be shed a light on by current study aims and some future studies.

The concept of everyday creativity which both in the community and at home, is often not adequately recognized and appreciated on the other hand, it is defined as the notion of authenticity and uniqueness through different ways in daily life, such as work or social life, and is regarded as an element that everyone needs to have at least a part of it in order to survive (Richards, 2010). In this sense, the creative process is seen as important as the product and the results. It also highlights the psychological perspective of everyday creativity since it serves and protects people. Richards (2007) mentioned everyday creativity as a useful element that people's attitudes towards themselves and the world become more meaningful through it which provides a certain degree of flexibility for the person, and at the same time increases their knowledge about themselves and surroundings. Everyday creativity includes not only producing a product, but also the experience of answering the problem in a meaningful and unique way (Villanova & Pina e Cunha, 2021). With participants similar in some aspects to the sample of the current study, Silvia et al. (2014) found in their study that everyday creativity is more likely to occur when a person is feeling happy and alive at the time.

1.3.1. Role of Creativity in Parent-Child Relationship

There is not much research on how the role of creativity plays in child-parent relationship. However, it is seen as healthy approach that parents take on an

inclusive role in communicating with their children, helping them to organize, understand and recognize their emotions as well as modeling them so that they can regulate them. Parents may experience friction with their children, be triggered by their own childhood and the things they bring from the past during this duty and have interruptions in the relationship. In the meantime, a number of factors may be encountered that allow parents to be effective and good enough parents. An element that provides these effects can be the creativity of parents. Parents may sometimes suffer from stress due to severe and negative life events, difficulties in their personal lives or problems with business life, and this may reflect on their relationships with their children. In such cases, the importance is emphasized for parents to have positive coping strategies so that they can cope with their stress and therefore the relationship with their children is not adversely affected (Murphy et al., 2018).

The development of creativity in children and adolescents relates to the creative climate their parents offer them at home with encouraging them to new and different experiences (Tennent & Berthelsen, 1997 as cited in Kwaśniewska, 2019). Parents' parental attitudes play a major role in this environment, and parents reach higher creativity levels when they are more confident in making their own decisions, do not worry about society's expectations, and give children responsibilities and freedoms they can fulfill (Miller & Gerard, 1979). A research study looking at parents' creativity levels found that when parents' creative capacity is increasing, it also increases their child's creativity (Fearon et al., 2013).

In the parent-child relationship, creativity is also very related to games and toys. Play is one of the areas that allow children to express themselves, their thoughts, and some emotions they feel or cannot feel comfortably. In a qualitative study, it was investigated from what perspective children and their mothers see games and toys (Ummanel, 2017). While mothers see play as a social necessity and an activity that allows them to spend time, they stated that they see toys as a tool where they can reflect their children's inner worlds and support their imaginations. In this sense, it is seen that creativity can also emerge in activities where children can easily show their inner world. Similarly in a study conducted in Turkey, investigating the thoughts and knowledge of parents about creative thinking

(Taneri, 2012), it has been revealed that they are unfamiliar with creative thinking and that they are not sufficient to create spaces to use this thinking style in the home environment. As a result of the seminars on creative thinking, the research revealed that the parents became aware of the emotional power of toys, games and activities in the home. Russ (2016) talked about the premise of pretend play in adult creativity which explained that imaginary play is a part of the creative production of adults, while also pointing out to the lack of consensus about whether this kind of play activates adults' creative thinking or not.

Parental styles are also associated with creativity. The effect of parenting styles on children's creativity has been further investigated in the literature. It has been found that creativity is more predicted in authoritarian parenting attitudes for children, and parental styles also influence children's creativity through self-esteem **(**Fearon et al., 2013; Pham & Betsy, 2019). However, in young adults, it was seen that permissive parenting was associated with creativity and authoritarian parenting had a negative relationship with creativity, on the contrary to the results obtained with children (Miller et al., 2012). For this reason, it is thought that there is a gap in the literature, although there are studies about which family factors affects children and young adults' creativity, there is not enough information about the creativity of adults who have children.

1.3.2. Parenting Creativity

There is less research on parenting creativity in the literature. A parent's creative capabilities can be directly linked to their child and, in fact, their relationship to themselves. Within creative capabilities of parents can include adaptability, enhancement of a supportive environment, psychological flexibility, consistency, and problem solving-skills. In this context, although not many resources are available in the literature under the term parenting creativity, creativity in parenting will be mentioned through these features.

Research on the creativity of parents has occasionally introduced the term "climate for creativity"; in the family context definition can be referred as an

environment in which parents strive to enhance and develop the creative thinking for family members using different elements such as being open to new experiences, achieving an internal mental state (Runco, 2007). The atmosphere of creativity provided by parents for their children and climate creates more stable, balanced, and gives fulfillment relationships within the family (Lebuda et al., 2020). Therefore, parents' creative self-characteristics and self-beliefs have a positive effect on their relationship with their children. Creating a climate for creativity also requires mothers to display their own creativity as well. This involves being open to innovations/new experiences, supporting creative efforts and imagining, and finally supporting the mindset that their ideas and thoughts doesn't necessarily need to be the same as those of other people (Kwaśniewska et al., 2018). Research by Tennent and Berthelsen (1997) shows that when the environment mothers try to create for their children is more democratic, this climate actually feeds the creativity. The democratic atmosphere is characterized by features such as acceptability of mistakes, having a say in the decisions and rules taken within the family and being open to different ideas and activities.

While looking at the creativity in parents, it may be good to mention the definition of parenting capacity. According to this capacity, in addition to meeting some basic vital needs of children, it is also necessary to feed their needs emotionally. In order to achieve this, parents need to be quite flexible and able to provide their children with appropriate solutions in the face of the problems they encounter in this journey since each child has different attributes (Marchant, 2001, as cited in Seden, 2008). This definition of parenting capacity actually overlaps with the definition of creativity such as showing flexibility, being original and trying to have adaptive solutions to problems. As children continue to progress developmentally parents try to provide their needs and parental creativity can create a basis for containing the children's feelings and emotions while establishing a supportive relationship with them. There are also beneficial sides of creativity to parenting such as parents who continue to read books with their children found to have a positive impact on the relationship established based on creativity, while their parenting capacity also intensifies (Seden, 2008).

Showing adaptability is one of the important attributes of people in order to overcome challenging times which comes suddenly. Adaptability can be defined as; cognitive, behavioral and affective regulation of people in the face of suddenly changing conditions and situations (Martin et al., 2012). In a study covering the adaptability of families, it was found that as the playfulness of the parents increased, their adaptability increased, at the same time it was found that the adaptability of the mothers affected the adaptability of their children (Shen et al., 2017). Therefore, it can be said that playfulness is related to adaptability. Because adults who are playful find themselves in more foreign and new environments, and thus they will be more ready for possible crisis moments by using their adaptability through playfulness.

When single parents already deal with various concerns about their livelihood and parenting, quarantines may have made things even harder for some populations like this. Their skill of adaptability is thought to be a crucial role at the time, so that they can quickly adjust their roles and to the upcoming situation. Parental adaptability also shows its beneficence in child's temperament, since each child's behavior, reactions and intensity are different, it is important for parents to adapt to their children's temperament by shaping their own expectations, attitudes, and approaches in this context (Neitzel & Dopkins Stright, 2004). Parental adaptability is also one of the most essential features in establishing effective parenting which is the motivation to ensure the skills that set out the suitable parenting feedback responses accordingly to their children's needs with flexibility (Tallman, 1961). In this context, it is possible that single parents can ensure this creative ability as a tool that can be used to provide effective parent.

Problem solving skills is defined as the efforts to form the given problem into the desired goal (Davidson et al., 1994). It is another important asset for effective parenting, but also in terms of creativity, since it involves parents' ability to solve problems they encountered in a quick and practical way, it relates with parents' creativity. In research with single parents, parents developed creative coping strategies to cope with the challenges they experience. Among these creative copings, balancing their roles and the ability to manage the time in their hands in

an efficient manner came to the fore (Hamid & Salleh, 2013). Another study looked at differences between problem solving skills among abusive and non-abusive parents, it was found that problem-solving problems of abusive parenting are lower (Hansen et al., 1989).

Although children sometimes complain, they like to know their routine and what to expect, which makes them feel safe. The arrangement and balance parents provide them creates an internal balance in the children, too. Internal balance starts when children can guess how their parents will react and feel in different situations when they look at them. Parenting creativity also requires consistency for this reason; parents who show inconsistency in their behaviors, have more conflicts and fights with their children in their family life (Gardner, 1989). The fact that the reactions of the mother or father are predictable in the relationship with the child, helps with child's self-confidence and interpret and express his/her own feelings much easily. Thus, even in troubled times, it may be related to parent's creative capacity to ensure a balance and order in both at the home and in the relationship with the child after a period of struggle. Same goes during the pandemic, when most parents tried to adapt to this new situation with organizing distance education, establishing various activities at home, trying to connect with their loved one and relatives virtually, which all shows their effort to maintain a consistency with their children's life in the given situation.

Psychological flexibility can be defined as; to cope with emotions experienced especially in stressful and challenging times, it aims to achieve the desired goals by showing specific behavioral patterns (Doorley et al., 2020). Flexibility of parents is very relevant to their childhood experiences and in fact, children who grew up with parents who show uncertainty and ready to argue/oppose with each other have higher creativity in their later adult lives and have higher capacity for uncertainties and approach the challenges they face with more than one point of view (Koestner et al., 1999). In this respect, parenting creativity has a great deal of interest with parental styles and can increase creativity capacity of children as a result of the defense mechanisms they have developed to adapt to their earlier years of lives in adulthood.

Research by Kwaśniewska and Lebuda (2017) which studied the perception of creativity in mothers' parenthood, participants mentioned creativity accompanies them almost everywhere and aspect of their lives. Their creative capacity and thinking were especially come to fore about the different problems they encounter is trying to balance different roles in their lives with home, work and children. In the same research, area in life where mothers realize their creativity and express them the most is in the relationship they establish with their children and when they approach to their needs with flexibility as much as they can be. With these approaches, a creative climate is emerging at home once again, where they indirectly contribute to the creativity of their children too. It is known that pretend play games played in childhood, are effective in the development of adult creativity, which may have similar features in some aspects to parenting creativity, in the future (Russ & Wallace, 2013). From this point of view, for parents who are also adults, their childhood experiences and the contexts and variety of their plays while developing may play a role in their parenting creativity. However, it should not be forgotten that there is a gap in the literature on the development of parent creativity and future research can be conducted on this gap.

1.3.3. Parenting Creativity During Pandemic Lockdown

As stated in previous sections, families tried to reduce the anxiety of staying at home by trying to find different solutions during stressful lockdowns. On the one hand, because some families were experiencing a loss or depletion of resources, they were in search of various solutions to get support. This is where the role of the parent's own creative capacity came into play, making a difference in the relationship they form with their children where they come up with solutions that are unique, useful, and adaptive. During this period, while trying to cope with stress, parents made an effort to use creativity during lockdowns and aimed to reduce the stress they experienced in terms of both themselves and their relationships with their children. Therefore, it may be possible to see, in fact, the creative capacity of parents as potentially strength during pandemic.

Since pandemic was one of the sudden anxiety provoking situations, a lot of parents and many different age group's patience and adaptability were tested. For example, it was found that adaptability predicted the success of students during this period and at the same time instilled a certain hope in students (Stockinger et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). Some families have reported that closures and lockdown periods contained much more creative activities comparing to their "old" pre-covid life (Singha et al., 2020; Vaterlaus et al., 2021). Similarly, Lopez-Persem et al. (2022) has shown perceived self-creativity and the number of creative activities performed during lockdowns has increased compared to the pre-pandemic. In fact, the interpretation of these results showed that creativity was a solution to deal with and reveal negative emotions, and as a usual method used by people with more creative personalities when going through difficult and negative life events. In a study involving adults residing in Germany and China (Hofreiter et al., 2021) a significant increase was seen in everyday creativity during Covid-19 lockdowns.

In addition to their relationship with children and their parenting lives, the creativity of families also has the potential to help overcome the difficult experiences in lockdowns. When it is considered that people have an increase in anxiety and stress levels due to different effects of the pandemic (Saladino et al., 2020), it is possible to use their creative capacity to minimize the negative effects of this situation. In fact, it is important for parents to keep their own care and their own mental health balanced and as healthy as possible so that they can communicate healthily with their children. As with the announcement in planes that says "Secure your own masks before attending the others" in emergency situations, parents act with their own mental health in mind and perhaps use creativity as a tool. Coyne et al. (2021) revealed that mental health experts during this period should support families, especially in terms of psychological flexibility and self-care, because it can provide the physical and emotional care parents need during this intense and difficult period, while also in return has an impact on their child's adaptive behaviors.

Especially during the pandemic period, it has been possible for adults as well as children to process this shared trauma through their own creativity and play (Singha et al., 2020). It has been mentioned in previous sections that children who have gone through early childhood might experience some social skills setbacks during the pandemic (Charney et al., 2021). Accordingly, some families have tried to meet these needs through board games in order to prevent such skills from being disrupted and to prevent further boredom (Ali et al., 2021). Playing similar games within the family not only improves communication but also helps children develop social skills. Looking from the parents' creative capacity perspective, parents work to find practical and applicable solutions for the development of their children and the use of these types of games to overcome certain negative feelings during the time of quarantine could show their creativity in parental life. Aznar et al. (2021) found in parents who stay at home during periods of closure, confidence in the ability to succeed in their parenting skills as they please have been higher for families with creativity. Same research also revealed that creative parents cope better and more successfully with the stress they experience with home lockdowns, the negative experiences in lockdowns were also found to diminish when the parents perceive themselves to have high creativity.

1.4. CURRENT STUDY

Although research on single parent's experiences and qualities have been well researched, with the sudden emergence of Covid-19, there is a gap in the literature regarding the population which is mentioned. To researcher's knowledge there is also no research concerning the creative climate, creative thinking and creative capacity in single parenting which can be one of the adaptive, facilitating and resource in the particular population's challenging sides of their lives for instance a pandemic. Single parents have difficulty economically, socially and have trouble making time for their self-care needs compare to other traditional families (Demir & Çelebi, 2017; Stack & Meredith, 2018; Talbot, 2021). In the study, which covers single parents in regard to their pandemic processes, found that single

parents report more problems in mental health than any other family types (Patrick et al., 2020). For this reason, current study will provide a contribution to literature regarding the effects of the pandemic on single parents living in Turkey and the role of creativity in these challenging times. In the present study, experiences of single parents in pandemic lockdowns will be put in measure with examining the role of creativity in their lives.

So current study has the following research questions:

1) What were the experiences of single parents during pandemic lockdowns?
2) What were the challenges single parents go through during pandemic lockdowns?
3) What is the role of their creative capacity in their parenting?

CHAPTER 2: METHOD

2.1. PARTICIPANTS

Current study had the inclusion criterias as a) being a single mom or parent before pandemic started, b) having a child between ages of 6-11, c) spending quarantines with their children. Exclusion criteria included participants' single parenting status starting prior to covid period, with the aim of showcasing the sampling characteristics more clearly. Taking into account that losing spouse due to Covid and/or starting single parenting at the time of Covid onset is considered to be outside of the current research's problem, so such volunteers were excluded from the study. Another exclusion criterion was when the parent is in single parent status but lives with another family member in the house; for example, a single parent residing with his/her child but at the same time with his/her own mother or father. Considering these exclusion criteria's, one participant was eliminated from the data that was collected.

Parents with children aged between 6-11 were chosen because specific age group does not need his/her caretaker to meet all his/her needs compared to the earlier periods of age, but on the other hand the caregiver still has a vital place in child's life and continues to significantly affect his development (Santrock, 2019). The upper limit of 11 years of age was decided because due to adolescence period, teenager goes through series of physical, psychological, and social changes which also impacts the dynamics of the house, such as there is usually an increase interest into the peer groups more than family members. Therefore, some relational problems in terms of the parent-child relationship may occur while these particular changes take place which are beyond the pandemic and single-parenting criteria of the current research. Thus, middle to late childhood stage was selected for sample which consists of general supervision and regulations of parents during the pandemic while also children's self-regulation skills are allowed to develop.

Participants consisted of eight women aged between 35-43 who continue their parenting on their own. The number eight was thought to be sufficient for a

qualitative analysis of the current research. In the revision by Clarke (2010), it was stated that 4-10 participants would be sufficient for the research of master's level students. At the same time, it was stated that 8-16 participants were enough to reach saturation for individual interviews (Namey et al, 2016).

Participants all have children who were aged between 6 to 11. They came from different socio-economic background and education levels which varied between middle to middle-high economic level and high school to graduate education level. Socioeconomic levels of the participants are as followed; one from low-income level, two from low-middle income level, two from middle income level and three from middle-high income level. All the participants were single parenting due to divorce and the current relationship status varied between the participants. Their duration of single parenting status varies from at least 1.5 years to at most 10 years. All participating single parents stated that they had spent the quarantines with their children. Detailed demographics can be seen in Table 2.1.

2.2. DATA COLLECTION

Upon the approval by the Ethics Board Sub-Committee at Bilgi University, in order to find volunteer participants who, fit the criteria sought, a research poster was shared to the mail group of Istanbul Bilgi University, also via social media. Snowball and convenience sampling was used, and an appointment was made for online interviews with the volunteers. Inform consent (see Appendix A) was sent before the interview, and if they consider appropriate and wish to participate in the research, they were asked to sign the consent of their participation in the research and send it back. After receiving approval for their participation in research, a demographic information form that they could fill online was sent (see Appendix B). The interviews were made via Zoom and recorded by informing the participant. Since zoom recordings automatically took both video and audio recordings, the video recording was deleted immediately after the interview ended and only the audio recording was locked and stored with a password in researcher’s laptop.

Starting the interview, the researcher introduced herself and before the interview questions, small talk was made with the aim of making the participant feel more comfortable. A series of open-ended questions were then asked (see Appendix C) and the interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. It is also important to note that interviews took place after the pandemic lockdowns and other social restrictions ended in Turkey. During the interview, the researcher took some notes from time to time, and these notes were especially related to some behavioral and visual cues that could not be understood from the participant's audio recordings. Audio recordings were deciphered and protected together with audio recordings with a password lock in researcher’s laptop.

Table 2.1

Demographic Information of the Participants

ID	Age	Education	Working Status	Occupation	Single Parent Duration	Current Relationship Status	Children
1	35	University	Home Office 10 hours weekly,5 hours weekend	Accountant	10 years	Divorced	F(11)
2	43	Masters	Home Office	Assistant Professor	4 years	Divorced	M(6)
3	41	University	Working at office weekdays	Property Marketing	5 years	Divorced	F(9)
4	37	Masters	-	Tourism Management	5 years	Divorced	M(12), F(9)
5	43	University	Working at office 45 hours a week	Health Technician	5 years	Divorced	M(23), M(6)
6	38	Masters	-	Medical Promotion Representative	4 years	In relationship	M(8)
7	41	Masters	Not working	Food Engineer	3 years	Divorced	M(7), F(7)
8	38	High School	Home Office	Modeling	6 years	Divorced	F(7), F(15)

M: Male, F: Female

2.3. DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used for data analysis. Prior to analysis process, audio recordings were transcribed, and repeated readings and listening were performed to highlight the key-points of the interviews. These transcripts were later transferred to the MAXQDA program, and readings and highlights were repeated so that potential codes can start to be developed.

The thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) first began by being familiar with the data, by listening to audio recording and reading the transcripts. At the beginning of the analysis process, a single participant was selected from among the interviews and codes were created based on this single participant. After the discussions and reviewing between research consultant and researcher, initial codes were generated based on the selected participant. These initial codes were later categorized and improved to cover a larger scale of the data. Same process was repeated along with the remaining participants. In the next step when there was a list of codes were created, searching for the mutual themes began. The coding of the data continued by highlighting some parts, so that each highlighted code reveals an idea, emotion or thought. These codes were then transformed into potential themes according to the common patterns within them. Finally, the themes were reviewed, and recurring major themes were identified to ensure that the data were accurately represented. After the main themes and sub-themes were finalized, triangulation process began between researcher, thesis advisor and two other faculty members of the university. The themes were updated to their current form in the light of the feedback and comments provided from the triangulation process. At the last stage, a member check was made to see whether these emerging themes reflect the experience of the participants. No changes or suggestions were received from the participants, and many participants provided feedback that themes reflected their own experiences.

2.4. THE RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVE

The researcher is a clinical psychology graduate program student. She has been carrying out therapeutic work with children, adolescents, and their families with a psychodynamic orientation for about 1.5 years within the scope of her internship period of her master's degree. Within the scope of her internship, which she continued at the counseling center of the university, she also carried out group works with parents during the pandemic period with another intern therapist colleague. What's starting to get researcher's attention especially in these group studies was that the challenges mentioned by parents who are single mothers among the participants are not related to some of the challenges that the other traditional married couples were talking about. The researcher has also been engaged in some creative art activities in her personal life for a long time and began to wonder about how and in which ways families uses their own creative capacity. Moreover, she wondered how the creativity factor played a role in the lives of this population, especially after observing in personal family relationships around her, as well as the patients who were single parent she worked with, difficult challenges started to encounter them in the quarantines caused by the pandemic.

The initial questions of the interview were about how the pandemic has generally experienced and whether there has been any positive impact on them if possible. More general and open-ended questions were firstly initiated to parents in order for them to come up with psychological, social, financial, relational or any other experiences that comes to their mind. Follow-up questions were asked mostly to investigate quarantine effects on the parent's relationship with their child regarding how the dynamics with their children changed or did not change as a result of quarantines. The interview went on with what it means for them to be a good parent and how and which factors did quarantine affect their "good and effective parenting" based on their definition. With these questions, the researcher gradually tries to see the role of creativity in their parenting, when participants also strive to express their own good parenting definitions, it is thought that what characteristics are important to them in parenting also comes up with their answer.

The final questions on the interview were about the creativity capacity of the parents' self-perception. The section focuses on how creativity in parenting is defined, how they looked at their own creative capacity and how often creative activities were used in quarantine. It was also aimed to explore the impact of parenting creativity on quarantines. Nevertheless, the whole interview was also viewed from the perspective of being creative in parenting, whatever subject the participants were talking about. Although not as explicit or immediate as the last questions in the interview, the role of parents' creativity has been sought through exploring how and whether the participants found a solution for their difficult experiences and the nature of these solutions.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Using thematic analysis method, four main themes emerged. These four themes include “Perceived Influences of Quarantine”, “Creativity as an Aid to Challenges”, “Factors Related to Enhance Parenting Creativity” and “Factors Related to Inhibit Parenting Creativity”. Below are the sub-themes and codes for each theme (Table 3.1.). Original language of the quotations used from the interview can be found in Appendix D.

3.1. PERCEIVED INFLUENCES OF QUARANTINE

While the participants were explaining what they experienced during the quarantine, some experiences were perceived as positive, and some others were perceived as negative. Sub-themes that make up this theme consists of “perceived positives influences” and “perceived negative influences”. All interviewees reported that they had both positive and negative experiences.

3.1.1. Perceived Positive Influences

Participants mentioned some positive effects and experiences stemming from the quarantines. These positive experiences are gathered in four separate elements. Some of these elements includes the effects on the relationship families had with their children, while others have some positive results intended for them. This theme includes the following sub-themes “life on pause”, “more evident emotions”, “discovering new aspects of themselves” and “strengthening the relationship with the child”.

Table 3.1.

Themes, Sub-themes, and Aspects of the Study

Themes	Sub-Themes	Aspects
PERCEVIED INFLUENCES OF QUARANTINE	Perceived Positive Influences	Life on Pause More Evident Emotions Discovering New Aspects of Themselves Strengthening the Relationship with Child
	Perceived Negative Influences	Enlargement of Duties Unable to Achieve Desired Lifestyle Feelings of Boredom Uncertainty of Outside World Lack of Support
CREATIVITY AS AN AID TO CHALLENGES	Self-Perception of Creative Capacity	Using Available Resources Act According to the Child's Differences Practicality Showing New Solutions Parental Self-Awareness
	Co-Creations	Use of Symbolism Emotional Contact: Curiosity &Accompaniment
	Creative Capacity as a Use of Bonding	
	Creativity Providing Adaptability	

FACTORS RELATED TO ENHANCE PARENTING CREATIVITY	Providing a Holding Environment	Making Room for Expressing Emotions Keeping Communication Alive Child Participation in Decision-Making
	Coping Strategies	Social Supports Looking from Positive Viewpoint Building Tolerance Self-care
FACTORS RELATED TO INHIBIT PARENTING CREATIVITY	Constant Availability	Confusion within Boundaries at Home
	Decline in Quality of the Relationship with Child	Decreased Sense of Longing Increase Dependency on Parents Decreased Tolerance to Each Other
	Financial Responsibilities	

3.1.1.1. Life on Pause

Half of the participants mentioned quarantine as an opportunity to give a break, as if a pause key had been pressed into their life, allowing them to relax. As life in the outside world has almost completely stopped, their lives have been slowed down. This gave them the circumstances to tune into themselves, and opportunities were created in their relations with their children which can conclude in many positive ways.

" I was really shut down. I didn't want to go out at the time. For me, it would mean nothing, even if outside was permitted. It slowed me down. It made me breathe

a little. It also stepped on my throat a little bit. I don't know how it happened at the same time." (P6, Line 231)

Despite the difficulties of quarantine, the transition of social, academic, and business life to a totally new online order has brought all the participants into the home. Thanks to the increase of time spending in the house, some daily concerns (such as traffic, weather conditions, social relationships in business-academic life) experienced in the world pre-pandemic decreased greatly or even completely disappeared. This way, the participants mentioned that they have taken a break and had felt as if the world around them was stopping.

"There is no rush to get up in the morning and go out during the online training. We sleep better, we sleep more. There's much more time left." (P4, Line 557)

" I think it prompted us to listen to more. We are very busy, we get a job, we come home, we teach, and so on. But through this we also listen to ourselves. I think we've become more aware." (P1, Line 266)

3.1.1.2. More Evident Emotions

Another positive effect of quarantine was more evident emotions. Some of the participants stated that their own, also their children's feelings come out more in lockdowns, and the normalization of the expression of these emotions contributed positively. For this reason, even if negative feelings such as anger, sadness, and fear emerge, the acceptance of these feelings within the home has had positive results. Some children also had the opportunity to realize their parent's emotions alongside with them.

"I've learned to express my feelings, that is, say things that make me happy, that make me unhappy, that make me angry. so, we've actually come a long way because there's a chance that my mother will get tired. They never thought their mother would get tired. I was that active. Now, no, my mother can get tired, or my mother can get sick. My mother can get upset; my mother can get happy. So, they

learned that his mother has feelings in the process. And this happened even more during the pandemic." (P4, Line 396)

" I think it is due to the disease. We started to express our feelings more." (P1, Line 353)

One participant acted specifically aiming to create an environment where her sadness is normal, so that her child can also shows similar tough feelings in a more comfortable manner.

"Well, he got upset and I consoled him. I felt sad then he made that consolation. And when there was no joy at the house, we were two people who showed understanding to each other. I mean, if you want to stop, and you want to be sad you can. he didn't want to see me so upset, but he has to see that from time to time. I mean, it's real. We can do that, too. It is so normal. We were always together when emotions came up, in other words, when we were laughing or crying. What moments did pandemic bring? It brought me moments when I hugged him. It brought me moments when he came and hugged me. We may be angry at each other, but we never give up on each other." (P6, Line 244)

3.1.1.3. Discovering New Aspects of Themselves

Next positive effect of quarantines was that parents and children begin to see features of themselves that they were not aware before. Each participant saw new things from different perspectives, for example some referred to the activities undertaken, others reflected on the power within themselves.

" I can say that I've learned to be more satisfied and self-sufficient. In such times, we are always obliged to suffice. But we may have seen how much more we are enough, realize how much stronger we are." (P1, Line 260)

" It felt very good to study. It was very nice for me. So, I've always like to be successful, but I didn't know that I loved it that much." (P4, Line 623)

In fact, one participant saw that she could have a good time with her own child in the house without the need for any extra activity and surprisingly for her satisfied with it.

"We would do some activity even during the week before the pandemic, it was like sports, music and anything that is extracurriculars. Then with pandemic it was like we saw that we were two people who could get along just fine in the house." (P6, Line 162)

Finally, another participant talked about post-quarantine effects and embraced the importance of enabling her own self-care and social life. In this way, she stated that while she relaxes herself, her children will have the same effect indirectly.

" More precisely, I have turned to myself. So, I went back to my social life. I used not able to leave children and go out before. I'm going out very easily now, for example. I'm just saying, okay, tonight is mine. You know, I'm going out. If I'm going to chat with my friend, I'll chat. If I'm going to drink, I'm going to drink. I used to not do that. I thought I can't leave them at home and go out by myself. But no if I need that day for me so I'll live that day. I'll relax, so that he'll also relax. I kind of got into this situation." (P8, Line 147)

3.1.1.4. Strengthening the Relationship with Child

All of the participants shared that they have strengthened their relationship with their children. As there was a naturally increased the amount of time due to quarantine, the increasement has a positive impact on their relationship. Participants viewed their change in relations from two different perspectives: getting to know them better and more sharing. Some participants reported that they actually get to know their children better which includes the recognition of behaviors and features in their children which have not been noticed before. At the same time, with this realization, families have started to try different ways in their approach to them accordingly. Thus, the return to their relations has also been positive.

"I mean, pandemic taught me this sort of thing when I looked at myself. Because as you spend more time, you learn that, too. In fact, at the time you work, you don't learn or get to know your child because there is only a certain amount of time when you work. But in the pandemic, somehow you get to know him. You see

that "okay I did this and then he reacted. How about talking?" I weigh the things I tell him. I tell myself sometimes you sound so big. why are you telling the kid like he's a big adult like you? He is just a child. He doesn't understand what you're saying. That's how he looks at me, so blankly like he wonders what my mom is talking about right now?" (P3, Line 380).

About what children can and cannot do developmentally, one participant mentioned that she discovered how to regulate her expectations accordingly.

"Since I forgot my own childhood, which I tried to remember, I observed more easily what she could and couldn't actually do at that age. It may have increased my observation ability. So, there is no need to re-discover America. Here is the information presented here, okay, now start parenting or I was doing something like that before. because we have to use the time quickly, or you don't have enough time. At least I started from the beginning and went my own way." (P6, Line 326).

At the same time, a realization is provided about what children like and what they don't like. This situation is thought to be related to another sub-code within the same theme, "life on pause". Because since families had to take a break from their own and their children's social activities, it was revealed that the children did not get as much joy and happiness as they thought.

"Before, I was taking them to two different places each on Saturdays and Sundays just to keep them engaged in sports. But I was just taking it because I want it. They don't have that request. So right now, don't spend that time because they don't want to do it, I was just taking them to satisfy myself. So, I learned more about them." (P4, Line 569).

All of the participants talked about an increase in sharing with their children during their quarantine, and they saw this as a positive impact. For some working mothers, the remote management of their jobs has made up for the time they want to spend with their kids, and this has allowed them to play, read books or share activities with each other.

3.1.2. Perceived Negative Influences

Next sub-theme under the title of “Perceived Influences of Quarantine” is “perceived negative influences”. The participants mentioned some negative factors, which is about the affects theirs and their children's lives negatively. This sub-theme includes aspects of “enlargement of duties”, “unable to achieve the desired lifestyle”, “feelings of boredom”, “uncertainty of the outside world” and “lack of support”.

3.1.2.1. Enlargement of Duties

One of the first downside factors that arises with greater amount of time spent at home is the increase in responsibilities. Participants complained about the increase in the duties they undertake with the quarantines. The increase in these responsibilities brought role conflicts and affected their own mental health. Some participants sought different solutions to solve or prevent these conflicts. Conflicts of roles emerged due to the fact that participants could not simultaneously fulfill the responsibilities and expectations of multiple roles. This could be thought of as a result of the sample selected for the study, especially because the participants who are single parents do not live with any other parent who may share their responsibilities regarding work, children or domestic life or delegate some of these duties.

3.1.2.1.1. Role Conflicts

Role conflicts occurred with the increase of the responsibilities of all the participants. Conflicts have been experienced in such a way that different roles of human life such as home responsibilities, work and social life get ahead of each other. Perhaps one of the common reasons among the participants in these role conflicts is that their children start to fulfill their responsibilities at home with them.

Thus, even though it is a role they do not wish for, for instance the "teacher" position is also given to the participants from time to time.

"*It is even limited to go to the market. You come home; she wants to go to the park. You can't. You also have to cook; you also have to do other things… But you also can't share these with someone else. That was a little difficult."* (P1, Line 41)

"You know, we had a role in being both a friend and a mother and a father. Of course, that was challenging. You're eating together then he says I've got to go toilet, my stomach hurts. So, when you experience all sorts of things during the day very intensively and, of course, when you add the workplace things you need to do…" (P2, Line 113)

A participant drew attention to the difficulty of a single parent providing the burden not only in terms of responsibilities, but also in the spiritual sense of containing the child. There have been role conflicts with the mother in terms of both being an example alone and guiding the child in difficult situations. Because in the same house, the duties of giving love and teaching something to the child at the same time could not be carried out at the same time. In this sense, the lack of the other parent has attracted attention and all these parenting duties have become unmanageable, especially due to the closures.

"During the pandemic, I saw that when only one person constantly gives love and advice, try to set an example, to teach something, to be angry, to apply discipline, to set boundaries to the child and all of these happening through only one person was not successful…. We have become like octopuses. So, to speak. Trying to do more than one thing at once." (P4, Line 136).

3.1.2.1.2. Mental Consequences of Role Conflicts

Role conflicts mentioned by the participants had some mental consequences. The conflicts experienced caused them to not be able to use time effectively and as they wished, and in this case, they made sacrifices from the time intervals they thought to allocate for themselves. Although these sacrifices appear

in short-term appealingly; for example, having done the housework, spending one-on-one time with the child, in fact, had a negative psychological effect on their mental health in the long term. In particular, examples such as not being able to spare time for themselves and not being able to perform self-care practice have emerged. Some participants, on the other hand, found it very tiring to stand up to overcome all the roles and the weight created by the increase in responsibilities directly, without mentioning any inability to do self-care practices.

"During this period, I couldn't spare much time for myself because I was working, and we were always together outside of work." (P1, Line 31)

As a feature of the sample, since they continue to be a parent at home alone, there was a conflict of security concerns but also the effort to maintain private life. In this case, one participant had a dilemma which she had difficulty in resolving it. Since the mother continue her education life, she had the anxiety of being dominant from those inside the house because of the obligation to be at home while she also wanted to concentrate and attend classes as she wishes.

"Because I mean I don't want to close the door. There could be someone at the door, there is my cat or security can call and I want to have control of the house. But on the other hand, when the door is open, I have to study or work in an uneasy way all the time." (P4, Line 208)

Another participant stated that she became more withdrawn from these role conflicts and the effort to bring the necessity of many different roles in her life and started to work in a way that her mind might not be functional.

"You know, when I was started to be needed more in house, I inevitably started to concentrate on my mind. This time, the time I gave to them or the time I spent at home began to be unhealthy. I started to question a lot about, what will it be like? How will this be? And I started to shut down a little." (P5, Line 36)

In particular, one mother also talked about taking on the role of a father and a male figure to her son, unlike the roles mentioned by the other participants. Although she did not like what this role brought and almost hated some of its requirements, she felt she had to take on this role as she was a single parent during

the pandemic and her child had relatively less contact with his father due to quarantines.

"So, you just have to be a man sometimes. You know, it's hard to just stay on the mother's side. Well, I say, let's watch the match and swear together or something…But there is the most difficult thing for me, if you want, let me tell you. I hate going to the men's barber. So maybe I'd say that really, that is the biggest challenge. What if there was someone who does these things, for example, it would make me breathe, and make him feel the fatherhood, so he would not miss his father that much." (P6, Line 199).

Another participant conflicted with the responsibilities of her own business life and what she brought for his child's online education life. She tried to strike a balance between the two roles, trying to carry out both at the same time in this conflict.

"The teacher taught them two words. He asks them to make a sentence about those new words. But she doesn't really know a word yet. You know and I need to work and get work done for a meeting or something at the same time. I'm quitting my own work, I teach her words, then we make sentences, and we send it to the teacher. At that point, I quit my job and come back to her responsibilities. What's going on this time? I was always in a process like working overnight. There were many such difficulties like that." (P8, Line 25).

3.1.2.1.3. Resolution of Role Conflicts

Seven of the participants expressed different ways they try to resolve their role conflicts they experienced. While some participants found solutions that could be considered adaptive, others acted unintentionally or could not find a solution, which could be maladaptive. It is noteworthy that these titles under this theme are permeable, that is, the same participants found resolutions that can be considered both adaptive and maladaptive.

3.1.2.1.3.1. Adaptive

Seven participants try to find adaptive solutions, in which there were assigning tasks and responsibilities to the child in accordance with his/her own developmental age. In this way, the workload undertaken by a single parent has decreased, albeit a little, and it has become easier for the child to evaluate his time at home. At the same time, explaining the responsibilities and duties of their work life to their children over and over if necessary and creating moments that will provide opportunities for them to develop their empathy skills are also solutions that can be considered adaptive. Among these are to disclose their own tiredness and low energy levels, to show the fragility of the parents during this period, and to make their children think about these feelings. How these solutions are conveyed is also important, and the participants paid attention to approaching them in a way that is compatible with their children rather than being accusatory or angry.

"I have to finish that job that day. So, a simple solution; when I cook, he ironed a couple of shirts himself." (P1, Line 405).

One participant, on the other hand, tried to solve it by getting social support from outside, as she did not see it as a realistic expectation that she could do business at the same time and that her child should wait calmly and linger alone.

"For example, I told him yes you want to paint with me at work, but at work, at my workplace, they want me to complete things and get work to be done. I have to catch up on that. I think you will understand me. Give me a little more time. Five minutes with you, okay let me paint but I'll get back to work while you go on." (P2, Line 398).

3.1.2.1.3.2. Maladaptive

Among the solutions, there were also choices that can be considered as maladaptive used by three participants. These include expectations and demands that are not appropriate for the child's developmental age, fights or shouting with sudden anger, and more accusatory attitudes.

"There is something that I need to cultivate very intensely. He, by chance, wanted to spend more time with me that day. There were times when I can't answer to him or said please leave me alone now I have to handle this job once, I told you." (P2, Line 223)

One of the participants talked about the effects of the yelling to her child which in return made her child have feelings of not being loved and not being wanted by his mother. So maladaptive solutions can often result in adverse effect on parent-child relationship according to participants.

"Well, when he promised that he would definitely not do it but do it, this time I started to get angry with him. Therefore, he began saying you do not love me, you hate me, you are making me sad. He started getting defensive like this, like you're breaking my heart." (P5, Line 325).

3.1.2.2. Unable to Achieve the Desired Lifestyle

This aspect of the subtheme of "perceived negative influences" includes how single parents move away from the lifestyle they wish and/or were used to, and the reasons for this alienation. Especially in connection with the closures experienced during the pandemic, they started to talk about the conditions that were not in their own hands and that they could not change. The quarantines that took place forced all participants to socially distance themselves from other people. The participants complained that this situation was caused by the closure of places such as cafes, restaurants, and cinemas, where they met collectively. At the same time, although online communication resources such as telephone, video chat, etc. are possible, socialization could not be realized as they wished in this sense, due to the repetition of the topics discussed and the monotony of their lives.

"*Asking when everything is going to open, when will I go to my job, of course, people need socialization. It's not like talking on the phone or the topic of the conversations are always the same…Therefore, I remember mostly the difficulties I experienced, the difficulties arising from not being able to socialize and not being in a relationship with people."* (P2, Line 120).

All the participants mentioned that they were deprived of being alone as they wished and different self-care activities that they had time and opportunity to practice before. Among the activities mentioned in the sense of self-care, they are actually the times when they can rest themselves and their minds a little and return to themselves; this includes only drinking a coffee or just being alone with themselves.

“Being a single parent, so now we have to evaluate it in two ways. If his dad could take him on weekends, you'd have some private time. But I had already progressed through a process that I knew I would not have a private time for pandemic. You know, the downside of being a single parent is that there's no room in your life, especially." (P6, Line 180).

3.1.2.3. Feelings of Boredom

One of the intense emotions experienced was the feeling of boredom. Six of the participants stated that despite the efforts of them to keep their children busy and entertain them as much as possible, what some of them eventually feel was getting bored. There are thoughts about the desire of children to be in the outside world, where all the activities that can be done at home are almost consumed and after a while they are no longer enough. In addition, it is noteworthy that participants talk more about their children's feelings than their own boredom.

"Well, we were always releasing a new toy every day or every other day. We played with Lego today. Okay, I was bored after the day. Come on then, let's build a train today, let's make a station, let the train stop there. Let's paint today, let's do watercolor. In the sense of diversifying it, of course, in the sense of keeping it busy, of course but it is very difficult to do when it is all day." (P2, Line 106)

"For example, we are three people at home, we are three women, and at some point, we are all bored of staying at home. The activity is done to a certain extent, then they say, "We get bored of it.” (P8, Line 217)

3.1.2.4. Uncertainty of the Outside World

Another factor that can be mentioned in this theme is the uncertainty in the outside world. Particularly at the beginning of the pandemic and when new cases started to occur in our country, five participants expressed that they were exposed to very different and more worrying information when they look at it now, due to the formation of information pollution. It is not only the parents who are affected by this uncertainty, but also their children, and the participants are uncertain about how they can handle this situation. Because, just like their children, the participants could not come to the conclusion of what is right and what is wrong with the sudden change of the outside world. This code also talked about an uncertainty that seems like an eternity experienced with the feeling and anxiety of pandemics and quarantines as if they will never end. This uncertainty has thus brought with it the question of when they will return to the lifestyle, they have become accustomed to, but they had difficulty in finding an answer.

"She was very afraid of going out. For example, when I said, come on let's get some air, what if the police came and took us away. So, she had to look at what's outside and quickly running away from the door. then she slowly got over it." (P3, Line 10)

"When we see it on television, in terms of news shared on social media, of course, what will happen, what will it end, when will it reopen? there is always this kind of conversation." (P2, Line 88)

3.1.2.5. Lack of Support

Due to the partial cut-off with the outside world due to the closures, besides the social friendships, the support of the parents in terms of kindergarten, grand-parents and nannies was interrupted. Looking at the characteristics of the sample of the study, all the participants mentioned the difficulties of going through quarantines without a support for instance the other co-parent. Therefore, the participants especially drew attention to the absence of father and imagined

themselves in scenarios where the other parent was in quarantine, thinking about what if situations.

"Maybe if there was someone else with us or the other parent, he would be able to take it…" (P1, Line 38)

Another participant complained that since she felt alone in the spiritual sense, she alone took on the anxieties and anxieties brought on by the extraordinary situation she was in and that there was no other person to share them with.

"When you become a single parent, of course, you worry alone too. It's like what if my son gets sick maybe I would tell my own mother but still not enough and of course, I couldn't share much of my anxiety with him too." (P2, Line 124)

"*After all, I am a single parent, but when a helper comes and goes, or getting help from my fathers, it's always something to breathe, but the moments when I feel like I can't breathe are a bit challenging."* (P7, Line 415)

3.2. CREATIVITY AS AN AID TO CHALLENGES

This theme explains how parent's creative capacity comes into play in different roles against the difficulties experienced in quarantines. Participants used their own creativity in different ways during the closures which was also activated in the relationship established with their children. While the participants talked about the creative capacity they saw and perceived in themselves, they also talked about the features related to the use of this capacity in the information about how they approached solving difficulties during the interview. Sub-themes consist of "self-perception of creative capacity", "co-creations", "creative capacity as a use of bonding" and "creativity providing adaptability".

3.2.1. Self-Perception of Creative Capacity

This sub-theme includes aspects about using the available resources, acting according to the differences in their children, practicality, their parental self-awareness and showing their children new solutions/ways. When participants were

asked about their own creativity in parenting, following qualities came to their mind while also evaluating their own capacity. So, this sub-theme describes their own capacities and how they perceive creative parenting.

3.2.1.1. Using Available Resources

Three of the participants mentioned that they can use the resources at their disposal as relate to their own creative capacity characteristics. This feature required parents to engage with the child by offering possible opportunities, since only the areas inside the house were left behind with the restriction of areas such as social activity and education life during quarantine times.

"Actually, every parent, in daily life, uses a resource in line with the needs of the child if he or she has it. If the resources are scarce, it is like using it effectively." (P6, Line 439)

3.2.1.2. Act According to the Child's Differences

Seven single parents have mentioned that each child needs a different attitude, depending on the child's characteristics and perhaps temperament, and that in a way, the same and uniform parenting will not work for each child. They associated this feature with the creative capacity in their parenting lives, and they talked about the creativity of being able to observe these differences in child and to notice them and act accordingly.

"Then I look at it, but that kid is a different kid. Mine is different. In other words, every mother is very creative, and creativity can change according to the needs of the child." (P1, Line 382)

"In the first place, it is necessary to think that parenting is not a single pattern. So, there is no such thing as your right. He is an individual and he will have truths. In my opinion, what we call creativity is actually being able to adapt to it. Being able to keep up with his ideas are creativity." (P8, Line 355)

3.2.1.3. Practicality

The third feature, describing their own perceptions of creative capacity, was related to practicality. Practicality included being able to think quickly and find solutions in a harmonious way. In this sense, all of the parents mentioned that this feature should be fast and practical in the face of problems that may occur in quarantines.

"I myself am a very fast and practical person. In general, I have a very strong problem-solving aspect, so I always try to find a solution to something. That's why if you look at me creatively, I mean, when you come with a problem very quickly, I solve it very quickly" (P4, Line 715)

3.2.1.4. Showing New Solutions

Showing new solutions aspect, which may be related to the previous feature, is about participants making children think about the problems they face and on the other hand, offering different and new solutions. In other words, instead of putting the solution directly in front of them, they associated it with their creative capacity to help children by showing different possibilities for the problems they are worried about and cannot solve at that moment.

"So, for example, he sounds very unhappy and says I had this homework tomorrow and I forgot about it. How will I do? I immediately find something in my head, but by showing it to him, I make him see it, so that works for me too. So that's creativity, I think. I don't have a pen; how do I write this he asks. What else do you think you could write with?" (P4, Line 716)

3.2.1.5. Parental Self-Awareness

The last aspect, which is parental self-awareness, includes every attitude that the participants noticed in their parenting journey and tried to take action in different ways with this awareness. While one participant realized that it would be

better to stay close to the child and calm him down rather than shouting at him when he is experiencing an intense emotion, another participant mentioned that she sees and accepts the differences between her generation and her child's generation.

“My kids are seven or eight years old, and the generation gap is really huge. For this reason, being able to raise them within my own framework is already the biggest creativity for me. (P7, Line 554)

"So, for example, I couldn't do the things I should have done. When my son behaved too aggressively, I said, as a solution, you will stop there until you cry. I did a self-criticism myself, because that's not what I was supposed to do." (P5, Line 500)

3.2.2. Co-creations

This sub-theme describes how all of the participants accompany the activities they do together during the quarantine and approach the created ones with curiosity. The sub-theme has two aspects which are use of symbolization by families and the accompaniment and curiosity to their child’s creations. These aspects are effective from the formation of the co-creation theme, because rather than all the activities done during the quarantine time, there were processes in which the mother actively wondered what the child was doing and tried to be involved. For this reason, this sub-theme is aimed to explain how parents achieve a meaningful outcome as a result of the interactions that occur collaboratively, together with the use of parent creativity in activities that they will encounter in daily life.

"They were usually board games involving attention and memory games. Or playing card games like uno not in a routine though. We played these dance or sports games together on PlayStation from time to time. Sometimes they played themselves. Apart from that, we play with the cat together. Chase, hide and seek. Whatever you can think of really. We took walks together. We participated in home events as a joint activity." (P4, Line 682).

3.2.2.1. Use of Symbolism

In these co-creations, some participants stated that they aimed to make it easier for their children by using symbolization, to narrate and gamify difficult topics such as during online education.

"She has a very good perception in verbal lessons, let it be from English to science lessons, so we do it in a storytelling way. All of them can be taken very easily in the form of a story for her. We sit, we play, or I write a story about it. It's supportive. So, we work it that way. I realized that in the science class, she started to say that there were two brothers, called volume and mass, and continued with those brothers, thus gaining more attention by telling stories." (P1, Line 180).

"I have a philosophy class this semester, but it is very enjoyable with the child. It is very different doing philosophize on a subject with him. Apart from that, giving a role, that is, a role in the conversation, can also be nice. It's helpful. I mean, putting him in another role or putting yourself in another role. It can be nice… Feeling that you are in a different role or suddenly starting a conversation on a different topic. It provides instant creativity, and it becomes different." (P4, Line 691).

3.2.2.2. Emotional Contact: Accompaniment and Curiosity

During the pandemic, when the participants were asked to describe the games, they played with their children and the activities they did, it was revealed that the mothers, in particular, wanted to participate in these activities and that they accompanied them instead of watching them as a distant observer by staying in contact with the child. In this sense, an emotional contact emerged through the game or activity they spent time with, and it was seen that they could serve a purpose that helps to maintain their relationship harmoniously.

"Like I said, I'm a person who likes games, that kind of activities anyway. I have a good time with my son, I love it, but I think it's not like sitting next to him

with difficulty, but I really think that I am a mother who includes yourself in the process, when I evaluate myself. " (P2, Line 129).

" Well, I kept something in my mind, initial starts with an E. It's an item. That's how we play for breakfast or liquid paint or watercolor whatever he wants at that moment we would do it together. If he said let's play ball, we were playing a game inside the house. We do a lot of pillow fights; we play the tickling game a lot. We would play the games we played in his childhood." (P5, Line 513).

3.2.3. Creative Capacity as a Use of Bonding

During the quarantine period, it was noticed that one of the roles and areas where the seven participants used their creative capacities was to strengthen the bond they established with their children. Although some stated that they aimed to enrich the day and get rid of the feeling of boredom, they also co-operated with the activities by keeping their communication with their children strong. They talked about this situation not only in concrete and visible things, but also in emotions, and it was revealed that their own creativity was related to noticing the emotion that their children needed at that moment and showing adaptive reactions and attitudes.

"I think creativity is important in terms of behaviors or their emotions, emotions or thoughts. Creating different games or thinking about different activities at the usual level. I mean, it is something that we can all think of for ourselves, but in the sense of emotional thoughts. I also think that giving the right responses to them at the right time has something to do with creativity." (P2, Line 453)

"So, when you say creativity, something like this come up: when you can make a tool from scratch where there is no source at that moment, but when you think about it emotionally, think about the abstract version of the same. Creativity is a process for me where I shape it according to whatever emotion needs to be put there if there is a need for it." (P6, Line 449)

3.2.4. Creativity Providing Adaptability

This subsection, on the other hand, talks about the adaptability function provided by the creative capacities of the seven of the participants. In this sense, the flexibility of the participants in their parenting lives came to the fore. Thanks to this flexibility, some participants both tried to quickly return to their normal routines against what was experienced in quarantine, and on the one hand, this flexibility became an important part of their relationships with their children. Their own creativity has helped them adapt to closures, for example their adjustability to celebrate special holidays and occasions at home. The flexibility of realizing and accepting that their children may be different from them was mentioned, and they associated this with parental creativity. In this sense, it is possible to talk about two aspects of adaptability; adapt to move on and adapt to the child.

"Look, instead of saying something cliché like if you don't eat, you can't grow up, does your stomach hurt? Or did you feel like you didn't want to eat this food today? Okay what would you like to eat then. In this way, you know how I treated him as a parent in a little more thought and behavior, I think being more flexible is actually a type of creativity, both in terms of accepting his behavior." (P2, Line 471).

Some of the participants also used their creative capacities to adapt to daily normal times for the continuation of sameness. They aimed to use creativity for daily chores or to celebrate special occasions and provide some stability in this extraordinary time.

"During the pandemic period; on the twenty-three of April, on the nineteenth of May, we celebrated the unity and all the holidays at home. Decorated, the whole apartment with all the kids. You know, we've stayed at home, but we didn't skip special days." (P1, Line 147).

Although it was difficult for some participants to return to their child side and be playful, their creative thinking enabled them to be adaptive. They made an effort to participate in activities that would make them feel comfortable and that

they could be involved in their children's lives and keep them busy without preventing them from being sincere or authentic.

"We go to the playground and riding the slide together. Well, they make videos like TikTok sometimes. Being involved in those videos and playing with him. I try to be as fun as I can for him, but it happens to a certain extent." (P3, Line 429).

3.3. FACTORS RELATED TO ENHANCE PARENTING CREATIVITY

This theme talks about the factors that enable participants to use their creative capacities more and more efficiently during quarantine times. Sub-themes in this theme are "providing a holding environment" and "coping strategies".

3.3.1. Providing a Holding Environment

Providing an inclusive and holding environment for their children is also considered as a factor in enhancing the creative capacities of families. This sub-theme explains which aspects of the participants present a holding environment to their children. They made room for the expression of their feelings and tried to keep the communication as lively and effective as possible. At the same time, they allowed them to make choices by including them in the process when making a decision about their home or their lives. Therefore, there are three aspects of providing a holding environment: "making room for expressing emotions", "keeping the communication alive" and "child participation in decision-making".

3.3.1.1. Making Room for Expressing Emotions

During quarantine times, the participants mentioned both them and their children had negative emotions such as anger, fear, sadness, rather than emotions such as excitement, happiness, and joy. Six of the participants made an effort to explain and show their children that expressing these feelings is a normal and

natural thing. In this way, while children were able to understand and see their own emotions, mothers also provided inclusivity and containment role to their children and their feelings. When all this is considered, it is thought that this feature, which some participants mentioned, is an element for activating their own creative capacities. Because the efforts of parents who try to make room for such difficult feelings they mention, to accept them actively without ignoring them can serve a place that boosts their creative capacities in the difficulties in the relationship with their children. It can also show their own flexibility and their effort to stability during challenging times.

"You are an individual who have certain thoughts, have ideas. You have feelings. It's not like criticizing when you know, or when you cry. You know, it's normal to cry. I understand that you are upset, you know, by giving importance to both his feelings and thoughts, and ask why are you crying?" (P2, Line 332).

"If you're angry, you should talk to your father about it. You have to express yourself. If you're mad at me, you can tell me too. Or if you don't want to do it, you can say why you don't want to. So, it we were back to talking. As I achieved this, he actually relaxed, and of course I relaxed, and I got a better view of the areas he was having trouble with." (P3, Line 392).

3.3.1.2. Keeping the Communication Alive

Another aspect that provides the holding environment has been the efforts of the participants to keep their communication with their children lively and active during the quarantine. Rather than being two distant people immersed in their own worlds in the same house, they tried to both show affection and open communication with their children despite having different responsibilities.

"We show our love every minute. That's why our closeness has increased a lot. Mommy, I love you very much, love you too…. It strengthened our relationship, so it became much stronger during that time. He tells, I listen, and when that happens, one starts to understand better. Our relationship was strengthened, that is, in that process, this situation became much stronger." (P5, Line 417).

"To be honest, talking and communication. I don't think there are anything other than that helps much. We talked about our worst moment, we also at our best times" (P1, Line 233).

3.3.1.3. Child Participation in Decision-Making

One of the factors in creating a holding environment was related to the fact that five participants made their children open to different topics and thoughts and gave them the right to make choices. Mothers have tried to emphasize that their children are an autonomous individual even though they are still children. In particular, two mothers stated that giving this choice to their children creates an aspect of creativity in their parenting lives.

"It wasn't like; You are a child so you can't have a say, we will go there or we're going to grandma's today without taking her opinion. Let's do this today, let's get up no. I definitely ask him his idea during every process or what to eat today, rather than directing him to do something." (P2, Line 322).

"She is also an individual, so without putting pressure on her, you won't give her all the control, but she also has the right to talk about things, she has the right to choose, her ideas are important and keeping up with it seems like creativity to me. Even now, yes, when I'm going to buy something, when I'm going to buy anything, I said, what do you say, what do you think?" (P8, Line 359).

3.3.2. Coping Strategies

Thanks to the different coping skills used by families, they aimed to overcome the effects of quarantine more easily. In this way it is also such that they have an enhancing effect on the creative capacity they have inside the house.

3.3.2.1. Social Supports

One of the coping strategies was the social support received by the parents. This support was provided sometimes by relatives, sometimes by neighbors and sometimes by remotely interacted teachers. Despite the quarantine, the families felt supported thanks to these possible supports, and they predicted that they would experience a collapse if the number of times that this were not possible would have increased.

"I coped so how did I cope? As I said, it's like making sure that he spends time with his grandmother and aunt, especially during busy times like class. Other than that, maybe when I came to the workplace like this, I chatted a little more with the people who came to the workplace that day, maybe I tried to socialize." (P2, Line 193).

"I try to get support from pedagogue, I try to get support from other parents and mothers. But I can say that I look at other single parents for example." (P7, Line 175).

3.3.2.2. Looking from Positive Viewpoint

Trying to look at the positive as well as the negative side of the experiences has been one of the strategies used. In this way, participants tried not to be caught in bad scenarios for both themselves and their children, and they attempt to see the good sides of the given situation and keep their hope that these days would pass.

"If I had negatively motivated myself by when it will end, when it will end, I would have given negative answers to his wishes to engage in activities together…" (P2, Line 214).

"When we look at it, yes, it is very difficult. But what can I do? I have to experience the benefit sides in order to say the downside of it. In other words, if I did not include the positives sides, complaining on about the other side is no use to any of us." (P6, Line 189).

3.3.2.3. Building Tolerance

Another strategy used in difficulties is to create as much tolerance as possible. While some participants try to gain this tolerance by raising awareness about what is happening around them and some have found that over time, they necessarily become more patient as they go through these difficult paths.

"So, awareness was important in this process, and my resilience increased a lot." (P4, 457).

"Patience took the whole relationship in the pandemic. You know, it's challenging but patience is also very important. Your patience is really struggling. You learn about your limits." (P7, Line 507).

3.3.2.4. Self-Care

The last of the practices mentioned by the participants that make them feel better is self-care. Self-care included any activity that was good for their mental health and psyche. Those who could find time for self-care practice among the participants thought that they felt much better and that these times, which were good for them, indirectly had a more positive effect on their children.

"It felt very good to learn from the lessons, to be educated, to take time for education." (P4, 618).

"Your own personal space ... that is, the more relaxed mood you have, the more your relationship is. Your parenting relationship is also in that comfort." (P8, Line 160).

3.4. FACTORS RELATED TO INHIBIT PARENTING CREATIVITY

This theme describes the factors that hinder participants' own creative capacities during quarantine times. Sub-themes are "Constant Availability", "Decline in Quality of the Relationship with Child" and "Financial Responsibilities".

3.4.1. Constant Availability

Seven participants had problems because they were always seen as suitable and available at home. Due to the developmental characteristics of most children, it was not possible for them to realize that their mothers were not available even though they were at home. Thus, this situation caused some problems in terms of boundaries in the one-to-one relationship with the child and appeared as another factor that prevented the participating mothers from using their creative capacities. Sub-theme includes the aspect of "Confusion of Boundaries within Home".

"Now, of course, time is different, just in terms of duration he goes to school, I'm going to work. We get together in the evenings, but during the pandemic period, of course, we were together from morning to night until we went to bed. I mean, necessarily due to circumstances." (P2, Line 76).

"The time spent together during the pandemic actually loses its quality after a while. I think there were such problems, and when that happens, it is difficult to do anything together." (P2, Line 186).

"You know, it's not just being single parent, it's a pretty different dynamic going. Because I have twenty-four hours and you become unshareable." (P7, Line 237).

3.4.1.1. Confusion of Boundaries within Home

With the increase in the time spent inside the house, it was difficult to draw boundaries both physically and relationally, and sometimes these boundaries became very slippery. This situation resulted in the children being stuck and exceeding their limits because they wanted to spend more time with their parents as long as they saw them, and some of the participants could not find another place to "escape". Thus, it was thought that this was a factor that prevented the participants from using their creative capacities productively or effectively.

"Another difficulty of the pandemic, that is, when everyone went to school, these were less common. My active life is my life, but because you are always at

home during the pandemic, as they say, there is nothing hidden. There is nothing hidden inside the house." (P4, Line 82).

3.4.2. Decline in Quality of the Relationship with Child

Another theme that can inhibit the creative capacities of parents is the poor quality of the relationship with their children. This theme describes the problems that seven mothers experience in bonding and interacting with their children due to different reasons and results. This sub-theme brought the following aspects: "fights and frictions", "decreased sense of longing", "increase dependency on parents" and "decreased tolerance to each other".

"And of course, it's very intense, you know, living together so intensely, after a while relationship becomes breakdown (laçkalaşma)…Therefore, in terms of effective use and quality of time, current times are of higher quality, but the time spent together during the pandemic period actually loses its quality after a while. I think there were such problems." (P2, Line 183).

3.4.2.1. Decreased Sense of Longing

The feeling of longing was seen as a necessary element in the relationship. However, since the participants spent almost every hour and minute of the day together due to the quarantines, the lack of longing was felt. The lack of this feeling, on the other hand, led to a decrease in tolerance and paved the way to fighting, bickering, or shouting.

"Not longing is also a problem. So, one needs to miss. When you don't miss, your tolerance decreases. And I've been having a serious low intolerance lately." (P4, Line 147).

3.4.2.2. Increase Dependency on Parents

It has been reported by five participants that children experience problems with separation as the time spent increases. This situation caused the mothers not to

be able to create a special time for themselves in the house, and at the same time, it was seen that some children had certain fears when the openings started which made their relationship with parents difficult.

"I can say that there were some fears in this process. Maybe he was a little more attached, or I don't know, that's how I evaluate it, he started to be more protective like that. As I said, he is afraid that I might get sick more quickly, for the things he hears from the surrounding. He's afraid of me going away, and since he doesn't have much of a relationship with his father, he was already a little more attached to me. In this process, he became even more dependent." (P1, Line 67).

3.4.2.3. Decreased Tolerance to Each Other

One of the other sub-aspects that negatively affect the relationship between the parent and the child is the decrease in tolerance towards each other. With the participants spending much more time with their children, there were also more occasions and incidents where they fight and argue with each other, and after a point, this situation turned into an intolerable level for some of the parents and lead into them shouting.

"So, it's a constant reciprocity. There was already but the pandemic has increased it. Because he is always in the house. And he always wants to get something from me. He wants to achieve something. For this reason, he constantly pushes me, so to speak, forcing me." (P4, Line 215).

"He is knocking on the door or starting to throw things in the house. Therefore, when you see these, no matter how hard you try to be a good mother, after a while, you raise your tone of voice because you no longer have the strength to endure." (P5, Line 203).

3.4.3. Financial Responsibilities

There were three participants who experienced financial problems, which affected their own psyche while not being able to take care of their children as much as they would like and inhibited their own creative capacities.

"There is the responsibility of the house and of course, there is also financial responsibilities. So, when you put it all together, I'm always busy, actually mentally. When my mind is full, what he wants at that moment. Of course, I miss his need for my attention." (P4, Line 70).

"*Especially during the pandemic period, the expenses are too much, but it was a little difficult for me to overcome. It pushed me because I didn't want to be not do it or not be able to do it."* (P5, Line 260).

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

4.1. DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES

The aim of this study was to investigate experiences of single parents during pandemic quarantines, what kind of kind of challenges they went through, and current study explored single parents' quarantine experiences and the role of their own creative capacities. The difficulties experienced by single parents in quarantines caused by the pandemic, the aspects that might remain the same or things that change within their relationships established with children, as well as how the creative capacities of single parents had an effect in these periods and how the quarantines could mutually affect their creative capacities were investigated. Research questions include the experiences of single parents during quarantine and what did their creative capacity had a role. Eight single parents living in Turkey were interviewed and four main themes emerged as a result of the thematic analysis. Themes were “Perceived Influences of Quarantine”, “Creativity as an Aid to Challenges”, “Factors Related to Enhance Parenting Creativity” and “Factors Related to Inhibit Parenting Creativity”.

Looking at the first research question in the study, "Perceived Influences of Quarantine" emerged as the theme considering the experiences of single parents. In the “perceived positive influences” sub-theme, the participants talked about the positive aspects of quarantine for them. One of the aspects that was perceived as positive in this sub-theme was more evident emotions. It is thought that this situation may be related to the cultural and social dynamics of the sample. Since all of the participants are from Turkey which has more properties from collectivistic culture, it cannot be said that it is a common element in Turkish family structures that individuals talk and discuss about individuality and their own feelings that much especially children of young age try to hide their negative emotions due to various reactions they would be assume they would get from their surroundings (Okur & Corapci, 2016). However, Turkey's recent cultural shift towards a more

horizontal collectivistic may have paved the way for this conclusion (Ayçiçegi-Dinn, & Caldwell-Harris, 2011).

At the same time, in a study conducted by Lim (2016), it was found that while high arousal emotions were given more importance in western countries with individualistic culture, on the contrary, in collectivistic cultures of eastern countries, low arousal emotions such as boredom, pleased, sad, relaxed were more experienced and considered more important. In this context, it can be said that although Turkey has some urban regions in individualistic culture, collectivistic thought and understanding is still more prevalent. Apart from life events that may cause higher arousal, such as loss and mourning during the quarantine period, the population in the current study mostly struggled with fitting their life patterns inside the house. Therefore, another reason why it is possible to talk more about the emotions that arise in the results may be due to the fact that low arousal emotions are experienced more based on culture. Based on this, there was no such effect on the research about effects of pandemic in individualistic sample studies as far as the researcher knows. Only one study has shown so far that individualistic countries have more motivation to stay positive about the process about pandemic (Franklin et al., 2022) which can be associated with the "looking from positive viewpoint" in coping strategies within the third sub-theme, and this cultural difference can be explained by the socio-economic differences brought about by the current sample since they were mostly highly educated and from mid-to high SES levels.

“Discovering new aspects of themselves” aspect includes that during these challenging times, parents had the chance to discover some of their previously existing features that they hadn't noticed, as well as some of their newly formed features in the process. In a sense, this gave the opportunity for parents to experience an introspection about their own feelings, thoughts, and values. A finding related to the pandemic has not yet been found in the literature, but after bad life events that can be considered similar in some aspect, some positive changes have been observed in people. For instance, Updegraff and Taylor (2021) reported about the positive effect of stressful life events which included positive changes that benefit self-perception and in a positive sense of self-concept. So, this may

explain why some participants talked about the endurance and strength they had realized during pandemic.

Another aspect mentioned by all participants was the strengthening of the relationship with their children. There are conflicting studies in the literature regarding this finding, while some show that the time spent in quarantine does not have an effect on the relationship with the child (Lachowska, 2021; Vaterlaus et al., 2021), some researchers have shown that the relationship with the child is strengthened and the participating parents feel closer to them (Öngören, 2021; Stoecklin et al., 2021; Tarsuslu et al., 2021; Weissbourd et al., 2020). Similar to the results of latter studies, from the current research it was revealed that during this period, parents acknowledged the aspects that they had not noticed before in their children while saw quarantines as an opportunity to get to know them better. Since there is no finding in the literature about the changes in the relationship with the children of single parents in this period, a contribution has been made in this sense.

Negative influences also emerged during pandemic which again answers the first research question. In the subtheme of "negative influences of quarantine" the participants talked about increasing responsibilities, which they perceived as negative. One of the important and talked factor mentioned in these responsibilities is that children's increase duration of time at home with the online education system. Current study's findings about responsibilities can also be found the literature which also indicates in the pandemic, families have difficulties in balancing responsibility based on distance learning (Garbe et al., 2020), however, the sample of the current study includes only single parents and shows that they have some problems in common with other family types. Consistent with results it is also known that especially single parents were expected to have difficulties managing the combined responsibility of both work and child-care (Alon et al., 2020). The increase in responses perceived negatively by the participants caused role conflicts and different degrees of mental consequences on the parents. The lack of self-care in the mental consequences has been the limitation of finding time for themselves and doing what they want which Hertz et al. (2020) mention likewise, it is one of the difficulties that single parents have mentioned. In this sense, the self-

care practices of single parents and their inability to spare time for themselves, which emerged in one of the themes in the current study, supports the literature.

Second aspect focused on participants inability to have their desired lifestyle. In which they talked about how it wasn't possible for them to have social connections and self-care practices like they used to. Research that found the lack of self-care with the same sample of population in pandemic conditions as the current study was Hertz et al. (2020). In this sense, the current result supports the literature while at the same time, social limitations also have been one of the difficulties mentioned in the current study. Since daily life has changed very seriously and the rules of isolation and restriction are actually a kind of prison and punishment (Usher et al., 2020), it has been challenging for the participants in general and almost all other different population groups. So, this may explain why it was difficult for parents in current study for not being able to go out and have the feelings of have obstacles in getting the lives they desired and wanted.

The uncertainty of the outside world that emerges in the results can be said to be one of the common feelings of many different population groups, not only in the studies conducted for this sample. At the same time, there were the feelings of boredom that the participants describe downwards within the same sub-theme. Westgate et al. (2021) also talks about that the countries which apply strict policies related to the pandemic and enter into quarantines feel boredom more and among the countries that have the most boredom included Turkey. It can be said that this feeling that the participants talk about can be a motivational force that ignites them for some when it is looked in terms of creativity. Because, as mentioned in the second theme, creativity as aid to challenges, one of the elements that initiate the creative capacities of a few participants is the feeling of boredom seen in themselves and their children. Therefore, it can be said that the perception of boredom and uncertainty in the outside world is not unique to this sample, but is a common feeling seen in people from other populations. Another explanation can also be made by the fact that the intense emotions experienced during the pandemic can be processed and reflected more comfortably after a certain period of time,

which may have led to the boredom feeling finding in current study, since the interviews with the participants were held after the pandemic lockdowns were over.

Similar with the results from Boylu and Öztop (2013); Demir and Çelebi (2017), five of the participants also talked about the effects of not being able to have a support. Since single parenting automatically eliminates the other co-parent during pandemic, they complained about the restrictions on the access of the participants to the social assistance and support they benefited from in pre-pandemic times. However, unlike these previous articles with single parents (Feyzioğlu & Kuşçuoğlu, 2011; Hamid & Salleh, 2013; Jackson et al., 2010) where especially social support from outside resources were possible, the group in the current study talked about the difficulties in reaching those support due to quarantines and restrictions. So overall, these aspects answer the second research question of the study which was about the challenges single parents went through during pandemic lockdowns.

Third research question which was about investigating the role of parent's creative capacity; showed three themes that answers the question. The theme that emerged as a result of the research, "Creativity as an aid to challenges", tells how the participants use their own creative capacity during the pandemic, while also talking about self-perceived elements that include in their own parenting creativity. In this context, dimension of "using available resources" is in the first sub-theme of self-perception of creative capacity. There are participants who define parenting creativity as using whatever means and/or resources they have within their capacity, even though they have limited opportunities, time, and social support during the quarantine period. As Lebuda et al. (2020) mentioned, when families perceive themselves as self-creative, it supports the relationship they establish with their children and the environment at home, while the current study reveals in detail what aspects and features families perceive their own creativity. In this respect, study has contributed to the literature on how single parents especially see and perceive their own parenting creativity.

The second aspect of "self-perception of creative capacity" was associated with parents' acting according to their children's differences. Based on the results,

the point that the participants tried to draw attention to is that not every child will react the same to the same stimulus or experience and accordingly, a single parental attitude cannot work for every child which can actually be related to different temperaments and the fact that emotional needs of each child would be different. In this sense, this concept that mothers mentioned was thought to be related to temperament which can be defined as the individual's different emotional and behavioral reactions to what is happening around. Since the pandemic and the events that followed can be considered as a life event in which children can react very differently from each other, it has been crucial for families to act accordingly in this period. Scaini et al. (2021) researched what kind of problems children experienced based on their temperament profiles. The results, however, found that children whose temperament profile was more prone to anxiety had more internalized problems. Exactly what type of attachment pattern or temperament children had in current research was unknown, but it is highly likely that each participant's children grow up with different temperaments since parenting attitudes do not always have a single way that fits every child in every situation and family life, it is the parents' search for solutions according to the child's needs and situation. Otherwise, when the temperaments of the children and the expectations of the parents do not match, the relationship pattern starts to become maladaptive (Neitzel & Dopkins Stright, 2004).

It was thought that their practicality came to the fore, especially in quarantine times. This aspect generally includes parents' fast problem-solving abilities, quick thinking, and their ability to adapt to changes quickly. It is seen that families showing problem solving skills also improve communication with their children (Shokoohi-Yekta et al., 2011). In fact, problem solving skills primarily involved the need to understand emotion, produce different solutions and be careful about the outcome. In this respect, this may be the reason why families add practicality qualities to their own creative capacities, as problem solving skills are also among these practical features that emerged in the current study. Because the positive effect on the relationship mentioned above in the research may have been felt in current study’s participants too.

At the same time, showing their children new solutions and being able to encourage them in a way were also in their perceptions of their own creativity. This result may be related to the fact that parents put themselves in their shoes when they see and feel that their children are stuck in a problem. When adults who are more developmentally at a higher-level think about child's deadlock, it may actually be easier for them to reach alternatives from time to time. In this sense, this result is thought to be closely related to the previous aspect, practicality. Because parents trying to find solutions to their children's difficulties need to be quick and practical from time to time. The reason why families see this aspect in their own creative capacities may be related to their efforts to make their children notice/show different ways rather than fulfilling this solution for them. It turns out that sometimes it is enough for parents to simply repeat the problem that has arisen and point it out to their objective for children. Considering that the alternatives that emerged in decision making using the objectives were of higher quality, even highlighting the objectives might have been sufficient to produce alternatives (Siebert & Keeney, 2015).

Finally, within parental self-awareness aspect was about noticing what kind of parenting they try to establish and realize the mistakes they made in their parenting at the same time. At this point, an important aspect of the parental self-awareness aspect was some parents were aware of the fact that they cannot always be a good and "perfect" parent in every situation, conflicts, and maladaptive approaches to their children do not make them completely bad parents. Thanks to parental self-awareness, parents who realize these mistakes or undesirable behaviors become models that learn and strive. It can be said that this is related to the ability of families to return to themselves and reflect at the same time. In a study conducted by Yaakov et al. (2022), the self-awareness of parents was examined in terms of two characteristics, which one of them is reflection, it was found that families with high parental reflection experienced less parental stress. Similarly, self-awareness seems to have a direct effect on parental stress (Kim & Kim, 2012). Considering these results in the literature, results from the current study can be explained that participants may also be able to manage the stress during lockdowns

with parental awareness which was associated with parent creativity for them. One of the reasons for this may be that, thanks to the awareness on their own behavior, the stress in their parenting life during pandemic is reduced and thus it is easier to establish a harmonious relationship with their children.

The second sub-theme of the “creativity as an aid to challenges” theme was co-creations. One of the results that emerged in different studies is that there is an increase in the number of parents in terms of activities and games with their children (Öngören, 2021). This was valid in the current study, and each participant talked about many games that they played and different activities they conducted. However, what draws attention is the language in the narrations of some participants. In this language, especially referring to "we" and togetherness is that these activities are done as a joint activity with the parent, rather than just involving the child alone. Thus, an aspect of emotional contact emerged within the co-creation sub-theme, and instead of parents giving them a game as if it was a task for their children to pass time, on the contrary, they actively tried to be involved and most importantly, some were actually curious. It is not exactly known whether this curiosity has increased especially during quarantine times or if it is a feature of the previously mentioned participants. However, these curiosities aimed at understanding the inner world of the child, discovering what and what kind of things the child likes and their efforts to engage in their favorite activity or game with them created an accompaniment. This aspect can also be related to the study by Ummanel (2017); where mothers see the toys of their children as if a door opening to their inner world.

Another aspect of the same sub-theme was use of symbolism. Symbolization includes the ability of children to pretend and the ability to represent an object, toy, character and/or anything imaginable to something else symbolically (Gardner, 1979). From this point of view, again, some parents have told stories about what happened around the child or some co-creations, especially in order to make the difficulties experienced by their children easier. Symbolization can include symbols and metaphors that can appear not only in the game but also in daily conversations and conversations, in this sense it is an element that they use

not only to refer to things, but also to communicate, not only by children but also by adults. Even in the very early stages of children, it is used to communicate with their families' using symbols, and in fact, the use of symbolization has been a system that also predicts communication between the child and their parents (Vallotton, & Ayoub, 2010). The current study therefore demonstrates the importance of parents' creativity, along with the use of symbols in activities where families play or spend time with their children.

The third sub-theme "creative capacity as a use of bonding" described the role of parents in their effect on bonding with their children through their creative capacities. Seden (2008) found that even in an activity such as reading a book with their children, parents both increased their own creativity and had positive feedback in the relationship they established with their children. In this sense, it shows a similar result in the mentioned theme, which is that a role of creative capacity that can be used by parents is to get in touch with their children. The report presented by Ginsburg (2007), on the other hand, describes how play, which is perhaps one of the most witnessed places of creativity, strengthens the family-child relationship. According to Ginsburg (2007) report, it has been stated that parents who have the opportunity to watch and observe their children through play can communicate with them more effectively, and parents who realize that their children can spend time with different activities in the house can be less stressed. So, these findings can also be linked to pandemic effects, due to increase amount of time parents had more opportunities to watch, observe and interact with their children. And in return they were able to bond, listen and communicate with them effectively through creativity.

The fourth sub-theme "creativity providing adaptability", is related to the role of parents in preventing the emotional intensity and difficulties they experience during quarantine by using their creative capacities. In this sense, the parent's creative capacities have provided a range of possibilities for families to adapt as quickly as possible to new conditions. Some of these include making special days celebrated at home, or in another example, parents adapting to them and their feelings in the general relationship they have with their children. The more the families show adaptability, the more function they move in the home environment

and the other members of the house can show their individuality (Farrell & Barnes, 1993). It was known that students predicted positive results both spiritually and academically during the covid period, thanks to their adaptability (Stockinger et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021), but in this current study, especially the adaptability of single parents has emerged. It is thought that for this function of their creative capacity, they could also actively use their flexibility. In the research conducted by Brassell et al. (2016), it was found that as the psychological flexibility of parents, especially in their parenting roles, increased, they had better parenting skills, and it also positively predicted their adaptive parenting skills. In fact, depressive symptoms occur more in some families that are not flexible enough, but in families that are flexible enough, the consequences arising from the pandemic can be handled more easily and comfortably (Tam et al., 2021). So current study participants tried to reach out to their adaptive sides through many different creative sides and in return they may have benefitted from these important aspects, too. In the current study, it is thought that the ability of families to adapt may be related to flexibility because being able to adapt quickly to the change mentioned by the participants may also require parents to be flexible at least at an optimal level. It was observed that there were efforts to be flexible in the participating families, and this result can also be explained by the research conducted by Dillon (2002) who found adults who spend time with their children have proven to be more flexible and at the same time more creative. Considering that there is an increase in the time parents spend with their children in the current study, communication with their children may also have made them more flexible and creative.

The third theme which is “factors related to enhance parenting creativity” was created in connection with the last research question. This connection is related to the fact that parents allow creative thinking to occur as they realize that some situations and actions are beneficial for themselves, their children and for the relationship between them. As mentioned in the literature, Silvia et al. (2014) emphasized that creative thinking is more likely to occur when people are happy. In this sense, parents who establish healthy and adaptive relationships with their children through holding environment emerge. Likewise, coping strategies included

in this sub-theme also contained some practices that parents try to implement in order to feel better.

In the third theme, “factors related to enhance parenting creativity”, sub-theme of providing a holding environment was included. According to Winnicot's theory, “holding environment” used by primary parent, mostly the mother, it goes beyond the physical holding, also spiritually and emotionally holding the first born’s feelings together and embracing him/her during early infancy (Hersen & Sledge, 2002). It is this term of Winnicott that influenced this sub-theme, parents can show the ability to keep their feelings and thoughts inclusive not only in early infancy but also in later ages of their children’s development. This inclusion task was also one of the sub-features that enhance their own creative capacities.

The first aspect of this sub-theme was making room for expressing emotions. It can be developmentally challenging for children to verbally express their emotions like adults. Jiloha (2020) also suggested some creative activities such as painting and playing ways to express these feelings, especially since children may need help in expressing some difficult emotions. In order for parents to better understand their children and support their development, it will be helpful for them to create opportunities to open up these feelings, and even to include their own feelings and name them. Children's expression of their emotions is also related to emotion regulation and their parents' attitudes. When parents label children's emotions and help them through difficult emotions, they enable their children's own emotional regulation (Morris et al., 2017). Rothenberg et al. (2019) applied an educational program to families about how they can follow their children's difficult emotions, and in the content of the program, expressive-encouragement reactions which is similar to the language used by some participants in the current study, showed responses to the child that it is normal to cry were mentioned. As a result of the program given to families, it was observed that children had a positive effect on their emotional regulation. Considering these findings in literature, current study also expressed the containment role of parents during pandemic by showing emotions, labeling them which helped the whole of the family to go difficult emotions together and encourage mothers to engage their creativity through

thinking, focusing and finding solutions for their children and for their parenting lives.

Keeping the communication alive was the other dimension of this sub-theme. This aspect explains the efforts of parents to be as lively and active as possible with their children. This dimension can be thought of as a section that will both feed their creative capacity and use their capacity at the same time. Because parents who manage to keep communication healthy and functional both use their creative capacities and at the same time, thanks to the positive relationship interactions brought by communication, it can provide opportunities to increase their creativity. These findings can be supported by Tam et al. (2021) which showed during pandemic it was seen that families who can better provide intergenerational communication, which are the interactions with a person from a different group of their own age and generation, feel closer to each other. In this sense, it is important that age groups with generational differences such as mother-child or father-child communicate with each other in a healthy and positive way during this difficult time. In the current study, the effort of some participants to keep communication alive during the quarantine period is worth seeing. At the same time, Ford-Gilboe, (2000) mentioned that in the face of the difficulties faced by single parents, the cohesion within the families is the most prominent strength for them. The cohesion found in the aforementioned research may also be related to the rapport of the relationship established by the participants in the current study keeping the communication they mentioned effectively.

Another dimension in the sub-theme of "providing holding environment" was child participation in decision making. Five of the participants mentioned that while making a choice, if it is a choice about the life of this child, they especially offer an opportunity for them to have a say in it. This factor functions in a way to enhance the creative capacity. In support of these findings, Kwaśniewska et al. (2018) also mentions about adopting that the other people's thought may be different from person's own thinking is a factor in creating climate for creativity, especially in the household. In this sense, this element, which helps to create climate for creativity, has also emerged in the current study research and further improves

the quality of their own creative capacities of the participants. In the research conducted by Gregory et al. (2013), being exposed to different thoughts was mentioned as one of the factors that enable to enhance creative thinking. However, the participants in this research are mostly from peers in the same generation. With the current study on the other hand, it has been also seen that being open to other thoughts will enhance one's own creative thinking in relationships with a large generational difference, such as mother and child.

Last sub-theme of "factors related to enhance parenting creativity" was the coping strategies. Coping is the ability to cope with the difficulties and intense emotions that person experiences which continued to be used in different ways during the pandemic period. In a study conducted by Adams et al. (2021) the most common strategy stated by families to cope with the stress of the conditions brought by the pandemic is to do activities with the household and to stay connected online with family and friends. According to the results of the current study, the first coping mentioned differs from literature, although the participants in the research also talked about the activities they did with their children, they did not mention the role of adapting these activities to negative events in order to maintain the balance. Instead, similar to the second common coping mentioned in the Adams et al. (2021) article, strategy was not breaking ties with family and friends in a social sense. Shi (2004) mentioned the inhibitory and encouraging effects on creative products that emerge through creative behavior. Among these effects, various factors such as environmental situations, family conditions and personality traits were mentioned. From this point of view, the current study also revealed some enhance and inhibiting factors similar to the aforementioned research, but it has been shown in a different way to show which factors play in such intense and stressful periods as the pandemic.

Another coping strategy that few participants tried was self-care. It is known that self-care is one of the elements that affects the families to parent in an effective way (Wise, 2012). Current study explained participants' experiences about when they feel good, this feeling and emotion is reflected on their children. In fact, it was revealed through research and recommended that profession that aim to help

families in this time should focus on establishing self-care practices (Coyne et al., 2021). For this reason, although the previous sub-themes also contained the lack of self-care complaints in lockdowns by the parents, they also talked about if they had the opportunity, the effects of the same practices both on their own psyche and on the relationship with their children. Close to this sub-theme, it has been found that self-compassion facilitates creativity (Zabelina & Robinson, 2010). To compare current study found self-care as a factor that enhances the creative thinking of parents.

Again, the last theme that answered the third research question was “factors related to inhibit parenting creativity”. This theme included the sub-theme of “constant availability” which explained how parents give the impression of being available to their children because of the situation they have to go through in the house. This availability has put the children in a position to constantly demand something, e.g., play, parental interest, and their time; However, since the parents were not in a position to fulfill these demands, it had a negative and disturbing effect on them. However, this sub-theme includes the confusion of boundaries within home aspect. In this aspect, it is the blurring of the boundaries that families lived in in terms of relational and private life. Parents from time to time both limit their children; conversely, children tend to intrude on their parents' private and personal space. But perhaps one of the only things that can prevent this is the child's own life and, in a way, her/his "private" school life. When the child goes to school, there is a physical separation, yes, but at the same time, the child who is separated from his parents interacts with peers socially, starts to collect special moment for themselves which they can only share with their family later on. Since the pandemic has brought these experiences into the home, the unique moments that the child can experience by himself have disappeared, instead it has turned into a common online platform where the voices of many friends and teachers coming from one place which can be usually heard from the next room and sometimes even from the same place of the parents. From another point of view, children met their parents from the moment they finished their online education and they wanted to be seen and taken care of without ignoring or caring about their needs. Similar to one of the

current studies research aim, Richards (2007) mentioned both internal and external reasons affecting everyday creativity; for instance, perception of creativity as not being conformist while the effort of the environment to suppress creativity due to this perception has been one of them. In this study, differing from what Richard mentioned, both creativity in parenting life and some elements that can inhibit creativity in the parent-child relationship were discussed.

Among the fourth theme of "factors related to inhibit parenting creativity" it was found that there were parents who felt a decline in their relationship with the child during the pandemic. Some of the reasons causing these deteriorations were explained by the participants as follows; decrease in tolerance and longing, and more dependency by the children. Vaterlaus et al. (2021) founded that families experience lack of patience, similar to the current study findings during pandemic. This low intolerance was thought to have an inhibitory effect on parents' own creative capacities. Because the deterioration of the relationship with children due to the pandemic and the loss of quality are among the factors that prevent families from approaching their children in creative ways and effective parenting as they wish. Singletary et al. (2022) stated that the difficulties and stress experienced by the parents due to the pandemic had a link to the anxiety and fear-induced behavioral problems of their children. In this sense, the more stressed the parents get, the more behavioral problems are seen in the children, and then the parents may experience difficulties again. As a result, there has been a decrease in tolerance to each other and almost a cycle may have been entered.

The other factor that played a role in the poor quality of the relationship is dependency for parents, the children start to become more dependent on their families at home and there have been behaviors such as timidity to go out even in the re-openings experienced during the times in interview, or the fear that their parents will catch a disease. This finding is similar to the emotional problems observed in children during pandemic, such as separation anxiety of children by Zabcı and Karadeniz (2021). At the same time, it has been mentioned that among the possible psychosocial effects that may occur, published by the World Health Organization (2020) in the same way, children may be more attached and dependent

on their families. Children whose families are divorced show more separation anxiety than children from other families who are together (Amorós et al., 2008). In the family system of children with anxiety-related problems, it also has some effects on the parents; Towe-Goodman et al. (2014) found that there has been a significant effect on their parental functioning. In addition, same research also indicates negative consequences on parents such as depression and fatigue due to their child's anxiety problems. In the light of these information, results of the current study indicate that some anxiety related issues experienced by children may have increase during the pandemic period according to some of their parents, and it was thought that these problems experienced by their children could have affected parent's own mentality and therefore disrupt their creative thinking.

The last sub-theme of the fourth theme was financial responsibilities. It is known in studies that financial problems are related to depression and that these depressive symptoms also have an effect on parenting quality (Demir & Çelebi, 2017; Jackson et al., 2000; Stack & Meredith, 2018). The perception that the pandemic had a negative impact on the parents' own mental health negatively affected the relationship with their children, and this was more common in low-income families (Kerr et al., 2021). As stated in literature review, it is known that single-parent families carry a greater risk in terms of poverty (McLanahan & Booth, 1989), and they also experience more low-income problems than traditional families (Stack & Meredith, 2018). In this sense, although it is not possible to make any comparison from results of the current study, it has emerged in their experiences, that some parents have to shoulder a lot of economic burden especially with the decrease of their resources, and due to the effect of the pandemic on the employment rate and revenues (O. Kim et al., 2020). In this case, close to the research (Daryanani et al., 2016), where low socioeconomic status of single parents affects the negative parent behaviors, some parents have also entered a process that closed them, pushed them back, and thus prevented them from thinking creatively. Sometimes, negative effects were experienced in the relationship they established with their children indirectly due to financial difficulties effects. So, this finding was also supported by Saurabh & Ranjan (2020) where it was revealed that

children’s fear, anxiety, and concerns were primarily related to their family’s economic situation.

4.2. CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current study can contribute to psychotherapists working with the child in a therapeutic way, in their work with parents. If the children's families are encouraged to discover and think about their strengths and on the one hand, they are informed about creative parenting, this can lead to climate for creativity in the home and positive feedback in the relationship they establish with the child. It is also one of the features that can be especially helpful to parents in this population, since the sample of the study includes single parents.

As a result of the research, with the analysis of the data, data for the applications for the development of parenting skills of single-parent families were presented. In clinical terms, it is thought that it can help to discover the needs of parents and create support mechanisms suitable for the relationship established with the child, especially in extraordinary life events such as the pandemic period and difficult times, and at the same time, it is thought to shed light on studies aimed at increasing the creative capacity of parents. These findings mainly helped to showcase the needs of single parents and their challenges in their lives, accordingly therapists who work with a similar family type in their clinical work can look and suggest to parents they work with to create support mechanisms suitable for them and keep their challenges in their mind. For instance, advising their patients the importance of self-care practice to enhance their creative thinking. Prior knowledge on single parent’s challenges may help therapists to better understand them. But also, what factors might have inhibited their thinking shows that they can bear in mind that these possibilities exist beforehand and look into it in the parents they work with.

The research also showed how parents perceived their creativity. Psychotherapists working with parents can try to resolve relational conflicts in the family from this aspect by investigating these capacities or keeping the issue in

mind. Also, similar approach can be done with investigating how parents see their own creative thinking and whether if there is anything that is blocking them. Other than psychotherapists it can also be a factor that charities or social workers can use in their field. Particularly on supporting and nurturing creativity, group work can be done with a social worker, psychologist or both together with parents. In these group studies, parental creativity features can be emphasized to show that parents have more than one solution to reach a solution and to increase features such as flexibility skills. Group works lead by therapist or social workers can give one session to focus on creative thinking, how it may help them whether to adapt to new changes, or to bond with their children or just create uniqueness.

Therefore, the current study has generally provided a basis for parents to realize their own resources and at the same time explore, increase their parental creativity by talking about different characteristics or sharing in group and therapeutic works.

4.3. LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS

The current study included all mothers and fathers who were single parents as a sample for any reason/selection. However, considering some of the cultural and social factors of Turkey, where the research was conducted, all the volunteer participants who wanted to be candidates for the research were women and single parents as a result of divorce. This situation creates a limitation because there are no fathers in the sample, and at the same time, the voices of the parents who were single parent status for a different reason and their experiences in the pandemic could not be conveyed. While searching for the sample, it was thought about including the fathers in the process, but no suitable and desired father candidates could be found. In order to create originality in the literature, the sample criteria were chosen in this way, but this situation may have created a limitation on its own. Also due to the nature of the research, there were relatively smaller sample size, which is why it is difficult for results of the research to be generalized to studied population. Researcher's bias should also be taken into account, because qualitative

studies rely more on subjectivity. So, this can cause an outcome where the same gathered data potentially be differently evaluated and coded from another researcher's perspective and his/her own biases.

One of the factors that constitute the strengths of the research may be the diversity of the economic groups from which the participants come from. Participants came from different economic groups as low, middle, and middle-high, and there were no participants in the highest group only. However, when the education backgrounds are considered, it may be a potential limitation that only one of the participants has a high school diploma, while the remaining participants have Master or University degrees. Single parenting duration also varies between participants, officially minimum 3 years and maximum 10 years on paper. This situation includes parents who are relatively new to single parent and participants who have been single parents for longer years and presents their different experiences.

There is also a triangulation process within the strengths. During the thematic analysis process, both the potential codes and sub-themes that were created were discussed with the thesis advisor. The themes that emerged at the end were shared with both the thesis advisor and the thesis jury member, and their feedback and comments were received. In a similar way, in order to increase research reliability, the results and summary of the analysis were sent to the interviewed participants, and member check was made. It was determined that there were no disagreements related to the transmitted theme and results reflected the experiences of the participants.

4.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the limitations mentioned in the previous section, it is recommended to conduct research on the single father, who is considered to be a minority group in Turkey, by limiting the sampling criteria in future studies. It may be meaningful to investigate the problems and difficulties that single fathers in Turkey face in such a society, especially as Turkey is a more patriarchal society in

social and cultural terms, and the position of women who take care of the children and complete the household chores in the house still continues to be influential. Again, through the sampling criteria, the reasons for coming to the single parent position can be limited and research can be conducted on the parents who decide to raise a child alone due to death or other reasons. At the same time, in the sample of the current study, there was no restriction or exclusion criterion on single parent duration, and therefore the times vary considerably, but future studies can compare the problems between newly single parents' families to parents who have been practicing single parenting for much longer time.

It has been investigated which factors and what kind of parenting increases children's creativity (Fearon et al., 2013; Pham & Betsy, 2019). However, the very little research of parenting creativity still creates a gap in the literature, so future research can be made about which personal and environmental factors are affected by parenting creativity. Unlike the current research, these studies can investigate parents' own childhood, lifestyles, attitudes, and values rather than the impact of difficult times such as the pandemic, and it can be questioned whether these variables influence parent's creativity. There can also studies concerning different age groups' parent's creativity, such as adolescence or infancy. Furthermore, comparisons can be made between different age groups families creative thinking.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to explore the experiences of single parents during pandemic and the role of their creative capacity. Single parents faced some negative experiences with the limited opportunities that helped them before the pandemic and allowed them to cope in difficult times. However, they also mentioned some positive results, as there is an increase in the time spent with the child at home.

It was revealed how single parents observed their own creativity and in what ways. From these results, factors such as practicality, using the right resources, showing new solutions and acting according to the differences of their children emerged. There were also some insights about how the challenging and hard times such as pandemic may have affected their own creativity which showed that there were some that enable them to act or show parenting creativity. While there were also things that affected their creativity to inhibit.

The results from the research can be a guide for not only single parents, but also for families from different populations in parenting life to better understand their children and how to act on the problems they face. However, in order to deliver these results to families, mental health workers, such as psychologists and guidance services, who work with parents at the same time, can integrate these subjects into parenting programs to bring parent creativity to the surface. In this sense, the subject of parental creativity can be discussed in one of the sessions, especially in parenting groups made by counseling centers, which was the starting point of the researcher when creating the research topic.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORM CONSENT FORM

Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Psk. Filiz Zeynep Sezgin tarafından, Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Zeynep Maçkalı danışmanlığında tez araştırması kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, özellikle pandemi sürecindeki kapanma dönemlerinde ebeveynlerin yaratıcı kapasitelerinin, çocuklarıyla kurdukları yakınlık ve ebeveynliklerindeki rolünü araştırmaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllük esasına dayanmaktadır. Herhangi bir nedenden dolayı sorulara cevap vermek istemediğiniz zaman araştırmaya katılımı sonlandırabilirsiniz. Araştırma için onay verdiğiniz takdirde sizinle yaklaşık 1 saat sürmesi planlanan bir görüşme gerçekleştirilecektir. Çalışmanın amacına ulaşabilmesi için görüşme sırasında size sorulan soruları eksiksiz ve içten bir şekilde cevaplamanız beklenmektedir. Verdiğiniz bilgiler gizli tutulacak ve kimliğiniz tanımlanamayacak şekilde yayınlanacaktır. Görüşme anında verdiğiniz cevaplar daha sonra detaylı bir şekilde incelenmek amacıyla, "zoom" programı kullanılarak tüm görüşme video-ses kaydı şeklinde kaydedilecektir. Araştırma için yalnızca ses kayıtları kullanılacak, görüşmeden sonra video kayıtları silinecektir. Adınız, ses kaydının yazılı hale dönüştürüleceği deşifre belgelerinde belirtilmeyecektir.

Çalışma ile ilgili daha fazla bilgiye ihtiyaç duyarsanız mail adresi üzerinden iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman bırakabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin kimliğim gizli kalmak şartıyla bilimsel amaçlı yayınlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. Görüşmenin sesli olarak kayıt altına alınmasını kabul ediyorum. Herhangi bir sebepten ötürü kayıt alınmasından rahatsız olduğum takdirde kaydın durdurulup silineceğini ve görüşmenin sonlandırılacağını biliyorum.

Ad Soyad: Tarih:

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Demografik Bilgi Formu

Yaşınız:

Cinsiyetiniz:

- ☐ Kadın
- ☐ Erkek
- ☐ Diğer

İlişki durumunuz:

- ☐ Bekarım, ilişkim var
- ☐ Bekarım, ilişkim yok
- ☐ Boşandım
- ☐ Eş kaybı yaşadım
- ☐ Diğer: _____

Öğrenim Durumunuz

- ☐ İlköğretim
- ☐ Lise
- ☐ Üniversite (ön lisans/lisans)
- ☐ Lisansüstü (yüksek lisans/doktora)
- ☐ Diğer: _____

Şu anda çalışıyor musunuz? Evet ise çalışma hayatınız için ne kadar sıklıkla uzaktan ve/veya yüz yüze şekilde çalışmaktasınız?

_____

Mesleğiniz: _____

Gelir Düzeyiniz

- ☐ Düşük
- ☐ Düşük-Orta
- ☐ Orta
- ☐ Orta-Yüksek
- ☐ Yüksek

Kaç Çocuğunuz var?

_____

Çocuğunuzun/Çocuklarınızın Cinsiyeti

_____

Çocuğunuzun/Çocuklarınızın Doğum Tarihi

….. / ….. / …….

….. / ….. / …….

Çocuğunuzun/Çocuklarınızın sınıfı

_____

Ebeveynliğinizi ne kadar süredir tek başınıza sürdürmektesiniz?

_____

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Görüşme Soruları

Bu görüşmede pandemi sürecinde çocuğunuzla birlikte geçirdiğiniz kapanma dönemindeki deneyimleriniz ve aynı zamanda genel olarak ebeveynlik, çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizle alakalı size bazı sorular soracağım. Soruların doğru ya da yanlış bir cevabı bulunmamaktadır. Düşüncelerinizi paylaşırken mümkün olduğunca içtenlikle ve eksiksiz paylaşımlarda bulunmanız büyük önem taşımaktadır.

Çalışmaya dair daha detaylı bir açıklama sizin için onam formunda bulunuyor. Bu formda belirtildiği üzere, bu görüşmede paylaştıklarınız gizli kalacaktır. Gizliliği sağlamak için katılımcılara anonim isimler verilecek ve genel çalışma temalarına odaklanılacak ve herhangi bir ifadeyi bireysel isimlerle ilişkilendirmekten kaçınılacaktır. Kayıt alınmasının sebebi ise tüm yanıtlarınızın alındığından emin olmak ve görüşmeyi daha sonra detaylı bir şekilde gözden geçirebilmektir.

1) Pandemi nedeniyle yaşanan kapanma dönemlerini nasıl geçirdiniz? Neler deneyimlediniz?

2) Kapanma döneminin hoşunuza giden taraflar var mıydı? Varsa neler?

3) Çocuğuna tek başına ebeveynlik yapan biri olarak karantinayı nasıl deneyimlediniz?

4) Geçirdiğiniz kapanma dönemlerinin, çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizi nasıl etkilediğini (veya etkilemediğini) anlatabilir misiniz?

5) Çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizin pandemi öncesi ve sonrası nasıl olduğunu anlatabilir misiniz? (İlişki içerisinde aynı kalanlar ve farklılaşanlar gibi)

6) Kapanma döneminde yaşadığınız zorluklar nelerdi ve tek ebeveyn olmak bu zorluklarla nasıl ilişkiliydi? Nasıl çözümlemeye çalıştınız? Bir örnek ile anlatabilir misiniz?

7) Sizce bu zorluklarla başa çıkmak için gösterdiğiniz bu çözümler çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizi nasıl etkiledi, nasıl etkiliyor?

8) 3 sıfatla çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizi tanımlayabilir misiniz mümkünse hem pandemi sürecindeki hem de genel normal pandemi dışındaki ilişkiniz için? (Bu sıfatların kişi için anlamı ayrı ayrı ele alınacak)

9) Çocuğunuzla olan fiziksel yakınlığın artmasıyla ne gibi değişimler oldu / ilişki anlamında yakınlığınız nasıl değişti?

10) Kapanma döneminin ebeveynlik becerilerinize sizce nasıl bir etkisi oldu?

11) Kapanma dönemini düşündüğünüz zaman siz ve çocuğunuz için işe yaradığını düşündüğünüz yöntemler neler oldu zor zamanlarda?

12) Sizin için iyi bir ebeveyn olmak ne anlama geliyor/ne ifade ediyor?

13) Kapanma sürecinde etkili şekilde ebeveynlik göstermenizi etkileyen faktörler sizce neler oldu?

14) Çocuğunuz zor bir duygudan geçtiği zaman örneğin öfke ve üzüntü gibi nasıl tepki verirsiniz? Kapanma dönemlerinde bu duygulara verdiğiniz tepkilerde değişimler yaşandı mı?

15) Çocuğunuzun uzaktan eğitim ile ilgili zorluklarını aşması için nasıl yardımcı oldunuz?

16) Çocuğunuzla kapanma döneminde oynadığınız oyunlardan ve/veya yaptığınız aktivitelerden bahsedebilir misiniz?

17) Sizce ebeveynlikte yaratıcı olmak ne demek?

18) Ebeveynlik açısından sizin yaratıcı olma kapasiteniz hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

19) Kapanma dönemlerinde bu ebeveynlik açısından, sizin yaratıcı olma kapasiteniz hakkında neler düşünüyorsunuz?

20) Sahip olduğunuzu düşündüğünüz bu yaratıcılık kapasiteniz çocuğunuzla olan ilişkinizi ve iletişiminizi nasıl etkiliyor sizce?

21) Bu görüşmeyi yapmış olmak, bu görüşmeye katılmış olmak size nasıl hissettirdi?

Çevrenizde araştırmaya katılabileceğini düşündüğünüz kişiler varsa iletebilirseniz çok sevinirim.

APPENDIX D: TURKISH VERSIONS OF QUOTATIONS

P1

"Bu dönemde hem çalıştığım için hem de sürekli iş dışında da beraber olduğumuz için çok fazla kendime vakit ayıramadım belki ya da ona hani bu ben işte olduğum dönemlerde ister istemez televizyonun başında olduğu için ki yine şanslı değilim." (P1, Satır 31)

"belki bir yanımızda bir başka biri olsaydı ya da diğer ebeveyn olsa o götürebilecekken kaldırabilirdi…" (P1, Satır 38)

"Özellikle bu durumda da bir yandan işte markete gitmeniz bile kısıtlı. Eve geliyorsunuz onu işte parka gitmek istiyor. Gidemiyorsunuz. Aynı zamanda yemek yapmanız gerekiyor. Aynı zamanda bir başka hani paylaşamıyorsunuz bu ebeveynliği. O biraz zor oldu." (P1, Satır 41)

Bu süreçte bazı korkular oluştu diyebilirim. Biraz daha fazla da bağlanmış olabilir belki ya da bilmiyorum kendimi öyle değerlendiriyorum, daha böyle korumacı olmaya başladı. Işte hani dediğim gibi çevreden de duyduğu şeyler için daha çabuk mesela hasta olabileceğimden korkuyor diyelim. Uzağa gitmemden korkuyor zaten şöyle bir de baba tarafıyla da çok fazla ilişkisi olmadığı için zaten biraz daha fazla bağlıydı bana. Bu süreçte daha da bağlandı bu." (P1, Satır 67)

"Işte yirmi üç Nisan'da, on dokuz Mayıs'tı ya da ne bileyim birliği, bütün birliği, bütün bayramları evde kutladık. Süslendi, bütün apartman bütün çocuklar. Çok şey bir şekilde onları geçirdiler. Hani hiç evde kaldık ama özel günleri atlamadık. Hem onların daha iyi hissedebilmesi için aynı zamanda şey yapmıştık mesela." (P1, Satır 147)

"sözel derslerde de şey algısı çok iyi hikayeleştirerek anlattığımız zaman İngilizce'den fen dersine kadar olsun. Bütün hepsinin hikaye şeklinde çok rahat alabiliyor. Oturuyoruz, oyun kuruyoruz ya da o konuyla ilgili bir hikaye yazıyorum ben. Destek oluyor. Onu o şekilde çalışıyoruz yani. Işte fen dersinde işte hacim ve kütle diye iki kardeş varmış diye başlayıp o kardeşlerden devam ederek hikayeleştirerek daha fazla dikkatini topladığını fark ettim" (P1, Satır 180)

"Açıkçası konuşmak iletişim. Onun dışında çok fazla bir şeyin faydası olduğunu en kötü anımızda da konuştuk. En iyi anımızda da konuştuk."(P1, Satır 233)

"Daha fazla yetmeyi öğrendim diyebilirim kendi adıma. Zaten hep yetebilmekle mükellef oluyoruz bu dönemlerde. Daha fazla yettiğimizi, daha fazla belki şeyi Ne kadar daha güçlü olduğumuzu görmüş olabiliriz." (P1, Satır 260)

“Sonra bir bakıyorum öyle ama o çocuk da farklı bir çocuk. Benimki farklı. Yani yaratıcı her anne çok yaratıcıdır ve çocuğun ihtiyaçlarına göre de yaratıcılık değişebilir."(P1, Satır 282)

"bizim de kendimizi biraz daha dinlemeye itti. Her ne kadar koşturmaca içinde olsak da, işte işe giriyoruz, eve geliyoruz, ders yapıyoruz vesaire ama zamanda kendimizi de dinliyoruz. Daha fazla farkına vardık diyebilirim" (P1, Satır 266)

"Çok fazla hani hastalığın da verdiği bir şey sanırım. Daha duygularımızı çok fazla belli etmeye başladık." (P1, Satır 353)

"Sizin o gün o işi bitirmeniz lazım. Ben yemek yaparken çok basit. Belki bir iki tişörtünü kendisi ütülemişti mesela." (P1 Satır, 405)

P2

“ki hani bu televizyonda okuduğumuzda da sosyal medyada paylaşılan haberler anlamında tabii devamlı hani ne olacak, ne bitecek işte, ne zaman hani tekrar açılacak? Işte aşı ne zaman olacak falan gibi devamlı hani bu hani muhabbet söz konusu tabii ki.” (P2, Satır 88)

"Işte devamlı hani her gün yeni oyuncak çıkarıyorduk ya da iki günde bir. Hani bugün Lego'yla oynadık. Tamam hani işte gün sonra ben sıkıldım oluyordu. Hadi o zaman bugün de işte tren kuralım, işte istasyon yapalım, tren işte orada dursun. Işte hani bugün resim yapalım, sulu boya yapalım elimizde ne varsa. Hani onu çeşitlendirmek anlamında tabii ki hani oyalamak Tüm gün olunca tabii ki çok zor" (P2, Satır 106)

"Hani biz tabii hani hem arkadaş, hem anne işte hem baba neyse her şey hani o olmak gibi bir şeye bir role büründük yani o dönemde. O da tabii ki zorlayıcı oldu yani hani. Yemek yiyorsunuz. O bitiyor işte tuvaletim geldi işte karnım ağrıyor odur budur. Yani her tür şeyi hani gün içerisinde çok aşırı yoğun yaşayınca e bir de buna tabii ki yapmanız gereken iş yeri işleri de eklenince." (P2, Satır 113)

"Hani ne zaman işte açılacak bir açılsa artık hani ben o işe gitsem hani sosyalleşme ihtiyacı yaşıyor insan tabii ki. Telefonda konuşmak gibi olmuyor. Ya da konuşulan konu hep aynı" (P2, Satır 120)

"Tek başına ebeveyn olunca insan tabii ki bu endişeleri de tek başına hani. Ya kalkıp da ben hani anneme işte ya işte oğlum hani hasta olursa ne olacak anne gibi bir şey. Tabii ki hani onunla da çok paylaşamıyordum." (P2, Satır 124)

"Dediğim gibi hani ben o işte oyundur, o tür aktiviteleri zaten seven bir insanım hani. Oğlumla keyifli zaman geçiriyorum, seviyorum da zorlanarak işte hani o mutlu olsun diye yanında oturmak şeklinde değil, gerçekten hani kendiniz sürece dahil eden anne olduğumu düşünüyorum kendim hani kendimi değerlendirdiğimde" (P2, Satır 129)

"Bir de çok yoğun tabii hani bu kadar yoğun birliktelik yaşamak bir süre sonra hani ilişkiyle hani laçkalaştırıyor tabii hani." (P2, Satır 183)

"Başa çıktım yani nasıl başa çıktım? Dediğim gibi işte, özellikle hani ders gibi, yoğun olan zamanlarda işte hani anneannesi, teyzesiyle zaman geçirmesini sağlamak şeklinde. Onun dışında işte belki hani böyle iş yerine geldiğim zamanlarda O gün benimle birlikte iş yerine gelen insanlarla birazcık daha böyle sohbet ederek, belki sosyalleşme gidermeye çalıştım." (P2, Satır 193)

“Yani çünkü hani ben eğer işte kendimi motive etmeyi, işte ne zaman bitecek, ne zaman bitecek de kendimi olumsuz olarak motive etseydim sonuçta hani onun belki bu yoğun olarak birlikte faaliyet yapma isteklerini hani sinirlilik hali nedeniyle ya da psikolojimin çok normal olmaması nedeniyle olumsuz cevaplar verebilirdim" (P2, Satır 214)

"hani çok yoğun olarak yetiştirmem gereken bir şey vardır. O da o gün şans eseri daha çok benimle birlikte vakit geçirmek geçirmek istemiştir. Hani ona cevap veremeyip ya lütfen hani beni işte şimdi bir hani rahat bırak ya da işte ben şu işimi bir halledeceğim sana hani söyledim anlattım biraz önce falan gibi belki o tür şeylerimiz olmuştu" (P2, Satır 223)

"Hani sen çocuksun ya da neyse işte hadi şuraya gidiyoruz mesela hani. Hiç fikrini almadan hadi işte bugün anneanneye gidiyoruz. Hadi bugün işte kafeye gidiyoruz. Hadi bugün işte bunu yapacağız. Hadi kalk işte bilmem ne tarzında bu şekilde hani

yönlendirmeden ziyade mutlaka onun da hani fikrini alıp her süreçte ya da bugün ne yemek yiyelim hani diye sorarım mesela. (P2, Satır 322)

“sen bir bireysin. Senin de hani belli düşüncelerin var, fikirlerin var. Duyguların var. Hani ya da ağladığında mesela eleştirmek şeklinde değil. Hani ağlamak normaldir hani. Üzüldüğünü anlıyorum şeklinde hani onun hem duygularını hem düşüncelerine mutlaka hani önem vererek ve işte niye ağlıyorsun?” (P2, Satır 332)

"mesela hani seni evet benimle işte resim yapmak istiyorsun ama benim de işte hani iş yerimde hani öğretmenim neyse işte bilmem kim abi şöyle bir şeyin hani yapılmasını istedi. Ben de onu yetiştirmek zorundayım hani. Beni senin hani anlayacağını düşünüyorum. Biraz daha bana zaman tanı Beş dakika seninle tamam. Hani resim yapayım ama sen devam ederken ben işime geri döneceğim." (P2, Satır 398)

"Hani davranışları ya da onun duygusu duygularını ya da düşüncelerine tepki vermek anlamında hani yaratıcılık önemli diye düşünüyorum. Klasik bildiğimiz işte farklı oyunlar yaratmak ya da farklı faaliyetler düşün hani o daha çok hani hepimizin belki aklına gelebilecek bir şey ama duygu düşünceleri anlamında hani onlara doğru tepkiler, doğru zamanda doğru tepkiler verebilmenin de aslında hani yaratıcılıkla birazcık alakalı olduğunu düşünüyorum" (P2, Satır 453)

"Işte bak hani yemezsen büyüyemezsin gibi klişe bir şey söylemek yerine acaba karnın mı ağrıyor mesela? Ya da bugün canın hani bu yemeği yemek mi istemedi? Ne olsa mesela yersin hani gibi. Bu şekilde hani biraz daha düşünce ve davranışlarda hem ebeveyn olarak ona davranışım, hem onun davranışlarını da kabul etme anlamında Daha esnek olmak da aslında bir yaratıcılık türü bence." (P2, Satır 471)

P3

"Dışarı çıkmaktan çok korkuyordu. Mesela anneciğim gel biraz hava alalım dediğimde ya işte polis gelir döktürürse ya dışarıda ne var falan böyle kapıdan bakıp içeri kaçmalar falan yaşadık. Sonra yavaş yavaş onu atlattı ama biraz bu sıkıntıyı yaşadı kendisi de." (P3, Satır 10)

"Ama pandemide bir şekilde onu tanıyorsun. Bakıyorsun diyorsun ki bu buna tepki verdi. Belki konuşmam lazım deniyorsun sen de. Konuşarak nasıl olur? Anlattığı

şeyleri tartarak anlatmaya çalışıyorsun. Bazen büyük gibi anlatıyorsun. Bu sefer diyorum ki ya çocuğa niye büyük gibi anlatıyorsun? O küçük daha. Hani senin söylediklerini anlamıyor. . Hani bir yerini anlamıyor. Zaten suratına böyle bakıyor. Annem ne diyor acaba diye. Şimdi ben de böyle çocuğa anlatıyorsam diyorsundur yani" (P3, Satır 380)

"Hani kızıyorsan bunu babanla da konuşman lazım. Kendini ifade etmen lazım. Bana kızıyorsan, bana da söyleyebilirsin. Ya da bunu yapmak istemiyorsan neden yapmak istemediğini söyleyebilirsin? Ya artık konuşmaya döndü. Bunu sağladıkça da rahatladı aslında ve ben de tabi rahatladım ve daha iyi görür oldum sıkıntı çektiği alanları" (P3, Satır 392)

"işte çocuk oyun alanına gidip tahterevalliye binmek ne bileyim kaydırağa binmek beraber. Işte, ne bileyim TikTok gibi videolar çekiyorlar bazen. O videolara dahil olup onunla birlikte oynamak.Ya elimden geldiğince eğlenceli olmaya çalışıyorum onun için ama bir yere kadar oluyor o." (P3, Satır 429)

P4

"Evin sorumluluğu da var. Maddi açıdan da sorumluluğu var tabii. Yani hepsini bir araya koyduğunuz zaman her zaman yoğunum aslında zihnen Benim zihnim dolu olunca da o an onun istediği şeyler benim ilgime karşı olan ihtiyacını da kaçırıyorum tabi." (P4, Satır 70)

"Pandeminin diğer bir zorluğu yani herkes dersine okula gittiği zaman bunlar daha az yaşanıyordu. Aktif hayat hayatım ama pandemi sürecinde sürekli evde olunduğu için her türlü. hani derler ya gizli saklı bir şey kalmıyor. Gizli saklı bir şey kalmıyor evin içerisinde." (P4, Satır 82)

"Pandemi süresince ise yani çocuğa bir şey öğretilecek herhangi bir konuda sadece bir kişinin sürekli hem sevgi vermesi hem öğüt vermesi hem örnek olması hem kızması hem disiplin uygulaması hem sınır koyması ve hepsinin bir kişi üzerinden yürümesi başarılı olmadığını pandemide gördüm…. Ahtapot gibi olduk herhalde. Tabiri caizse. Birden fazla şeyi bir seferde yapmaya çalışmak " (P4, Satır 136)

"Çünkü özlememek de sıkıntı. Yani özlemeye ihtiyaç duyuyor insan. Özlemediğiniz zaman tahammülünüz azalıyor. Ve ben son zamanlarda gerçekten çok ciddi tahammül düşüklüğü yaşıyorum." (P4, Satır 147)

"Yani sürekli bir karşılıklılık. Zaten vardı. Ama pandemi arttırdı. Çünkü sürekli evin içerisinde. Ve sürekli bir şeyler almak istiyor. Bir şeyler elde etmek istiyor. Bunun için de sürekli beni tabiri caizse dürtüyor, zorluyor yani." (P4, Satır 215)

"Çünkü yani kapıyı kapatmak istemiyorum. Kapı olabilir. Kedi var. Güvenlik telefonla arayabilir ve evi eve hakim olmak istiyorum bir yandan da. Ama kapı açık olduğunda da sürekli tedirgin bir şekilde ders ya da çalışmak zorundayım" (P4, Satır 208)

"Duygularımı ifade etmeyi yani mutlu olduğum ya da mutsuz olduğum şeyleri ya da kızdığım şeyleri söylemeyi öğrendim. o yüzden aslında yol katettik çünkü annemin de yorulma ihtimali var. Önceden annelerinin yorulabileceğini hiç düşünmüyorlardı. O kadar hareketliydim. Şimdi hayır annem yorulabiliyor ya da annem hasta olabiliyor. Annem üzülebiliyor, annem sevinebiliyor. Yani annesinin duyguları olduğunu öğrendiler süreç içerisinde. Ve pandemi içerisinde çok daha fazla oldu bu." (P4, Satır 396)

"Gerçekten çok ciddi dayanıklılık kazandım, kazanmış durumdayım evet." (P4, Satır 457)

"Hani o online eğitim süresi boyunca gene e sabahleyin kalkıp dışarı çıkma telaşı yok. Daha güzel uyuyoruz, daha fazla uyuyoruz. Daha çok zaman kalıyor" (P4, Satır 557)

"Daha öncesinde sadece aman onlar spor yapsın diye hafta sonu yani hafta sonu iki gün ikisini ikişer tane farklı yerlere götürüyordum cumartesi-pazarlar. E baktım sadece ben istiyorum diye götürüyorum. Onların öyle bir talebi yok. Şu anda öyle bir zaman harcamıyorum çünkü istemiyorlar. Sadece ben kendimi tatmin etmek için götürüyormuşum demek ki. Mesela onları öğrendim" (P4, Satır 569)

"Ders çalışıp da çok iyi hissettirdi. Çok güzel geldi bana. O yüzden aslında başarmanın hep başarılı olmayı sevmişimdir ama bu kadar sevdiğimi bilmiyordum" P4, Satır 623)

"Oynadığımız oyunlar ama dediğim gibi genelde işte dikkat, hafıza oyunları içeren kutu oyunlarıydı. Ya da uno gibi kart oyunları oynuyorduk. Bir düzen, bir rutin içerisinde değil. Ara ara PlayStation'da bu dans ya da spor oyunları falan beraber oynadık. Bazen onlar kendileri oynadılar. Onun dışında kediyle oynuyoruz hep

beraber. Kovalamaca, saklambaç. Ne ararsanız. öyle, bu şekilde yürüyüş yaptık beraber etkinlik olarak" (P4, Satır 682)

"Yani şöyle oyun oynamak güzel. Sohbet etmek güzel. Ama alakasız bir anda herhangi bir konuda felsefe yapmak mesela çocukta. Çok değişik olabiliyor. Konu açıp üzerinde üzerinde.buarada felsefeyi sevmem. Çok da zorlanıyorum. Bu dönem felsefe dersim var ama çocukla beraber çok zevkli oluyor. Bunu yapmak. Onun dışında bir rol vermek yani sohbette rol vermek de güzel olabiliyor. Faydalı oluyor. Yani onu başka bir role koymak ya da kendini başka bir role koymak. Güzel olabiliyor. Yani bu şimdi yaratıcılık dediğiniz için bunu yaratıcılıkla bağdaştırayım. Birden onun farklı bir role girdiğini hissetmek ya da birden farklı bir konu üzerine konuşmaya başlatmak. Yaratıcı. Ya anlık bir yaratıcılık sağlıyor ve farklı oluyor" (P4, Satır 691)

"Ben kendim zaten çok hızlı ve pratik bir insanım. Genel olarak çok sorun çözmek yönüm çok kuvvetli yani mutlaka bir şeye bir çözüm getirmeye çalışırım hep. O yüzden zaten ister istemez yaratıcılık aktif bende bakarsanız. Yani çok hızlı bir sorunla geldiğinde çok hızlı çözmüş bir şekilde gönderiyorum." (P4, Satır 715)

"Bunu çözebilmesini farkı çözebileceğinin farkındalığını kazandırıyorum. Sen bunu zaten yapabilirsin. Ha evet deyip mutlu bir şekilde çıkabiliyor yanımda. O yüzden tek ebeveyn olmak burada zor değil. Keyifli hale geliyor bazen de.. Yani çok mutsuz bir şekilde geliyor mesela. Bir aa işte benim yarın şu işim vardı ve ben bunu unuttum. Nasıl yapacağım? Dediğinde o anda hemen bir şey bulup kafamdan ama ona onu göstererek kendisinin görmesini sağlattırıyorum yani bu ben de işe yarıyor. Yani bu bence yaratıcılık. Hani kalemim yok benim, ben bunu nasıl yazacağım? Başka neyle yazabilirsin sence? Bir duruyor. Aaa evet ojeyle yere yazabilirim. Örnek veriyorum şu anda tamamen. Yani o cevabı kendi buluyor." (P4, Satır 719)

P5

"Hani daha çok artık hani ihtiyaç duyulmaya başlayınca ister istemez de kafa yoğunluğuma başladı. Bu sefer benim verdiğim zaman ya da evde geçirdiğim zaman sağlıklı olmamaya başladı. Düşünmeye başladım o nasıl olacak? Bu nasıl

olacak? Öyleydi, böyleydi falan derken ben birazcık kapanmaya başladım dolayısıyla." (P5, Satır 36)

"Işte hani ders sürecimiz çok kötü geçiyordu. . Bende de işte hani iki anlatıyorum, üç anlatıyorum ama "A" çok dirençli bir çocuk oldu bu süreç içerisinde. Işte hani kesinlikle yapmayacağım dediği zaman hiçbir şekilde bu sefer ben kızmaya başladım ona. Dolayısıyla da kızdığım zamanda da sen beni sevmiyorsun, sen benden nefret ediyorsun. Işte beni üzüyorsun. Kalbimi kırıyorsun gibi böyle savunmalara başladı. " (P5, Satır 325)

“Her dakika bir sevgimizi belli ederiz. ve konuşuruz yani. Dolayısıyla işte o yakınlıklarımız da çok arttı. Anneciğim seni çok seviyorum. Işte ben de ona anneciğim. Ben de seni çok seviyorum. Yatarken mesela her akşam o fikstir sohbet ederiz, her akşam en az beş kere seni seviyorum der. O anlatır ben dinlerim ve böyle olunca daha iyi anlamaya da başlıyor insan. O ilişkimizin güçlenmişti yani o süreç içerisinde bu durum çok daha fazla güçlendi.” (P5, Satır 417)

“Yani Mesela yapmam gereken şeyleri yapamadım. Yani atıyorum işte oğlum çok agresif davrandığında çözüm olarak işte ağlayana kadar oradan duracaksın dedim. Mesela hani kendimi de öz eleştiri yaptım ama Aslında yapmam gereken o değildi.” (P5, Satır 500)

"Işte aklımdan bir şey tuttum. Işte baş harfi E. Bu bir eşya gibi. Böyle hani hala hala kahvaltıda falan oynarız. Bu tarzda. Ya da o Kendisi o anda hani ne istiyorsa mesela sulu boya hani yapalım diyorsa sıvı boya. Top oynayalım diyorsa işte evin içerisinde maç yapıyorduk. Işte yastık kavgası çok yaparız. Böyle yastıkla birbirimize vurma falan. Işte gıdıklama oyunu çok oynarız. Ben işte genelde bazen işte çocuklukta oynadığımız oyunlardan aslında daha çok oyundan çok "A" sohbet etmeyi çok seviyor." (P5, Satır 513)

P6

"Ama bazı zamanlarda hafta içi de biz bir şeyler yapabiliyorduk. Hatta pandemiden önce sporu, hafta sonu, işte bilmem nesi. Oraya gitmesi, buraya gitmesi biz yani evin içinde geçinebilen iki insan olduğumuzu gördük gibi bir şey oldu" (P6, Satır 162)

"Yani şöyle bir kere tek ebeveyn olmak şimdi bunu iki şekilde değerlendirmek lazım. Eğer hafta sonu alan bir babası olsaydı özel zamanın kalırdı. Evet. Ama benim zaten özel zamanımın olmayacağını bildiğim bir süreçle ilerlemiştim. Hani tek ebeveyn olmanın eksi tarafı özellikle hayatına yer yok." (P6, Satır 180)

"Yani sadece bazen erkek olmak durumunda da kalıyorsun. Hani anne tarafında sadece kalmak zor oluyor. Bazen aklıma geliyor. Şey diyorum ya maç izletip küfredelim birlikte falan ama bunların dışarıda söylenmeyeceğini ya da işte hani böyle falan filan yani sokakta da duyuyor geliyor. Çok istiyorsan şimdi et edemem falan filan böyle şeyler yapmak zorunda kalıyorsun. Ama bana en zor gelen şey var isterseniz onu söyleyeyim. Erkek berberine gitmekten nefret ediyorum. Yani belki bunu gerçekten yani en büyük zorluk olarak söyleyebilirim. Ya bu işleri gören biri olsa, arada mesela nefes aldırsa ona ve babalığını da hissettirse çocuk da özlememiş olur." (P6, Satır 199)

O yüzden gerçekten kapandım zaten ben yani. O sırada çıkmak da istemiyordum. Açık da olsa hiçbir şey ifade etmeyecekti benim için. Yavaşlattı. Biraz nefes aldırdı. Biraz da gırtlağıma bastı yani hani. Nasıl ikisi aynı anda oldu ben de anlamadım." (P6, Satır 231)

"Yani bir o üzüldü ben teselli ettim. Bir ben üzüldüm o teselliyi etti ve evde hani hep birbirini neşelendirmeye çalışan işte neşe yoksa hani anlayış gösteren iki insandık. Yani durmak istiyorsan ve üzülmek istiyorsan çok üzülmemi görmek istemiyordu ama zaman zaman göstermek de gerekiyor. Hani bu da gerçek. Bunu da yapabiliriz. Bu çok normal gibi. Hani öyle şeyler. Duyguların çıktığı her anda, yani gülmekte de işte ağlamak da birlikteydik. Hangi anlar getirdi? Ona sarıldığım anlar getirdi. Onun gelip bana sarıldığı anlar getirdi. evde dans ettiğimiz anlar geçirdi. Birbirimize sesimizi yükselttiğimiz anlar getirdi. Kızabiliyoruz birbirimize ama o asla birbirimizden vazgeçmiyoruz gibi şeyler. anlamaya çalışıyoruz aslında birbirimizi" (P6, Satır 244)

"hatırlamaya çalıştığım yani kendi çocukluğumu unuttuğum için onun hani o yaşta aslında neyi yapamayacağını daha rahat gözlemledim. Gözlem yeteneğimi arttırmış olabilir. Hani bir şey deriz ya böyle Amerika'yı yeniden keşfetmeye gerek gerek yok yani. Burada sunulmuş bilgi var işte tamam buyurun falan diye öyle ebeveynlik

yapıyorduk ya da yapıyordum. çünkü hızlıca vakti kullanmak zorundayız ya vaktinizi az ya. Işin en azından en baştan başlayıp kendi yolumu çizerek gitmiş oldum." (P6, Satır 326)

"Ebeveynlikte yaratıcı olmak ne demek? Ya aslında her ebeveyn yani günlük yaşamda çocuğun ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda elinde bir kaynak varsa kullanır. Eğer elindeki kaynak kıtsa bunu etkin bir şekilde kullanır gibi bir şey bu." (P6, Satır 439)

"o yüzden böyle şey hani yaratıcılık deyince çeşitli böyle mucitlik tarafını o anda kaynak olmadığında sıfırdan bir alet yapabilen bir şeyler geliyor ama bunu duygusal anlamda düşündüğünde de aynısının soyut halini düşün. Orada bir duyguya ihtiyacı varsa hangi duyguyu koymak gerekiyorsa ona göre şekillendireceğim bir süreç benim için yaratıcılık." (P6, Satır 449)

P7

“bir şekilde o pedagogdan hani şey sağlamaya çalışıyorum, destek almaya çalışıyorum. hani başka hani velilerden, annelerden destek almaya çalışıyorum. Ama hani şunu diyebilirim ki bakıyorum mesela başka single parentlara." (P7, Satır 175)

"Hani sadece single yani değil bu bayağı farklı bir dinamiğe doğru gidiyor. Çünkü yirmi dört saatim var. Paylaşılamaz hale geliyorsun." (P7, Satır 237)

“hani sonuçta yalnız bir yani tek bir ebeveynim ama bir yardımcı gelip gittiği zaman ya da babamlardan yardım almak hani o bir hep bir şey nefes alma payı ama nefes alamadığımı hissettiğim anlar Biraz zorlayıcı" (P7, Satır 415)

"Yani benim Hani yedi sekiz yaşın, yani gerçekten hani jenerasyon farkı devasa. Bu sebeple kendi hani yani kendi çerçevemde onları hani yetiştirebilmek benim için zaten en büyük yaratıcılık." (P7, Satır 554)

P8

“mesela şöyle. Öğretmen işte ilkokul olduk bir oldukları için Iki kelime öğretti işte atıyorum ellayı öğretti. Bize diyor ki Ella'yla ilgili cümle kurun Ama daha onunla ilgili bir kelime bilmiyor. Hani orada da çalışıp iş yetiştirmem gerekiyor toplantıya veya bir şeye. Ben işi bırakıyorum. Kelimeler öğretiyorum. Sonra cümle kuruyoruz. öğretmene yolluyoruz. O sırada işi bırakıp ona dönmüş oluyorum. Bu sefer ne

oluyor? Geceleri hep çalışmak gibi bir sürece girmiş oluyordum. O tarz zorluklar çok oldu (P8, Satır 25)

"daha doğrusu kendime yönelik, kendime daha döndüm. Işte sosyal sosyal hayatıma da döndüm. Dışarıda eskiden mesela şey yapmıyordum. Çocukları bırakıp bir yere pek çıkmıyordum falan. . Şimdi çok rahatlıkla çıkıyorum mesela. Diyorum ki tamam bu akşam benim mesela. Hani ben çıkacağım. Arkadaşımla sohbet edeceksem sohbet edeceğim. Içmeye gideceksem içmeye gideceğim. Eskiden onu yapmıyordum. Ben şimdi onları bırakıp evde gitmeyeyim diyordum. Ama hayır o gün bana lazım. Ben o günü yaşayacağım. Ben rahatlayacağım ki o rahatlayacak. Gibi bir duruma geçtim." (P8, Satır 147)

"yani sen kendi kişisel alanını …yani sen ne kadar rahat ruh haline sahip olursam ilişkin de o. Ebeveynlik ilişkin de o rahatlıkta oluyor.” (P8, Satır 160)

"hani mesela evde üç kişiyiz üç kadınız ve hani bir noktada hepimiz evde oturmaktan sıkılmışız. Aktivite de bir yere kadar yapılıyor falan filan Bundan Da sıkıp diyorlar haliyle. Çok sıkıldım, çok sıkıldım dediğimiz hepimizin ağzında bu olduğu süreçlerle yani şey yaptık" (P8, Satır 217)

"Ebeveynlik ilk başta ebeveynliğin tek bir kalıpta olmadığını düşünmek gerekiyor. Yani senin doğrun diye bir şey yok. O bir birey ve onun da doğruları olacak. Orada yaratıcılığın işte yani yaratıcılık dediğimiz aslında ona uyabilmek bana göre. Onun fikrine de ayak uydurabilmek yaratıcılık." (P8, Satır 355)

"onun da kendine göre bir baskı kurmadan onu birey olduğunu tamam bütün kontrolü ona vermeyeceksin ama onun da bir şeyleri konuşarak konuşma hakkına sahip olduğunu, seçme hakkına sahip olduğunu, fikirlerinin önemli olduğunu ve buna ayak uydurmak, yaratıcılık gibi geliyor bana. (P8, Satır 359)

ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.