

A QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF DEATH OF A SPOUSE AND
BEREAVEMENT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

GİZEM MİNÇE

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

APRIL 2024

Approval of the thesis:

**A QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF DEATH OF A SPOUSE AND
BEREAVEMENT**

submitted by **GİZEM MİNÇE** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology, the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Sadettin KİRAZCI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY BIYIKOĞLU
Head of Department
Department of Psychology

Prof. Dr. Faruk GENÇÖZ
Supervisor
Department of Psychology

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sevda SARI DEMİR
Co-Supervisor
Haliç University
Department of Psychology

Examining Committee Members:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bahar ÖZ (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Psychology

Prof. Dr. Faruk GENÇÖZ (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Psychology

Assist. Prof. Dr. Burcu Pınar BULUT
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University
Department of Psychology

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayşen GÜNDÜZ
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University
Department of Psychology

Assist. Prof. Dr. Tuğba UYAR SUIÇMEZ
Başkent University
Department of Psychology

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Gizem MİNÇE

Signature:

ABSTRACT

A QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF DEATH OF A SPOUSE AND BEREAVEMENT

MİNÇE, Gizem

Ph.D., The Department of Psychology

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Faruk GENÇÖZ

Co-supervisor: Assist. Dr. Sevda SARI DEMİR

April 2024, 169 pages

Losing a loved one has always been seen as a painful experience. The death of a spouse, who is the person with whom the person plans to spend his life together, certainly has an important impact on the one who is left behind. In addition, being a young woman who has lost her husband has many attributes in Turkish culture, which are mainly formed around the phenomenon of a woman who is a “widow”. The present study aimed to examine women's experiences of partner loss in early life from a psychoanalytic point of view and to investigate the narrative of their lives after the loss. In this context, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight women who had lost their spouse by natural means or by accident before the age of 45. The data obtained from these interviews were examined by utilizing the thematic analysis method through the MAXQDA software program. Five main themes were created in line with the results. The themes consist of the role of the husband, the unspeakable: death, what is lost with loss, ways to cope with death, being a “widow”. The themes have been discussed within the framework of psychoanalytic literature, and the place of “widow” discourse in the Turkish culture has been presented.

Finally, how these findings can be evaluated in clinical practice has been discussed and some suggestions for future studies have been presented.

Keywords: Spouse loss, Bereavement, Widowhood, Thematic Analysis, Psychoanalysis

ÖZ

EŞ KAYBI VE YAS DÖNEMİ ÜZERİNE NİTEL BİR ARAŞTIRMA

MİNÇE, Gizem

Doktora, Psikoloji Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Faruk GENÇÖZ

Ortak Tez Yöneticisi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sevda SARI DEMİR

Nisan 2024, 169 sayfa

Bir yakını kaybetmek her zaman acı verici bir deneyim olarak görülmüştür. Kişinin hayatını birlikte geçirmek üzere plan yaptığı kişi olan eşinin ölümü ise muhakkak geride kalan için önemli bir etkiye sahip olmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra eşini kaybetmiş genç bir kadın olmanın Türk kültüründe başta “dul kadın” olgusu etrafında şekillenen birçok atfı bulunmaktadır. Söz konusu çalışmada, kadınların hayatın erken dönemlerindeki eş kaybı deneyimlerinin psikanalitik bir bakış açısıyla incelenmesi ve kayıp sonrasındaki yaşantılarının anlatımının araştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Bu kapsamda eşini 45 yaşından önce doğal yollarla ya da kaza yoluyla kaybetmiş sekiz kadın ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu görüşmelerden ortaya çıkan veri MAXQDA yazılım programı aracılığıyla tematik analiz metoduyla incelenmiş ve sonuçlar doğrultusunda beş ana tema oluşturulmuştur. Temalar, kocanın rolü, konuşulamayan şey: ölüm, kayıpla birlikte ne kaybedilenler, ölümle baş etmenin yolları, “dul” olmaktan oluşmaktadır. Temalar psikanalitik literatür çerçevesinde tartışılmış ve “dul” kadın söyleminin Türk kültüründeki yeri sunulmuştur. Son olarak bu bulguların klinik uygulamalarda nasıl değerlendirilebileceği tartışılmış ve gelecek çalışmalar için bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eş kaybı, Yas, Dulluk, Tematik Analiz, Psikanaliz

To all my loved ones...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ	vi
DEDICATION	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Mourning	1
1.2. The Lack and Lacan’s Object a	2
1.3. Three Orders: the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic	3
1.4. Three Types of Lack.....	5
1.5. Bereavement and Cultural Issues	8
1.6. Love and Marriage	9
1.7. Theory of Discourse	12
1.8. The Aim of The Study	16
2. METHODOLOGY.....	18
2.1. The Research Methodology.....	18
2.2. Sample Selection	20
2.3. Procedure	22
2.4. Methods of Analysis.....	23
2.5. Reflexivity and Trustworthiness	24
3. RESULTS	26
3.1. Role of Husband.....	28
3.1.1. Father of the household.....	28
3.1.1.1. Leader of the house	28
3.1.1.2. Repeating family patterns in marriage	30

3.1.2. Man is free in marriage	32
3.1.2.1. Having a wandering eye	32
3.1.2.2. Men take less responsibility	33
3.1.2.3. Men are jealous	34
3.2. Unspeakable thing: the Death.....	36
3.2.1. The Body Speaks	36
3.2.1.1. Health problems after the loss of the spouse.....	36
3.2.1.2. Breathing difficulties.....	37
3.2.1.3. Having reflux during the mourning period	38
3.2.1.4. Losing weight.....	38
3.2.1.5. Sleep Deprivation.....	39
3.2.2. Not knowing how to bid farewell	40
3.2.2.1. To avoid talking about death.....	40
3.2.2.2. Hiding the truth	42
3.2.2.3. Failing to bid farewell	43
3.2.3. Not knowing how to explain death	44
3.2.3.1. How to tell the children.....	44
3.2.3.2. Not talking about the father.....	47
3.2.3.3. Concealment of feelings in the family	48
3.3. What is lost with the loss.....	49
3.3.1. Losing the power.....	50
3.3.1.1. Loss of dreams about the family	50
3.3.1.2. Thinking that he will never suffer a deadly illness	52
3.3.1.3. Be on one's own	53
3.3.1.4. Losing comfort in society.....	55
3.3.2. Losing the Father of the household.....	57
3.3.2.1. Lack of the father figure.....	57
3.3.2.2. The Mother cannot fill the father's place.....	59
3.3.2.3. There is no such thing as damage that can be overcome	60
3.3.3. Losing the partner	62
3.3.3.1. Trying to make up for the loss with other men	62
3.3.3.2. Giving up “The birds and the bees”	63
3.4. Ways to deal with death.....	65

3.4.1. Denial of Mortality	65
3.4.1.1. Preferring separation to death	66
3.4.1.2. Not being able to accept the reality of death.....	67
3.4.1.3. Feeling disconnected after loss	70
3.4.2. Moving on after death.....	73
3.4.2.1. Working	73
3.4.2.2. Medication makes it easier to cope	74
3.4.2.3. If there is no spouse, there is a sibling	75
3.4.2.4. Focusing on the child	77
3.5. Being a “Widow”	78
3.5.1. Judgements of the society	78
3.5.1.1. The family becomes more protective	78
3.5.1.2. Being sexually objectified.....	79
3.5.1.3. Society expects the widow to continue her mourning	81
3.5.2. Victimization	81
3.5.2.1. Being both a mom and dad	81
3.5.2.2. Self-pity.....	82
3.5.2.3. Staying alive for the child	83
3.5.2.4. Fight Alone	85
3.5.3. Guiltiness	87
3.5.3.1. “I wish he hadn’t died but we had divorced”	87
3.5.3.2. Feelings of guilt in subsequent relationships	88
3.5.3.3. Being accused.....	89
4. DISCUSSION	92
4.1. Role of Husband.....	93
4.2. Unspeakable thing: the Death.....	96
4.3. What is lost with the loss.....	100
4.4. Ways to deal with death	104
4.5. Being a “Widow”	106
4.6. Discourse of “Widow”	110
4.7. Conclusions, Clinical Implications and Limitations of the Study.....	116
REFERENCES.....	120
APPENDICES	127

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE	127
B. THE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE STUDY	128
C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	129
D. QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.....	131
E. TURKISH VERSION OF THE QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS	133
F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET	135
G. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU.....	169

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Three Types of Lack (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020)	6
Table 2. Descriptive Information about the Participants	21
Table 3. The Stages of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)	23
Table 4. Themes and sub-themes of the interviews	27

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The Borromean Knot	4
Figure 2. The positions of discourses	15
Figure 3. Positions in a Discourse	111
Figure 4. The Structure of the Discourse of "Widow"	112

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Death belongs to the realm of faith. You're right to believe that you will die.

It sustains you.

If you didn't believe it, could you bear the life you have?

If we couldn't totally rely on the certainty that it will end, how could you bear all
this?

— Jacques Lacan

Seminar recording (1972)

The present thesis is a qualitative examination of women's spousal bereavement following the death of their spouse. It aims to examine the experiences of women who have lost their spouse due to an illness or accident. The introduction dwells initially on related concepts, namely mourning, the lack and object a, three orders, three types of lack, cultural issues, love and marriage, and theory of discourse. Subsequently, the aim of the study is presented in detail within the context of the psychoanalytic literature. Finally, the scope of the current study, the rationale and purpose of the study are explained.

1.1. Mourning

Losing someone is considered a painful experience in every stage of life. After every loss, significant changes occur in a person's life, and readapting to the external world seems to be a challenging process. Mourning, according to Sigmund Freud, is a reaction to the death of a loved one or the death of an abstraction that has taken one's position, such as one's country, liberty, or an ideal (1917). In this sense, when someone dies, we lose not only the person themselves, but also the roles we ascribe to them in life, our relationships with them, and more importantly, how they perceive

us. The loss of those with whom we have formed deep bonds ultimately deprives us of the source that bestowed love upon us. However, these bonds, which form over time and are quite complex, do not suddenly break with the death of a person. These bonds are gradually broken over time and gain new meanings. In this sense, although the deceased is never forgotten, it takes some time for the bereaved to process the death and indeed the lost one(s) so that it becomes less painful than it was initially. This period is called mourning.

Freud associates the mourning process with the loss of the object invested by the libido, and it takes a certain time before the libido can separate from the lost object. According to Freud, libido is not only about sexual instinct but also about energy, which can increase or decrease, and which can be displaced as a quantitative concept (1921). Furthermore, he states that "...it never occurs to us to regard it as a pathological condition and to refer it to medical treatment. We rely on it being overcome after a certain lapse of time, and we look upon any interference with it as useless or even harmful" (Freud, 1917, p. 244). While mourning is considered a natural phase that must pass by itself, how each loss affects a person subjectively and in what way each person experiences it are questions that need to be taken into account.

1.2. The Lack and Lacan's Object a

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the term "lack" refers to an inherent and fundamental incompleteness or insufficiency that characterizes the human subject. It is a central concept in understanding human desire and the structure of the unconscious. Lacan (1964/1998) states that a person's desire is the desire of the Other, and desire is not in relation to an object, but in relation to a lack (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). In other words, desire is in relation with the *object a*. The *object a*, which emerges as the object of desire in this context, is always related to what is desired, i.e. the lack (Lacan, 1964/1998). For this reason, object a is positioned precisely in the absence of the Other. However, objects that we think will replace the lack will never be able to completely do so (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

The Real, one of the three orders, arises from that which is outside of language and resists symbolization. Lacan relates the concept of Real with the concept of impossible, claiming that "The real is 'impossible'" (Lacan, 1964/1998). Nevertheless, the subject will continue to relate to the lack that belongs to the Other and will establish a relationship with desire within the framework of this goal (Fink, 1997). In relation to mourning, while Freud emphasized the necessity to disconnect with the lost object as an entity, Lacan stated that mourning is about a need to re-find the object, which is a constant escape from reality (Boothby, 2013). However, it is impossible to find a new object that will completely replace the lost one. It is impossible for the subject to fully comprehend and linguistically express what they have lost nor describe their experiences. As a result, the lost object, in Freudian terms, or the lack, in Lacanian terms, becomes the focal point of mourning.

1.3. Three Orders: the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic

Lacan introduced the concept of three orders: the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. The Borromean knot, which Lacan has used since his early works, depicts the relationship of these three orders to each other topologically. As can be seen in the figure, a Borromean knot is a group of three rings that are connected to each other in such a way that all three will separate if any of them break. A minimum of three rings are required to form the Borromean Chain, but more rings can be added. The feature of this chain is that the entire chain is collapsed when one ring leaves the equation. Lacan utilizes this knot as a mathematical method to show the relationship between the *symbolic*, *imaginary* and *real* orders. In the intersecting set of chains, we see concepts arising from the relationship of orders to each other (Evans, 1996)

These orders are fundamental to Lacan's psychoanalytic framework and offer insights into human subjectivity and the construction of meaning. These three orders are interconnected and shape subjects' experiences of reality. Lacan argues that subjectivity emerges through the interplay between these orders. The grief process starts with a loss and after the loss, the subject encounters the Real. The Real is closely linked to the unconscious and the trauma. It represents repressed desires, anxieties, and unresolved conflicts that surface in unexpected and disruptive ways.

The Real exists outside the realm of language, making its integration into the symbolic order impossible (Lacan, 1964/1998). The Real is, by definition, unrepresentable, and cannot be fully captured or articulated through symbolic systems. Traumatic character for a person is real and is related to this impossibility and resistance to symbolization. Therefore, death is real. This part, which is beyond the imagination and cannot be known, is also the lost object. The destination of the subject, which is structured with lack, is again the lack itself. The existence of this limit is the only condition for the subject to exist.

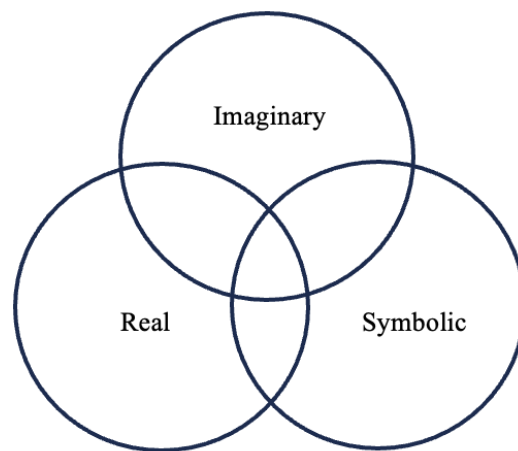


Figure 1. The Borromean Knot

When the person begins to make sense, imagine, and verbalize the Real, death takes its place in the symbolic and imaginary orders. In this way, the subject finds the opportunity to replace the nothingness created by the Real with signifiers. Death is often understood as an imaginary construct rather than a concrete biological event. Meaning can be created by excluding something, not by having it there, as in the game of Fort Da, which Freud's grandson played. The ball itself in this game is not the signifier, but the one who shows it – the grandson of Freud; the ball is actually just an object (Lacan, 1961-1962/2010). The part of this game where the ball is lost rather than returned is important. In this sense, we can treat the signifier as what occurs when the ball is lost; i.e. the lack is encountered. This game is a representation of what is not there – the mother. The absence of the mother is being replaced by the game (Lacan, 1964/1998). The way to establish a relationship with an object is also related to its absence and incompleteness. This game is basically a

practice of interpreting whether an object is still there when it is invisible, and therefore it is not merely about the object. For this reason, we can think of this game as an exercise for perceiving death. When the object disappears, “what is left When that person dies? Are they still there when we can't see them? Can I exist apart from him in his absence? Where does his absence correspond to me?” These questions belong to the Imaginary order. The Imaginary order provides an opportunity for a person to process their loss in their imagination and to attribute meanings to the resulting lack.

The experience of death is shaped by our symbolic and imaginary frameworks. We construct images, narratives, and symbols to represent and understand death, which are deeply influenced by cultural, social, and personal factors. A person may not feel or think of anything at the first moment of hearing about someone's death but carries this loss towards the symbolic area after a certain period of time. Although a person knows that they will die one day, they have to continue living by ignoring it; that is, they, in a sense, resist the notion of death. However, thanks to this avoidance, one finds the opportunity to become a subject by moving their existence beyond the body. In other words, the subject relocates beyond this lack or lost object. All memories and expectations related to the lost object are symbolically re-processed and the person becomes ‘free and uninhibited’ again (Freud, 1917).

1.4. Three Types of Lack

Lacan refers to the concept of lack in his fourth seminar (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). Within the development process of the subject, the three forms of lack are evaluated in the context of the missing objects accompanying these forms and the perpetrators who are the agents of the lack. The three forms of lack are presented as castration, frustration, and privation, while the missing objects are evaluated as the imaginary phallus, the real breast and the symbolic phallus, respectively (*Table 1*). The real father is treated as the agent of lack in castration, the symbolic mother as the agent of frustration, and the imaginary father as the agent of privation (Lacan, 1956–1957/2020).

Table 1. Three Types of Lack (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020)

AGENT	LACK	OBJECT
Real father	Symbolic castration	Imaginary phallus
Symbolic mother	Imaginary frustration	Real breast
Imaginary father	Real privation	Symbolic phallus

Castration, one of the three types of lack, is closely related to the Oedipus complex. According to Freud, the first object of love for both sexes is the mother, who provides basic care. Accordingly, it could be claimed that the Oedipus complex is related to wanting to possess the mother rather than wanting to be with the mother (Freud, 1925). However, beyond the possession of the mother, the mother has the child and what protects her from being an extension of her mother in the event of an object of pleasure is the imaginary phallus. While Freud deconstructed castration into a biological definition (but not in terms of anatomical differences between the sexes), Lacan associated castration with the handling of an imaginary object by a real father. This phallus is an imaginary phallus because it does not have to be a real biological organ. A job, a friend, or a preoccupation that the mother, who may be a father substitute, is interested in and intervenes between the mother and the child, can serve the same function. However, this complex cannot be claimed to be resolved and overcome at a certain age period. There is always something incomplete and missing. Traces of how this complex could not be overcome perfectly in the clinic can also be observed to some degree (Freud, 1933). With castration, the subject gives up being the object of their mother's desire; therefore, the subject rejects the endless and unlimited jouissance that their mother can provide them. In other words, the subject will only be able to access the possibility of having an imaginary phallus through a symbolic function by giving up jouissance (Lacan, 1958/2006).

Frustration appears as another type of lack. The object of frustration is the real breast, and the agent is the symbolic mother. In the symbiotic relationship between the mother and child, the mother may not give the child the breast that they need at some point. Until this point in time, the breast functions as the common object between the mother and the child, and the child is an extension of the mother through

the breast. However, the mother cannot give her breast to the child every time they want it. At this point, the breast, which is taken for granted to be deserved by the child from birth, gains a new meaning, and turns into an object that the mother does not give to the child. Therefore, the fact that the breast is not given to the child is based on a completely different reason, while the child thinks that this is an obstacle for him (Evans, 1996). This also leads to frustration in the child. As a result, the demand for love intrudes with physical needs. Although the object of this type of lack is a real breast, frustration is a concept that is experienced in life. The subject experiences frustration by assuming that in the relationship with the Other, he thinks that what he is entitled to is not given to him and that his demand for love is not met. In the context of a spouse's death, it is also seen that during the mourning period, the opportunities provided by this late husband to his wife are taken away with death. For example, even if a woman assumes responsibility for her child to the same extent before her husband's death, she can refer to this as a "burden" imposed upon her after her husband's death. What is missing here is not the objects that are no longer provided, but the disappointment caused by the fact that this object was taken away by someone (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

Lacan defines privation as another type of lack. The agent of privation is the imaginary father, and its object is the symbolic phallus. In other words, privation is the revealing of the phallus, which functions symbolically, by the imaginary father (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). The imaginary father is the father of the child's imagination and often does not have much of a relationship with the father in reality. The imaginary father disturbs the peace of the child by intervening in a mother-child relationship from the earliest times. The imaginary father has a position like the father of the Totem and the Taboo: he is both all-powerful and forbidding. Therefore, for children, not following their father's rules means that the child must lead his own life (Freud, 1913). This father is imaginary because this father no longer exists. But in order to put the father in such a position, it is necessary both to accept that he is all-powerful and to imagine that he is the one who imposed the ban. This father either occupies a glorified and ideal position, or he is seen as destroying the child's life and taking everything away from him, which in both cases is all-powerful, but cannot be said to coincide with the real father. As a result, what is missing is that the

imaginary father, not the real father, deprives the child of phallus. The reason is that in the Real, there is no room for the lack; the absence of a penis is not a lack for a woman. The incomplete perception of this can only be possible in the imaginary order (Evans, 1996). As a result, privation can only be perceived by symbolizing the lack. Just as being mortal allows us to live, so it will not be possible to live in the absence of death, because existence requires being dead, and mortality gives us the opportunity to live (Kütahneçi, 2009).

1.5. Bereavement and Cultural Issues

The rituals performed after death (which can vary across various beliefs and cultures) fulfill the function of providing a place for this lost object in the symbolic order, and these rituals are very important for mourners since they add new chains to a network of signifiers. The Symbolic order refers to the realm of language, culture, and social systems that shape our identities and mediate our relationship with the world (Lacan, 1966/2006). Within the Symbolic order, death is represented and understood through cultural and linguistic symbols. Different cultures have distinct systems of beliefs, rituals, and narratives surrounding death, which provide frameworks for comprehending its meaning and significance. Human beings, the only living species who are aware of their mortality, are able to repress this fact at the same time and live as if they were never to die. Although it is known that death is an inevitable end for every living being, this is an inevitably obscure phenomenon. This has to do with the fact that no living human knows what death is. For this reason, some cultural references are resorted to in order to cope with this obscurity of death.

In the Turkish culture, one can see burial ceremonies, meals distributed to those who come to the funeral after death, the grave, and the vase/pot in one corner of the grave as elements of the symbolization process. These symbolic representations help individuals navigate the existential questions and anxieties associated with death. As stated by Lacan, a vase signifies a lack or nothing; in other words, it creates a void and thereby introduces the possibility of filling it (Lacan, 1959-1960/1992). The concepts of presence and absence are inseparable and give birth to each other, and symbolic order is shaped by the fundamental opposition of absence and presence

(Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). Thus, mourning ends with breaking the ties with the lost object, but it will never be forgotten. Within the Symbolic order, there are attempts to overcome the existential anxiety triggered by death. One way is through the pursuit of symbolic immortality, where individuals strive for a lasting impact or legacy that extends beyond their physical existence. Thus, the lost object will leave a mark on the person (Freud, 1917), but it will be remembered in its new web of signifiers.

1.6. Love and Marriage

Until this point in the present study, a theoretical explanation has been made of the loss of a loved one based on the concepts of mourning and lack. In short, grieving after the death of a loved one entails readjusting to an absence where there was previously a presence. The mourning that we define in this mutual relationship of presence and absence in relation with the Other essentially provides us with the definition of love (Boothby, 2013). In seminar X Lacan said that "...love is to give what one hasn't got. This is even the principle behind the castration complex. To have the phallus, to be able to make use of it, [one] must not be it" (1962-1963/2014). The concepts of love and death share certain similarities and connections. Both love and death are associated with fundamental aspects of human subjectivity and desire. In this context, human desire is shaped around the lack of the Other. In the event of the death of a loved one, the subject must change its position in the symbolic order since there is no longer anyone to regulate the relation of the subject to the *object a*.

In this sense, partners have a different position from biological relatives. Unlike the mother, father and child, a partner is chosen to be a life partner and drawn into one's life. For this reason, a relationship with a partner is something two people have established, unlike the traditional view of closeness brought about by blood ties. Owing to the traditional view of closeness, the relationship between the married couple continues to exist with a third party have blood ties dominantly intervening between the couple (Lacan, 1938). The relationship between a couple in a love relationship begins by imagining the partner in the imaginary order. While a person has reasonable explanations as to why they are with the person they are with on a

conscious level, the reason why that person was chosen in a love relationship carries traces of the unconscious. However, there are limited studies in the literature on the conceptualization and theoretical foundation of love. Lacan said that the subject of love, which has drawn little attention in the literature, is essentially the only thing mentioned in analytical discourse (Lacan, 1972-1973/1998).

Although love is fundamental for all human beings, it is not possible to fully express and attend to it at the level of consciousness. The most important reason why love is such a complex concept is that it bears traces of the archaic times, when language did not yet exist. A person who comes into the world as an object of love before falling in love (Freud, 1925). In the parents' imagination, how he will be loved, what roles will be assigned to them, and how his caregivers establish relationships are crucial to relationships that the child will establish in their future life. In this respect, it can be asserted that the first romantic relationship is usually established with the mother, and then it fades away throughout the stages of development. However, the child realizes that the mother, who was once perfect and omnipotent and fulfilled all of the child's needs, is actually flawed and has different expectations from the child. Although it is a frustrating process, it is an essential step for their subjective existence. For this reason, partners offer a possibility where these relationships can be maintained and are not disallowed again.

Love is positioned in the complex interaction between the imaginary, symbolic and real orders. Love begins with an image, and then strengthens in a highly symbolic order, including the social and cultural roles that the relationship brings. But there is always the Real underlying all of this. A person initially attributes his own ideals, fantasies, and the way he desires to the loved one. In other words, the person who is essentially the object of desire dreams that the loved one will complete himself. But these dreams never have a direct connection with the beloved; it's a fallacy. Just as a person does not know exactly how they are seen, so it is the same with the beloved one (Demandante, 2014).

Similar to the way a child who identifies with the image in the mirror defines themselves through the eyes of their mother and this is a misconception, a love affair

also bears illusions in parallel with this basic fallacy. In other words, the ego is in a misrecognition or misunderstanding (Fink, 2016). The Subject wants to see themselves in certain ways, and they choose to ignore their characteristics that do not fit into this picture. The reason for this is that the Subject believes in being strong and complete, like the people they saw around them when they were a baby. Likewise, the Subject also wants to see the beloved one as being strong, complete, and perfect, and it is not difficult to initially ignore things that do not fit into this picture.

As Lacan said, two are not enough to love; a third is needed (Lacan, 1972-1973/1998). In other words, with the Other's desire also entering the scene, love is moved to the relationship, and therefore to the symbolic order. At this point, the relationship brings the one who loves and the one who is loved together and closer in some partnerships by moving out of the imaginary. The symbolic order represents the field of language, culture, and social norms. Love in the symbolic order is deeply influenced by social and cultural norms, as it involves individuals' communication with and understanding of each other.

Above all, there is an aspect of love that is related to reality. Lacan says in his tenth seminar that "Only love allows *jouissance* to underestimate desire" (1962-1963/2014). Love is a third that brings together two, consisting of me and other. The Real order in Lacan's theory is the order that exists beyond the symbolic and the imaginary. The Real often represents the traumatic aspects of human existence due to the fact that it is unmediated, raw and a place where meaning does not exist. If there is no lack, there is no desire. Desire always tries to eliminate and compensate for this lack. To love someone is to express to that person that one is lacking something and that this lack is related to that person. In a way, it is about entrusting the loved one with what is missing. Therefore, being in love is also related to accepting the lack (Soler, 2003/2006); on the other hand, every conversation is an expression that we are lacking in some way, we want to be heard every time we talk, we want our demand to be seen, answered and loved (Lacan, 1960-1961/2015).

But what is missing in a person is not hidden in the beloved, and that is the core problem of love. The loved one also loves what they usually do not have, but dream

of having. It is necessary to preserve this lack in order for the relationship to be possible. For this very reason, Lacan said, “There is no such thing as a sexual relationship (*il n’y a pas de rapport sexuel*)” (1972-1973/1998). This does not mean that sexual activity or relationships do not exist. Instead, it refers to the idea that there is a gap, a lack of understanding and communication between couples. It also highlights the difficulties that men and women have in fully understanding each other and having a harmonious, satisfying sexual relationship.

What does a person lose with the death of a spouse in particular? To discuss this question, it is necessary to go way back and look at the foundations of civilization. Freud was immediately placed at the center of his theory of symbolic law with his discovery of the unconscious because, while talking about unconscious mechanisms in “Interpretation of Dreams” and “the Oedipus Complex”, he based the theory of unconscious on the laws of marriage and kinship relations (Lacan, 1966/2006). It can be maintained that the best thing that can keep men and women together is symbolic. In this context, marriage is possible due to all factors that can be considered as restrictions (duties, children, religious and economic reasons, etc.) and with the absence of pleasure. The signifier is the purest symbol of lack, and this lack is the driving force of desire (Gürsel, 2017).

1.7. Theory of Discourse

Lacan defines discourse as the function of a social bond based on language (1969-1970/2007). In other words, the concept of discourse is addressed in terms of the ability to decipher the role of language in relationships between subjects and the nature of the social bonds in these relationships. Lacan emphasized that there is an important difference between subjects and machines. The meaning found in speech is different from the information found in machine language because speech is sensitive to time and desire in a way that language is not (Marshall, 1994). Speech, which is something produced by humans, is very different from language. Language is something that is uniquely possessed by humans and loaded with human qualities. Speech produces a unique meaning because speech is a "language" that is uniquely "structured" by subjects. In order to understand speech, it is necessary to understand what it means to be a subject, as opposed to a language.

Lacan mentioned discourse in 1969 and 1970 in detail in his seminar. The title of this seminar has been translated by Russel Grigg as “The Other Side of Psychoanalysis”. The fact that this title was given to the seminar is related to the discourses that take place in the seminar. In this seminar, Lacan mentioned four discourses: the discourse of the master, the discourse of the university, the discourse of the hysteric and the discourse of the analyst. What Lacan emphasized when he said discourse is a fact that determines the subjective word or deals with the structure that determines the discourse of subjects. The positioning of the subject according to different types of discourse was covered in this seminar. The fact that the subject is in any discourse does not necessarily require the subject to inevitably use the same discourse under all circumstances. For example, a person who is in a hysterical discourse may also position the analyst's discourse or university discourse, but since the discourse determines the subject's positioning, this is not something that can be changed instantly.

Lacan has presented a new perspective to decipher the relationship between discourse and subjects. With these four basic discourses that Lacan has created, he has developed a formalization logic to understand social structures and subjective positioning and has created a very rich infrastructure to understand these discourses (1972-1973/1998). In Lacan's theory, there are four positions and some symbols to be placed inside these positions. With this formulation, Lacan has studied the way to understand the subject's position in various social structures and how this creates an impact on the subjects. These four discourses are formed by the displacement of these symbols between these four fixed positions. To understand the four basic discourses mentioned by Lacan, it is necessary to first understand the positions and symbols in the discourses. Lacan's use of mathemes in explaining discourse in this way gives him the advantage of being able to embody very complex structures in the symbolic order; similarly he prefers to use topology in his seminars. The biggest advantage of using mathemes is that it prevents the possible occurrence of differences while imagining, allowing it to keep everyone in the symbolic order (Quackelbeen et al., 1994).

There are many communication theories in the literature in relation to discourse. These communication theories usually focus on how to communicate effectively.

Communicating effectively in these theories refers to the act of transferring the intended message that the communicator wants to express directly across without any occurrence of misunderstandings between speaker and the listener. Lacan's discourse theory, however, is completely different. In fact, according to Lacan, communication should always fail so that the subject can continue to talk. The reason why the subject continues to talk is precisely because of the failure in the communication. When we look at the positions from this perspective, the first position belongs to the initiator of the discourse, that is, the agent. When someone is talking, they are talking to someone else. So, there is an address or the Other. The aim is to achieve an effect as a result of this relationship established between the agent and the Other. That is, there is a product formed as an effect of this discourse. In order to embody it in a very basic and simple way, it can be thought that someone is talking to someone else, and as a result, a product emerges. The difference brought about by the psychoanalytic point of view lies in the fourth and, in fact, the first position. This position is the truth. Freud said that although the truth remains an unknown for the person who speaks, when someone speaks, they are guided by this truth. In this sense, it can be said that truth is the motor power or the driving force of discourse (Schroeder, 2008).

For this reason, it is seen that the agent is actually just the apparent power of the discourse. The power that activates the discourse is the truth, and it is located in a position that is suppressed by the discourse. Glimpses of truth can be traced in slips of tongue, jokes, symptoms, and dreams. In the Lacanian theory, it is not possible to put this truth completely into words. Somehow, there is always something remaining that cannot be linguistically expressed in. The truth can only be expressed partially (the half-speaking of the truth). Here, as a result, there will be a repetition and the speech will be continuing. "The truth has spoken" can be clearly observed in this relationship (Verhaeghe, 1995). Lacan here sees the subject as a passive element of the chain of exponents; that is, the agent manifests himself in discourse only as a fake agent or un semblant. It is the truth that is the main driving force. In other words, the product that appears when a person is talking to someone else, that is, speech, carries traces of the unconscious, and the truth in this speech is revealed in a person's speech or actions. At this point, the subject cannot be both the agent and the

other position and forced to make a choice due to the fact that a loss inevitably arises. For example, it is not very possible for the subject both to speak and to be aware of what he is talking about when he speaks (Lesourd, 2018). The relationships of the mentioned positions with each other can be monitored by following the arrows depicted in *Figure 2* below.

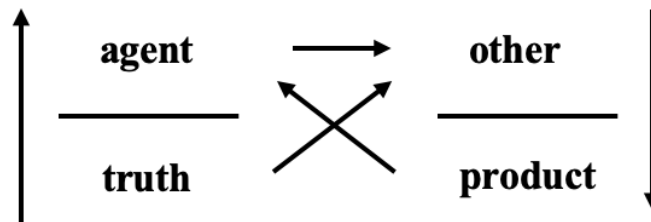


Figure 2. The positions of discourses

Lacan explains discourse via four positions and four symbols. All four discourses mentioned by Lacan exemplify a desire that is in a certain social relationship and the failure to achieve it. The character of these four discourses is determined by the symbols that are placed in these positions. While the positions remain fixed, the locations of the symbols change. These four symbols are actually the symbols that Lacan also used when talking about the unconscious and the structure of language (S_1 , S_2 , $\$$, a). These four symbols also have functions that differ according to the discourse positions they take part in, and they can be placed in 24 different positions. However, Lacan has addressed these symbols in a certain order (S_1 , S_2 , $\$$, a) and maintaining this order, he worked on four discourses (Lacan, 1969-1970/2007).

S_1 , or the master signifier, dominates in every discourse because it is the one that gives meaning to all other signifiers. S_1 is the beginning of the chain of signifiers, and it is impossible to reach it because it is the one that has now been suppressed by discourse by entering the language. S_2 or knowledge represents the chain of signifiers. Since the meaning can never define the subject, it always sends it to another signifier, and it disappears forever. The subject ($\$$) is the division of the ego and the unconscious by language, that is, the result of alienation in language (Lesourd, 2018). There is a loss produced by the representation of the signifier of the subject for another signifier, which is object a , that is, the object that is the cause of

desire. No signifier can fully represent the subject; each signifier sends to another signifier while representing the subject, and this continues eternally. It is about a remainder that cannot be represented in the signifier chain, which resists representation which is an object a. In the case where one signifier represents the subject with another signifier, there is a crack or a gap that occurs. It can also be considered as an excess of pleasure or surplus enjoyment (Bracher, 1994).

According to Lacan's theory, discourses determine the nature of social connection in inter-subject relations (Fink, 1996). In addition to these four basic discourses, some analysts have used the mathemes developed by Lacan to understand different social ties and have studied the discourses of religion, education, politics, and psychological structures (Salecl, 1994; Casenave et al., 1994; Garcia et al., 1994; Apollon, 1994). In this respect, the study of the discourses of women who lost their spouses at an early stage is important in order to understand their position in social relations and the structure of their discourses.

1.8. The Aim of The Study

Based on this background information, it can be argued that the mourning process after the loss of a partner revolves around the lack of the person. However, the literature on the mourning process regarding the loss of a spouse reveals that men and women experience this process differently. After the mourning is over, the society expects the man to make a fresh beginning in life, but the woman to maintain her widow status throughout her lifetime (Şirin, 2016).

In Turkey, studies on bereaved women tend to focus on the problems women face after a loss (rapid impoverishment, difficulties in finding a job, new responsibilities they have to cope with, changes in their relations with their families and environments, and social discrimination). Findings of these research studies reveal that these women feel lonely after losing their husband, lead a restricted life style to protect themselves, and refrain from engaging in social occasions (Koçyiğit, 2019; Şirin, 2016; Uzunkaya Seçen, 2017; Öksüzler, 2015). However, of the existing studies, which seek to provide answers to help widowed women overcome the

grieving process faster and easier, hardly any have examined the subjective experiences of widowed women from a psychoanalytic perspective.

In light of this information, the primary aim of the current study was to study the experiences of women who lost their spouse before the age of 45 owing to an accident or illness. The study sought to answer the following research questions

1. How do widowed women experience and perceive the loss of their spouse?
2. How do widowed women convey what is lost after the death of a partner?
3. How does this loss subjectively affect their identities and roles as a woman and a wife?
4. What does marriage and spouse mean to a widowed woman?

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The present chapter describes the research methodology employed in the study, the method of sample selection, the procedure followed, the methods of data analysis, reflexivity and trustworthiness.

2.1. The Research Methodology

In the current research, the qualitative research methodology was employed, and the author's epistemological stance was in line with structuralist and social constructivist views. The constructionist and the relational approach are based on the assumption that the world and subjectivity are inseparably intertwined, and therefore there is no fixed reality. In this sense, the individual and knowledge cannot be separated from each other (Gearing, 2004). In addition, the epistemological stance of the researcher, according to the Lacanian theory, suggests that knowledge is in a structure that includes the researcher and cannot be evaluated independently of the researcher. Accordingly, signs do not have a fixed meaning and, since they are specific to the Subject, they hold meanings within the structure of one's experiences (Baltacı, 2019).

From a psychoanalytic perspective, qualitative research has many advantages over quantitative research. First, qualitative research refers to the subjectivity of the person rather than generalizations. Another advantage is that data is usually based on sessions and case studies as in clinical practice and it can aim at the development of a theory or be used to expand the reach of existing theories, such as psychoanalysis. (Vanheule, 2002)

Thematic analysis (TA) was used in this study. TA is a method used to systematically identify, organize, and provide insight into the patterns of meaning in

a data set. By focusing on meaning in a dataset, TA allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences. For this reason, this method is a way to determine what is common in the way a topic is described and to make sense of these commonalities. However, what is common is not necessarily meaningful or important. The meaning patterns that the TA allows the researcher to define should be important in relation to the specific topic and the research question being investigated. Analysis, as in some qualitative research, produces the answer to a question, even if the specific question answered arises only through analysis. There are many patterns of meaning that can be identified in any data set, and the purpose of analysis consists of partnerships that can answer a specific research question (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Unlike other qualitative research analysis methods, thematic analysis does not hinge on any pre-existing theoretical framework, and so it can be used within different theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides researchers with a flexible and useful research tool that allows the data to be explained in a rich, detailed but complex way. Although thematic analysis does not impose any methodology on the researcher, it is critical for the researcher to have a robust theoretical and epistemological stance for high quality research (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Moreover, the theoretical framework and methodologies used in the thematic analysis must be congruent with the researcher's questions and decisions throughout the study. Therefore, an appropriate analysis to utilize is inductive analysis, which is a data coding process that is done without trying to fit the data to a predetermined coding framework or the analytical bias of the researcher. In this sense, such a thematic analysis is entirely data-driven with an inductive approach. (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

One of the most important benefits of TA is its flexibility. Qualitative analytical methods can be roughly divided into two parts. In the first part, there are methods that depend on a specific theoretical or epistemological position. Examples of these include conversation analysis (CA) and interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). On the other hand, there are methods that are essentially independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied within the framework of a number of

theoretical and epistemological approaches. TA, which is studied within both essentialist and structuralist paradigms, could be considered to fall in the second category. Thanks to its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool that can provide a potentially rich and detailed, but complex data account (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given the advantages of the flexibility of thematic analysis, it is important to note that we are not trying to limit this flexibility. Along with the freedom provided by this flexibility, it is very important to explain the analysis clearly as the method is applied and to detail how the analysis is used as a method in order to provide consistent analysis. In this way, it is possible to make a methodologically robust analysis without limiting the flexibility brought by thematic analysis. For this reason, in qualitative analyses, it is very important for the researcher to be clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it, as well as including "how" the analysis was performed in the reports (Attride-Stirling, 2001). In summary, thematic analysis was utilized in the present study for these reasons specifically because it allows for such detailed research of the data as well as allowing flexibility in the examination of the data without imposing an epistemological view upon the researcher.

2.2. Sample Selection

The aim of the present study was to investigate the experience of women who lost their husband at an early stage of life. To this end, purposive sampling was utilized. The criteria for participant selection were established as follows: (1) being a female (2) being a widow who lost her spouse before the age of 45 (3) having children from the spouse she lost and (4) being an educated person holding at least a university degree.

In the literature, widows under 45 years of age are considered as young widows, and many studies have shown that if women experience widowhood early in life, it causes more stress than it would at an old age (Derman, 1999). For this reason, this study aims to focus on people who lost their spouse at a young age, and the age limit was set at 45 years of age . Although studies in the literature have revealed that men or women who lose their spouse undergo a mourning period, both genders

experience this period differently (Şirin, 2016). This study focuses on women's experiences and interpretations of mourning after the loss of their spouse. Hence the fact that at least one year had passed since the loss of their spouse was determined as a criterion. The loss of a husband at a younger age is an unexpected situation compared to a loss at a later phase in life. Unexpected death in early phases in life makes this situation more complicated than expected death at old ages. In this case, the young widow has to confront her new social status that emerges after the change in the marital status, and she has to reorganize the economic and social relations outside the home to maintain her life (Silverman, 2004).

Table 2. Descriptive Information about the Participants

Name	Education	The Cause of the Spouse's Death	Current Age / Age at which the spouse was lost	Number of Children
Seren	University	Lung Cancer	52/38	1 son
Büşra	University	Lymphoma	40/33	1 son
Ceyda	University	Motor accident	38/35	2 (son & daughter)
Deniz	University	Choking	52/26	2 daughters
Elif	University	Heart Attack	54/34	2 (son & daughter)
Fatma	University	Heart Attack	42/40	2 (son & daughter)
Güler	Junior College	Colon Cancer	49/39	2 (son & daughter)
Hayat	Junior College	Gas Poisoning	63/37	2 (son & daughter)

In the present research, the participants were selected based on education level (at least university graduate) and the condition of having children. These two criteria enabled the sample to be homogeneous in accordance with the research questions of the sample. Thus, it was possible to investigate the experiences of educated and child-bearing women who lost their spouse at a young age in a more detailed way in the study. The study focused on how losing a spouse through an acute or chronic illness or an accident had an impact on the grieving process. In thematic analysis,

there are no guidelines for the sample size related to the saturation of data, and saturation can be an elastic concept (Morse, 1995). In this study, which is based on an inductive approach, the sample size depends on the saturation of data and themes. As a result, eight women who meet the mentioned criteria and who live in different provinces of Turkey were included in the study (see Table 2).

2.3. Procedure

After obtaining the necessary permission from the Middle East Technical University (METU) Human Research Ethics Committee, the research study was announced on social media. Subsequently, appointments were made with the potential individuals who could be included in the study and interviewed. Interviews were performed through either a Skype or a Whatsapp video call. First of all, the subject provided informed consent and a declaration that they were willing to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. Subsequently, semi-structured questions were asked in the interview. No scales or questionnaires were used. The interview with each participant was completed in a single session and the length of each interview ranged between 30 to 90 minutes. Verbatim transcriptions were made of the interviews. In interpretive qualitative methodology, deciphering is considered to be one of the essential steps of data analysis and viewed as an interpretative process by which meanings are formed; thus, it is not a mere mechanical process by which verbalized sounds are translated to paper. (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). The data collected in this context were analyzed within the scope of thematic analysis and the steps of the analysis were followed by Braun and Clark (2006). In this context, the research was concluded by interpreting the results.

Special attention has been paid to meeting ethical standards throughout the entire process. In this sense, in order to protect the privacy of the participants, information about their identities has been kept confidential while using and publishing the data. In addition, the names of the participants and their relatives have been changed to ensure anonymity, as well as the names of certain cities and institutions that would disclose the identity.

2.4. Methods of Analysis

The analysis process begins with the researcher identifying the issues that could be of interest and seeking the patterns of meaning in the data; this search can continue during the data collection process. The final stage of the data analysis process is the reporting stage of the themes, that is, the content in the data, which are abstract structures that the researcher identified before, during, and after the analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The analysis entails the analysis of the entire available data set, the constant oscillation between the content encoded from the analyzed data and the data produced. Therefore, writing is an integral part of the analysis process. The writing process should start with the creation of ideas and possible coding schemes in the first place and continue throughout the entire coding and analysis process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The stages of the thematic analysis created by Braun and Clarke are presented in Table 3. Considering the stages, thematic analysis is not just a linear process where one stage is accomplished before moving on to the next. In contrast, it is an iterative process that requires switching back and forth between stages.

Table 3. The Stages of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic „map“ of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

In accordance with the stages of thematic analysis, the verbatim transcripts of the recorded interviews were produced in the first stage. Punctuations were not used to see possible side meanings when writing out the transcripts. Subsequently, the transcribed document was uploaded to the MAXQDA program. The entire coding and analysis process was completed with the help of MAXQDA, which is a highly flexible tool that provides the researcher with exceptional options for editing and reorganizing the data compilation and code system, making any changes to the source texts and notes, and enabling qualitative analysis (Kuckartz, 2014) Thanks to this program, the researcher was able to make changes that he found essential. Subsequently, the transcribed data was read repeatedly, during which notes were taken and new codes were created. In the next stage, these codes were edited, and sub-themes started to be created. Then, these sub-themes were grouped under broader themes. The data collected from each participant underwent this entire data analysis process. After the themes created were repeatedly edited, they took their final form. In this respect, the analysis was not conducted in a linear way, and the results section was created by making new adjustments and additions that were constantly backward-looking throughout the entire study.

2.5. Reflexivity and Trustworthiness

Reflexivity, one of the most important issues to be considered in qualitative research, is the researcher's relationship with the research. Researchers are also a part of the social world within the subject they study, and, thus, can influence the research (Aull Davies, 1999). Hence, the researcher needs to consider both her role in creating research data and how she subjectively affects the information produced as a result of the research. In qualitative research, the researcher cannot remain neutral, nor passive or detached from the research (Given, 2008). For this reason, as the researcher, I kept a diary in which I examined my thoughts, feelings, and position about the research throughout the whole process. In this way, I transparently included my position and reflexive stance in the research.

I am a clinical psychologist with an analytical orientation, and I am pursuing my doctoral degree in the field of clinical psychology at Middle East Technical

University. I have been interested in Lacanian psychoanalysis since 2016, and I have been trying to improve myself both theoretically and practically in this field. In addition, I am also in the process of psychoanalysis myself.

My interest in the loss of a spouse essentially originates from my family history. My grandfather passed away on a trip abroad when my grandmother was 29 years old. I heard many stories from my grandmother, who had to start a new life with her two children, about the difficulties she had at that time. Her stories were based on the challenges she faced at the time. Listening to the stories I was told, I used to believe that my grandfather's death and the lack he left behind formed the entire family's history. Even though social and financial challenges were frequently discussed, my grandmother rarely described what it was like to lose her spouse and how she dealt with it as a young woman. This has always been a subject that has piqued my interest. Many years later, when I was going over old photos of my mother, I saw that there were gaps in some places, which intrigued my curiosity. My father told me that my mother had previously been engaged, but her fiancé had been a martyr. Although my mother experienced a similar loss with my grandmother, it made me wonder why this topic was never brought up. Later, I started to wonder what these women who had lost their husband experienced and what was underneath the unspoken. Nevertheless, I could never openly ask them how they felt and what they experienced about these losses because I refrained from raising this issue, which was regarded almost like a taboo in the family. Since I started conducting research for my dissertation, I have also experienced the loss of a pet, a family elder, and a long-term relationship myself. My personal experiences during this research, where I have studied loss in depth, have brought me to a different point in studying this topic. My experiences have enabled me to make sense of death, separations, and life in general. Over time, I realized that trying to understand these concepts was my main motivation in this dissertation. In addition, my curiosity about marriage, loss of spouse and bereavement was what made me choose this research topic. With all this information, I believe that this inquiry, which began from a subjective standpoint, will significantly contribute to the psychoanalytic literature as well as future studies on mourning.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. *Table 4* presents the themes and sub-themes in a specific order. The first theme is in relation to the roles attributed to the husband from the women`s point of view. The information related to this theme describes how the husband is defined by the woman in terms of the functional roles assumed by the man as a husband and a father in the family. The second theme is related to the traumatic character of death. In regards to this theme, it was mentioned by the participants that what they experienced immediately after the loss of their spouse could not be expressed in language. In the third theme, it is mentioned that not only is the spouse himself lost, but the meanings that the spouse bears and references to the power related position that comes with being married in society are also lost. In this respect, widows speak of finding themselves in a position of fundamental denial of mortality after the loss of their spouse, and they seek new ways to deal with it. They mention that the loss they have experienced has started to be experienced differently over time, and they substitute the lack they experience in different ways. Finally, the last theme shows that they have found an identity again in society as a “widow”.

Table 4. Themes and sub-themes of the interviews

Role of husband	Unspeakable thing: the death	What is lost with the loss	Ways to deal with death	Being a "Widow"
Father of the household * Leader of the house * Repeating family patterns in marriage	The body speaks * Health problems after the loss of spouse * Breathing difficulties * Having reflux during the mourning period * Losing weight * Sleep deprivation	Losing the power * Loss of dreams about the family * Thinking that he will never suffer a deadly illness * Be on one's own * Losing comfort in society	Denial of mortality * Preferring separation to death * Not being able to accept the reality of death * Feeling disconnected after loss	Judgments of society * The family becomes more protective * Being sexually objectified * Society expects the widow to continue her mourning
Man is free in marriage * Having a wandering eye * Men take less responsibility * Men are jealous	Not knowing how to bid farewell * to avoid talking about death * Hiding the truth * Failing to bid farewell	Losing the father of the household * Lack of the father figure * Mother cannot fill the father's place * There is no such thing as damage that can be overcome	Moving on after death * Working * Medication makes it easier to cope. * If there is no spouse, there is a sibling * Focusing on the child	Victimization * Being both mom and dad * Self-pity * Staying alive for the child * Fight alone
	Not knowing how to explain death * How to tell the children * Not talking about the father * Concealment of feelings in the family	Losing the partner * Trying to make up for the loss with other men * Giving up "The birds and the bees"		Guiltiness * "I wish he hadn't died but we had divorced" * Feelings of guilt in subsequent relationships * Being accused

3.1. Role of Husband

In this section, the husband's position in the family is mentioned. The discourses of the female participants reveal that they seem to view their husband as the father of the household and the head of the family. It has been mentioned that the man's freedom is not restricted after marriage and that they are prone to cheating.

3.1.1. Father of the household

This theme is named with reference to the fact that the man is the father of everyone in the house. In this sense, the phrase “Father of the household” is an expression unique to the Turkish culture. Thus, the husband holds various positions in the family. In addition to being a husband, the husband's position as a father is also dominant in the female participants' discourse.

3.1.1.1. Leader of the house

Seren said that in the Turkish culture, regardless of education and cultural level, the man is considered the head of the family. She mentioned that it brings in a system that governs decisions in the house, and perhaps having a leader in the house makes women feel safe.

...it is the same in our society too the man is the head the leader of the household despite being educated people and I as a girl who grew up without a father yes a man is something like this; our internal feelings are sort of feminist but, well, you know we are educated and we have proven ourselves to our families et cetera et cetera but still we would like in the house you know what they say a mature man a strong man behind us someone to consult to take decisions to together...” Seren

“..bizim toplumumuzda da öyle erkek evin reisidir lideridir e biz de okumuş etmiş kesim de olsak hele bi de ben babasız büyümüş bir kız çocuğu olarak evet erkek böyle iç duygularımız feministtir falan ama şey hani okumuşuz kendimizi ispatlamışız ailemize karşı falan filan ama yine de isteriz ki evde bir ne derler ağır başlı bir adam olsun bir arkamızda güç olsun gene ona danışalım biz kararlarımızı birlikte alalım..” Seren (Original)

Seren mentioned that her parents had divorced when she was in middle school, and she said that her father could not satisfy his fatherhood role much because of his

addictions and tendencies to violent behavior during that time. Thus, Seren mentions that she fulfilled her wish to have a father, perhaps in some way, with her husband, and that by getting married she may have found a father figure that she could rely on.

“...Were I always longing for a father feeling yes I was actually I had found a little of that in my husband too you know having a guardian someone to lean your back on you know it happens to us women though it wasn't a big love that's what I had felt for him...” Seren

“..hep bir baba duygusuna hasret misin hasrettim aslında eşimde onu da birazcık bulmuştum hani bir kollayıcı olmak şöyle bir sırtını yaslamak işte hani biz kadınlarda olur da onu da çok aslında büyük aşk değilse de bile benim ona hissettiğim oydu..” Seren (Original)

Ceyda stated that her husband was the best father she had ever seen in the world, and although there were problems in their marriage, she stated that as a father, he took very good care of her children and took responsibility for them.

“... meanwhile he could be the best father on earth he's an incredibly good father to his children he plays with them very well he's fantastic he's you know such fun funny well he's not picky about money...I mean there were points where he made me feel very good I don't know for instance we always went on holidays we never considered the expenses...” Ceyda

“..ya dünyada gördüğüm en iyi baba olabilir bu arada çocuklarına karşı inanılmaz iyi bir baba çok güzel oynar müthiş böyle şeydir falan eğlencelidir komiktir paradan hiç takılmaz işte...yani çok iyi hissettirdiği yerler de vardı işte ne bileyim hep biz tatile gittik mesela hiçbir şeyin hesabını yapmadık..” Ceyda (Original)

Fatma said that her husband undertook the financial responsibility of the family. In fact, he tried not to reflect any financial difficulties onto his family. When such is the case, Fatma added, taking on the financial burden of the family relaxes relationships and prevents quarrels indirectly.

“...I mean he couldn't say there's no money so that he wouldn't upset us or maybe not to quarrel at that moment I mean not to make things worse Perhaps rather than saying there was no money he was saying he made payments and I trusted him...He worked harder as a thing over time he worked his tail off he worked hard you know if he didn't earn anything he then earned more earned 5 then earned 10 and while doing so when he reduced his debts we felt relieved during that moment he bought more than

whatever I wanted we were good then I mean weren't quarrelling all that much then." Fatma

"..hani para yok diyemiyordu üzmemek için belki o an kavga etmemek için hani ortamı kurtarmak için belki de e para yok demektense ödedim diyordu ve ben de ona güveniyordum ... daha fazla çalıştı bir şey olarak zaman olarak koşturduğu çok koşturdu çok çalıştı hani hiç kazanıyorsa daha çok 5 kazandı 10 kazandı derken böyle borçlarını hafifletince rahatladık o sürede ne istediysem ekstra aldı o zaman iyiydik yani o zaman kavga da olmuyordu çok fazla" Fatma (Original)

Hayat referred to her husband's profession and mentioned that a man resist having what he wants at home and can be harsh.

"...and because they are soldiers ours are sort of like a 'man' I mean soldiers are harsh you know they try to treat their spouse like they treat the soldiers I mean they try to continue the relationship as such a soldier should behave according to his commands but I didn't have that much thing..." Hayat

"...bir de asker oldukları için bizimkiler biraz şey oluyorlar erkek hani asker sert oluyorlar hani askerlere yaptığını eşlerine de yapmaya çalışıyorlar yani sürdürmeye çalışıyorlar asker ya emrettiği gibi olacak ama benim o kadar fazla şeyim olmadı..." Hayat (Original)

3.1.1.2. Repeating family patterns in marriage

Seren and Ceyda both mentioned the similarities between their husband and their father. When Seren talked about the absence of her own father at home, she said that she and her husband experienced similar things and that raising her children without a father, which was her biggest fear, was repeated in her own marriage. Ceyda, on the other hand, mentioned that although her father cheated on her mother many times during her youth, her mother could not leave her father in any way, and she herself experienced similar things in her own marriage. Ceyda mentioned that her husband was an aggressive man like her father and that she was trying to endure what she was going through like her mother. When Ceyda talks about the separation of her parents, she uses the phrase "my mom and dad are separated too" and this implies that the separation is repeated in her own life, albeit for a different reason.

"...for me it is different for my son of course he is the father the father figure actually he is a father figure for me as well I grew up without a father as well

and what I feared most was raising a kid without a father because I know what my mom went through and so you know I experienced the single thing I feared...” Seren

“.. benim için ayrı oğlum için tabiki baba baba figürü aslında benim için de baba figürü şöyle ben de babasız büyüdüm ve en korktuğum şey babasız çocuk büyütme çünkü annemin neler yaşadığını biliyorum hani tek korktuğum şeyi de yaşadım yani...” Seren (Original)

*“...we don't have the chance to get to know people as such as a female in Turkey well we get know our dad and then well we get to know the man that enters our life and marry him that's how life goes on...we don't get to meet people we don't know anyone we think this the norm when in fact, a more normal calm-natured because my father was like that kind of a man too tense and so on well I thought that's how men were...**my mom and dad are separated as well but** you know mom made effort to rehabilitate him for 10 years a futile effort though I knew it was futile I was also in such a struggle thinking that you know it is going to be good better whatever yeah like that...” Ceyda*

*“..böyle insan tanımaya da fırsatımız olmuyor türkiye'de kadın olarak hani babamızı tanıyoruz sonra işte hayatımıza giren erkeği tanıyoruz sonra da onunla evleniyoruz gidiyor böyle işte...kimseyi tanımıyoruz etmiyoruz bilmiyoruz normal o geliyor bize yani oysaki böyle daha sakın yapılı normal çünkü benim babam da o tür bir adamdı gergin vesaire hani erkek zaten böyle olur gibi düşünüyordum...**annemle babam da hani ayrılır** ama hani annem 10 yıl boyunca düzeltmek için çabaladı böyle gereksiz bir çaba onun gereksiz olduğunu bildiğim halde ben de hep hani iyi olacak daha iyi olacak bilmem ne falan gibi böyle bir çaba içindeydim yani öyle..” Ceyda (Original)*

Ceyda said that her father cheated on her mother many times during her childhood and that she was very angry with her mother for not separating from him. Although she said that such issues between the couple impacted the child and that their separation could have been better for everyone, adding that she herself was unable to make the decision to divorce while experiencing similar things in her marriage. In a way, she echoes what she experienced in her own childhood in the family she herself established.

“...perhaps it's more essential to end it when there is a child because it is unjust for the child I mean trying to continue it like this I'm looking at it from the child's perspective I mean when I look at it from the perspective of my own childhood I see it unjust for the child but well we then continued...” Ceyda

“..asıl çocuk varsa belki de bitirmek gerekiyor çünkü çocuğa haksızlık oluyor yani bunu böyle devam ettirmeye çalışmak kendim çocuk tarafından bakıyorum yani kendi çocukluğum açısından baktığımda çocuğa haksızlık olarak görüyorum bunu ama işte sonra devam ettik..” Ceyda (Original)

3.1.2. Man is free in marriage

3.1.2.1. Having a wandering eye

Seren and Ceyda mentioned that they were cheated on by their husbands. Both explained that they had somehow accepted this situation and mentioned that the men were more inclined to go to other women, especially after getting married.

“...I came across a message I meddled with his phone you know I told you quarrels test with the birth of the child, disconnection started to be experienced... the chores were not divided evenly so just like in other households men start to have a wandering eye I would never have guessed...” Seren

“..mesaj yakaladım kurcaladım telefonunu kavgalar bişey yoklar demiştim ya size çocukla birlikte bir kopukluk yaşanma yaşadı işler eşit bölünmedi dolayısıyla erkekler birçok evde de olduğu gibi gözleri dışarıda olmaya başlıyorlar hiç aklıma gelmezdi..” Seren (Original)

“...As a person who had already been cheated on before marriage and as a person experiencing it as such repeatedly afterwards but being much loved on the other hand I really don't know how it comes to be I don't understand... Of course there have been times when I thought about it the first time well I was pregnant I mean when I learned that I was cheated I was suspicious anyway and had started investigating and so on at the time I was pregnant to my son...That day for example I packed my things and was leaving you know but well you know things like I am so regretful bla bla bla you know when there is a kid in the family one doesn't really want to do it I don't really know the reason it's very interesting..” Ceyda

“...zaten evlenmeden önce aldatılmış bir insan olarak sonrasında da bunu defalarca hani bunu böyle deneyimlemiş bir insan olarak ama bir yandan da çok sevilerek nasıl oluyor bunu bilmiyorum gerçekten bunu anlamış değilim ...düşündüğüm zamanlar tabii ki oldu ilk işte şey hamileydim yani aldatıldığımı öğrendiğimde zaten bir şeylerden şüphelenip böyle araştırmaya başladım falan o zaman oğluma hamileydim o gün mesela toplandım gidiyordum yani ama işte işte şey ben çok pişmanım bilmem neler falan filan insan zaten hani çocuk varsa ortada çok hani bunu yapmak istemiyor sebebi ne gerçekten bilmiyorum çok enteresan...” Ceyda (Original)

3.1.2.2. Men take less responsibility

Seren said that men and women have different roles in the home. She mentioned that the roles attributed to women were more than those attributed to men, which she complained about. When she was asked about her role and responsibilities, she remained in a passive position and stated that these responsibilities were attributed to her, and she had no say in the matter.

Participant: ...well when the volume of chores increased life was not could not be shared to the same degree perhaps he found his job more important well, these kinds of things let's say we couldn't completely share the complexities of life when the turmoil of life the responsibilities of caring for the kid are not shared equally when one side is burdened more then you know babbling begins.

r: So how were you take on more of the burden?

p: na na I had lots on my shoulders let me say it that way ...” Seren

k- ..e işler arttığında aynı oranda hayatı paylaşma olmadı olamadı belki işini daha çok önemsemi işte bu tür şeyler hayat kargaşasını tam paylaşamadık öyle diyelim hayat telaşesini çocuk sorumluluğu eşit oranda bölüşemeyince e bir taraf fazla yüklenince cırlamaya başlıyor işte

*a- peki siz nasıl fazla yükleniyordunuz
k- yo yo bana fazla yük binmişti öyle söyleyeyim...”Seren (Original)*

Büşra said marriage did not change anything in terms of the freedom in a man's life, while a woman was restricted because of children and responsibilities.

“...a man is free even when he is married while a woman from her free life and while I was much freer than him when I was single in marriage he was much freer than I was I couldn't do anything because there's a kid...” Büşra.

“..bir erkek evlendiğinde bile özgür bir kadınsa tamamen özgür hayatından ki bekarlıkta ben ondan özgürken evlilikte o benden çok daha fazla özgürdü ben hiç bir şey yapamıyordum çünkü çocuk var..”Büşra (Original)

Ceyda mentioned that during her marriage, she took on many more responsibilities related to children compared to her husband and could not get support from her husband when she asked for help.

“...first of all I felt utterly alone well you know with the children all day on my own you know carrying them around doing the shopping doing this and that you know I was in a state of thing that was the last, then the kids were getting sick frequently... my back would ache from carrying the kid, you know to calm him/her down then well I said for example can you take him/her a little I'm tired well you asked for it it was you who wanted it the child do whatever now and so on...” Ceyda

“..bir kere çok tek başıma hissediyordum kendimi işte şey çocuklarla bütün gün tek başıma işte indir kaldır alışverişi yap bilmem ne yap hani böyle şey haldeydim artık son ondan sonra çocuklar çok hastalanıyordu ...benim belim ağrımış artık çocuğu kucagında taşımaktan hani sakinleşsin diye sonra şey biraz alır mısın çok yoruldu falan dedim mesela işte şey sen istedin kendin istedin ne yaparsan yap şimdi falan ya..” Ceyda (Original)

Hayat also mentioned that the women took on more of the burden of the house and added that she did a lot of the work herself, despite working at a job.

“...well of course the man goes to work and returns home for example but the woman the woman bears all the burden for instance I had great difficulty there I was alone I was taking care of the kid I was working at a medical center for example my kids because I went when my daughter was six months old we didn't have a babysitter and when he went too he wouldn't return for one or two months I had great difficulties but the man goes to his work, returns home from his work eats his dinner but the woman being the person who undertakes all the responsibilities the woman undergoes more difficulties in marriage...” Hayat

“..e tabi erkek mesela işine gidiyor evine geliyor ama kadın her yükü kadın taşıyor mesela ben orada çok zorlandım tek başımaydım çocukla ilgileniyordum sağlık ocağında çalışıyordum mesela çocuklarım benim kızım altı aylık gittiğim için bakıcımız yoktu o da gidince bir iki ay gelmiyordu baya bir zorluk çektim ama erkek göreve gidiyor görevden geliyor yemeğini yiyor ama kadın her sorumluluğu alan kişi olduğu için kadın daha çok zorlanıyor evlilikte..” Hayat (Original)

3.1.2.3. Men are jealous

In this part, Elif and Fatma mentioned that their husbands were very jealous men during their marriage. They stated that they were subjected to some restrictions in terms of their attire, behaviors, workplace and appearance, and although they were very uncomfortable with these restrictions, they somehow found a way out and

adapted. But it has been said that these restrictions did not apply to men; it was mostly women who were the object of jealousy and the restricted one.

“...my husband was an extremely jealous man I could never take off my scarf we had some rules in our marriage I could never wear colored clothes yeah it was forbidden for me because my husband said no he would say you attract too much attention he used to say to me I am jealous and Ms. Gizem at the bank I had three colors black grey brown it was forbidden for me to wear particular things apart from these...” Elif

“..eşim aşırı kıskanç bir adamdı ben asla saçımı açamazdım bazı kurallarımız vardı bizim evliliğimizde ben asla renkli giyemezdim he bana yasaktı çünkü eşim hayır diyordu sen çok dikkat çekiyorsun diyordu ben ben kıskanıyorum derdi bana ve bankada benim 3 tane rengim vardı Gizem hanım siyah gri kahverengi ben onun dışında özellikle bir şey giymek bana yasaktı..” Elif (Original)

“...For 10 years he put me enclosed me in a jar and I submitted I got dressed as he wanted I behaved as he wanted I was always as he wished me to be my hair would not be disclosed for long Gizem my hair is always tied up it was tied up then and I never wore trousers it was forbidden for me...” Elif

“..10 sene boyunca beni bir fanusa koydu kapattı ve ben de kabullendim onun istediği gibi giyindim onun istediği gibi hareket ettim hep onun istediği gibiydim benim saçlarım hiçbir zaman açık kalmazdı Gizem hanım hep saçım topludur benim o zaman topluydu ve asla pantolon giymedim bana yasaktı bana...” Elif (Original)

“...more so on the issue of outfits the issue of clothing well he would never let me out with a track suit on me I would not wear revealing clothing anyway but it would be as much as he wanted normally I didn't wear such clothes anyway but during the first years of our marriage he bought revealing ones clothes and when he converted to modest ones I got angry...” Fatma

“..daha çok kıyafet konusunda giyim konusunda hani eşofmanla beni dışarı çıkarmazdı açık saçık giyemezdim zaten ama hani onun istediği ölçüde olurdu ben zaten normalde de giymiyordum ama evliliğin ilk yıllarında kendisi aldı açıkları sonrasında kapatınca kızdım..

” Fatma (Original)

“...he didn't want me to work and I insistently wanted to...there were few women where I worked that's why he was very jealous men were in majority it was so hard to start working anyway you know to convince him and to start working and after starting to work I was always in his focus you know one of his acquaintances there was following up on me like who I was talking with what I was doing, whether I was sitting what I was doing kind of thing you

know he was very jealous his jealousy in this matter wore us out a little...”
Fatma

“..çalışmamı istemiyordu o ben de ısrarla çalışmak ... çalıştığım yerde bayan azdı o yüzden çok kıskanıyordu erkek çoğunlukta idi giresiye zaten canım çıktı hani ikna etmek girmek için e girdikten sonra sürekli üstümdeydi hani oradaki tanıdıklarından bir takip ediyordu işte kiminle konuşuyor ne yapıyor oturuyor mu ne yapıyor mu gibisinden hani çok kıskançtı bu konuda kıskançlığı biraz bizi yıprattı..” Fatma (Original)

3.2. Unspeakable thing: the Death

3.2.1. The Body Speaks

Symptoms appear as the return of what is repressed like dreams, slip of tongues, or clumsiness. Things appear in the body and the subject cannot symbolize nor locate these in a chain of signifiers. There is a complex and deep connection between a person's symptoms and their structure. One of the main points that psychoanalysis differs from other clinical methods is that it is an examination of human structures rather than of symptoms. However, it is an undeniable fact that a person's symptoms convey a significant amount of information about their structure and subjectivity. Symptoms are treated as signifiers and metaphors in psychoanalysis. In this respect, the following subsections detail what symptoms widowed women experienced in their body.

3.2.1.1. Health problems after the loss of the spouse

Seren explained that she had lost a kidney when she met her husband, but had no problems with drug treatments. However, seven months after losing her husband, her remaining kidney could not function, and she had to undergo dialysis every other day. She stated that her sadness about the loss of her husband may have triggered this health problem. Based on Seren's narrative, it is clear that she tries to assume the roles of both a mother and a father; on the other hand, she suffers from great health problems and says that her remaining single kidney is not working properly. That is to say, what should have been two is now only one, and that remaining one is non-functional. For this reason, it can be said that Seren's mourning process is also a bodily reflection.

*“...first of all a family routine a nuclear family routine dreams these and those everything plunges plus you try to take on the roles of being both a mother and father for a long time I experienced the panic of how I could meet it against the child well actually later seven months later I also started to take dialysis treatment I was this time with a single kidney you know I had told you...after seven months of losing my spouse I started to receive dialysis treatment every other day I don't know if you know the dialysis **as the kidney cannot carry out its function, there is no kidney, you have no kidney** every other day the machine they clean your blood for four hours in the machine...” Seren*

*“..bir kere bir rutin aile çekirdek aile rutini hayaller şunlar bunlar her şey bir dip yapıyor artı **hem anne hem baba olma rolüne bürünmeye çalışıyorsunuz** çocuğa karşı onu nasıl giderebilirim onun paniğini yaşadım uzunca bir süre gerçi sonra yedi ay sonra da ben diyalize girmeye başladım **bu sefer tek böbrekliydim** ya anlatmıştım ... eşimi kaybettikten yedi ay sonra ben artık gün aşırı diyalize girmeye başladım diyalizi bilir misiniz bilmiyorum **böbrek görevini yapamadığı için artık böbrek böbreğiniz yok** makina gün aşırı dört saat girip makinada kanınızı temizliyorlar..” Seren (Original)*

3.2.1.2. Breathing difficulties

Seren often mentioned that she wanted to give her husband a sense of relief. She expressed her husband's inability to breathe easily due to his illness as follows: “... of course problems started how **he couldn't breathe freely at home** couldn't breathe freely. The tumor goes up this throat here, causing his breathing to be problematic...” Being unable to breathe comfortably at home could signify more than one meaning. Despite the fact that Seren mentions a bodily issue, it is also assumed that she is referring to her husband's incapacity to be at ease at home. In the following parts, she said, “... of course I got stuck on this, mentally I mean if he were to live for three days then he should be able to breathe freely for three days well this wasn't the cure of the illness but only a solution to ease the patient...” She mentions that even though the surgery is no solution, she wants to comfort her husband very much. When she was asked why it was so important for him to breathe easily, she mentioned that her husband suffered a lot physically. In the later parts of the interview, she said that she learned about her husband having cheated on her a year before they learned about the disease of her husband. She stated that she did not divorce him, thinking of her son. She explained this as follows:

“...I myself grew up without a father and not wanting my child to experience this I put aside my womanhood pride and remained but it's not that easy of

*course at every chance I jab at him when he comes home late I do it more well cheating on him is obviously a terrifying thing because once he himself said to me **let's either get divorced or stop doing this** he said **you made life miserable to yourself and you are making my life miserable too** you know forget it but forgetting it is not possible it's not that easy..." Seren*

*"..ben kendim babasız büyüdüm çocuğa da bunu yaşatmayacağım diye kadınlık gururumuzu bir tarafa koyduk oturdum ama öyle kolay da olmuyor tabi her bir şeyde laf sokuyorum geç gelince daha çok şey yapıyorum yani onu atlatmak korkunç bir şey zaten de çünkü bana kendisi de bir gün dedi **ya boşanalım ya da bunu bırak artık hayatım kendine de zindan ettin bana da zindan ediyorsun dedi** hani unut gitsin öyle unut gitsinle olmuyor işte kolay olmuyo.." Seren (Original)*

In this part of the interview, Seren says that she did not forgive her husband but continued her relationship for the sake of her son. However, not having completely forgiven her husband, she reminded him of what had happened from time to time, turning his life into a "zindan". It seems that her husband's inability to breathe freely at home, Seren's leaving her own pride of womanhood aside and wanting to ease her husband's problems are interrelated.

3.2.1.3. Having reflux during the mourning period

After the loss of her husband, Büşra mentioned that she suffered from stomach pains in a serious way, which were later diagnosed as reflux.

"...yes yes of course I went I was suffering from a very severe stomachache the internal medicine doctor here was the doctor who told us my husband's liver cancer he said well this time I can't do anything for your stomach first see a psychologist it is probably stress naturally I had developed reflux..." Büşra

"..gittim gittim tabi çünkü çok ciddi mide ağrısı çekiyordum dahiliye doktoru burada eşimin karaciğer kanseri diyen doktordu bana şey dedi bu sefer miden için hiç bir şey yapmayacağım önce bir psikoloğa görün muhtemelen strestir dedi tabi reflü oluştu bende.." Büşra (Original)

3.2.1.4. Losing weight

Based on her accounts, Büşra has been experiencing a loss of appetite as of her husband's sickness, as a result of which she lost more than twenty kilos.

“...I am still experiencing stomach problems and lasting from that period from being something like eighty-eight kilos you drop to fifty nine kilos no eating no drinking...” Büşra

*“..şu an midemde hala sıkıntı çekiyorum o dönemden kalan bir de ben seksen sekiz gibi bir kilodan elli dokuzda düşüyorsunuz yemiyorsunuz içmiyorsunuz..”
Büşra (Original)*

3.2.1.5. Sleep Deprivation

Elif mentioned that she experienced sleep problems for a long time after losing her husband and that she needed medication support to be able to sleep. However, she added that there were times when even medication could not help her sleep.

*“... I could not sleep for 6 months Gizem I stayed up all night no way could I fall asleep imagine the heaviest medication was given to me I while one quarter of that heavy medication can put one to sleep I took a full dosage and still can't sleep I would sit in the house till morning I was literally a gatekeeper at home well, perhaps I slept at for an hour or didn't during the day I got up again during the day I was always sitting I had no struggles...”
Elif*

“..ben 6 ay uyku uyuyamadım Gizem Hanım sabahlıyorum asla gece uykum gelmiyordu düşünün bana en ağır ilaçlar verildi ben o ağır ilacın normalde dörtte biri insanı uyuturken ben tam içiyordum gene uyuyamıyorum sabaha kadar evde oturuyordum resmen evde bekçiydim yani gündüz belki bir saatte uyuyordum ya uyumuyordum gündüz yine kalkıyordum o hep oturuyordum hiçbir mücadelem yoktu..” Elif (Original)

Similar to Elif, Güler also mentioned that she could not sleep after losing her husband.

“...of course I can't sleep in the without him as a matter of fact before he was always on my right you know I had developed a habit would you check his breathing I checked his breathing even at three in fact once I turned and he apparently, was in pain you he said for the first time he didn't even realize that saying it was difficult for me to get used to turning to my left still is you know lying on his side of the be there was always such a problem of course I don't sleep at all...” Güler

“..tabii ki hiç yatakta yatamıyorum onsuz zaten önce hep sağımda zaten hani alışmışım nefesini dinler misin üçte nefesini bile dinliyordum hatta bir kere dönmüşüm gitmiş ağrısı olmuş sen dedi ilk defa fark etmedi yani onu bile sola

dönmeyi hâlâ zor alıştım desem hani hep onun tarafına yatmayı öyle bir sorun hep vardı tabiki hiç uyumuyorum..”Güler (Original)

3.2.2. Not knowing how to bid farewell

3.2.2.1. To avoid talking about death

Seren talked about an operation her husband had to undergo in Istanbul so that he could breathe more easily. This surgery was not to improve her husband’s recovery, but one that would only enable him to breathe more easily. The last conversations between them took place in the ambulance before their trip for this surgery. Based on Seren's account, her husband had told her that upon seeing her husband, the doctor accompanying them felt fearful of his condition. “Fear” is here the unspoken verbalization of the fear of death. Although this fear is attributed as the "fear" of the doctor, Seren's statement "it happened as we feared" in the following statements shows that the fear actually was what was felt by her husband and herself.

*“... our final talk was like this he said I think **the doctor got scared of me** he said how am I to take such a patient and so on why should he get scared I said he said hair beard of course well at that time his hair beard If the doctor were to get scared it would be from his hair they would see all sorts of patients I mean I had actually understood what he meant but I pretended not to...”*

r: What do you think he meant

*p: I think his condition was obvious doctors get that information too I mean for what reason we are trying to go is also obvious I think the man is afraid that something might happen on the way or something about what he can do and it happened **it happened as we feared** hmm whatever that was our last conversation...” Seren*

*“...son konuşmamız şöyle oldu **doktor benden korktu** herhalde dedi böyle bir hastayı nasıl götürücem falan dedi niye korksun dedim dedi saç sakal tabi o arada saçlar başlar saçlarından korkmuştur korkacaksa onlar ne hastalar görüyordur yani aslında onun ne demek istediğini ben anladım da anlamamazlığa geldim*

a- ne demek istemişti sizce

k- bence durumu ortada doktorlarda o bilgiyi alıyor yani bizim ne için gitmeye çalıştığımız da belli hani yolda falan bir şey olur diye korkuyor

herhalde adam ne yapabilirim diye zaten oldu korktuğumuz gibi de oldu u neyse son konuşmamız o oldu yani..” Seren (Original)

Elif said that although her husband was in a very bad condition, she could not persuade him to go to the hospital together. Finally, when leaving the house, her husband bid farewell to her, but she commented that she did not want to talk about death at all and told him not to "be ridiculous".

“...I said let me take you to the emergency come let’s go I said no he said he said there were the kids then let me call an ambulance you are very sick I said I’ll call... him he said okay I said you know I accept as long as you go he called his sibling and thankfully he came in two minutes he came and took him on our way he said to me give me your blessing I didn’t understand I didn’t understand even at that moment I mean I couldn’t believe it nothing occurred to me then I said to him all my blessings yours can it be otherwise I said don’t be nonsense can it be otherwise...” Elif

“...seni acile götürüyüm dedim gel dedim gidelim hayır dedi çocuklar var dedi o zaman dedim ambulans çağırayım sen çok kötüsün dedim...onu arayacağım dedi iyi dedim hani onu da razıyım yeter ki git kardeşini aradı sağ olsun o da iki dakikada geldi geldi götürdü götürürken bana hakkını helal et dedi anlamadım ben o zaman bile anlamadım yani konduramadım aklıma bir şey gelmedi öyle ondan sonra hak helal olsun öyle şey mi olur dedim saçmalama dedim öyle şey mi olur..” Elif (Original)

Güler also explained that they had never been able to talk about death during her husband’s illness. Moreover, although her husband had made every effort before died to ensure that his family continued to pursue a decent life after he died, this was never a topic of conversation between them.

“...Well it wasn't talked about in fact he wanted to finish faculty apparently it makes a difference in salary now I realize that he had studied for us while he was taking those heavy medications he studied sat exams never never said goodbye sometimes he would get emotional but we would do thing quickly divert the topic I never allowed him to cry I don't know if we did the right thing but we would never talk about it

r: Rather than right or wrong I mean why can't you talk I wonder

p: Well because I couldn't bear to hurt him I don't know I mean I wouldn't let him talk that moment I didn't know what happened after that either what I would do well I didn't want to talk to him either I mean we will always be fine always be fine It was always like that..” Güler

“..işte ama konuşulmazdı hatta o fakülteyi bitirmek istediğini şimdi maaşta fark ediyormuş şimdi fark ediyorum ben bizim için okumuş o ağır ilaçları alırken ders çalıştı sınava girdi hiç hiç veda uh bazen ağlamaklı olurdu şey yapardık hemen geçiştirirdik ben ona müsaade etmedim hiç bilmiyorum doğru mu yaptık ama hiç konuşmazdık

a- doğrusu yanlışından ziyade yani neden konuşamazsınız acaba

k- ya ona kıyamadığımdan bilmiyor konuşturmadım yani o anı ondan sonra ne olduğunu ben de bilmiyordum ne yapacağımı hani onunla da konuşmak istemedim yani hep iyi olucuz hep iyi olucuz hep öyleydi..” Güler (Original)

3.2.2.2. Hiding the truth

Seren said that her husband knew that he had been diagnosed with cancer, but that he did not know how high her husband's death risk was. It was Seren's choice not to tell the risk to her husband as she did not want her husband to feel worse. In other words, she concealed the truth from her husband, claiming that talking about death was meaningless.

“..of course the doctor is talking about the treatment plan next to the patient... but don't get too hopeful it's a fast-recurring type you know and because he didn't paint the picture very well we didn't tell him these things this is always a debated issue whether it should be said or not but in my opinion it shouldn't be said there's no point in the patient knowing what they will experience at that moment and their morale collapsing.” Seren

“..tabi doktor hastanın yanında tedavi planından bahsediyor...ama çok umutlanmayın bu çabuk tekrarlayan bir tür şeklinde hani tabloyu çok da iyi çizmediği için dolayısıyla bunları ona söylememiştik bu da hep ben tartışılan bir şey söylenmeli mi söylenmemeli mi ama bence söylenmemeli hastanın ne yaşayacağını bilmesinin o anda moralman çökmesinin bir anlamı yok ki..” Seren (Original)

Fatma, on the other hand, said that her husband was hiding from her the fact that he was spitting blood. She mentioned that if her husband had told her about this symptom, she would have applied a different intervention, but since she did not know about it, she may have led him on the wrong pathway.

“..after he died well I returned home when I returned I saw it on the balcony I hadn't seen it at night; the lights were off when I saw it he was already

spitting into the bottle but it was a soda bottle, green I didn't understand like did he know it was blood was that the reason why he did not want to show me why he hid it I don't know but if for example he had said that he had vomited blood I wouldn't have allowed him to move and would have called an ambulance..” Fatma

“..öldükten sonra işte eve geri döndüm geri döndüğümde balkonda gördüm gece görmemiştim ışıklar kapalıydı ben gördüğümde zaten şişeye tükürüyordu ama şişe soda şişesiydi yeşil anlamadım hani kan olduğunu o biliyor muydu bana o yüzden mi göstermek istemedi sakladı bilmiyorum ama mesela kan kustum deseydi ben onu kıpırdatmaz ambulans çağırırdım..” Fatma (Original)

3.2.2.3. Failing to bid farewell

Büşra said she knew her husband was dying but found it hard to say ‘goodbye’. Even though she did say ‘goodbye’, she added that her husband was in a situation where he could no longer respond to her. She said she wanted to forget about all that had happened.

“...Did I bid farewell to my spouse no he couldn't feel me anyway every day I heard that his kidneys and blood pressure were not good we were losing his organs and then with the infection setting in which is common in cancer I wanted to forget the things I knew you know didn't want to accept them still don't but they said he passed away around six in the evening although I think he had already passed away during the day I didn't enter the morgue I couldn't see him when I saw him he had already died that's what I think...” Büşra

“..eşimle vedalaştım mı hayır beni zaten hissetmiyordu her gün böbreklerinin tansiyonunun kötü olduğunu duyuyordum organlarını kaybediyoruz artık enfeksiyon da girince ki kanser hastalığında geçiyor yani bildiğim şeyleri unutmak istiyordum hani kondurmak istemiyordum halen ama akşam altı gibi vefat ettiğini söylediler ki zaten bence gündüz vefat etmişti morga girmedim göremedim ben zaten gördüğümde ölmüştü öyle düşünüyorum..” Büşra (Original)

Seren said that she did not share the bad news about her husband's illness with him. However, although this information was not shared, her husband felt that his illness was progressing. In this part of the interview, it is mentioned that something was experienced in the body but could not be expressed. In fact, although they both felt

that they were approaching the end, Seren said that they somehow could not say farewell, which she later regretted.

"..we both sensed certain things but couldn't express them much, to be honest it's because talking about death when there is no death I mean when there is no illness, is very easy but when experiencing a serious illness you can't talk comfortably well at least we couldn't in our relationship we couldn't bid farewell hmm I also have regrets about that but I don't know how I could have done it you know." Seren

"..o da bir şeyleri sezip çok dile getiremedik açıkçası içimizdekileri o da ben de çünkü ölüm yokken yani hastalık yokken ölümden ölümden konuşmak çok kolay ama böyle ciddi bir hastalık yaşıyorken çok rahat konuşamıyorsun yani en azından bizim ilişkimizde konuşamadık bi vedalaşamadık u benim de keşkelerim var o konuda ama nasıl yapabildim bilmiyorum yani.." Seren (Original)

3.2.3. Not knowing how to explain death

3.2.3.1. How to tell the children

Seren and Büşra mentioned that they did not know how to explain to their children the death of their father. Considering that death is one of the moments when the Real is encountered, it becomes more understandable that Seren did not know how to explain death and that she described her feelings as "she feel the tense" over her body. That traumatic character is real is related to this impossibility and the resistance to symbolization.

"..my son your dad will undergo treatment and we will come back I had consoled him with the promise that we would return together how could I say it how can you say it to your child making such a promise and now having forgotten about myself about people what will I say to O. How will I explain it How will I tell a 9-year-old of course this started to press me more."

"...what will I say how will I explain it how will I tell a 9-year-old of course this started to press me more..." Seren

"..oğlum tedavi olacak geleceğiz söz beraber geleceğiz diye avutmuştum öyle nasıl diyeceğim nasıl diyebilirsiniz ki çocuğunuza yani öyle de bir söz verip de ben şimdi kendimi falan unuttum milleti falan unuttum O.'ya ne diyeceğim nasıl anlatacağım 9 yaşında nasıl anlatacağım tabi o beni daha çok kasmaya başladı.."

“.. ne diyeceğim nasıl anlatacağım 9 yaşında nasıl anlatacağım tabi o beni daha çok kasmaya başladı..” Seren (Original)

“...when I got off all our acquaintances were already there uhm when I saw the hearse it wasn't supposed to be this this was the struggle for me not to see this vehicle but I saw it...he got buried how was I to tell my son I didn't know...” Büşra

“..indiğimde zaten bütün tanıdıklarımız oradaydı u cenaze arabasını gördüğümde bu değildi ya bu aracı görmemek içindi benim mücadelem ama gördüm...defnedildi oğluma nasıl söyleyecektim onu bilemiyordum..”Büşra (Original)

According to Büşra, it could be upsetting for her son to remember his dad; therefore, she made special effort not to mention his father. She continued by saying that it was also difficult to look through at the digital folders where her husband's memories were kept. In the following utterance, it is assumed that Büşra is actually conveying her own emotions via her son.

“...making him remember if it sometimes agonizes me to remember then I think it would agonise him too but when he wants to I tell him you can see his images on the computer whenever you want I tell him you can hear his voice there is no prohibition over this but if you are going to get sad I say then stay distant a little bit more I mean I don't know mental health is as important as physical health...” Büşra

“..hatırlatmak bana hatırlamak acı veriyorsa bazen ona da acı verebilir diye düşünüyorum ama o istediğinde istediğin zaman bilgisayarda görüntülerini görebilirsin diyorum sesini duyabilirsin diyorum buna yasak yok ama üzüleceksen biraz daha uzak dur diyorum yani çünkü bilmiyorum ruh sağlığı da beden sağlığı kadar önemli..” Büşra (Original)

As for Seren, she wanted to say something when she was talking about not being able to say goodbye to her husband, but she paused for a moment and decided that she could not say it. She wanted to light a cigarette and then added that it hurt to talk about these issues and to remember the old times.

“...There was a situation like this uhm I'm skipping that can I light a cigarette Would you mind

r: Well, however you'll be comfortable.

p: When I talk like this of course you relive those moments one feels pain inside you get involved in life in a way now that you think about it line by line..." Seren

".. şöyle bir durum oldu ah onu es geçiyorum bir sigara yakabilir miyim bir sakıncası var mı

a- yani siz nasıl rahat edecekseniz

k- ben böyle tabi konuşunca tekrar oraları yaşıyorsunuz içi acıyor insanın hayata karışıyor sun bir şekilde de şimdi böyle satır satır düşününce.." Seren (Original)

Fatma, on the other hand, said that she preferred not to go to places that reminded her of her husband, because when she goes to these places and meets her husband's relatives, she remembers the absence of her husband and feels incomplete.

"I mean it's not that I don't want to remember him but it's more like I don't want to relive that moment that's why I don't want to go when it comes to his relatives for example if there's a wedding related to him I go and if there's food I eat and then I come back... you know I feel his absence when I visit his relatives because he's not there but I'm with them and because I feel his absence even more." Fatma

"..hani onu hatırlamak istemediğimden değil de hani o anı yaşamak istemediğim için gitmek istemiyorum daha çok onun akrabaları mesela onunla ilgili bir düğün olsun gidiyorum yemek varsa yiyorum geri dönüyorum...işte onun eksikliğini hissediyorum onların akrabalarına gittiğimde hani o yok ama ben onlarlayım onun eksiliğini daha çok hissettiğim için.." Fatma (Original)

Additionally, Güler stated that she was unable to discuss with her children their father's passing away. She continued to say that while her husband was alive, she made effort to prevent the children from believing that his condition was fatal.

"I didn't talk at all I didn't mention anything related to their father even after he died it sounds like a terrible thing but I can't speak I can't speak... They were aware that he was ill but they might not have been aware of the extent I didn't make it apparent they were very very fond of their father..." Güler

"..zaten konuşmadım hiç öldükten sonra da hiç babanın b'si geçmedi çok kötü bir şey gibi geliyor ama konuşamıyorum konuşamıyorum... farkındaydılar hastalığın olduğunu ama bu derece olduğunun farkında değillerdir ben hissettirmedim babaya çok çok düşünlerdi.." Güler (Original)

3.2.3.2. Not talking about the father

Büşra explained that it was probably normal for a son to forget his father. In this respect, the fact that not speaking is could also be associated with forgetting, and forgetting may have a protective function.

"...sometimes we don't talk about his father much no sometimes we do but he said I can't remember his voice is that a bad thing no I said it's a normal thing sometimes we can forget a city we haven't visited sometimes I mention his preschool friends and he doesn't remember because people can forget you know..." Büşra

"..bazen babasından çok konuşmayız hayır bazen konuşuruz ama sesini hatırlamıyorum dedi bu kötü bişey mi yoo dedim bu olağan bir şey biz bazen gitmediğimiz bir şehri de unutabiliriz bazen anasınıfı arkadaşlarını söylüyorum hatırlamıyor çünkü insan unutabilir çünkü.." Büşra (Original)

Participant: "...I don't tell the children much because well it feels like they might use it you know like saying If my dad were here he would do this when they say that I get devastated because since I feel his absence I try to do it so I try not to make them say If your dad were here, we would do this we don't talk much anyway..." Fatma

"..k- çocuklara çok anlatmıyorum onlar çünkü şey bunu kullanıyorlar gibi geliyor hani babam olsaydı böyle yapardı dediler mi ben bitiyorum hani eksikliğini hissettiğim için onu yapmaya çalışıyorum o yüzden hani babanız olsaydı böyle yapardık dedirtmemeye çalışıyorum çok da muhabbet etmiyoruz .." Fatma (Original)

Elif, on the other hand, said that after losing her husband, her son never mentioned his father and even skipped the word "father" when reading a book.

"...I directly went to his teachers and the class teachers and explained the situation and said I can't cope I still can't pull myself together ...I said please you know I said I don't want my children to be upset my son closed himself off incredibly he didn't see anything he didn't even want to hear the word dad and he would skip the part about the father even when reading a book..." Elif

"..ben direkt kendi öğretmenleriyle sınıf öğretmenlerine gittim durumu anlattım dedim yani ben toparlayamıyorum hatta hâlâ kendimi toparlayamıyorum...lütfen dedim yani çocuklarım üzülmesin dedim benim oğlum inanılmaz içine kapandı hiçbir şey görmüyordu sadece baba kelimesini

duymak istemiyordu asla kitapta bile babayı atlayarak o okuyordu..” Elif (Original)

Güler added that following her husband's death, they were unable to discuss him with her children and that the room would be filled with freezing air when she brought up his name. She continued by saying that she also found it difficult to recall things and to reflect back on past experiences.

“...he can't say the 'b' in 'baba' [dad] in fact it's been quite a while since he moved here the boy looks like my husband well both are in terms of their personality who does this child take after he asked this kid is me I said the girl is like your father just as your father and suddenly we both turned ice-cold I couldn't even say that I don't know if I have the courage to open those videos and watch them I can only look at photos just a bit in fact the other day I found our letters we used to write a lot in our time I have them now and slowly I'm looking at them but I probably can't watch videos yet maybe we'll talk slowly again I don't know.” Güler

“..babanın b sini diyemiyor hatta baya oldu artık buraya taşındı oğlan eşime benziyor ikisi de zaten yapı olarak da ay dedi kime çekmiş bu çocuk benim kız dedim baban gibi aynı baban nasıl çıktı o birden buz gibi olduk onu bile söyleyemedin bilmiyorum bende o cesaret yok o videoları açıp seyredebilir miyim fotoğraflara anca anca bakıyorum birazda hatta geçen gün mektuplarımızı buldum mektup vardı bizim zamanımızda çok yazardı elime geçti işte yavaş yavaş onlara bakıyorum ama video filan izleyemem daha herhalde belki yavaş yavaş konuşur muyuz gene bilmiyorum..” Güler (Original)

3.2.3.3. Concealment of feelings in the family

Seren said that when they first learned about her husband's illness, they cried as a family at first, but then everyone started to roleplay. It can be asserted that hiding feelings and perhaps not voicing worst case scenarios is like an unspoken agreement in the family. It is believed that this situation arises from the difficulty of talking about the reality of death and symbolizing it.

*“...We were in Hacettepe, and then we came out my sister-in-laws and son on also came his sister had come and with us there were I don't remember very clearly of course we cried uhm we wept then **everyone starts pretending to each other** in such courses of time of course you become hopeful the doctor starts the treatment right away saying we'll get results this or that way of*

course at that time you don't know that it will progress so quickly and poorly..." Seren

"..ya hacettepenin içindeydik işte çıktık dışarı görümcemler falan da geldiler ablası geldi bir de yanımızda ya öyle çok net hatırlamıyorum ağladık tabiki u ağlaştık sonra herkes birbirine rol yapmaya başlıyor böyle süreçlerde tabi umutlu oluyorsun doktor da tedaviye hemen başlıyorsun şöyle böyle sonuç alıcaz tabi o zamanlar o kadar çabuk ve kötü seyredeceğini bilmiyorsun.." Seren (Original)

Deniz, on the other hand, had lost both her father and her husband in a short period of time. Because of experiencing great losses one after the other, she said that everyone in the family withdraw to their own corner to grieve on their own.

"My mother was trying to support just herself she also experienced a great intensity of pain well there was my brother but he was also in the same state of shock my mother-in-law and sister-in-law you know because we left they had this feeling as though they had lost their son frankly I didn't have many people around me except for my friends." Deniz

"..annem ancak kendine destek olmaya çalışıyordu o da çok büyük bir yoğunluk acı yaşadı yani abim vardı ama o da yine aynı şeyle şaşkınlıklar içerisindeydi kayınvalidem görümcem zaten biz gittiğimiz için oğlunu için kaybetmiş gibi bir şeyi vardı düşüncesi yani çok da çevremde arkadaşlarım dışında kimse yoktu açıkçası.." Deniz (Original)

3.3. What is lost with the loss

The focal point in grief becomes the lost object in Freudian terms or the lack in Lacanian terms. It is explained in this section how the loss of a spouse, which can also be considered the loss of an object, leaves its marks on the Subject and the points at which these marks are shaped around the lack. It is revealed that what is lost is a representation of the lack, and the subject is positioned again around these representations. Losses, which have now become a signifier, seek to show us something, but basically what they are seek to show is based on something that is missing, a gap, something that is not there. In this part, the lack of a partner is represented with the absence of a person with whom common feelings are shared and a father figure in the house. This lack has left a permanent mark upon the family members. Although they have tried to fill the absence with other "things", it continues to manifest itself with the remaining objects.

3.3.1. Losing the power

In Lacanian theory, the phallus is interpreted not as a biological organ, but in terms of the symbolic and imaginative functions of this organ. For this reason, Lacan preferred the term "phallus" to "penis". Having a penis does not mean having a phallus, as the relationship with the penis is established independently of the physiological differences between the sexes. A man can only claim to have a symbolic phallus if he admits to being castrated. Castration, on the other hand, begins with the abandonment of the mother's imaginary phallic position during the Oedipal period, and is experienced in many ways throughout life. Lacan focuses on the phallic function in the formula he uses to explain sex differences. This section examines how the loss of a man who is thought to have a phallic function has an impact on a woman's life.

3.3.1.1. Loss of dreams about the family

Seren said that she grew up without a father figure in her childhood and this is something she always missed. Hence, she stated that her biggest fear was raising her own child without a father because she did not want her son to experience the difficulties she underwent in her childhood. However, she encountered what her greatest fear was. She described the father figure she lacked as a source of power she could trust and feel the support of. She said that with the death of her husband, the person in this position was suddenly removed from her life.

*"...Have I always longed for a fatherly feeling I have actually I had found a bit of that in my spouse you know to have a protector to lean on a shoulder well that's something we women often have... **It may not be a great love but that's what I had felt for him now I understand it better you know some people marry as great lovers no feeling secure feeling the strength behind you that's what I felt mostly but well my life of course suddenly turned upside down...**" Seren*

"..hep bir baba duygusuna hasret misin hasrettim aslında eşimde onu da birazcık bulmuştum hani bir kollayıcı olmak şöyle bir sırtını yaslamak işte hani biz kadınlarda olur da onu da çok aslında büyük aşk değilse de bile benim ona hissettiğim oydu şimdi daha iyi tahlil ediyorum hani bazıları büyük aşık olarak evlenir yok güven vermek şöyle arkanda güç olduğunu

hissetmek ben onu çok hissetmiştim benim e tabi o birden hayatım alt üst oldu ...” Seren (Original)

Deniz said that after losing her husband, the absence of the person carrying the moral and financial burden of the family disrupted the whole order. She added that by overtaking her husband's duties, they lost their old dreams.

“...So everything you were used to was different you were alone and there's a child there's the anxiety about the future previously when it was on someone else's shoulders even if you were working or had a job you wouldn't think much about the cost of living or the concerns about the future but suddenly all of that falls on your shoulders at once and there are negative and challenging things that come with it.” Deniz

“..yani alıştığımız her şey farklıydı yalnızdınız bir de çocuk var gelecek kaygısı var daha önce başkasının sırtındayken her ne kadar çalışıyor da olsanız işiniz de olsa hani çok fazla geçim derdiymiş gelecek derdiymiş düşünmezken hepsi birden sizin sırtınıza da kalıyor onun da getirdiği negatif sizi zorlayıcı şeyler var..” Deniz (Original)

Seren stated that her dream of raising a family was no longer possible after her husband died. She explained these dreams as small family routines like going to picnics, but that they were taken away from her.

“...I don't know as a family what I've always dreamed of mother father and the child I haven't experienced it properly you know what do you on weekend you know you go for a picnic sit somewhere eat and drink these things are missing what do they call them these are the small dynamics of life a bit more love-filled what families do one part of us mother and son is broken...” Seren

“..ne bileyim ailece benim hep hayal kurduğum anne baba çocuk kendim yaşayamamışım doğru dürüst haftasonu ne yapılır işte pikniğe gidilir bir yere oturulur birşeyler yenilir içilir bunlar yok hani yaşamın ne derler küçük dinamikleri bunlar biraz daha sevgi dolu olunabilmesi işte aileler ne yaparsa biz ana oğul bir tarafımız kırık..” Seren (Original)

Fatma said that after losing her husband, she left her husband and her dreams of becoming a family in that house along with the house she had to move out of.

“...I felt forced to change the house the biggest challenge was these three the other aspects like work and finances all fell into place maybe changing

houses made me adapt to it so quickly our dreams our things everything of ours was left there there's not much left to remind me of that perhaps that's why I quickly forgot or I shouldn't say I quickly forgot but I quickly got used to it because it's not possible to forget..." Fatma

"..mecburen ev deęiřtirmek zorunda kaldım en büyük zorluk bu üçüydü dięer çalışma maddi kısmı hepsi oldu gitti belki de ev deęiřtirmem beni bu kadar hani çabuk alıştırdı ona hani hayallerim şeylerim her şeyimiz orada kaldı ... onu hatırlatacak pek bir şey kalmadı belki de o yüzden çabuk unuttum çabuk unuttum demiyim de çabuk alıştım unutmak mümkün deęil çünkü..." Fatma (Original)

3.3.1.2. Thinking that he will never suffer a deadly illness

Seren described herself as a "patient" in the house and mentioned that her husband's death was unexpected for her.

*"Yes, in the end I ended up with a single kidney then the illness you know I became a kidney patient with all the check-ups and everything life after all the one in our house who was sick was me **life showed its right side but struck with the left** that's how I describe it such an interesting thing we experienced..." Seren*

*"..evet sonuçta tek böbrekli kaldım sonra hastalık hani şöyle bir artık bir böbrek hastasıydım yani kontroller şu bu ama hayat işte bizim evin hastası bendim **hayat sağ gösterdi sol vurdu** diyorum öyle de enteresan bir şey yaşadık yani.." Seren (Original)*

Seren expressed the shock she felt at her husband's illness and death. She remarked that she was always weaker than he was. She added that her husband was the first relative she lost in her life.

"...Well, the first death people the first death I experienced was the death of someone close to me, my spouse you know when someone older passes away one might get a bit more used to it whether one can get used to death or not though I don't know uhmm so it was a big shock for me anyway... Due to having a single kidney well I have check-ups every three months I have my medications you know he never had any health problems before while I was scared for myself you know..." Seren

"..insan ilk ölümü ben ilk ölümü yakınlarımdan bir ölümü eşimde yaşadım hani şöyle olur büyüklerden birileri gider de insan birazcık daha alışır mı alışılır mı ölüme bilmiyorum ama u dolayısıyla büyük şoktu benim için

zaten...tek böbrekli olmamdan dolayı işte 3 ayda bir kontrollerim olur ilaçlarım olur kullandığım hani o hiç bir sağlık sorunu yaşamamıştı kendimden korkarken diyelim işte..” Seren (Original)

Ceyda said that when she was told that her husband had had an accident, she did not even think about death. Similarly, Fatma said that she thought that nothing would happen to her husband, even though her husband could not breathe. These discourses suggest that despite all the symptoms, they saw their husband as if he were immortal.

“... Ceyda he said uhm Eren has had an accident we need to go to the workplace he said but of course the thought of death doesn't even cross my mind it's impossible for such a thing to happen...” Ceyda

“..Ceyda dedi şey Eren bir kaza geçirmiş iş yerine gitmemiz lazım dedi ama tabii ki aklıma hiç ölüm gelmiyor yani mümkün değil böyle bir şey gelmesi...” Ceyda (Original)

“...There was nothing absolutely nothing he used to smoke for example but ... you know when you can't breathe when air doesn't reach your lungs it will end that's what I thought that it wouldn't be something bad they would put him on oxygen and he would stay in the intensive care unit for a while I went to the hospital with that thought it never occurred to me that he would die...” Fatma

“..yoktu hiçbir şey yoktu sigara kullanıyordu mesela ama ...hani nefes alamazsan ciğerlerine hava gitmeyince bitecek ben öyle düşünmüştüm hani kötü bir şey olmaz hava takarlar bir süre yoğun bakımda kalır diye çıktım gittim ben hastaneye o düşünceyle gittiğimi öleceği hiç aklıma gelmedi..” Fatma (Original)

3.3.1.3. Be on one's own

Seren explained the importance of being a family as having the strength to endure the difficulties in life and emphasized that this "power" no longer existed after her husband's death, and she was left alone. Despite the existence of people to support her, she stated that no one could fill her husband's position.

*“In the classical sense why are the mother father and children so important well **your resilience to what life may bring increases** you know there's only standing alone oh, actually that's a more accurate word now of course there are relatives cousins and such around thank God there are people nearby but what happens in our house especially anything related to O. brings the most*

joy to both me and my spouse when something positive happens there's no one else who feels as happy as us inside the family you have to experience these things alone..." Seren

"..klasik anlamda anne baba çocuk bu niye bu kadar önemlidir e **hayatta olabileceklere dayanma gücün artar e** bi tek başına dayanmak var hah aslında bu daha doğru bir kelime şimdi aile içinde olan biteni tabiki akrabalar kuzenler falan da var şükür ki etrafta var birileri ama bizim evde olan en çok benim ve eşimin O. ile ilgili bir şeye sevinci çoktur olumlu bir şeye olumsuz bir şey olduğunda da ikimiz kadar üzülen olmaz aile içinde e bunları tek başına yaşamak zorunda kalıyorsun..." Seren (Original)

p: "...I used to get at least twenty or thirty calls from him every day while at work I felt such a void when there was no one calling no one asking throughout the day you know life was so full with him you know I realized this after he was gone there was no one calling all day no one asking what I did what I drank what we would eat... I realized that his presence was different you know how you don't understand its presence until you lose it that's exactly how I felt completely in a void." Fatma

"..k- bende tüm gün işte günde en azından yirmi otuz kere arardı beni gün içinde o öyle bir boşluk hissettim arayan yok soran yok işte o kadar doluymuş ki hayatım onunla hani o gittiğinde anladım bunu bütün gün arayan yok soran yok ne yaptın ne içtin ne yiyeceğiz...onun varlığı başkaymış varlığın hani kaybedince anlaşılır ya aynen öyle oldu benimki de hani tamamen bir boşlukta hissettim kendimi.." Fatma (Original)

"Throughout my marriage I was always alone you know my spouse was always away okay he was always with me on the phone but he wasn't with me spiritually he wasn't with me as with his presence I'm always outside as I mentioned he left on Monday and came back on Saturday after a long time he came back again he was away for 3 or 4 days I was always there but he wasn't with me with his presence well now he's completely gone and well I don't want to be alone for the rest of my life I want someone to be there you know with their presence to grow old together..." Fatma

"..ben evliliğim süresince hep yalnızdım hani eşim hep dışarıdaydı ya tamam telefonla hep yanımdaydı ama manevi olarak yanımda değildi varlık olarak yanımda değildi hep dışarıdayım dediğim gibi pazartesi gitti cumartesi geldi uzun bir süre sonra yine geldi yine 3 gün 4 gün dışarıdaydı hep ben varlık olarak o yoktu yanımda e şimdi zaten tamamen yok e ben ömrüm boyunca yalnız kalmak istemiyorum hani varlık olarak birisi olsun yaşlanalım istiyorum.."Fatma (Original)

Ceyda mentioned that because she had to undertake the responsibilities of two people as a single parent, this sometimes led her to question herself. Although she had been carrying out the responsibilities of the children while her husband was alive, she said

that she tried to be more cautious when making decisions after losing him. Fatma similarly mentioned that in the absence of her husband, she could not provide for the things that he had provided for their children. Although she tried hard, she felt all alone.

"...especially regarding the children sometimes I feel inadequate and lonely you know you feel like you need another person because you know you decide to do this to raise them together as a couple anyway the responsibility is supposed to be shared even if I physically do a lot myself psychologically you feel the absence of a support behind you in the end having a spouse and sometimes the absence of that you know can be quite challenging..." Ceyda

"..çocuklarla ilgili özellikle çok bazen kendimi yetersiz ve yalnız hissediyorum hani insanı bir kişiye daha ihtiyacı var çünkü hani bunu zaten iki kişi büyüteceğim diye yaptığın için sorumluluğun tek kişiye kalmış olması normalde fiilen ne kadar kendin de yapıyor olsam psikolojik olarak arkamda bir güç hissediyorsunuz sonuçta eşin olduğu zaman hani onun olmayışı bazen çok zorluyor.." Ceyda (Original)

"...their father never said no to them in anything be it financial or emotional so when I have to restrict or say we can't go can't come can't buy they say if our dad were here he would buy it he would go he would do it I try not to let them say this because you know when they say it my conscience doesn't feel at ease you know if their father were really here he would indeed do it and I try to do it as much as possible but..." Fatma

".. babaları onlara hiç hayır demedi her konuda maddi manevi o yüzden ben kısıtladığımda veya yapamayız gidemeyiz gelemeyiz alamayız dedim mi onlar bunu söylüyorlar işte babam olsaydı alırdı giderdi yapardı ben de bunu söylettirmemeye çalışıyorum hani söylediler mi vicdanım rahat etmiyor yani babaları olsaydı gerçekten yapardı ben de mümkün olduğunca yapmaya çalışıyorum ama .." Fatma (Original)

3.3.1.4. Losing comfort in society

Büşra noted that marriage can give women a place of freedom, particularly in conservative and secluded countries. She also said that even though she did not really want to be married, she agreed to do so in order to feel more at ease.

"...it wasn't that free you know well it's Mardin when I told my mom, she said let there be an engagement so that you can easily see each other we won't pressurize you when she kept saying this we kind of gave in to her insistence and said they won't pressure us we stayed engaged for 13 months and then

they said no you have to get married now that's when I started getting scared Uhm, and we got married well that's why we waited for a year I was planning to wait longer we actually got engaged just so that we could see each other more easily..." Büşra

"..bu kadar özgür değildi mardin işte anneme anlattığımda rahat görüşebilmen için işte nişan olsun sizi sıkmayız hep böyle söyleyince biz biraz onun galeyanına geldik dedik ki sıkmazlar bir sene oldu 13 ay nişanlı kaldık, sonra olmaz evlenmeniz lazım o zaman korkmaya başladım zaten u ve evlendik yani bir sene o yüzden kaldık daha fazla kalmayı düşünüyordum daha rahat görüşebilmek için nişanlandık aslında.." Büşra (Original)

Elif and Fatma mentioned that, in the absence of their spouse, they could not take part in social environments where there were both men and women. They explained this as both an obligation and a preference. In this respect, they added that being alone deprived them of becoming socialized.

"...While my husband was around, you know maybe it's not a big deal but now I feel his absence a lot for example there would be a wedding and because my husband isn't there I can't go alone I didn't go for instance friends would gather everyone goes with their spouse but I didn't go without my husband I found it difficult to move my life in different directions this time I was obliged not to go because everyone comes with their spouse and it didn't feel right for me to attend alone because I was afraid..." Elif

"..eşim varken hani belki şey değildir ama şu an onun çok eksikliğini hissediyorum mesela bir düğün olurdu eşim olmadığı için ben yalnız gidemem gitmedim mesela arkadaşlar toplanırdı herkes eşiyle gidiyor ben eşim olmadan gitmedim hayatımı bu sefer farklı yönler taşımaya zor zorlandım mecburdum çünkü herkes eşiyle gelirken benim yalnız katılmam bana doğru gelmiyordu çünkü korkuyordum.." Elif (Original)

"...somehow I don't have a husband I am compelled I can't go there is nothing to be done I can't invite them as it doesn't work with men but the kids have a lot of fun with their kids when we go they used to understand this but now they are deprived of it... I feel incomplete I don't know I don't want to go... Right now I am always at home in the evenings like moving from house to house I am at home taking care of the kids..." Fatma

"..ben bir şekilde eşim yok mecburum gidemiyorum yapacak bir şey yok e davet edemiyorum onlar erkekli olmuyor ama çocuklar onların gittiğimiz çocuklarla çok eğleniyorlar hani anlaşıyorlardı bundan mahrum kaldılar ..ben eşim yok eksikli hissediyorum kendimi ne bileyim ben gitmek istemiyorum...şu an ben hep evdeyim evden eve misali akşamları evdeyim çocuklarla ilgileniyorum.." Fatma (Original)

Hayat explained that she had to move in with her family after losing her husband and mentioned that she had locked herself in the room to avoid encountering guests coming to the house.

"...Because there were the kids well you would know in the village there were many visitors when they asked me something my psychology would be disturbed I didn't want to tell remember over and over again or even answer for example after that I would either go to the room my parents would be with them but my mom and dad really provided a lot of support if they weren't there if I were left alone maybe I would have been even worse..." Hayat

"..çünkü çocuklar vardı e köy yerini bilirsiniz çok gelen vardı onlar bana bir şey sorduğunda benim psikolojim bozuluyordu hani anlatmak tekrar tekrar hatırlamak cevap vermek bile istemiyordum mesela ondan sonra ya odaya geçiyordum annemler onlarla oturuyordu ama annemle babam gerçekten çok destek oldular onlar olmasaydı belki yalnız olsaydım daha kötü olurdu..." Hayat (Original)

3.3.2. Losing the Father of the household

3.3.2.1. Lack of the father figure

Seren describes her husband as the father figure at home. She- also emphasizes the absence of a father in the family where she herself grew up and mentioned that the father figure was important not only for her son but also for herself. As described by Seren, the absence of a male figure, who is in a strong position and to whom decisions can be consulted at home, leaves her bewildered.

"...As a girl who grew up without a father yes men are like this our inner feelings are feminist so and so but you know we have educated ourselves, proven ourselves to our families and so on but still we want there to be what do they say a dignified man at home someone strong behind us, someone we can consult make decisions together well ideally make decisions together that is pulled out of your life..." Seren

"..ben babasız büyümüş bir kız çocuğu olarak evet erkek böyle iç duygularımız feministtir falan ama şey hani okumuşuz kendimizi ispatlamışız ailemize karşı falan filan ama yine de isteriz ki evde bir ne derler ağır başlı bir adam olsun bir arkamızda güç olsun gene ona danışalım biz kararlarımızı birlikte alalım en iyi ihtimalde birlikte alalım işte o çekip çıkarılıyor hayatınızdan..." Seren (Original)

Elif, on the other hand, mentioned that after losing her husband, it was as if the position of an imaginary father figure remained in a vacuum, and her son felt obliged to take on the responsibilities imposed by this role. She also added that she felt the lack of a father figure more so on special occasions in relation to her children, such as engagements and weddings. Fatma added that her husband was the one who had arranged all the family programs and that after losing him, she had a very difficult time making these decisions.

"...Already to my child what his uncle and aunt told him for 40 days for two months was this you have become the father of that house now you are taking over the responsibility of the house you will take care of your mother your brother and your sibling the child's mind was so blown away that he only focused on that you know what he said to the professor he said am I a child now or am I a father now I don't know what I am I don't know what to do..."
Elif

"..çocuğuma zaten 40 gün boyunca 2 ay boyunca amcası halası söylediği şeydi sen artık o evin babası oldun sen artık o evde sorumluluğu sen alıyorsun annene kardeşine ablana sen sahip çıkacaksın çocuğun beyni öyle bir gitmiş ki sadece ona odaklanmış ne söyledi biliyor musunuz profesöre ben dedi şimdi çocuk muyum ben şimdi baba mıyım ben dedi neyim bilmiyorum ben ne yapacağımı bilmiyorum.." Elif (Original)

"...I only wished for my husband to be alive when I was giving away my daughter you know how they announce at weddings the mother and father of the bride so that my daughter wouldn't be upset I went secretly and said Please, don't say mother and father when announcing because the bride does not have a father is not here alive..." Elif

"...sadece bi eşimi kızımı verirken çok istedim hayatta olmasını bir düğünde anons ediyorlar ya gelinin annesi ve babası ben kızım üzülmesin diye gittim gizlice dedim ki lütfen dedim anons ederken annesi babası diye söylemeyin dedim çünkü gelinin babası yok dedim.." Elif (Original)

"...I think my arm and wing were broken in my opinion because everything was on him I mean, he was doing everything noticing what was missing in the house seeing the gaps arranging everything planning where to go what to eat everything whatever had to be done on the weekends we would go to this place we would go to the beach he would arrange everything... especially with the kids if I couldn't decide I would throw it on him you know he's the father let him decide now everything is on me and it's especially difficult to make decisions for the children..." Fatma

"..bence kolum kanadım kırıldı benim fikrim çünkü her şey ondaydı yani her şeyi yapıyordu evini eksikliğini görüyordu gediğini görüyordu gezilecek

yenilecek her şeyi o ayarlıyordu ne yapılacaksa hafta sonu şuraya gideceğiz denize gideceğiz her şey o ayarlıyordu .. özellikle çocuklarda ben karar veremedim mi ona atıyordum hani babadır o karar versin şimdi her şey bende en çok zordu o hani çocuklar için karar vermek..” Fatma (Original)

Hayat said that her son was more affected by the loss of his father. She accounted for this by mentioning that he was not at an age to remember his father; hence, he always maintained his father's absence in his imagination.

“...My daughter is not doing anything she says you've been very supportive to us but my son since he is two years old and hasn't seen his father he found it difficult quite a bit because at the age of two he doesn't know what it means to have a father what it's like so whenever he thinks about his father there is a lot of sadness in other words he has been quite affected by it..” Hayat

“.. kızım hiç şey yapmıyor sen diyor bize çok destek oldun ama oğlum iki yaşında olduğu için baba görmediği için baya bir zorlandı iki yaşında babanın ne demek olduğunu nasıl bir şey olduğunu bilmediği için hala babam olsaydı babası aklına geldiği zaman baya bir üzüntüler oluyor yani o baya bir etkilendi..” Hayat (Original)

3.3.2.2. The Mother cannot fill the father's place

The following is how Büşra described the advice she received from a psychotherapist she saw before her husband passed away. No matter what the mother does, the therapist claimed, she will never be able to fully replace the father; that gap will always exist. She continued to say that she was focusing more on being a good mother than on attempting to fill that gap. Although this circumstance shows the absence of the real father, it was believed to imply that the mother is unable to carry out the paternal role.

“...Because you cannot be his father try to be a good mother but you won't be able to fill the void of his father in his life that part will always be missing he said he won't be able to put anyone there in his place...” Büşra

“..çünkü babası olamazsın iyi bir anne olmaya çalış babanın yerini dolduramayacaksın hayatında o kısmı hep eksik olacak dedi kimseyi oraya koyamayacak..” Büşra (Original)

Seren talks about the absence of a person with whom she can share common feelings in life. She talks about the shortcomings of these partnerships through her child and

states that although there are people who can be with her, her husband has left her alone in this matter and creates an irreplaceable lack in her life.

"...in the traditional sense why is the mother father and child so important well it increases your resilience in the face of what life may throw at you you know compared to enduring it alone ... of course there are relatives cousins and such thankfully there are people around however what we have in our home is primarily my son and me and my spouse but what happens in our home is me and my spouse experience such joy when something positive related to our son happens and when something negative happens there's no one as saddened as the two of us in a family you go through these things together and when you're alone you have to endure and can't share these heartfelt experiences..." Seren

"..klasik anlamda anne baba çocuk bu niye bu kadar önemlidir e hayatta olabileceklere dayanma gücün artar e bi tek başına dayanmak var... tabiki akrabalar kuzenler falan da var şükür ki etrafta var birileri ama bizim evde olan en çok benim ve eşimin oğlumla. ilgili bir şeye sevinci çoktur olumlu bir şeye olumsuz bir şey olduğunda da ikimiz kadar üzülen olmaz aile içinde e bunları tek başına yaşamak zorunda kalıyorsun paylaşamıyorsun bu kadar içten.." Seren (Original)

3.3.2.3. There is no such thing as damage that can be overcome

Seren described that her life was as being suddenly turned upside down with the loss of her husband. Although life continues, the loss of her husband means the absence of a fatherly feeling ("baba duygusu") not only for her son but also for herself. She mentioned that although she tried to make the absence of her husband less distressing for her son, she realized that such a thing was not possible in time.

"...For me well of course my life suddenly turned upside down it was a very a very emotional experience and of course some things progressed now work and social aspects are going on but the storm never end yes for me what I might have replaced for the fatherly feeling from my perspective is like this but when I let go of myself how can I prevent my son from overcoming this with less damage how you think there is no such thing but you think there is..." Seren

"..benim e tabi o birden hayatım alt üst oldu çok çok duygusal anlamda tabiki bir şeyler yürüdü şimdi iştir güçtür sosyal şeyler yürüyor ama fırtına hiç bitmiyor evet benim belki de baba duygusu yerine de koyduğum şey benim açımdan böyle ama ben kendimi falan bıraktım ben oğluma nasıl daha az hasarla atlattırabilirim nasıl öyle bir şey yokmuş da var zannediyorsunuz.." Seren (Original)

Seren preferred to describe the effect of the loss upon her son, and she mentioned that her son was exposed to a lot of negative experiences. Even though experiences such as loss or illness had passed, the fact that they felt "pierced through" shows how challenging these experiences and their aftermath are.

"...Already it has always been like that in the house illness death illness death serious illnesses serious deaths you know there is no such thing as serious death but the grandmother then the father I the child I'm sick I mean I'm on dialysis the child went through very difficult times during that period, between those ages of eight and twelve It's always like that well of course these come and go but among folks we say they pierce through well years later the pandemic erupted in this way..." Seren

"...zaten hep öyle evin içinde hastalık ölüm hastalık ölüm ciddi hastalıklar ciddi ölümler hani ciddi ölüm olmaz da anneanne baba peşine ben çocuk ben hasta yani diyalizdeyim çocuk çok zor dönemler geçirdi o ara hani bir sekiz yaş on iki yaş arası hep böyle e tabi bunlar gelip geçiyor ama delip geçiyor deriz halk arasında biz e yıllar sonra pandemide bu şekilde patladı.." Seren (Original)

Seren said that when she told to her son that his father had died, her son had difficulty in completing death and in understanding the notion of not being able to see him again. She said that she also had a hard time explaining death and that they learned to live together with his lack, but the wound he left behind him was not healed.

"...my son is such a child I never forget his reaction he said well can't we see each other on MSN either well he said well at least we could see each other from there... He thought perhaps we could have a video call or something it was very difficult to explain to him but still of course not death but the absence the lack we always experience thing we always experience it that will never end but well we have learned to live with it he is learning somehow..." Seren

"...oğlum şöyle çocuk şu tepkisini hiç unutmuyorum msnden de mi görüşemiyoruz yani demişti yani bari oradan görüşseydik demişti...zannetti ki belki oradan görüntülü görüşürüz falan zannetti çok zor oldu ona onu anlatmak ama hala daha tabi ölüm değil ama eksiklik şey yaşıyoruz hep yaşıyoruz o bitmeyecek ama işte onunla yaşamayı öğrendik öğreniyor bir şekilde.." Seren (Original)

When asked why it was so hard for her to talk about her spouse, Güler replied that she did not know the answer herself and that she was afraid the children would be

unhappy if she did. She claimed that's why they carried on as if their father had not passed away.

"...I don't know is it like not making his absence felt I mean I couldn't exactly thing there's nothing really challenging me but as if I couldn't do it I can't find that strength in myself how shall I explain it It feels like I can't do it it feels like I can't speak to the children maybe the children will be saddened my boy is much more emotional and introverted sometimes memories come to his mind he talks about them but I can't do it maybe I don't want to hurt him or maybe I just act like nothing happened and continue I don't know I can't fully explain myself..." Güler

"...ne bileyim sanki onun yokluğunu hissettirmemek mi yani tam şey yapamadım zorlayan bir şey yok aslında yapamayacakmışım gibi kendimde o gücü bulamıyorum nasıl anlatsam yapamam gibi geliyor konuşamam gibi geliyor çocuklara karşı belki üzümler benim oğlan çok daha duygusal içe kapanık zaten bazen anıları aklına geliyor anlatıyor ama ben yapamıyorum belki üzme istemiyorum belki de hiç yokmuş gibi davranıp devam ediyorum bilmiyorum ben de kendimi tam açıklayamıyorum.."Güler (Original)

3.3.3. Losing the partner

3.3.3.1. Trying to make up for the loss with other men

Ceyda mentioned that she was trying to make up for the emptiness she felt after her husband had passed away by meeting up with some men whom she would not normally meet. The expression "closing the gap" that she uses in this section has more than one meaning. In this respect, one might think that both sexuality and the need to fill an emotional gap are associated. Deniz, on the other hand, compared her deceased husband with the men with whom she subsequently had an affair and mentioned that her deceased husband was different, and no one could fill his place.

*"...and, of course in the initial period there was always thing that gap there you know there's a relationship that has been going on for 15 years **I can now see that I introduced someone into my life with the desire to actually close that gap just so that it would close** however it closes just let it close it's like let anyone close that gap with a wrong man an interesting thing later on for example things happened like trying to communicate with people share something with them which under normal circumstances I would never even talked to..." – Ceyda*

“..bir de tabi ilk dönem hep şey böyle o bir açık var orada hani 15 yıldır yaşanan bir ilişki var o açığı aslında kapatma isteğiyle hayatıma birini sokmuş olduğumu görebiliyorum şu anda orası kapansın yeter ki kapansın nasıl kapanırsa kapansın herhangi biri orayı kapatsın gibi yanlış bir erkek şeyiyle böyle enteresan daha sonra işte mesela normal koşullarda asla konuşmayacağım bile insan yapılarında insanlarla iletişim kurup onlarla bir şeyi paylaşmaya çalışmak falan gibi şeyler yaşandı..” Ceyda (Original)

“...You know with his characteristics structure and the value he gave me I realized he was at a different point in my life later when I tried to put the other people I met in his place maybe putting in his place is the wrong expression but looking at what he gave and what he made me experience and at the approach of the others well let me not say approach well the pleasure we got from spending time together seems to have fallen a bit behind I think we had more to share with him with life you know he lived life to the fullest he was a person who loved life let’s say he was different...” – Deniz

“..hani özellikleriyle yapısıyla bana verdiği değerle farklı bir noktadaymış daha sonra tanıdığım insanları onun yerine koyabilmek veya yerine koymak belki yanlış bir tabir ama onun verdiği yaşattığını noktayla öbürlerinin yaklaşımına baktığınız zaman yaklaşım da demeyim hani birlikte zaman geçirmekten aldığınız haz biraz daha geride kaldı galiba... daha çok şey paylaştığımız vardı onunla yaşamla hani dolu doluydu yaşamı seven bir insandı daha farklıydı diyim..” Deniz (Original)

3.3.3.2. Giving up “The birds and the bees”

Seren said that she tried to live with a man after the death of her husband, but the relationship did not work out. She later said that she did not establish a relationship with another man, and she actually put an end to romantic relationships with the death of her husband. She mentioned that having a new person in her life was frightening to her and that it would be difficult for her to trust someone. Similarly, Elif has stated with a definitive language that as soon as she realizes that someone is interested in her, she prevents it and does not want to take anyone into her life. Likewise, Fatma said that she agreed to being alone if necessary because her children did not accept a new father.

“...When you look at it as a woman yes I mean being in a marital relationship in a man and woman relationship you stops these there wasn't any such other pursuit I only had one attempt and since it's history now since it's a valuable history and we decided that it wouldn't work out for us honestly what comes next scares me a bit because there are men around who prey on women...” – Seren

“..bir kadın olarak baktığınızda evet yani eş birlikte bir yaşan kadın erkek ilişkisi bunları da durdurmuş oluyorsunuz böyle de bir şey başka bir arayış olmadı sadece bir denemem oldu o da geçmiş olduğu için kıymetli bir geçmiş olduğu için onun da olamayacağına karar verdik ötesi de beni açıkçası korkutuyor ortalıkta kadın kesen adamlar dolaştığı için..” Seren (Original)

“...I mean, for example now you feel that the person there is interested in you but I from the beginning cut it off from the beginning honestly I cut it off right from the start I say If you approach me like this or talk about the future thinking like I'll become friends with Elif and then think about marriage and whatever If he approaches me with this purpose I directly tell him don't approach me because I don't have such plans I would only be friends with you never a spouse that's the sentence I directly say...” – Elif

“..yani mesela artık hissediyorsunuz karşıdaki insanın sana ilgi duyduğunu ama ben baştan önünü kesmeyi kesiyorum açıkçası direkt baştan kesiyorum ben benimle veya böyle konuşuyorsan hani ileriye yönelik ben Elifle arkadaş olurum sonra evlilik düşünürüm bilmem ne bu amaçla ben bana yaklaşırsa yaklaşmayın diyorum direk ben çünkü öyle bir şey düşünmüyorum benden size sadece arkadaş olur asla eş olmaz direkt söylediğim cümle budur benim..” Elif (Original)

“...Well let's say let it be for the best if it's to the benefit of my children let it be if not we'll choose to be alone there's nothing we can do we'll cope with it well I can't explain this to the children I say I sleep alone look' and she says there's no one to hug and I sleep with my daughter I still haven't been able to separate her the boy sleeps separately but not the girl...” – Fatma

“.. yani nasip hayırlısı diyelim çocuklarım için hayırlıysa olsun değilse yalnız da tercih edeceğiz yapacak bir şey yok katlanacağız diyelim yani çocuklara bunu anlatamıyorum ben diyorum yalnız yatıyorum bak diyorum sarılacak kimse yok diyor kızımınla beraber yatıyoruz hâlâ bunu ayıramadım oğlan ayrıldı da kızı ayıramadım..” Fatma (Original)

Güler said that after her husband passed away, she quit romantic relationships completely, and regarded all men as her brothers because she was still loyal to her husband and loved him very much.

r: “...Okay have you ever thought about thing having someone else in your life afterward if so how it would be

p: Uhm uhm I wouldn't even well shake hands everyone became like a brother to me I always refer to them as brother I never thought about such a thing and I won't I've experienced everything more than enough I say you made me experience everything the biggest of pain and everything I say we've experienced everything beautifully I don't desire such a thing no.

r: What do you think the reason of this is?

p: I love my spouse very much I am very attached I don't know it's like he's always inside me inside me as if I'm moving with him only with him..." – Güler

"..a- peki daha sonrasında hiç şeyi düşündünüz mü hayatınızda başka biri olur mu olsa nasıl olur

k- ı ih ben öyle tokalaşmaya bile şey yapmam herkes benim abim gibi oldu ben hep abi diyorum asla öyle bir şey düşünmedim düşünmem de yani ben yaşadığım her şeyi fazla fazla yaşadım her şeyi bana yaşattın acının da her şeyin de en büyüğünü yaşattın her şeyi çok güzel yaşadık diyorum ben öyle bir şey istemem yani

a- bunun sebebi ne sizce

k- eşimi çok seviyorum çok bağlıyım bilmiyorum o hep içimde sanki içimde sanki onunla hareket ediyorum bir tek o.." Güler (Original)

3.4. Ways to deal with death

After the loss, the Subject develops ways of coping with the lack over time. As the libido becomes unbalanced due to loss, we seek new ways to restore it, and each develops its own defense mechanisms to manage the lack, depending on subjective structure. During the period of mourning, a person tries to establish a relationship with life in another area by exchanging lost objects for new ones. When a person turns to supporting factors during a period of grief, they are not always able to make these decisions at a conscious level. Some of these coping strategies are functional and improving for the person, while others can be harmful at some level. Below are some factors that make it easier to deal with grief.

3.4.1. Denial of Mortality

As one of the three orders, the Real, emerges from that which is outside of language and that 'absolutely resists symbolization'. In this respect, the Real is 'the domain of everything outside symbolization' (Lacan, 1966/2006). Lacan associates the Real with the concept of impossibility: "The real is 'impossible' (Lacan, 1998) because it is impossible to imagine the Real and integrate it into the symbolic order, and it is at

a place where we have no access. This aspect of impossibility and resistance to symbolisation is what gives the Real its basically traumatic quality. To deal with the destructive and traumatic aspect of reality, the individual must establish their own defense mechanisms. The ego's desire for self-preservation seeks to maintain an idealized self-image, shielding itself from the awareness of mortality. This idealized image is constructed to give us a sense of coherence and strength, compensating for our fundamental lack and vulnerability. In this perspective, the denial of losing a spouse, and thus the denial of mortality, are regarded as a manageable function of the obscurity of death, which fundamentally belongs to the realm of the Real.

3.4.1.1. Preferring separation to death

Büşra said she really wanted her husband to get well, but was not sure if she wanted this for herself, for her son or for her husband. Then she pulled herself out of that equation by saying that if he got better, they could divorce if necessary. Similarly, Ceyda and Seren, mentioned that they preferred divorce to death. As for Fatma, she stated that when she told the children that they had lost their father, the children first perceived it as a divorce. When Fatma was asked if she had held any previous thoughts of losing her husband, she misunderstood it to mean a breakup in relationship. She stated that she had also thought about getting a divorce, but the possibility of death had never occurred to her.

"...Do I want him to recover for myself I am struggling so much is it for my son or is it for him there is someone who is sick is it for him and I came to this conclusion and said let him recover if necessary let him separate from me a person's health is above everything..." Büşra

"..onun kendim için mi iyileşmesini istiyorum bu kadar çabalıyorum oğlum için mi yoksa onun için mi hasta olan biri var onun için mi ve şuna kanaat ettim dedim iyileşsin gerekirse benden ayrılın bir insanın sağlığı her şeyin üstünde.."Büşra (Original)

"...Let him recover if necessary let's get divorced..." Seren

"..iyileşsin gerekirse boşanalım.."Seren (Original)

"...I wish he hadn't died we if only he lived we could have divorced..." - Ceyda

"..keşke ölmeyeydi biz yaşasaydı da biz boşansaydıkt..” Ceyda (Original)
"...I told the children when I came home both of them were ready to go to school I told them both I said we lost our father but they didn't even understand what I meant by lost you know they thought he had gone somewhere as if we had separated..." – Fatma

"..çocuklara ben söyledim gelince ikisi de hazırlanmış okula gideceklerdi ikisine de dedim babamızı kaybettik dedim onlar bile anlamadı kaybettik derken hani bir yere gitti anlamışlar o boşandık gibi..." Fatma (Original)

r: "... Well have you ever thought about it before something about losing him

p: No in the past I had thoughts of divorce and I shared this with the children we experienced it several times we had disagreements and I came back home to my family's house ... so the thought didn't occur not of losing him but rather of separating but I had never thought about something like this, never..." – Fatma

"..a- daha önce hiç düşündünüz mü peki onu kaybetmeyle ilgili bir şey

k- hayır geçmişte boşanma düşüncelerim oldu çocuklarla da paylaştım bunu defalarca yaşadık yani küslüklerimiz oldu geldim evde ailemin evinde...yani hiç önce aklıma gelmedi onu kaybederim değil de hani ayrılırız ama böyle bir şey hiç aklıma gelmedi hiç.." Fatma (Original)

3.4.1.2. Not being able to accept the reality of death

Büşra took an interest in religion during her husband's illness and said her religious beliefs brought her more comfort than the people around her. She said she could not talk about the situation with her loved ones when her husband's illness relapsed because she did not want to believe that her husband was going to die. After the death of her husband, she found it very difficult to accept the situation and she said she was barely able to meet her own needs during that time.

"...I wanted to have faith I sought refuge in religion I sought refuge in miracles I had to seek refuge because that was the only thing left for me Uhm I didn't accept it I couldn't even share it with my family because I didn't want them to accept his death." – Büşra

"..inanmak istedim dine sığındım mucizelere sığındım sığınmak zorundaydım çünkü tek şey oydu elimde kalan ı kabul etmedim bunu ailemle bile paylaşamadım çünkü ölümü ona kondurmalarını istemiyordum.." Büşra (Original)

Büşra said that she could not accept that her husband was suffering from a disease that could have fatal consequences, such as cancer, and added that she had denied this disease for a certain period of time, thinking about the possibilities.

"... 'I don't accept such a thing no diagnosis has been made yet there is only suspicion I said when I think about it now I couldn't accept it at that time because they wouldn't admit him there yes there was a great suspicion there was no definitive diagnosis but a consideration of eighty to ninety percent probability..." Büşra

"..ben böyle bir şeyi kabul etmiyorum daha teşhis konmadı şüphe var sadece dedim şimdi düşündüğümde o dönem kabul edememişim çünkü oraya yatırmazlardı büyük bir şüphe var evet teşhis konmadı ama yüzse seksen doksan gibi bir ihtimal düşünülüyordu.." Büşra (Original)

"... 'It's very bad I said to myself but I didn't even tell my sister this because I still don't want anyone to accept his death qhen I say anyone I mean myself maybe I don't want them to convince me..." – Büşra

"..çok kötü dedim kendi kendime ama ablama bile söylemedim bunu çünkü kimsenin halen ona ölümü kondurmasını istemiyorum kimseden kastım kendimim belki beni inandırmalarını istemiyorum.." Büşra (Original)

"...We will also die, and somehow to no longer struggle with illnesses we need to accept certain things with those who remain if I still have stomach troubles now it's probably because of the time when I devastated myself during that period If I had said yes he's dead but I need to eat but I need to drink a glass of milk I must not get sick I need to do something for my child then you can't even think about these things..." – Büşra

"..biz de öleceğiz ve bir şekilde kalanlarla artık hastalıklarla mücadele etmemek için bazı şeyleri kabul etmek gerekiyor şu an ben hala midemin sıkıntısını çekiyorsam o dönem kendimi perişan ettiğimdendir eğer deseydim ki evet öldü ama benim yemek yemem gerekiyor ama bir bardak süt içmem gerekiyor hastalanmamam gerekiyor çocuğum için bir şeyler yapmam gerekiyor bunu düşünemiyorsunuz.." Büşra (Original)

Similarly, Elif stated that after receiving the news of her spouse's death from the doctor, she refused it and did not accept what the doctor said.

"...All the arteries in the heart were completely blocked and well then the doctor came and how he said may his soul rest in peace we couldn't save him I couldn't believe it at that moment I said no it appears to you that way it's not possible I just went blank..." Elif,

“..bir kalpteki bütün damarlar tıkanmış tamamen ve sonra işte doktor geldi başın sağ olsun kurtaramadık dedi ya o an inanamadım biliyor musunuz yani hayır dedim size öyle geliyor dedim yok mümkün değil dedim yani gittim sadece..” Elif (Original)

Ceyda did not mention the death of her husband while explaining that she could not take care of the children after her husband passed away. When describing how she may have escaped from facing this loss, she mentioned it as “that incident, that thing I didn't mention there”. It is believed that her loss was perhaps still denied in her discourse.

p: "...Of course in the first two months maybe even a year even if I couldn't be with them couldn't take care of them everything seems to be going well now."

r: "What do you mean when you say you couldn't take care of them?"

p: "In the first two months I didn't want to see them at all I mean I didn't even want to see them but I was at home every evening I could only come home and sleep uhm I think I was avoiding facing it now you know what I'm doing now you know what I'm calling it now perhaps that thing you know perhaps I wanted to turn to myself a bit after this incident I wanted to gather myself a bit and I experienced quite an interesting process the first 2 months or so were quite challenging..." – Ceyda

“..tabii ilk iki ay hatta bir yıl belki çok yanlarında olamasam da ilgilenemesem de şu an her şey yolunda gidiyor gibi görünüyor

a- İlgilenmesem de dediğiniz nasıl bir şeyden bahsediyorsunuz

k- ilk 2 ay hiç yani görmek dahi istemedim ama evdeydim her akşam gelip sadece uyuyabiliyordum u şey yüzleşmekten kaçıyordum sanırım şu anda hani şey yaptığım şey o yani orayı isimlendirdiğim şey o belki de hani belki de kendime dönmek istedim bu olaydan sonra birazcık kendimi toparlamak istedim falan böyle enteresan bir süreç yaşadım ilk 2 ay falan bayağı zorlu geçti..” Ceyda (Original)

When Güler was asked what had changed with the loss of her husband, she stated that many things had changed, but what had changed did not fill the place of his absence. She added that they acted as if he would return one day.

"...Because we had relocated frequently due to being appointed moving out wasn't a problem I never had any trouble in that regard they always knew

about that my children as well of course the absence of one person going from four to three was very difficult we continued as if he weren't there as if he went somewhere and would come back exactly that he's not there but always there the photos are always with us, but he's not..." Güler

"..tayin çok olduğumuz için taşınmak sorun olmadı o yönden sıkıntı hiç çekmedim hani onu hep biliyorlar çocuklarım da tabii ki bir kişinin yokluğu 4 kişi gidip 3 kişi gelmenin yokluğu çok zordu o yokmuş gibi devam ettik o sanki bir yere gitti gelecek aynen o yok ama hep var fotoğraflar hep var yanımızda var ama yok.." Güler (Original)

"...No as he used to go on duty previously he went on duty and he'll come back it's been like that for ten years it hasn't changed no the routine is the same it hasn't changed at all..." – Güler

"..yok öncesinde göreve gidiyordu ya göreve gitti gelecek on yıldır öyle hiç değişmedi yok düzen aynı hiç değişmedi.." Güler (Original)

Hayat explained that when she received the news of her husband's death, she did not believe that he was dead until she saw his body.

"...well I threw myself from place to place you know saying no no it can't be it can't be I apparently literally hit myself to the ground here and there and kept saying no it's impossible it can't have happened and while going there to my spouse's hometown where they took him I still kept saying on the way no he mustn't have died it can't have happened news had come but I was definitely still proceeding in such a condition you know..." – Hayat

"..ya kendimi yerden yere attım yani baya böyle olamaz olamaz diye kendimi yerden yere atmışım olamaz diyorum olmadı ve ben eşimi memleketine götürdüler oraya giderken hala yolda diyorum ki hayır diyorum ölmemiştir diyorum kesinlikle olmamıştır haber geldi ama ben kesinlikle hala öyle gidiyorum yani.." Hayat (Original)

3.4.1.3. Feeling disconnected after loss

Ceyda explained that after receiving the news of her husband's death, she remained calm to an extent that was not expected of her and mentioned that she felt numb. It was thought that the expressions she used in this part of the interview, *"as if it were normal as if everything was under control,"* might be a defense mechanism to be able to cope with this news.

"...well I feel like I've swallowed a stone there's nothing and everything seems so normal well I called my son's teacher... Everyone was crying on the phone

and I was saying don't cry nothing happened and it was such a strange... there was nothing on my side I sent everyone home that night and I said let the children not wake up in this house I'm acting extremely consciously in an abnormal way if someone else had this death house right now I don't think I could do this I guess." – Ceyda

"..yani taş yutmuş gibiyim hiçbir şey yok ve her şey çok normalmiş gibi işte oğlumun öğretmenini aradım...herkes telefonda ağlıyor ben ağlamayın bir şey yok falan diyordum böyle garip bir ...bende hiçbir şey yok herkesi evden gönderdim o gece dedim ki çocuklar bu eve uyanmasın falan o kadar aşırı bilinçli hareket ediyorum ki anormal bir şekilde yani hani şu an ölü evi başkasının başına gelse bunu yapamam yani zannediyorum ki.." Ceyda (Original)

When talking about her husband's illness and his death before her eyes, Deniz stated that she could not remember exactly what she had been doing at that moment and what had happened.

"...what I did I notified the hotel I think I called probably called when I didn't get a response I went to the next room to ask for help then I went to him probably held him in the meantime the others came so 24 years have passed these are the things I remember very clearly everything..." – Deniz

"...ben ne yaptım otele haber verdim telefon ettim herhalde telefon ettim cevap alamayınca yan taraftaki odaya gittim yardımcı olun diye gidip de sonra yanına gidip herhalde tuttum o arada diğerleri geldi yani 24 yıl bitti çok da net hatırladığım bunlar yani birebir.." Deniz (Original)

Elif said that when she received the news of her husband's death from the doctor, she screamed. She was given an injection, and in general she could not remember anything that had happened for about 10 minutes; that part of her memory was faded. It is interesting that the only thing she remembered was that her spouse's shoe had come off. This could be due to a previous account that Elif had made in that it was her husband who chose everything she was wearing, including her shoes and that she did not have any freedom in this regard either.

"... 'All the arteries leading to the heart were blocked he said and with us two we brought him back twice he said but he said the latest crises he said well it was impossible he didn't overcome it well apparently I screamed at that moment underwent a crisis I remember them giving me an injection I only remember them putting me on a stretcher I know he was sitting in a

wheelchair first I don't remember the rest those 10 minutes or so are missing... I only remember that my shoe coming off..." – Elif

"..kalbe giden bütün damarlar tıkanı dedi bizde de ikisi 2 defa geri getirdik dedi ama dedi bu son gelen krizler dedi hani mümkün değil dönmedi yani dedi ben o ara işte bir bağırışım kriz geçirmişim bana bir iğne yaptıklarını hatırlıyorum sadece sedyeye uzattıklarını yani önce tekerlekli sandalyede oturduğunu biliyorum sonrasında bende yok o 10 dakika falan yok yani...sadece ayağımdaki ayakkabının çıktığını hatırlıyorum.." Elif (Original)

Fatma said that she had a nervous breakdown the moment she received the news of her husband's death, and then someone dropped her home, but she stated that she did not remember any of this.

"...Well I understood that something was happening I started crying then the doctor told me to calm down and said 'I'm going to tell you something I stayed silent thinking he would give me good news he said we lost the patient that's where I learned it and that's where I collapsed I started screaming and shouting I don't remember what I did I don't remember how I came home from there I don't remember the rest you know. ... Well for example we came home from the hospital but I don't remember how we came who brought us I don't remember that part but I remember what happened after we came home from the hospital..." – Fatma

"..hani anladım bir şeyler olduğunu ağlamaya başladım sonra doktor bana dur sakin ol dedi söyleyeceğim dedi ben de iyi haber verecek diye sessiz kaldım hastayı kaybettik dedi orada öğrendim orda yıkıldım artık bağırdım çağırdım ne yaptığımı da hatırlamıyorum oradan eve nasıl geldim onu hatırlamıyorum gerisini hatırlamıyorum yani...işte mesela hastaneden eve geldik biz ama neyle geldik kim getirdi onu hatırlamıyorum hastaneden eve geldikten sonrasını hatırlıyorum.." Fatma (Original)

Güler explained that she felt she had to be very strong at her husband's funeral and mentioned that she hardly ever cried.

p: "...They insisted a lot at that time you know the relatives of patients use it they said get support get support I stubbornly refused just because of my beliefs I thought I need to be a bit in control I need to be strong and stand on my own feet believe me I didn't even cry at the funeral the ceremony was conducted with a military funeral I held my children's hands one in each hand, directly next to them I didn't cry at all I know it might not have been good but I didn't go and seek support I didn't take it I need to be in control I didn't want those medications didn't want to take them..." – Güler

"..k- çok dediler o zaman yani abla hastaların dediler hani yakınları kullanıyor destek al destek al inatla reddettim aynen inançlar çünkü biraz ben kendimde olmalıyım güçlü olmalıyım ayakta olmalıyım inanın cenazede ağlamadım bile diyebilirim tören askeri törenle oldu çocuklarımın iki elinden tuttum dim direkt hani onların yanına zaten hiç ağlamadım biliyorum kötü mü oldu ama gidip destek almam almadım yani kendimde olmalıyım ben o ilaçları kullanıp içmeyi istemedim.." Güler (Original)

3.4.2. Moving on after death

After a loss, people develop different ways of coping with the lack over time. As the libido becomes unbalanced due to the loss, we seek new ways to restore it, and each person develops their own defense mechanisms to manage the lack, depending on the subjective structure. During the period of mourning, a person tries to establish a relationship with life in another area by exchanging lost objects for new ones. When a person turns to supporting factors during a period of grief, they are not always able to make these decisions at a conscious level. Some of these coping strategies are functional and enhancing for the person, while others can be harmful at some level. Here are some factors that make it easier to deal with grief.

3.4.2.1. Working

Büşra claimed that after losing her husband, her sleep cycle became unstable, and she was unable to get any rest. She viewed these waking periods as a special time when she could be alone, and no one could bother her. She claimed that she made use of these moments by doing her work. She began working toward a master's degree for her professional advancement while her husband was ill and emphasized the significance of the space, she created for herself. Deniz also said that after losing her husband, she felt the need to do something and take action, so she dedicated herself to work.

"...I said let me prepare for the KPSS since I can't sleep and the only time people can't bother me is when they're asleep I took advantage of my insomnia at the time and studied for the KPSS around me everyone said it's been so many years you won't get appointed but I didn't care I didn't even tell anyone that I was studying and making preferences..." Büşra

“..kpssye hazırlanayım dedim madem uyuyamıyorum ve insanların beni rahatsız edemediği tek zaman dilimi insanların uyuduğu zaman dilimidir dedim o zamanlarda uykusuzluğumu fırsata çevirip kpssye çalıştım a etrafımda herkes bu kadar sene geçmiş atanmazsın şu bu önemsemiyorum çalıştığımı tercih yaptığımı bile söylemedim..” Büşra (Original)

"I had listened to a psychologist who said if you turn every problem in your life into an opportunity you can hold onto life more easily when I was at the hospital I applied for a master's degree I used to go back and forth to Konya on weekends while I was in Ankara when my husband was doing well I completed my master's degree..." – Büşra

“..bir psikoloğu dinlemişim hayatınızdaki her sorundan bir fırsat çıkarırsanız hayata daha rahat tutunabilirsiniz demişti ben de hastanedeyken yüksek lisansa başvurduğum haftasonları konyaya gidip geliyordum ankaradayken sabah gidip akşam dönüyordum eşim iyi olduğu zamanlarda yüksek lisansımı bitirdim..” Büşra (Original)

"...I thought I need to do something so with their interference I started thinking about what I could do how I could improve myself again. ...Then I thought about doing my husband's work he used to participate in tenders had connections abroad so I asked myself if I could do that... I had a small saving I opened another place with that... I worked for 2 years." – Deniz

“..bir şeyler yapmam lazım diye ya onların karışmasıyla birlikte tekrar ne yapabilirim ne edebilirim nasıl kendimi geliştirebilirim...sonra eşimin işlerini yapmaya işte ihalelere giriyor yurt dışında bağlantıları vardı onları yapabilir miyim dedim...elimde ufak bir birikim vardı onunla tekrar bir yer açtım ...2 yıl uğraştım..” Deniz (Original)

3.4.2.2. Medication makes it easier to cope

Seren said that she started using Cipralext after learning about her husband's illness and that she had been using it for many years. She mentioned that she saw the drug as a support and that it helped her to continue her daily life. She added that quitting the drug was not good for her as it made her more tense.

"...I am using Cipralext somehow does Cipralext work miracles no still sometimes you know everyone experiences it when they get older wondering what will I do you know I'm single alone of course it prevents me from falling into that pit, you know.... I am more angry more aggressive therefore when I say I'm fine now I can attribute it to something that is more of a stable state without extreme ups and downs..." – Seren

“..cipralext kullanıyorum her nasıl oluyorsa cipralext mucize mi yaratıyor hayır yine bazen hani herkeste olur ya yaşlanınca ne yapıcım işte tek tekim

ne yapıcam elbette o kuyuya düşmemi engelliyor hani...daha sinirliyim daha öfkeliyim dolayısıyla iyiyim iyiyim dediğim şimdi daha normal iniş çıkışı olmayan bir şeye oturabildim diyeyim..” Seren (Original)

Fatma also said that after losing her husband, she increased the dose of her medications. She added that she did not have much time to think about what had happened because the medications made her sleepy.

“...I increased my depression medication then you know quite after 6 months I increased it again now I've reduced it back I've been reducing it for about three months when I increased it I used to sleep a lot maybe that's why my sister had me increase it so that if I sleep more I would cry less ache less and time would pass quickly perhaps when it increased my naps increased for example I used to come home from work finish my work have dinner and then I would sleep so that there wouldn't be a chance to cry perhaps...” – Fatma

“..depresyon ilacımı çoğalttım sonra işte bayağı 6 ay sonra çoğalttım şu an geri azalttım bir üç aydır tekrar azalttım bir ve çoğaldığında çok uyuyordum çoğaldığı için belki de ablam o yüzden çoğalttırdı hani uyursam daha çabuk ağlamam sızlamam diye çabuk geçer vakit diye belki de çoğalınca uyumalarım çoğaldı mesela evden işe geliyordum işimi bitirdim yemeği yedim mi uyuyordum için hani ağlamaya fırsat olmasın diye belki..” Fatma (Original)

3.4.2.3. If there is no spouse, there is a sibling

Seren mentioned her sister as one of the persons who helped her the most when her husband died. She stated that her sister did not have a child and that she was always there for her, especially when it came to things concerning her child.

“...I'm coming by the way my sister has been a great supporter we practically raised O. together her child was married but since they didn't have a child uhm both of us I mean she provided a lot of support in all aspects mostly regarding matters related to O.” – Seren

“..geliyorum kız kardeşim bu arada çok destekçim oldu hani O. 'yu neredeyse beraber büyüttük diyebilirim onun da çocuğu evliydi ama çocuğu olmadığı için u ikimiz yani çok çok bana destek oldu her anlamda O. ile ilgili konuların çoğunda..” Seren (Original)

Seren used the statement “one part of us is broken” referring to herself and her son and mentioned that she and her sister went to places where her husband had been.

For Seren, her sister was both a source of support and a person with whom she could share responsibilities. For this reason, she stated that her sister was very important to her.

"...Well, whatever families do mother son one part of us is broken you know yet I still tried it wasn't like 'let's enclose ourselves in the home especially our aunt made extraordinary effort both financially and morally she still does she still does uhm she tried to do things you know the three of us went to places where people would go with their spouse together you know we did this and that..." – Seren

"..işte aileler ne yaparsa biz ana oğul bir tarafımız kırık ha yine yapmaya çalıştım aman eve kapanalım gibi olmadı özellikle teyzemiz olağanüstü bir çaba harcayarak maddi manevi hala öyledir hala öyledir u bir şeyler yapmaya çalıştı işte hani eşle gidilecek yerlere üçümüz gittik şöyle yaptık böyle yaptık işte.." Seren (Original)

"...But my sister I really can't deny her support in this matter in every sense perhaps stemming from the thing due to not having her own child we shared the responsibilities related to O. in fact I'm very grateful that she was there still is in my life..." – Seren

"..ama kız kardeşim hakikaten bu konuda onun desteğini inkar edemem her anlamda belki de onun da çocuğu olmamasının getirdiği bir şeyle O. ile ilgili paylaştık sorumlulukları aslında o çok iyi ki o vardı yani var hayatımda hala öyle.." Seren (Original)

Similar to Seren, Fatma said that her sister was her greatest supporter during the time of mourning and that she could only share her sadness with her.

"...I talked to my sister the most you know when I came home my sister would be there as soon as I came home I said you know I came and there's no one who will I talk to who will I cook for who will I call I have no one to call I would say I was crying we were living in apartments one above the other and she was always by my side she was always there for me still is I told her everything I didn't tell anyone else who was not part of the family didn't feel the need to tell anyone else she was enough for me. ... She supported me a lot..." – Fatma

"..en çok ablama anlattım hani zaten ben geldiğimde ablam evde oluyordu hemen geldim mi şey dedim hani kimse yok ben kime anlatacağım kime yemek yapacağım kimi arayacağım arayacak kimsem yok diyordum ağlıyordum zaten altlı üstlü duruyoruz hep o yanımdaydı hâlâ yanımda hep ona anlattım başka dışarıdan kimseye anlatmadım anlatma gereği de duymadım yani o bana yetti...hani çok destekledi.." Fatma (Original)

3.4.2.4. Focusing on the child

Büşra indicated that she wanted professional support because she was about to lose her spouse and wanted to "save" (protect) her son. After she acknowledged that it was 'tough' for her, she suggested making her child a priority in her life; wanting to seek support for him served a purpose that made it less difficult to deal with all of this.

"...When I saw his feet turning purple I accepted it due to my husband's previous statement we lost our father after he became like this due to his lack of response in the intensive care unit and his pulse dropping every day prepared me I guess then I immediately searched for a psychologist it's actually a bit challenging to schedule an appointment in Ankara I went to the first available appointment and had the session I thought let me at least save my son now..." Büşra

"..ayaklarını morarmış gördüğümde kabul ettim çünkü eşimin söylediği şey biz babamı böyle olduktan sonra kaybettik deyişi yoğun bakım hiç tepki vermeyişi her gün daha nabız düşüyor olması beni hazırladı sanırım sonra hemen psikolog araştırdım ankarada randevu oluşturmak biraz zor aslında hemen oluşan ilk randevuya gittim onu yaptım yani bari oğlum kurtarayım artık.." Büşra (Original)

Deniz, who had lost her father and her husband one after the other, stated that she was able to stay strong by focusing on her child during this difficult time.

"...When you lose two people at once thinking about what will happen to your child if something happens to you also keeps you strong keeps you upright..." – Deniz

"..iki kişi birden kaybettiğimiz zaman size de şey olursa çocuğunuz ne olacak diye düşünüp o sizin güçlü tutuyor ayakta tutuyor.." Deniz (Original)

Güler also said that, after losing her husband, her children were among the best things that did her good.

r: "...So what do you think made this period easier for you"

p: My children they never disappointed me financially neither my daughter and my children are still my biggest supporters if it weren't for them I couldn't pick myself up from the ground thank goodness I have them only them..." – Güler

“..a- peki bu dönemi sizin için kolaylaştıran şey ne oldu sizce

k- çocuklarım onlar beni hiç üzmedi onlar maddi olarak da kızım da hala çocuklarım en büyük destekçim onlar olmasa yerlerden toplanamazdım onlar iyi ki var sadece onlar..” Güler (Original)

3.5. Being a “Widow”

3.5.1. Judgements of the society

3.5.1.1. The family becomes more protective

Ceyda mentioned that after losing her husband, her family was much more protective of her compared to prior times and said that this situation started to become a problem between her and her family. She added that she had to constantly remind her family that she was an adult woman and could make her own decisions.

“...My relationship with my family changed accordingly because for instance when I go out with my friends now of course since I don't have a spouse anymore they start asking where I'm going, what I'm doing and so on questions that were not asked before for example if I plan to go out and stay at a friend's place for an evening it becomes a kind of problem in each case individually I find myself re-establishing boundaries reminding the other person that well I'm not a child I'm a 35-year-old woman I am the calm one in every situation always in this state of calming everyone down...” – Ceyda

“..ailemle ilişkim ona göre değişti çünkü bu sefer örneğin dışarı çıkacağım arkadaşlarımla artık tabii bir eşim olmadığı için onlar nereye gidiyorsun ne yapıyorsun vesaire öncesinde hiç böyle bir şey sorulmayan şeyler sorulmaya başlandı işte bir akşam dışarı çıkıp arkadaşında kalacaksan bu bir böyle problem haline gelmeye başladı mesela falan onların her birinde teker teker yeniden sınırı hatırlatma karşısındakine yeniden kendini hani ben küçük değilim ben hani 35 yaşında bir kadını...her şey bende sakin olun sürekli böyle herkesi bir sakinleştirme hâli..” Ceyda (Original)

“...the things the family did still trying to protect you as if you were a child especially when you have these two big children situations of still trying to protect and so on for example challenged me you know even though we hadn't done anything together for years such behaviors suggesting we need to act together were very challenging...” – Ceyda

“..ailenin yaptığı şeyler hâlâ senin çocuk gibi görüp böyle iki tane kocaman çocuğun varken hâlâ korumaya çalışma durumları falan mesela çok zorladı

işte yıllardır hiçbir şeyi birlikte yapmadığımız halde ki birlikte yapmamız gerekiyormuş gibi böyle davranışlar çok zordu..” Ceyda (Original)

“...I felt like a fish out of water my husband's side was incredibly demoralizing they were never constructive it was always sell your house come here we'll take care of everything for you how will you survive there what kind of struggle will you face but I used to think if I go there I will lose my identity my essence everything that belongs to me.'...” – Elif

“..ya sudan çıkmış balık gibiydim eşimin tarafı inanılmaz derecede moral bozuyordu asla böyle hani yapıcı değillerdi işte evini sat evini sat buraya gel biz senin her şeyini alırız karşılığın sen ne yapacaksın orada nasıl yaşam mücadelesi vereceksin hep kafa bu şekildeydi ama ben de diyordum ki ben oraya gidersem kendi özlüğümden benliğimden her şeyimi kaybedeceğim sonuçta ben..” Elif (Original)

3.5.1.2. Being sexually objectified

Ceyda mentioned that after her husband passed away, she and her husband`s mutual acquaintances began to develop interest in her, and she encountered this situation repeatedly with different people. In this sense, She mentioned that widows were considered to be in need of sexuality and that although they were married, the men around her made some inconvenient proposals to her.

“ ...The most basic thing you know was in relation to the father of the deceased child who was a seventy-year-old man the man treated me indecently for example later for example many of my married friends friends for years suddenly behaved as if I had a huge sexual gap you know suggesting going on vacation together and I say I don't want such a thing they insist ask again and so on after that you know it's that mentality in Turkey that 'you're a widow you must have needs unfortunately I experienced this a lot you know from interesting interesting places.” Ceyda

“..en basiti şey arkada vefat eden çocuğun babası yetmiş yaşında bir adamdı adam bana sarkıntılık etti mesela daha sonra mesela işte bir sürü evli olan arkadaşım yıllardır ya böyle yirmi yıllık falan arkadaşlarım işte hemen cinsel anlamda böyle çok büyük bir açığım varmış gibi işte tatile gidelim mi senle falan istemiyorum böyle bir şey diyorum mesela bir daha soralım falan bilmem ne gibi böyle garip garip davranışlar ondan sonra ve işte o Türkiye'deki dul kadının ihtiyacını vardır mentalitesi yani ne yazık ki bunun çok öyle yaşadım enteresan enteresan yerlerden yaşadım yani..” Ceyda (Original)

Similarly, Elif mentioned that after losing her husband, the approach of those around her changed and they began to see her as a sexual “target”. She added that even people she would never have guessed approached her in a flirting manner, and she was very uncomfortable with it.

“...Every person I approached with goodwill began to see me differently even my friends who worked elbow to elbow with me started looking at me differently. I realized that in this society, once you don't have a husband, people see you as a target. I saw this, I experienced it...” Elif

“..iyi niyetle yaklaştığım her kişi farklı gözle görmeye başladı kendi birlikte hani derler ya dirsek dirseğe çalıştığım arkadaşlarım bile bana farklı gözle bakmaya başladı hani anladım ki bu toplumda kadın eşi olmadıktan sonra tamam artık o benim hedefimdir ben bunu gördüm bunu yaşadım..” Elif (Original)

“...Do you know I went with like a few friends we sat and had tea and coffee as soon as sat before we drank a couple of drinks one of them you can immediately sense it the change in his glances believe me you feel it they make you feel it I apologize Ms. Gizem but they are after seducing you at every opportunity...” Elif

“..biliyor musunuz ben gittim böyle birkaç tane arkadaşım ile beraber gittim oturduk çay kahve içtik birinin daha oturup daha bir iki şey çay içmeden hemen onu hissedebiliyorsunuz onun o bakışlarının değiştiğini seni her fırsatta çok özür diliyorum Gizem hanım yatağa atmanın peşine düştüklerini inanın siz hissediyorsunuz bunu hissettiriyorlar..” Elif (Original)

Hayat said that because she lived in a small place after losing her husband, her every move was watched and judged by the society., and She recounted a memory about it. She mentioned that the society makes judgements that a widow is sexually seeking.

“...Oh, you were going to the industrial side to do what he asked me good Lord I was so astonished what do you mean I said thank God the doctor and nurse had their signatures there. I sent her the doctor said What do you mean he said the doctor answered at that moment but I got so upset at that moment that you know ‘sanayi’ is a place for repairing cars they built our place right next to it women you know how it is they think she's a widow I wonder what she's up to people have work to do but they can't think about that I've heard these things too...” – Hayat

“..ya sen sanayi tarafına ne yapmaya gidiyordun dedi bana allah allah böyle kaynar sular başımdan indi ne demek istiyorsun yani dedim iyi ki doktor bey ya hemşire hanım orada imzası vardı ben gönderdim dedi ne demek

istiyorsun dedi doktor bey orada cevap verdi ama ben orada o kadar kötü oldum ki sanayi bilirsiniz arabaların onarım yeri ya bizim yeri de oranın dibine yapmışlar hani kadınlar ya şunu düşünüyorlar bu dul ya acaba ne yapmaya gidiyor ya ne yapmaya gider insanın işi vardır ama onu düşünemiyorlar işte ben bunları da duydum yani..” Hayat (Original)

3.5.1.3. Society expects the widow to continue her mourning

Ceyda mentioned that after losing her husband, she moved on with her life, did what she normally does and did not restrict herself. She said that this situation might bother her family. She believed that not only her family, but also the society expected her to be sad, but she did not really care about it.

“...My mother has recently told me you know Ceyda what people are saying things like Eren died and she’s now relaxed they’re saying she’s traveling and enjoying life’ and so on I told her for that, I wish you would have said something like she's trying to hold onto life continuing from a good place but you know they don't say that it doesn't happen like that they are under the pressure of what people would say the typical Turkish societal pressure I never cared about what others would say but because it still matters to them it becomes a problem of course I'm in a devastated state left to myself and expected to be a constantly crying person that's what I understand but when it's not like that then it turns into this situation of being watched by those around you...” Ceyda

“..annem yeni söyledi işte millet neler diyor işte Ceyda işte Eren öldü de çok rahat etti geziyor tozuyor diyor falan dedim seni dedim ki bunun karşılığında keşke siz de hani hayata tutunmaya çalışıyor ne güzel bir yerden devam edebiliyor deseydiniz dedin mesela ya işte o öyle olmuyorlar falan işte hani o Türk toplumunun elalem ne der baskısı benim hiç umurumda olmadı elalemin ne diyeceği ama onların hala umurumda olduğu için bununla tabii bu problem gibi...tabi benim bitik vaziyette işte kendini bırakmış perişan olmuş işte sürekli ağlayan bir insan olmam bekleniyor anladığım bu yani ama böyle olmayınca da işte bu sefer etrafından izlenme hali..” Ceyda (Original)

3.5.2. Victimization

3.5.2.1. Being both a mom and dad

Seren said that with the death of her husband, their routine and her dreams about their family were disrupted. She also mentioned that she tried to take on the roles of

both a mother and a father after the loss and that she tried to make up for the lack of the father. On the other hand, Ceyda said she had to take on a lot of things because she had to, but it made her angry. Unlike Seren, she added that she was not trying to be both a mother and a father, and that the father's role would be incomplete.

"...Once upon a time a routine family the nuclear family routine dreams all of these make a plunge plus you start to assume both the roles of a mother and a father trying to figure out how to meet the child's needs I experienced the panic of that for a long time..." Seren

"..bir kere bir rutin aile çekirdek aile rutini hayaller şunlar bunlar her şey bir dip yapıyor artı hem anne hem baba olma rolüne bürünmeye çalışıyorsunuz çocuğa karşı onu nasıl giderebilirim onun paniğini yaşadım uzunca bir süre.." Seren (Original)

"...For example I get very angry at well statements like 'you're very strong God gives burdens according to one's strength there are things I've done out of necessity because it happened to me if it hadn't happened I wouldn't want to do or naturally wouldn't do these things I'm not strong or anything I do what I can and leave the rest for example I'm not trying to be a father because I'm already a mother I can't be a father and that's not even a consideration..." Ceyda

"..mesela şeye çok sinirleniyorum insanları sen çok güçlüsün Allah dağına göre kar verir lafları falan yani başıma geldiği için mecbur kaldığım için yaptığım şeyler var yani olmasaydı bunu yapmak istemeyecektim ve yapmayacaktım da doğal olarak yani hani güçlü falan da değilim yapabileceğim kadarını yapıp gerisini bırakıyorum mesela baba olmaya çalışmıyorum çünkü ben anneyim yani baba olamam zaten böyle bir şey söz konusu değil.." Ceyda (Original)

3.5.2.2. Self-pity

Ceyda, Büşra and Seren talked about feelings of self-pity from different perspectives. Ceyda said that she did not prefer to remain at a position where she felt sorry for herself, but instead tried to return to life by taking action. Büşra, on the other hand, externalized her discourse while she mentioned being in a pathetic state. As for Seren, she mentioned that she still pitied herself from time to time, and that she reminded herself of what had happened from time to time and that she could not overcome this feeling.

"... I have never pitied myself for example maybe I did at first but right now there's no such self-pity or feeling sorry for myself I didn't engage in any self-pity like oh my husband died poor me what about my children kind of thing. I started working two months later I immediately tried to get back to life..."
Ceyda

"..kendime mesela acımadım hiç belki acıdım bir dönem hani ilk başlarda ama şu anda da hiç öyle bir acıma bununla ilgili acındırma ah benim de kocam öldü vay bana yazık çocuklarıma da aman da bilmem ne gibi bir şey hiç girmedim yani iki ay sonra çalışmaya başladım ben zaten yani hemen hayatta geri dönmeye çalıştım.." Ceyda (Original)

"...I spent three days in the course of condolences then I accepted them at home or rather at my mom's we had so many visitors again the process was one that aroused the feeling as you are in a pitiable state'..." Büşra

"..üç gün taziye sürecinde kaldım daha sonra evimde kabul ettim annemlerde daha doğrusu gelen gidenimiz fazlasıyla oldu yine süreç acınası bir haldesiniz duygusu uyandıran bir süreçti.." Büşra (Original)

"...I start to pity myself starting from childhood oh how awful, my husband's loss and the subsequent events these are repeated over and over again in my mind so they were lowering my energy..." – Seren

"..kendime acımaya başlıyorum hani aman ne kötü çocukluktan giriyorum işte eşimin kaybı sonraki yaşananlar bunlar tekrarlanıp duruyor tekrarlanıp duruyor kafamın içerisinde dolayısıyla enerjimi düşürüyordu.." Seren (Original)

3.5.2.3. Staying alive for the child

Seren claimed that her son was the reason for her survival after her husband's death; she stated that she could not die until her child grew up and be able to stand on his own feet. Seren's statements about losing one of her kidneys, the disfunctioning of the other kidney and "distortion of balance " are regarded to be important at this point.

*"...I am less anxious now when I was little I used to worry more **about how the child would grow up how I needed to stand on my own, how I needed to survive** and so on well I also undergo dialysis dialysis is a process like this: a machine cannot function **perform the function of a kidney at all. As I mentioned, many balances in your body get disrupted** well you don't die, but the days you undergo dialysis life comes to a standstill, let me put it that way..."* Seren

“..daha az evhamlıyım küçükken daha ya bu çocuk nasıl büyüyecek nasıl hani bir ayakta durmam lazım ölmemem lazım gibi hani bunları e bi de diyalize giriyorum tabi diyaliz şöyle bir süreç asla bir makina görev bir böbreğin görevini yapamıyor dediğim gibi vücudunuzda bir sürü denge bozuluyor ha ölmüyorsunuz ama diyalize girdiğiniz günler hayat iptal oluyorsunuz öyle söyleyeyim..” Seren (Original)

As for Büşra, she said that she had to survive for the sake of her child during the mourning period and take care of her, but she could not. She also added that people considered her to be a very good mother, but she could not consider herself as such, and even blamed herself from time to time.

“... If I had said yes, he died but I need to eat I need to drink a glass of milk I need to stay healthy I need to do something for my child...” Büşra

“..eğer deseydim ki evet öldü ama benim yemek yemem gerekiyor ama bir bardak süt içmem gerekiyor hastalanmamam gerekiyor çocuğum için bir şeyler yapmam gerekiyor..” Büşra (Original)

“...I talk to people around me what they say about me is well you are a strong woman you are a good mother if you ask me I don't see the strength and good motherhood in myself because I am a person who criticizes and questions myself a lot I constantly question myself uhm as I continuously question if I have done ten good things in the name of motherhood and not done one good thing of motherhood I mean if I slightly got angry at my son for his own good believe me I focus on that one thing I got angry about I wouldn't consider the ten good things I did.” – Büşra

“..çevremle konuşuyorum insanların benim için ifade ettikleri şey işte çok güçlü bir kadınsın iyi bir annesin bana sorsanız ben kendimde gücü ve iyi annelik yönümü hiç görmüyorum çünkü kendimi çok eleştiren bir insanım sorgulayan bir insanım u sürekli sorguluyorum ya on tane iyi annelik yaptıysam bir tane iyi annelik yapmadıysam yani hafif bir şekilde kızdıysam bile oğluma onun iyiliği için inanın o kızdığım şeye yönelirim on tane iyi yaptığımı görmem..” Büşra (Original)

Similarly, Deniz mentioned that in order to raise her children in a healthy way, she herself must be healthy first.

“...Maybe what made me strong was my nature I don't know maybe it was the experiences I went through maybe it was Duygu's presence I have always said this during that period you raise a child and in order for Duygu to grow up physically and mentally healthy I myself must first be healthy... I might have reflected a lot of negativity too I don't know but my logic was that I

needed to be mentally and physically healthy while being in the situation so that I could raise a healthy child..." – Deniz

"..beni güçlü kılan belki yapımdı bilmiyorum belki yaşadıklarım da belki Duygu'nun varlığıydı ben hep şunu söylemişimdir o dönem çocuk yetiştiriyorsunuz Duygu'nun bedenen ve ruhen sağlıklı yetişebilmesi için önce benim sağlıklı olmam lazım...çok olumsuzluk da yansıtmış olabilirim bilemiyorum ama hani mantığım buydu olayın içerisindeyken ben ruhen ve fiziken sağlıklı olacağım ki sağlıklı bir çocuk yetiştirebileyim.." Deniz (Original)

Hayat said that she lived for her children, and that now her children were living for her.

"...I live for them I lived so that they could be healthy be with me I lived for them, and I still do I still live for my children for example my son says I won't get married I'll live with you Mom I tell him it can't be like that you need to get married and establish your own family he insists no I want to be with you that is he doesn't want to leave me alone..." - Hayat

"..ben onlar için yaşıyorum yaşadım onlar sağlıklı olsun yanımda olsun ben onlar için yaşadım zaten hala da öyleyim hala da çocuklarım için yaşıyorum yani..oğlum mesela ben evlenmeyeceğim seninle yaşayacağım diyor oğlum diyorum öyle şey mi olur senin evlenmen yuva kurman lazım diyorum hayır seninle beraber ben diyorum ne zamana kadar benimle beraber olacaksın ya beni yalnız bırakmak istemiyor yani.." Hayat (Original)

3.5.2.4. Fight Alone

Büşra, Elif and Fatma explained that they encountered many difficulties in life after their husbands passed away, but they had to fight against all of those difficulties alone. They stated that they did not expect any help from anyone and that they overcame all kinds of material and moral difficulties on their own. They added that they had been coping with their own personal difficulties as well as with the judgments and pressures of the society throughout the whole period.

"...everyone around me says that so many years have passed you won't get appointed and so on I don't care I didn't even mention that I studied and made preferences when I was appointed to Hakkari I told them after being appointed you know when you do something wrong like your spouse has passed away people start treating you as if your psychology is disturbed but in normal life it seems like you are being treated with great care and you are

exhibiting these whims such an image started to be projected but there is no such thing I didn't enter into any expectations with anyone if I had maybe I wouldn't have studied I'm glad I studied..." Büşra

"..etrafımda herkes bu kadar sene geçmiş atanmazsın şu bu önemsemiyorum çalıştığımı tercih yaptığımı bile söylemedim hakkariye atantığımda atandıktan sonra söyledim benim zaten...biliyor musunuz kötü bir şey yaptığınızda işte eşi vefat etmiş bundan dolayı böyle psikolojiniz bozukmuş gibi davranılıyor ama normal hayatta baktığınızda sanki el üstünde tutuluyormuşsunuz da o kaprisleri yapıyormuşsunuz gibi bir imaj sergilemeye başladı herkes böyle bir şey yok ben kimseden bir beklenti içine girmedim girseydim zaten belki çalışmazdım iyiki de ders çalışmışım.." Büşra (Original)

"...You know I was forced to rely on people whom I would never consult I said to them let them ask you they are children too they didn't take proper care of us I on my own together with my children, we survived they never supported us, materially nor morally they were nothing but obstacles, frankly speaking our siblings only helped us morally they came and went talked to my children and so on but you know I dealt with it myself I did it myself with my children..." – Elif

"..hani eyvallah etmeyeceğim insanlara mecbur kaldım dedim ki sizden istesinler çocuk onlar da bize doğru düzgün sahip çıkmadılar ben kendi başıma çocuklarımla biz bu hayatta durduk onların bize hiçbir zaman maddi manevi asla desteği olmadılar köstekten başka bir şey olmadılar açıkçası öyle diyeyim size benim kardeşlerimiz de sadece manevi yönden yardım ettiler geldiler gittiler çocuklarımla konuştular vesaire ama hani kendim ya kendim uğraştım kendim yaptığım çocuklarımla beraber.." Elif (Original)

"...I struggled a lot and then coming here yes it was challenging there was very little time left until the children's school closed and depending on whether we were coming or not there would be renovations in this house I asked the children if they wanted to come they wanted to, but I didn't however I was alone, a widow and I was afraid that someone might notice as I am still relatively young I was afraid of gossip and judgment I thought it would be shameful someone might show up at the door cast an evil eye, and I together with my children would be ashamed." – Fatma

"..çok zorlandım sonra işte buraya gelmede evet zorlandım çocuklarla birlikte okul kapanmasına çok az bir süre vardı işte gelip gelmeyeceğimize göre bu evin tadilatı olacaktı işte gelecek mi gelmeyecek mi çocuklara soruyorum gitmek istiyorlar beni istemiyorum ama yanımda kimse yoktu dul kadını herkes bilecek tek başına bir de genç kaldım bir şey olur laf olur söz olur diye korktum söylemi ayıp birisi kapıya dayanır hani göz koyar ve çocuklarımla birlikte rezil olurum diye düşündüm.." Fatma (Original)

Güler also added that she could not get any support from her relatives, whom she considered very close, and had to struggle with the difficulties in life alone.

"...You understand very well I understand it even more now I wonder if it was all a lie despite what I experienced despite the things I did you rush to your hometown unfortunately what I had done did not receive the response it deserved you know after seeing them I said death for me what else could happen after I die I severed ties with them and they didn't even try to reach out to me they said we can't take care of you as they say their brothers are working and they have wives thank God I can take care." – Güler

"..çok anlıyorsunuz daha çok anladım yalanmış mı diyorum benim yaşadıklarım benim yaptığım şeylere rağmen memlekete koşar gelirsin benim yaptığım şeyler maalesef karşılığını bulamadı hani onları gördüm ya ölüm dedim benim için bir şeyler ben öldükten sonra ne olabilir çoğu şeyi kestim zaten onlar da aramadılar beni hiç biz sana bakamayız abileri çalışıyormuş da eşi var çok şükür ben bakarım.." Güler (Original)

3.5.3. Guiltiness

3.5.3.1. "I wish he hadn't died but we had divorced"

In the discourse of all three participants, the expression "I wish he hadn't died but we had divorced" was repeated. In this sense, all three participants had already thought about separation during their marriage, and they seemed unable to have put it into action. Hence, the fact that they had lost their spouse could be interpreted as the realization of their desire to divorce without having to take any action. The fact that they point to the lack experienced by the children and not to the lack experienced by themselves after the loss could be considered as a reflection of guilt.

"... perhaps a little because okay I wish he hadn't died we, I wish he lived and we got divorced and the child could still be in contact with him as the father it's obviously not equivalent to that..." Seren

"..bir parça belki çünkü hani tamam keşke ölmeyeydi biz yaşasaydı da biz boşansaydı hani çocukta yine babası olarak irtibatta olsaydı onun karşılığı değil elbette.." Seren (Original)

"... I did not want my son to grow to be raised without a father despite the many problems we were experiencing I was not considering the option of getting divorced but, you know I took a vow or something as such you know

let him be cured and in case he lives we can get divorced if needed I was saying his recovery is more important than anything else...” Büşra

“..oğlumun babasız bir şekilde büyümesini yetişmesini istemiyordum ne kadar sorun yaşarsak yaşarsak yaşayalım boşanma gibi bir ihtimali düşünmüyordum ama böyle artık adak gibi bişey yaptım hani iyileşsin gerekirse boşanalım kötü olalım ama yeter ki iyileşsin onun iyileşmesi her şeyden önemli diyordum hep..” Büşra (Original)

“...When I was a child the first thing I said to my mum was if one does it once, they will do it again, please get divorced you know a child’s wanting their mother and father to get divorced is an awkward situation but you know saying this as a child but not being able to do it later on for instance my space of freedom was much more than it was for my mother because you know my entire family was by my side well I was financially more et cetera but I couldn’t take the chance I don’t know...” Ceyda

“..çocukken anneme ilk söylediğim şey anne bunu bir kere yapan bir daha yapacaktır lütfen boşan ya bir çocuğun annesinin babasının boşanmasını istemesi garip bir durum ama hani bunu çocukken söyleyebilmiş olup sonrasında bunu yapamamış olmam mesela kendi benim anneme göre çok daha fazlaydı özgürlük alanım çünkü hani bütün ailem yanımdaydı işte maddi olarak daha vesaireydim ama bunu göze alamadım bilmiyorum..” Ceyda (Original)

3.5.3.2. Feelings of guilt in subsequent relationships

Seren later mentioned that she had established romantic relationships with other people but felt guilty about it. Even in her dream, she said that her deceased husband asked her to account for them. As explained Seren, in her dreams, she finds herself in a position where she has to take responsibility, and then attributes the failure of the relationship to her son’s not wanting the man.

“...always guiltiness as I say you did this and that with M. there are these kinds of talks and then I say but why then weren’t you there but by saying you weren’t there well I think I feel guilty at that point as I give such responses in my dreams you know we had the experience of living together my son didn’t want it and not having a child he didn’t understand him...” Seren

..hep suçluluk diyorum ya işte M. ile şöyle yaptınız böyle yaptınız o konuşmalar da geçiyor ben de diyorum ama niçin o zaman sen yoktun ama sen yoktun diye hani sanırım orada biraz suçluluk duyuyorum ki rüyalarımda böyle cevaplar veriyorum hani birlikte yaşama tecrübesi oldu oğlum istemedi o onu anlamadı bir çocuğu olmadığı için..” Seren (Original)

p: "... well, is wanting someone in my life normal...I mean I want someone to lean on at least you know not to be left alone when my kids are gone or when I am to do something together for them I want someone by my side eventually they will start going to university and I may not be able to do everything by myself...no one will be by my side forever one or the other will eventually go.

r: it's natural that you may not want to be left alone but there is something that you are questioning whether this reason is normal or not.

p: you know, what others are saying now well I also became influenced by such things as soon as she gets married or get married don't get married well I may be thinking wrongly perhaps my elder child doesn't care well he says it's up to you mum but the smaller one says I will never accept it I cannot live with a man'..." Fatma

"k-... yani hayatımda birini olması istemem normal mi... yani ben yaşlanacak birini istiyorum en azından hani çocuklarım gittiğinde yalnız kalmamak için ya da onlarla birlikte onların bir işini yapacak olduğunda yanımda birisini istiyorum sonuçta bunlar üniversiteye gidecek gelecek tek başına her şeyi yapamayabilirim...hiç kimse kıyamete kadar yanımda değil mutlaka birileri gidecek

a- tabii ki yalnız kalmak istemeyebilirsiniz yani de bu neden normal mi değil mi diye sorguladığınız bir şey oluyor ki

k- ya etraf ne diyor şimdi ya bu evlenir evlenmez evlen evlenme gibi hani ben de onların etkisinde kaldım da hani yanlış mı düşünüyorum acaba diye çocuklarım büyük önemsemiyor hani sen bilirsin anne diyor ama küçük asla asla kabul etmem bir adamla yaşayamam diyor.." Fatma (Original)

3.5.3.3. Being accused

Deniz said that after her husband passed away, her husband's family blamed her for his death.

"... well, the existing relationship with my husband's family didn't last either it became more apathetic more distant more problematic because they held me responsible for their son's death whereas their son wanted it saying come on let's go abroad..." Deniz

"..hani kocamın ailesiyle var olan ilişki de sürmedi daha soğuk daha mesafeli daha problemlerli bir hale geldi çünkü oğullarının ölümünden beni sorumlu tuttular oysaki oğulları istedi hadi yurt dışına gideceğiz diye.." Deniz (Original)

Elif mentioned that after her husband passed away, she had her sister tidy up her house so as not to leave anything conspicuous for people to talk about, thinking that her husband's family might blame her. She added that it turned out to be as she thought, saying that her husband's brother said, “You didn't carry out your commitment”.

“... do you know at home I called my sister well that day we had just returned home my washing machine is in the kitchen and you know that came to my mind I said, my clothes are in the open they are now going to enter my home they will say ‘what a lady, her clothes are here my spouse had drunk a glass of alcohol his glass was in the sink you know instantly these came to my mind I called my sister I said quick put all the clothes in the clothes basket I said and take that alcohol thing and put it in the rubbish bag and tie it up I mean because I know my spouse’s family very well they know he drinks alcohol but I would be to the one to blame and luckily I had taken him to the hospital my spouse’s family first blamed me for this what they said to me was were you late in taking him to the doctor did it happen because of you you couldn’t take care of my brother... What they initially said to me you didn’t take care of your entrusted was this, you know... Elif

“..biliyor musunuz evde kız kardeşimi aradım biz daha o gün yeni yoldan gelmiştik ya benim çamaşır makinem mutfakta aklıma geldi biliyor musunuz dedim ki benim çamaşırlarım ortada şimdi benim evime girecekler dedim diyecekler ki bak kadına bak çamaşırları burada eşim bir bardak alkol içmişti onun bardağı lavaboda benim direk aklıma bunlar geldi biliyor musunuz ben kız kardeşimi aradım çamaşırları çabuk çamaşır sepetine koy dedim o alkol şeyini de kaldır çöpe at ağzını bağla dedim yani çünkü eşimin ailesini çok iyi tanıyorum alkol aldığı biliyor ama suçlusunu ben olacağım ki iyi ki de ben hastaneye götürmüştüm bana beni ilk başta bununla suçladı eşimin ailesi sen geç mi götürdün doktora senin yüzünden mi oldu sen benim kardeşime sahip olamadın...bana ilk dedikleri emanetine sahip çıkmadın dedikleri buydu yani..” Elif (Original)

Elif mentioned that after her husband died, she did not go to her friends' place while the husbands were at home because she thought that her friends might blame her for any misunderstandings.

“... even now after my husband died I had taken this decision Ms. Gizem whoever had a spouse I would not go to that house if the man was not in the home if only the woman was then I would go to that house because I was afraid there were such nonsense things happening in my surrounding you know I would say the man might get interested in me his wife might see let me tell you something she won’t blame her husband but blame me she would say

what is she doing that is making my husband look at her because I saw this before I figured this out I witnessed this...” Elif

“..hâlâ bile benim eşim öldükten sonra şu kararı almıştım ben Gizem hanım kimin evinde eşi varsa ben o eve gitmezdim adam evinde olmazsa sadece kadın varsa ben o eve girerdim çünkü korkuyordum çevremdeki o kadar çok saçma sapan şeyler oluyordu ki hani adam diyordum gözü kayar bana bakar eşi görür size bir şey söyleyeyim eşini suçlamaz beni suçlar acaba ne yapıyor ki benim eşim bakıyor der çünkü ben bunu gördüm bunu algıladım buna şahit oldum..” Elif (Original)

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

“Although we know that after such a loss the acute state of mourning will subside, we also know we shall remain inconsolable and will never find a substitute. No matter what may fill the gap, even if it were filled completely, it nevertheless remains something else. And actually this is how it should be. It is the only way of perpetuating that love which we do not want to relinquish.”

Freud, 1960/1992

The present study aimed to investigate the experiences of widows below the age of 45. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight women who had lost their husbands by natural causes or by accident. Taking into account that there could be a significant difference in what is experienced when the husband is lost at a young age when compared to the loss occurring at a later stage in life (Jones, et al., 2019), the researchers preferred to base the study on women who lost their spouses before the age of 45. Apart from age, certain other criteria were sought in sample selection, namely completion of at least a university degree, presence of at least one child and not getting married after the loss. In addition, the fact that at least one year had passed after the loss of the husband was a requirement so that the mourning period could be examined. The four main research questions that the study sought were as follows: 1) How do widows experience and perceive this loss? 2) How do the widows convey what is lost when a partner dies? 3) How does this loss subjectively affect widows' identities and positions as a woman and wife? 4) What is the meaning of marriage and spouse for widows? Thematic analysis was conducted based on the research data, which yielded five main themes: role of husband, unspeakable thing: the death, what is lost with the loss, ways to deal with death, and being a “widow”.

4.1. Role of Husband

When the participants were asked questions about what kind of a person their spouse was, how they had met and what they experienced in their marriage, it was found that the answers were usually centered around the roles of men. For this reason, the characteristics of the husband are usually described in relation to the roles he assumed as a husband and a father. The participants often emphasized their spouse's paternal roles. When talking about a man's personal characteristics, the women's discourses were based on memories, the way of establishing a relationship, and fatherhood. In this respect, the spouse was described as if he were everyone's father at home rather than his role as a husband. For this reason, the theme 'role of husband' with its sub-themes, the 'father of the household' and 'the man being free in marriage' were created. The saying "father of the household (*'evin babası'*)" and "our father (*babamız*)" are common phrases in the Turkish culture. Although the addressee of these expressions are children, they are used as if he were also the father of his wife.

According to Freud, the choice of a spouse or partner is shaped based on relationships with parents long before this choice is made. In a person's relationship with his partner, there are repetitions of features peculiar to the relationship between participant and their parents during their childhood (Marković, 2000). For this reason, participants' discussions of the similarities between their father and their spouse or their perception of their spouse as the father of the household demonstrate consistency with Freud's theory. In this respect, the jealousy of the person in love originates from childhood and is associated with parents. In fact, the pain of people suffering from love appears to be a repetition of separation from loved ones during childhood (Freud, 1905). Ceyda used the expression "*you know my mom and dad are also separated*" when talking about her mother and father's divorce. Although she had not divorced her husband, this way of expressing her relationship with her husband seemed to resemble the relationship status of her parents. Ceyda, the child of a couple who was unhappy and could not take the decision to divorce, mentioned that although she and her husband had an unhappy marriage, they did not get divorced.

Preferences regarding partner selection can be traced back to the earliest years of childhood, and there are similarities between the child's attitude towards parents in partner selection. At the end of the oedipal phase, the subject who withdraws his libidinal investment from the opposite sex parent, later chooses object of love by modeling his parents. To illustrate, when talking about the absence of her father, Seren stated that she wanted someone who would stand by her in choosing a spouse and could support her, but her husband could not support her like her father did. In this way, an incestuous scenario can be staged but is not forbidden in this instance. Moreover, by saying, “... *are you always longing for a fatherly feeling well actually I was and I found it a little in my husband...*” , Seren exemplifies that features in relationships can be repetitive. In every partner choice, there are more or less some prototypes of parents. Particularly men seem to seek a partner who can resembles his mother that has dominated his mind from the earliest times of his childhood; accordingly, if his mother is still alive, he may get angry with this new version of his mother and display the same aggressive feelings towards her (Freud, 1905).

The source of the differences between men and women is not essentially based on anatomical differences. The only signifier of sexuation is the phallus, and there is no equivalent for this signifier for a woman. Therefore, there is a dissymmetry between a man and a woman in terms of sexuation (Lacan, 1966/2006). The different functioning of the Oedipus complex in men and women is also due to this dissymmetry. Although the Oedipus complex applies to both sexes, a woman's identification process is more complicated. While a man separates from his mother and identifies with his father, this path is more complex for a woman. A woman must first separate from her mother, identify with her father, and then separate from her father and identify with her mother. This is called detouring. It is not very surprising that a woman who has completed this complex path makes similar preferences with her mother in her choices, thus choosing a husband who looks like her father; or she chooses a partner who is in complete opposition of her father (Lacan, 1938).

A woman cannot perceive her femininity through her own being; to do so, the other is always necessary. Lacan's “The woman does not exist” argument is also related to the fact that there is no representation of femininity in the unconscious (Soler, 2006).

For this reason, a woman always needs a third party in the relationship in order to understand femininity, and in this way, she is able to establish identification with the people in her partner's life. In this respect, the fact that Seren reads her husband's messages with other women on her phone and Ceyda continues her relationship despite knowing that she was cheated on before marriage is viewed as means to sustain the desire in the relationship. The participants' references to other women in these betrayals answer the questions of what their partners expect from a woman and allow this relationship to be maintained by leaving their partner's desire unsatisfied. Essentially, the addressee of these questions can be traced way back to questions directed to the Other during childhood: “*What do you want?*” or “*Che Vuoi?*” (Lacan, 1966/2006). This is a question asked by the child in order to be able to interpret behaviors of the mother and what the expectations of the mother are. No matter how strong the relationship between the mother and child is, there is always something else that the mother desires. However, there is no specific object of other things that the mother desires; sometimes it can be a job, sometimes a husband or other things. In any case, there is no obvious object among these things that draws the mother's attention from the child, which can also be called the phallus, and the child can never fully settle into this condition. For this reason, the phallus, which is the signifier of desire, has a function that perpetuates desire by its absence (Lacan, 1953-1954/1988). The participants of the present study stated that many responsibilities come with marriage and the birth of a child. However, it is believed that both the assumption of these responsibilities by a woman and the mention of them as a subject of complaint are precisely related to promising the position of being a wife that femininity brings with it, but not being able to fully carry this position. In other words, the desire has been left unsatisfied.

However, a woman's identification with her mother has a significant impact on her marriage. Freud is sure that from the Oedipus complex onwards, none of them can be completely overcome in the process of development, when a girl retains feelings of hostility towards her mother and loyalty to her father. Along with this inheritance, some of the Oedipus hostility can be transferred to a new object: her husband. Initially, a husband inherits his father's place, but after a while, he begins to be the subject of some of the hostility that was previously directed at the mother (Marković,

2000). In the same way, it is believed that the participants' husbands being jealous of them and imposing restrictive attitudes upon them were related to this issue. The participant who was expected to wear unfeminine clothes and not to be seductive interpreted this issue as jealousy, but actually it is a legacy left over from identification with the mother. The fact that men can be jealous, restrictive and irresponsible is similarly related to the early relationships they establish with parents. In the consciousness of a child, a mother is considered a holy and morally pure person. There is a sharp contrast between a "mother" and a "prostitute". Going back to a man's childhood takes us to the moment when these two opposites of an "innocent mother" and a "prostitute" appeared as a union. It happens during the life of a child when they begin to learn a little about sexual relations of adults. Initially, a child absolutely rejects the possibility of their parents doing such a thing. But sooner or later they make sure that their parents are not an exception to sexual activity. A discrepancy occurs between the mother, whom they can no longer see as sinless, but who is no different from before (Marković, 2000). For this reason, the fact that they want to see their partner as a sinless, unfeminine, and innocent adult in a similar way is a repetition of the first representation of mothers.

4.2. Unspeakable thing: the Death

In the second theme, it is explained that death is a phenomenon that cannot be fully expressed in language. The grief process starts with a loss, and after the loss, the subject encounters the Real. The Real is positioned beyond the symbolic, outside the language and resistant to symbolization; the truth is the impossible (Lacan, 1966/2006). The Real is traumatic due to its impossibility and its position outside of language (Evans, 1996), and death, which is essentially in the field of the Real cannot be completely expressed in language.

For this reason, death is not a completely comprehensible phenomenon. It is believed that the inability of the participants to bid farewell to their spouse, their inability to talk about death, and the return of those who could not be talked about as symptoms or somatic displacements in the body were related to the traumatic character of death (Lindemann, 1944). First of all, the participants mentioned that they experienced

some bodily symptoms after losing their partner. In this respect, they mentioned that when they lost weight during the mourning period, they suffered from insomnia, had digestive problems, or had some difficulties with their respiratory tract. The occurrence of physical symptoms during the mourning period is a phenomenon that has been observed in many studies. It is observed that some bereaved spouses are vulnerable to changes in their cardiovascular or immune systems and are more likely to have worsening of pre-existing medical conditions (Osterweis, Solomon and Green, 1984). However, it has been observed that the expressions used by the participants when describing these symptoms have a subjective connection with their story.

Seren mentioned that after losing her husband, she tried to be both a mother and a father for her children, but it was very difficult to take on the role of a father. Immediately afterwards, when talking about these difficulties, she explained that one kidney no longer did its job and said, *“I was this time with a single kidney you know I had told you...after seven months of losing my spouse, I started to receive dialysis treatment every other day I don’t know if you know the dialysis as the kidney cannot carry out its function there is no kidney you have no kidney”*. In this respect, it is believed that when there are two, what is functional, and one cannot fully take over the task of the other can be both a kidney and a spouse. While Seren talks about her illness, she also talks about the difficulty she experienced when she lost her husband. Similarly, when talking about the period of her husband’s illness, she said, *“... of course problems started how he couldn’t breathe freely at home couldn’t breathe freely. The tumor goes up this throat here causing his breathing to be problematic..”*. Subsequently, she stated that her husband had cheated on her long ago, and that this had a devastating effect on her, but she did not end her marriage for the sake of her child. Nevertheless, she mentioned that she always brought up this issue in her marriage, and her husband said to her, *“Let’s either get divorced or stop doing this you made life miserable to yourself and you are making my life miserable too.”* In a sense, he says that he cannot breathe easily at home. But the participant expressed this again through his partner's symptoms. Freud, who studied the functioning of the unconscious through his work with hysterical women, suggested that the causes of hysterical symptoms can be traced in a person's narrative. Ultimately, he mentioned

that what is repressed could return as symptoms and there is a relief of trauma when a person traces what a symptom indicates (Freud, 1893/1955).

Büşra, for example, mentioned that after losing her husband, she began to suffer from stomach pain that became chronic, but she mentioned that there was no physical cause for those pains. She said that she consulted the doctor who had diagnosed her husband's disease and what the doctor told her was as follows: “... *the doctor here was the doctor who told us my husband's liver cancer he said well this time I can't do anything for your stomach first see a psychologist, it is probably stress related...*” Going to a doctor who had diagnosed her husband with a fatal disease and having a disease that the doctor could not intervene with, even though it was not fatal, was again an unconscious act. The loss of an object of love initiates processes that try to balance the confusion created by the loss. Wolfenstein maintained that in order to restore this balance with the loss of an object or the resistance to leave the lost object, a person could identify with this object (1966). Similarly, it is believed that losing a lot of weight together with her husband during her husband's illness was related to an identification she had established with her husband.

Elif and Güler mentioned that they had insomnia after losing their husbands. The occurrence of disruption in sleep patterns is very common during the mourning period (Hardison, Neimeyer, & Lichstein, 2005). Yet, there are subjective differences in the reasons preventing them from sleeping. Elif attributed her insomnia to experiencing insecure after losing her husband and talked about keeping watch almost like a “*guard*”; Güler related her insomnia to a longing for her husband and mentioned that the lack of his physical presence prevented her from falling to sleep. Considering all these narratives, it was seen that the symptoms appearing in the body are a reference to the subjectivity of the participant, and how these symptoms are described is closely related to the subjective history.

The second sub-theme about the unspeakability of death is the inability to know how to bid farewell to a spouse. Seren, Büşra and Güler lost their husbands due to cancer. Elif, on the other hand, lost her husband due to a heart attack. In this sense, unlike

Elif, although the treatment process provided sufficient time to bid farewell, none of the participants could talk about this issue with their spouse. None of the participants mentioned death in the conversations they had with their spouse. Instead, it has been observed that various other expressions were used to refer to death. For example, when describing their last conversation, Seren said that her husband said to her, "*the doctor became afraid of me*". This sentence can be interpreted as "*the doctor was afraid that I would die*", but the word 'death' is not explicitly stated in this sentence. The statement she uttered afterwards to explain that her husband had passed away again did not mention the word 'death': "and it happened as we feared". Similarly, Elif said that although her husband wanted to say goodbye to her, she did not accept it and said, "*all my blessings yours, can it be otherwise ...Don't be nonsense can it be otherwise?*" As for Güler, she did not let her husband talk about death and said, "*Well because I couldn't bear to hurt him I don't know I mean I wouldn't let him talk that moment I didn't know what happened after that either what I would do well I didn't want to talk to him either I mean we will always be fine always be fine it was always like that.*" Again, he did not mention the word 'death' either among themselves or during the interview. Seren said that although her husband was diagnosed with cancer and his life was at quite a high risk, she did not find it right to share this fact with her husband. As for, Fatma, she explained that she had lost her husband suddenly. Her husband had hidden the symptoms from her, and perhaps for this reason, even though an intervention was possible, it could not be applied. Similarly, Büşra and Seren explained that although they had enough time to bid farewell, due to the long treatment process, they could not.

It was difficult to talk about death before the loss, and this difficulty persists after the loss. The intensification of ambivalence towards the lost object can lead to conflict. The anger, frustration and even hatred felt by the mourners were found to be indescribable. The fact that the person expected to be sad feels such emotions makes it unspeakable (Hagman, 1996). First of all, the participants mentioned the difficulty they experienced in explaining this loss to their children. Although Büşra stated that this difficulty might be in relation to children and says "*...reminding them if remembering gives me pain could also give them pain I think...*", the fact that this difficulty belongs to them as stated by Güler "*...and I didn't talk at all I didn't*

mention anything related to their father even after he died it sounds like a terrible thing but I can't speak I can't speak....." is expressed in the form. When the death is that of a father, this can no longer be expressed in language. The death of the real father is not mentioned here, because the absence of the father is not just the absence of the body, but the absence of one who regulates relationships, who is powerful and legislating. The unspeakability of death is associated with the imaginary father, because although the father is dead, his law still applies, but since there is no longer the agent, he cannot be named exactly, and his absence is experienced in the form of privation (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). In this respect, the statements made by Fatma "*I don't tell the children much because well it feels like they might use it you know like saying if my dad were here he would do this when they say that I get devastated because since I feel his absence I try to do it*" refers to the absence of the imaginary father rather than the absence of the real father; thus, the father's function, and the absence of her husband is experienced as a privation. The fact that this loss cannot be talked about in the family, that feelings cannot be shared, and that everyone role plays with each other allows everyone to keep the imaginary father alive.

4.3. What is lost with the loss

With respect to this main theme, first, the role of the husband was defined, and then the unspeakable nature of death was mentioned. An explanation was made of what was lost with the loss of a spouse. According to the participants' accounts, what was lost with the loss of a spouse can be grouped under three headings: losing power, losing the father of the household, and losing the partner. When all the participants talked about the things they lost with the death of their spouse, it was observed that these narratives had some commonalities. The participants always made reference to 'power' when they talked about the loss of family-related dreams, about being alone, or about never having considered that this would happen to their partner. For example, when Seren talked about how the loss of her husband affected her, what she lost was explained as follows: "*You know, some people marry as great lovers no feeling secure **feeling the strength behind you** that's what I felt mostly but well my life of course suddenly turned upside down...*" By saying this, she also implied in a sense that this power was taken away from her. Fatma explained that after her

husband passed away, she had to move, leaving her family-related dreams in the house where she had lived with her husband. She said, “...*Our dreams our things everything of ours was left there...*” It seems that in her husband’s absence, Fatma came to the realization that that the presence of husband is what unites a family and what makes it strong.

Similarly, the participants mentioned that they had never thought about losing their husbands. Even if there were very clear signs that he was going to die, such as the inability to breathe, Fatma completely rejected this reality and said “...*that it wouldn't be something bad they would put him on oxygen and he would stay in the intensive care unit for a while I went to the hospital with that thought it never occurred to me that he would die...*” The participants reported that although they had problems in their relationships while their husband was alive, sometimes they felt lonely or could not see each other, but the absence after he died was incomparable to the previous absence. In this respect, the participants who said that they had been feeling lonely during their marriage were left alone with the death of their spouse. Thus, it is possible to understand the function of the husband in his absence. Fatma explained her thoughts regarding this issue as follows: “... *his presence was different you know how you don't understand its presence until you lose it that's exactly how I felt completely in a void.*” Ceyda, on the other hand, explained her husband's absence through her relationship with her children and how his absence had an impact on her: “... *because you know you decide to do this to raise them together as a couple anyway the responsibility is supposed to be shared even if I physically do a lot myself psychologically you feel the absence of a support behind you in the end having a spouse and sometimes the absence of that you know can be quite challenging...*” For this reason, it is believed that the loss of a function related to the phallus, rather than the actual existence of his husband, i.e. the fact that the paternal function can no longer be performed, is not related to the father and the father's real power in this reality. In this respect, even though the mother provides similar opportunities to the children, the absence of the father creates a lack. Therefore, what is missing is not the real father, but the imaginary father, who deprives the child of the phallus with his absence, and this lack is experienced as privation (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

The participants also mentioned that they lost their comfort in society with the loss of their spouse. It was stated that marriage was a source of freedom for women in conservative societies. To illustrate, Büşra stated that she got married so that she could meet up with her partner more freely. As for Fatma, she explained that she could not easily meet with her group of friends after losing her husband and said, *“I not having a spouse feel incomplete I don’t know I don’t want to go...”* She explained that the absence of her husband caused her to reorganize her position in social relations. It is believed that such a reference to power combined with the loss of a spouse is related to the phallus. In Lacanian theory, the phallus is interpreted not as a biological organ, but in terms of the symbolic and imaginative functions of this organ. For this reason, Lacan preferred the term "phallus" to "penis". Having a penis does not mean having a phallus, as the relationship with the penis is established independently of the physiological differences between the sexes. A man can only claim to have a symbolic phallus if he admits to being castrated. Castration, on the other hand, begins with the abandonment of the mother's imaginary phallic position during the Oedipal period, and is experienced in many ways throughout life (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

The second sub-theme revealed in the study is the loss of the father of the household. In the discourse of the participants, this loss appears not only as the loss of a husband, but also as the loss of a father. The participants talked about the function of the father rather than that of the spouse. It has been emphasized that with the death of their spouse, women feel this lack, especially in respect to the tasks that traditionally belong to the father. In relation to this issue, Elif said, *“I only wished for my husband to be alive when I was giving away my daughter you know how they announce at weddings the mother and father of the bride.’ ...”* In this statement, she exemplifies the engagement ceremony and her daughter's wedding as the moments when she most wanted her husband to be alive. It is believed that for women, the representation of the father in these traditional ceremonies was crucial. Hayat, on the other hand, mentioned that her son experienced much more difficulty compared to his sister because he lost his father at an age when he could not remember. When Hayat lost her husband, her son was two years old. As such, the son listened to accounts of his father only from the those left behind, and especially from the

discourse of his mother; he got to know him from others' accounts. It is believed that the son's being so anxious in relation to the issue of the father was related to Hayat transferring the father representation to his son, and perhaps it was Hayat who was so anxious and upset. Together with the lack of a father figure, emphasis was also laid upon the mother's inability to fill the place of the father. In relation to this, Seren said, "*...in the traditional sense why is the mother father and child so important well it increases your resilience in the face of what life may throw at you well compared to enduring it alone ...*" The absence of the father is again described with reference to 'power'. The same participant explained that although she had lost her husband years ago, it still had negative impacts on both herself and her child's life in different ways, and explained this as follows: "*... Well of course these come and go but among folks we say they pierce through well years later the pandemic erupted in this way...*" As for Güler, she told her children that it was very difficult for her to talk about their father. Perhaps this could be related to her own sadness, and again with a reference to power, she said, "*...but as if I couldn't do it I can't find that strength in myself how shall I explain it it feels like I can't do it it feels like I can't speak...*". Frustration is an imaginary lack caused by the loss of a real object (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). The fact that the participants described what they lost with the death of their spouse as things that were taken away from them even though they demanded them, also shows that this loss was experienced as frustration.

In relation to the last sub-theme, losing the partner, the participants mentioned that their attitude towards romantic relationships had also changed with the loss of their spouse. While some participants continued to see someone, others chose to completely withdraw from the romantic relationships. For example, although Ceyda had relationships with different men, she compared them to her late husband and said "*... I can now see that I introduced someone into my life with the desire to actually close that gap just so that it would close...*" Here, she explains that she tried to fill the emotional void created by her husband by establishing romantic relationships with other men, but this did not work. The expression of trying to see if different men would fit into a void that her last husband fit is also heard about sexuality. Fatma stated that she did not allow any other man to enter her life for the sake of her children. She added that her children were still sleeping in the same bed with her. In

a way, she says that she placed her children, instead of other men, to the point of her late husband. Similarly, Güler stated that after her husband passed away, she stopped having romantic relationships completely because she was still in love with her husband even though he no longer existed. As for Elif, she stated very clearly that she would not take anyone into her life, saying that she had “cut off the way from the beginning” of romantic relationships.

4.4. Ways to deal with death

In this section, the ways by which the participants who had lost their spouse coped with death are explained. The participants mentioned that after losing their spouse, they initially rejected this death. In this respect, the participants who said that they would have preferred a divorce to death stated that it was very difficult for them to face the reality of death and that their ties with reality deteriorated after receiving this news. They added that after some time passed subsequent to the death of their spouse, they said that they had developed new methods of coping with this loss by continuing their life. For example, they emphasized that work and medication support were helpful during the mourning period. They also mentioned sibling support being very important during this process and also stated that they felt stronger by focusing on their children.

Denial, which another coping mechanism belonging to the primary stages of the mourning period, was observed intensively in the discourse of the participants after the loss. Freud uses the term *Verleugnung* (deny) to describe a form of defense mechanism that occurs when the subject refuses to recognize the reality of a traumatic perception (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973). In this respect, the nature of the loss is found to be of importance. Many participants mentioned that they had both considered divorce during their marriage and had raised this issue to their spouse. It is interesting that they emphasized this issue after losing their spouse. Seren almost made a bargain during her husband's illness and expressed her thoughts as “...*Let him recover if necessary let's get divorced...*” Similarly, Büşra said in the interview, “...*Let him recover if necessary let him separate from me a person's health is above everything..*” These statements of the participants reveal that the loss of their

spouse's life is associated with the state of their relationship. Likewise, Ceyda said, *"...I wish he hadn't died we if only he lived we could have divorced..."* The fact that the participants preferred to lose their spouse via divorce rather than death was also heard as a wish to keep the father of their children alive.

After the participants received the news of their spouse's death, they said that they could not cope with this reality. Büşra said that she did not accept what had happened neither during the course of illness nor after her husband passed away. Similarly, Elif stated that although the doctor told her the news of his death, she did not believe it and said *"'No it appears to you that way it's not possible I just went blank..."* As for Ceyda when talking about the period after her husband's death, she said that she came home every evening to sleep and wanted to forget what had happened. Likewise, stated that she was not absolutely convinced that he was dead until she saw his body. Physical symptoms appear to save the ego from a situation of danger. In this way, a person is able to create a balance with the danger they face and cope with the uncertainty that danger brings (Freud, 1915). The narration of the participants shows that death is far from a comprehensible and acceptable reality. Similarly, the participants expressed that they had lost their connection with reality the first moment they received the news of their spouse's death. They either mentioned that they had nervous breakdowns and lost control of themselves or that they felt more dull and emotionless than they expected of themselves. Some participants even mentioned that they did not remember a certain period of time subsequent this news at all; that passage of time was completely erased from their memories. In both cases, it is observed that a reaction that the participants did not expect appeared in themselves.

After some time had passed since the death of their spouse, each participant mentioned that they discovered new ways to cope with this loss. In this respect, they said that they saw the positive impacts of working and turning this difficult time into something useful for them. Moreover, the medication support during the mourning period was also helpful, but it did not actually solve anything as Seren explained, *"...I am using Cipralex somehow does Cipralex work miracles no still sometimes you know everyone experiences it when they get older wondering what will I do you know*

I'm single alone of course it prevents me from falling into that pit you know..." Emphasizing that the support of their siblings was also very important in this process, the participants mentioned that, in a sense, the husband's fatherhood duties could be assumed by the brother. After this loss, it is now considered a coping mechanism of the loss by which the child is placed in the center of life, and it is now aimed to "save" the child. For example, Deniz described her experiences as "...*When you lose two people at once thinking about what will happen to your child if something happens to you also keeps you strong keeps you upright...*" and conveyed that despite these losses, she was able to remain strong by thinking about her child.

4.5. Being a "Widow"

The last main theme is presented as being a "widow". This section consists of the judgements of society, victimization, and guiltiness. The participants mentioned that after losing their partner, the family approached them more protectively, they were sexually objectified, and the society expected them to continue mourning. In the discourse of the participants, victimization emerges to a significant extent. Participants express their victimization by feeling sorry for themselves, having to cope with everything alone, being both a mother and a father for the child and being able to survive only in this way. In addition, the participants said that they still felt guilt towards their late husband and maintained this guilt in subsequent relationships with others.

In the event of the death of one of the spouses or the termination of the marriage union by divorce, a woman is defined by the expression "widow" by law. Until a few years ago, "widow" was written in the marital status section of the identity card of women who were divorced or whose spouse had died. With the new regulations, the marital status of these women is indicated as 'single'. Finally marital status is completely removed from the identity card, but Lopata argues that the woman carries identity of widowhood for the rest of her life because of the social consequences (1996). It is observed that after a divorce or loss of spouse, the woman experiences numerous problems due to being labeled as a "widow". While being married gives people credibility, being a single woman creates insecurity in society. A "widow"

creates the perception of an "insecure woman". Moreover, the opposite sex perceives widows as flexible or easy women, perceiving them as open to all kinds of situations, and, develops different expectations from them. It is believed that a widow is usually approached with the notion that she is easy to reach and has nothing to lose (Uzunkaya Seçen, 2017).

The protective approach of the family to the widow is not perceived as a positive support by the participants. In this respect, they mentioned that by losing their spouse, they lost their freedom in a sense. Ceyda mentioned that her family had made interventions to restrict her social life in relation to this situation and conveyed her thoughts as follows: *"...the things the family did still trying to protect you as if you were a child especially when you have these two big children situations of still trying to protect and so on for example challenged me you know even though we hadn't done anything together for years such behaviors suggesting we need to act together were very challenging..."* Similarly, Elif, said that her family made decisions on behalf her, but she was very uncomfortable with this situation. She stated that if she followed their rules and returned to her parents' home again, she would lose her identity, self and everything else.

The participants also mentioned that they were sexually objectified after their partner died. Socially, there is an assumption that widows are sexually flexible. The participants who reported that they had become a sexual target explained that they had received inappropriate offers from people they did not expect. For example, Ceyda said that a very older person had offered to go on vacation with her and conveyed her discomfort about this situation in the following way: *"...as if I had a huge sexual gap you know suggesting going on vacation together and I say I don't want such a thing..."* Similarly, Elif mentioned that even her colleagues started to look at her via a different lens, and they wanted to get her into bed. Hayat conveyed that it was not only men but also women who placed the "widow" woman in a similar position in society: *"...Women you know how it is they think she's a widow I wonder what she's up to people have work to do but they can't think about that..."*

These women who claimed that they were sexually objectified by the society were expected to continue their mourning at the same time. In this respect, Ceyda

conveyed that if a woman continued her life from where she left off, she would create disappointment in her family, friends and relatives: and conveyed this *“...Of course I'm in a devastated state left to myself and expected to be a constantly crying person that's what I understand but when it's not like that then it turns into this situation of being watched by those around you...”* It has been described as if pair of eyes were constantly watching Ceyda. In parallel with social judgments, the fact that the participants also felt victimized was a prominent issue in the interviews. Although the participants described their efforts to be both a mother and a father as an effort to compensate for the father's lack, they also emphasized how exhausting it was for them. To illustrate, Ceyda said that she was aware that she could handle many things on her own and actually did not need anyone, she said that losing her husband forced her to teach them, and in fact, she would not take on so much responsibility if it were up to her own decision. While talking about this issue, she conveyed that people's seeing her strong made her angry. She said, *“...For example I get very angry at, well statements like 'you're very strong god gives burdens according to one's strength there are things I've done out of necessity because it happened to me if it hadn't happened I wouldn't want to do or naturally wouldn't do these things I'm not strong or anything...”*

The participants said that they began to feel sorry for themselves after losing their spouse and reported that they were in a “pathetic” situation. In addition, those who began to take responsibility for the child as a single parent after losing their spouse reported that they placed their children at the center of their lives. They added that they tried to survive for the sake of their child in that they had to take care of themselves in order to take better care of their child. It is significant that they expressed this as an obligation. It is a socially approved situation for them to cling to life no longer for themselves but for their children. In this respect, Büşra conveyed that although her environment considered her to be a very good mother, she did not think so as revealed in her following statements: *“...I talk to people around me what they say about me is well you are a strong woman, you are a good mother if you ask me I don't see the strength and good motherhood in myself because I am a person who criticizes and questions myself a lot...”* In addition, these women, who did not receive the help they expected from anyone after losing their partner, reported that

they were struggling alone in face of all kinds of difficulty. Fatma stated that she did not prefer it very much, but that they were obliged to as expressed with the following statements: "*... I was alone a widow and I was afraid that someone might notice as I am still relatively young I was afraid of gossip and judgment I thought it would be shameful someone might show up at the door cast an evil eye and I together with my children would be ashamed...*" Being a "widow" puts a woman in a position where she needs to be both vulnerable and strong.

Finally, the subjects of feeling guilty and being accused appear repeatedly in the discourse of the participants. In this respect, all the participants, except one, had already thought about separation during their marriage, but they could not put it into action. In this sense, even if we divorced almost in a similar way with different people, there is an expression that I wish he hadn't died. Regarding this matter, Seren said, "*...I wish he hadn't died we if only he lived we could have divorced you know the kid would still have been in contact with his father...*" and Büşra said "*... you know let him be cured and in case he lives we can get divorced if needed I was saying his recovery is more important than anything else...*" Hence, the fact that they had lost their spouse could also be interpreted as the realization of their desires for which no action was taken. It could be considered as a reflection of guilt that children point out the lack, they have experienced and do not point out the lack they themselves have experienced after loss.

The recurrent occurrence of this guilt in subsequent relationships was also a recurring theme in the participants' narratives. In this regard, even if there were no one in her life, Fatma felt guilty for even thinking about it. She identified herself with her children, but she was also conscious of the societal judgements by saying "*what would people say?*". As for Seren, she said that she saw a dream where she had to provide an account to her late husband about the person who had entered her life. In her dream, Seren said to her late husband the following: "*...always guiltiness as I say, you did this and that with M. there are these kinds of talks and then I say but why then weren't you there But by saying you weren't there well I think I feel guilty at that point as I give such responses in my dreams...*" and repeated that he was not there for her. It seems that death takes responsibility for the decision to separate, and

the participants who could not process this decision sufficiently at the level of consciousness, perhaps, balance these desires with guilt from the opposite place in the discourse, even though they want to leave. When a woman loses her husband, it is quite common for the survivor to question whether she herself is to be blamed for carelessness or negligence. Feeling guilty is not related to being responsible for a person's death or carelessness. Nevertheless, the fact that there may be an unconscious desire for the death of a loved one can only be compensated by means of this guilt (Freud, 1913). The participants reported that they were similarly subjected to accusations by others. The participants were accused of not taking good care of their husband, not noticing the disease and not taking any action. These accusations that seemed to imply that these women were the cause of the death of their husband are revealed as the realization of a desire to want them to die, even if it is not in reality. However, since this death has taken place in reality, the participants are only able to cope with the realization of their desires with guilt.

4.6. Discourse of “Widow”

Lacan defines discourse as the function of social bonds based on language (1969-1970/2007). It does not refer to a specific language, but the structure of the language. In other words, through the analysis of discourse, one is able to decipher the role of language in the relationships between subjects and the nature of the social bonds in these relationships. In order to interpret discourses, it is necessary to understand the meanings of positions and the symbols. There are four symbols in each discourse, and the interpretation of the discourse varies according to the different positions of the symbols. Therefore, subjective expression is related to the structure of the positions of symbols. In other words, the structure of the discourse and the subjectivity within the structure may change according to the position of the symbols (Quackelbeen et al., 1994). Lacan takes an analytical approach to the reality that determines these discourses, thus seeking to explain the structure that determines subjective discourse. He explains discourses using symbols, which provide great advantage in the abstraction of concepts. Thus, discourses can be effectively meaningful in clinical practice.

Discourses could be thought that as bags with four compartments. These compartments are called positions, and the symbols are placed in the compartments. These four positions are fixed, and the relationship between the positions is also fixed in every discourse. The first position is called the “*agent*”. Every agent who is talking has a respondent. Thus, the second position is called- the “*other*”, which means that each speaker is talking to someone. In this relationship, the person speaking aims to create a certain effect on the other. As a result of this, as an observable effect of discourse, it forms the next position, which is called the “*product*”. So far, it works in the same logic as every classical communication theory. The fourth and the last position is “*truth*”, which is the main position from which we gain the psychoanalytic perspective (Verhaegne, 1995). *Figure 3* below depicts arrows which can be followed to interpret the positions in the discourse.

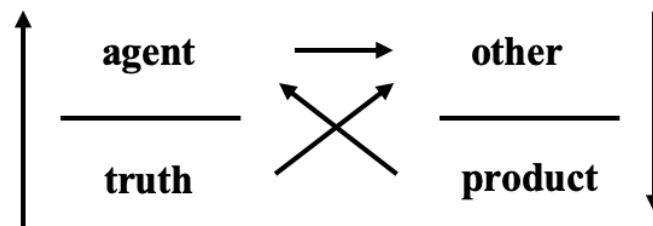


Figure 3. Positions in a Discourse

The agent, which is in the ego position, is actually a mediator. Truth, on the other hand, is the main speaker in this relationship, but this is not a conversation at the level of consciousness. The place of truth is suppressed and has a hidden position in discourse. On the other hand, truth is in a position to secretly activate the discourse and is the driving force of the discourse. The subject cannot be in the position of both the agent and the other, so the subject is forced into a position, and this inevitably leads to a loss. In other words, the agent's speech does not pass to the other completely in the way that the agent conveys. In this case, the conversation passing through the other undoubtedly creates a residual or surplus value, which is also called product (Verhaeghe, 1998). That is, the product can never fully represent the agent, and the product causes the subject to continue talking. Since information does not come entirely from the subject and the truth that really drives the discourse cannot be fully expressed, there is always an excess that resists representation. This

excess causes repetition, and the cycle continues, because truth will never find its exact meaning in the other.

Finally, the meanings of symbols are important to understand discourses. If positions are bags, their symbols can be considered as elements that are placed inside these bags and can take different positions from discourse to discourse. The subject (\$) is the division of the ego and the unconscious through language, that is, the result of alienation in language (Verhaeghe, 1998). S_1 , or the master signifier, is the main signifier that dominates every discourse. S_1 is the beginning of the chain of signifiers, and it is impossible to reach it because it is the one that has now been suppressed from discourse by entering the language. S_2 or knowledge represents the chain of signifiers. Since meaning can never define the subject, it is always sent to another signifier, and it disappears forever. There is a loss produced by the representation of the signifier of the subject for another signifier, which is *object a*, that is, the object that is the cause of desire. *Object a*, which is also called surplus jouissance, forces the subject to continue to talk to be understood but it always remains unsatisfied. No signifier can fully represent the subject; each signifier is sent to another signifier while representing the subject, and this continues forever (Verhaeghe, 1998).

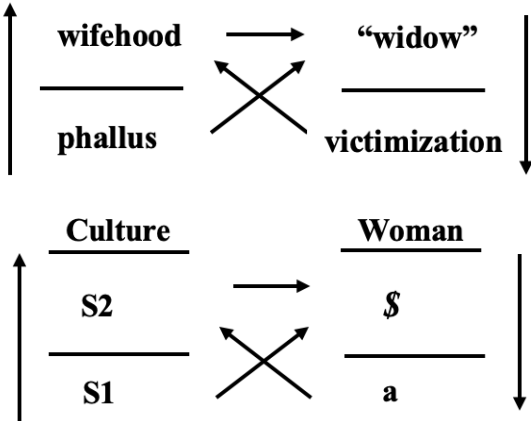


Figure 4. The Structure of the Discourse of "Widow"

The results of the present study are presented under five main themes: role of husband, unspeakable thing: the death, what is lost with the loss, ways to deal with death, and being a “widow”. In addition to the information provided until this point,

the topics that the participants explained in more detail during the interviews or the topics they briefly discussed also show some commonalities. For example, while the participants described in great detail the difficulties they faced after losing their partner and how they took a position in the face of these difficulties, almost no participant gave detailed information about the issues they felt strong with. While the participants were quite willing to tell the researcher what difficulties they experienced after losing their spouse, they did not give such detailed information when talking about the issues they were strong with. Similarly, some participants expressed their gratitude for being given the opportunity to talk about these issues at the end of the interview. In a way, it was thought that this study became a mediator for talking about the difficulties in their lives. For this reason, the discourse of "widow" has been shaped based on the speeches of the participants and has taken its final form by taking into account the cultural context.

The importance of marriage and the family institution has always been emphasized in the Turkish culture, which is a patriarchal society. In this respect, reference to the power of being a family is also observed in the statements of the participants. At this point, the phallus has been placed in the truth position, which activates the discourse. Although the phallus is associated with masculinity, the actual sexual organ is not mentioned. For this reason, participants always made reference to power or phallus when describing what was lost with the death of their spouse. Hence, in the Turkish culture, being married, that is being with a man, gives a woman an imaginary phallus. Although the phallus is in the imaginary order, the fact that those who are lost with the loss of a partner are always shaped around the phallus leads this discourse to the misconception of having something after the loss that women cannot have (Lacan 1956-1957/2020). For this reason, the phallus is suppressed in the discourse by carrying the quality of showing the master signifier S_1 in the discourse. Traces of truth could be traced in the following statements made by the participants: "...feeling the *strength behind you*..." or "*Well, it increases your resilience in the face of what life may throw at you you know compared to enduring it alone*..." In these quotes, power is not used as in "the power behind me" or "my strength to withstand what may happen in life"; therefore, it is expressed as something that belongs to someone else that is not in the woman herself. The question of who this

power belongs to remains unanswered. Women's experiences show similarity with the experiences of a girl who realizes that she does not have a penis at the end of the oedipus complex (Freud, 1924/1961). The phallus is at a point that activates the discourse. For example, Fatma said, "... *I don't have a husband... I feel incomplete I don't know I don't want to go...*" While the penis is only a signifier for the phallus, it is believed that the girl's perception of the lack of a penis evolves just as a lack of self is repeated with the loss of a spouse.

When the arrows (as indicated in *Figure 4*) in the discourse are followed, it can be seen that wifehood is located in the position of the agent. In this sense, a wifehood position has been formed with reference to the power of being married and having a family. In the discourse, the responsibilities and amenities that marriage brings with it are described in detail by the participants. Therefore, the participants have already internalized the knowledge about wifehood through culture. For this reason, wifehood is in the position of agent as knowledge or S_2 . Thus, being a married woman is in a position that cannot be ignored, regardless of the extent of difficulties it involves. Being a wife who undertakes every responsibility of the house, seeking to be a good mother to the children, and enduring all this despite all the jealousies and restrictions of her partner is the information that emerges about this position in the discourse. Even though the participants had considered getting a divorce, they mentioned they could not put it into action during their marriage. It is believed that the characteristics of wifehood, which are approved and supported in the Turkish culture liberate women in a way and make this position indispensable despite all its difficulties. Where wifehood is mentioned by participants, the traces of the phallus can be followed latently.

When the arrows in *Figure 4* are followed, it is seen that the woman who becomes a "widow" with the death of her husband is in the position of the other. Although the legal concept of "widow" applies to both men and women in the Turkish language, it was explained by Şirin (2016) that this concept is used to describe women in the Turkish culture. All references to power have socially been taken out of the hands of the woman with the loss of the spouse. Therefore, the woman who was a wife has now turned into a "widow". From this point on, a woman is now in a position where

she is unprotected, sexually objectified by society in such a way that she is constantly reminded of what she is missing and expected to continue mourning this loss. For this reason, the “widow” position is represented by the subject (\$) in the discourse. Therefore, the culture will now constantly point out the widow's lack and remind her of her lack. For example, although a woman tries to be both a mother and a father for her children, she never manages to do so.

In terms of the etymological origins of the word widow, there is a word that is generally used in the form of "tul" in ancient Turkish communities. “Tuldaw”, derived from the word “tul” (noun form) and “tullamak” (verb form), is a belief related to the death of men according to ancient customs. According to this belief, the horse ridden by the elderly who have reached maturity and died of old age is called “tullanmış”, while the weapons, saddle suits, clothes of middle-aged men, the horse they ride and the wife they love are also called “tullanmış”. It seems that the “tul” (widow), according to the ancient practices of the Kazakhs, the image of the deceased man, made in order to keep his memory alive in a concrete way, is a monument resembling him. The most valuable belongings of the deceased (his horse, clothes, weapons, etc.) also mourn with the deceased. In accordance with this belief, the especially valuable items that the deceased used in life were also “tullanmış” or included the grief. Naturally the main actor of the "mourning" is the spouse of the deceased. For this reason, the surviving spouse of the deceased person is also "tul". With the acceptance of Islam, the custom of making a "tul" that looks like a deceased person and is made by filling it in has disappeared, and the word "tul" (dul) has been used as a noun to refer to both a woman and a man who are bereaved and left alone only because their spouse died (Uygur, 2014).

This causes “widow” to produce statements that weave around victimization as a product in the fourth position. The phallus, which a woman was promised by the society that she would have if she became a family, but was later taken away from her, now appears in the discourse where a woman is a victim. For this reason, a woman who is now alone in the face of all difficulties can only survive for her children and feels sorry for herself. In addition, a woman's persistent guilt about the death of her husband is also explained as an obstacle in her subsequent romantic

relationships. It is believed that all this victimization should be explained in a very detailed way in interviews, and that excess of pleasure should appear as a product in discourse. Therefore, *object a* is placed in the product position.

When the arrow leading from victimization to wifehood is followed, a woman who has lost all her financial and moral support after losing her partner essentially strengthens her wifehood position. But the source of this lost power will never be reached. This can also be determined by the fact that when the arrows are followed, the “widow” never has access to the phallus. Therefore, there is an impossibility between the phallus, which is the motor power of discourse, and victimization, which occurs as a product. Therefore, the subjects in this discourse can never gain access to the phallus. As a result, women who are trying to repair this lack with a job, a sibling, or their children, but still have not fully recovered from this grief, experience a repetition of what they have lost. However, this loss is not only the loss of their spouses, it is a loss that belongs to them and goes back much further.

4.7. Conclusions, Clinical Implications and Limitations of the Study

In the present study, the experiences of women who lost their partner at an early stage of life and how they perceive these experiences have been studied. In this context, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight women who had lost their spouse by natural means or due to an accident, and the data were examined by thematic analysis. As a result of the study, five main themes were revealed: role of husband, unspeakable thing: the death, what is lost with the loss, ways to deal with death, and being a “widow”. Under the first theme, role of husband, the roles of the husband in a woman's life and in marriage and how this position affects a woman's life are examined. The emphasis on the man's role as a father rather than a husband at home and the similarities in a woman's early relationships with her own parents are presented in detail. In addition, the fact that the husband may be in a position that has fewer responsibilities in the home, being jealous of his wife and his inclination to cheat has been discussed by examining the nature of love. Under the second theme, unspeakable thing: the death, the nature of death that cannot be expressed in language is discussed. It was found that death could not be fully expressed due to the

fact that it also belongs to the order of the Real (Lacan, 1966/2006), and the participants could not easily talk about this topic either with their spouse, children, or their family. Yet, it was revealed that what could not be spoken could come out of the body as symptoms (Freud, 1893/1955), and it has been explained that these symptoms had a subjective connection with the participants. In addition, it is explained in the theme of what is lost with the loss that it is not only the husband who is lost with this loss, but the power, the father of the house and the partner are also considered as a lost. The fact that what is lost is always described with reference to power shows that participants experience this loss in the form of privation or frustration. These women have developed new ways of coping with this loss after losing their partner. At first, women who faced the death of their partner and therefore mortality were able to cope with this fact at first only by denying it. Yet, after a while, the participants stated that they had rebuilt their lives in various ways. Eventually, they explained that with this loss, they had taken on a new identity in society and that they were now a “widow”. How being a widow is perceived by society is explained in the theme of being a “widow” along with the sub-themes of guilt and victimization.

It was considered important for these women, who are educated, have children, and have established their lives, to talk about their grievances with such intensity in interviews within the scope of the study results. In this respect, the fact that these women, who can be regarded to be socioeconomically or culturally at an advantage in society, emphasize the negative effects of this loss so much, regardless of how long they have been going through it, has suggested that this experience can now be explained by something more than the loss of a partner. Hereby, it has been explained that this may also be related to the position of the “widow” in society and how the woman builds her own identity together with this label. Therefore, a pattern has been revealed in the discourse of women who socially speak of “widow”, and this pattern is not related with her opportunities, possessions, and abilities. In this regard, the power of being a family, being married, and being socially recognized as a couple, which seems to be a societal expectation, is taken away from a woman with the death of her spouse, resulting in the woman’s becoming a victim in this situation (Şirin, 2016). It seems that women's experiences go beyond the mourning period that

comes with experiencing the loss of a significant person. The fact that loss brings with it such great guilt and victimization shows that women can also produce this discourse as an excess of pleasure. In this respect, being grieved is what is expected from a woman after her husband dies and the fact that a woman goes beyond this expectation gives rise to guilt. Women maintain the position of their husband alive by continuing this mourning even if their spouse dies. It has been observed that the death of the spouse through illness or sudden death does not make a significant difference in the discourse. This has been revealed to be related to the consequences of the lost object rather than how it was lost. The fact that the power lost with the loss of a partner is based mainly on much earlier times, when as a small girl she realized that she did not have a penis (Freud, 1924), suggests that these women were prevented from forming new relationships and being reminded of this lack again. It was concluded that even if some of the participants pursued a romantic relationships in subsequent periods, none of them could be sustained. This loss may, therefore, be related to the maintenance of imagining to have phallus one day and remain unsatisfied (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

In conclusion, examining the relationship of a person to this loss and a detailed qualitative study of how being a woman with a partner lost at an early stage can differ from any period of mourning constitute the strength of this research. A woman who becomes a “widow” with the loss of her spouse reshapes the network of relationships and the social status she has established in life, and the connection of these changes with cultural references is observed in the discourse. For this reason, when working with a woman who has lost her partner in a therapy, the importance of cultural references and the subjective connection with this loss should not be ignored. In addition, it should be taken into account whether this loss is a repetition of another loss in relation to personal history and how the person develops coping mechanisms in face of this loss. In this respect, as long as a person experiences this loss as privation and frustration, the word “widow” will remain as a label. However, it is believed that working "the loss" in a psychoanalysis together with its connections at the earliest stage of life will lead the subject to experience this loss as a castration by giving up jouissance of victimization (Lacan 1956-1957/2020) and be able to let him go, even if she does not forget him.

In this study, the focus is on Turkish culture. It is believed that how women who have lost their partner at an early stage interpret these experiences may change from culture to culture. In this respect, qualitative studies of the experiences of women who have lost their partner at an early stage in different cultures will contribute to the literature. In addition, due to the nature of qualitative studies, it seems that working with a homogeneous group both enriches this research and creates a limitation on understanding the experiences of women who are uneducated, do not have children, or are at an old age. Finally, how there may be a difference between divorce and death, whether this difference can be considered as a variable in a woman's "widow" status and discourse, can be discussed in future studies. Despite these limitations, this study is the first thematic analysis of the bereavement experiences of women in Turkey due to the death of their spouse from a psychoanalytical perspective and this may provide important insights.

REFERENCES

- Apollon, W. (1994). The Discourse of Gangs in the Stake of Male Repression and Narcissism. In M. Bracher, M. Alcorn, R. Corthell and F. Massardier-Kenny (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 201-219). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). *Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. Qualitative Research, 1*(3), 385-405.
- Aull Davies, C. (1999). *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. New York: Routledge.
- Baltacı, S. (2019). Mental Durumlarda Kraepelin'in Tanılama Modeli ile Lacan'ın Yapısal Yaklaşımının Bir Karşılaştırması: Konumlanmadan Araştırma ve Uygulamaya. *Türk Psikoloji Yazıları, 22*(43), 1-10. doi: 10.31828/tpy.13019961.2018.42.02.05
- Bracher, M. (1994). On the Psychological and Social Functions of Language: Lacan's Theory of the Four Discourses. In M. Bracher, M. Alcorn, R. Corthell and F. Massardier-Kenny (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 107-128). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2012) Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, and K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 57-71). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Boothby, R. (2013). The lost cause of mourning. *Continental Philosophy Review, 46*(2), 209-221. doi: 10.1007/s11007-013-9256

- Casenave, L., Allende, D., Bort, G., Cafferata, O., d'Angelo, C., Massana, E., Perlino, E., Petricca, N., Porras, M.I. ... & Sanchez, C. (1994). "I Don't Know What Happened": Political Oppression and Psychological Structure. In M. Bracher, M. Alcorn, R. Corthell and F. Massardier-Kenny (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 176-184). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Demandante, D. (2014) Lacanian Perspectives on Love. *Kritike, An Online Journal of Philosophy*. 8(1), 102-118. doi:[10.25138/8.1.a.5](https://doi.org/10.25138/8.1.a.5)
- Derman, D. S. (1999). *Grief and attachment in young widowhood* (PhD thesis). Temple University, Pennsylvania, United States.
- Evans, D. (1996). *An introductory dictionary of Lacanian psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge
- Fink, B. (1997). *A clinical introduction to Lacanian psychoanalysis: Theory and technique*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Fink, B. (2016). *Lacan on Love: An Exploration of Lacan's Seminar VIII, Transference*, Polity Press , 223-236.
- Freud, S. (1893). Studies on Hysteria. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (2nd Vol., pp-1-222). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1905). Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (7th Vol., pp.123-246). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1913). Totem and Taboo. In I. Smith. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (13th Vol., pp.1-162). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1915). Repression. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (14th Vol., pp. 141-158). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1917). Mourning and Melancholia. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (14th Vol., pp. 237-258). London: Hogarth Press.

- Freud, S. (1921). Group psychology and the analysis of the ego. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (18th Vol., pp. 69-143). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1925). Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (19th Vol., pp. 248-258). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1933). New Introductory Lectures On Psycho-Analysis. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (22th Vol, pp.1-182). London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1961). The dissolution of the oedipus complex. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (19th Vol., pp. 173-179). London: Hogarth Press. (Original work published in 1924)
- Freud, S. (1992). Letter to Binswanger. In: *The Letters of Sigmund Freud* (T. Stern & J. Stern, Trans.). In E. L. Freud. (Ed.), New York: Dover Publications. (Original work published in 1960).
- Garcia G. L., Bassols, M., Berenguer, Romani, R.M.C, Guliana, E., Palorema, V., & Paskuan, E. (1994). On Blasphemy: Religion and Psychological Structure. Bracher, M., Alcorn, M. W., Corthell, R. J. ve Kenney, F. M. (Ed.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 185-201). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: a typology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14(10), 1429-1452. doi: 10.1177/1049732304270394
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 4-7.
- Gürsel, D. (2017). Yeni Ruhsal Yapılanmalar ve Klinik Etkileri. *AYNA Klinik Psikoloji Dergisi*, 4(2), 1-6.
- Hagman, G. (1996) The Role of the other in Mourning, *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 65(2), 327-352, DOI: [10.1080/21674086.1996.11927493](https://doi.org/10.1080/21674086.1996.11927493)

- Hardison, H. G., Neimeyer, R. A., & Lichstein, K.L. (2005). Insomnia and Complicated Grief Symptoms in Bereaved College Students. *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*, 3(2), 99-111. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15402010bsm0302_4
- Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: flexibility, Consistency and Coherence. *Qualitative Research*, 3(3), 345-357. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794103033004>
- Jones, E., Oka, M., Clark, J., Gardner, H., Hunt, R., & Dutson, S. (2019). *Lived experience of young widowed individuals: A qualitative study. Death Studies*, 43(3), 183–192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2018.1445137>
- Koçyiğit, M. (2019). *Eş Kaybı Yaşayan Bireylerin Deneyimlerine İlişkin Bir Derleme.*, I. Uluslararası Bilim, Eğitim, Sanat ve Teknoloji Sempozyumu, İzmir, Türkiye.
- Kuckartz, U. (2014). *Qualitative text analysis: A guide to methods, practice and using software.* Los Angeles: Sage publication.
- Kütahneçi, M. (2009). Lacan ve Ölüm. (H. İlksen Mavituna, Trans.). *MonoKL Lacan Özel Sayısı*. İstanbul: Monokl yayınları. 465-478.
- Lacan, J. (1938). *Family complexes in the formation of the individual.* (C. Gallagher, Trans.). Available at: <http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/FAMILY-COMPLEXES-IN-THE-FORMATION-OF-THE-INDIVIDUAL2.pdf>
- Lacan, J. (1988). *Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I: Freud's papers on technique, I* (J. Forrester, Trans.). New York: WW Norton & Company. (Original work published in 1953-1954)
- Lacan, J. (1992). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VIII: The ethics of psychoanalysis* (D. Porter, Trans.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (Original work in 1959-1960).
- Lacan, J. (1998). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI: The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis.* In J.A. Miller, Ed. (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York, NY: W.W. Norton. (Original work in 1964).
- Lacan, J. (1998) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: Encore, On Feminine Sexuality: The Limits of Love and Knowledge.* (B. Fink, Trans.) New York: W.W. Norton. (Original work in 1972-1973).



- Lacan, J. (2006). The signification of the phallus (B. Fink, Trans.). In *Écrits* (575-584). New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Original work published in 1958)
- Lacan, J. (2006). *Ecrits: The first complete edition in English* (B. Fink, Trans.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. (Original work published in 1966).
- Lacan, J. (2007). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XVII: The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (R. Grigg, Trans.) New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc. (Original work in 1969-1970).
- Lacan, J. (2010). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book IX: Identification* (C. Gallagher Trans.). Retrieved from http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Seminar-IX-Amended-Iby-MCL-7.NOV_.20111.pdf. (Original work in 1961-1962)
- Lacan, J. (2014). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book X: Anxiety* (A. R. Price, Trans.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. (Original work in 1962-1963).
- Lacan, J. (2015). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan book VIII: Transference*. In J.A. Miller (Ed.), (B. Fink Trans.). Cambridge: Polity Press. (Original work in 1960-1961)
- Lacan, J. (2020). *The seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book IV: Object relations* (A. R. Price, Trans.) Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. (Original work in 1956-1957)
- Lapadat, J. C., & Lindsay, A. C. (1999). Transcription in Research and Practice: From Standardization of Technique to Interpretive Positionings. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(1), 64-86.
- Laplanche, J., & Pontalis, J.B. (1973). *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (D. Nicholson-Smith Trans.). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho- Analysis. (Original work published in 1967)
- Lesourd, S. (2018). *Özne nasıl susturulur? Söylemlerden liberal laf ebeliklerine*. (Ö. Soysal & Ü. Edeş, Trans.) Ankara: Doğu Batı Yayınları. (Original work published in 2010).
- Lindemann, E. (1944) Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 101, 141-148. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.101.2.141>

- Lopata, H. Z. (1996). *Current Widowhood: Myths & Realities*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.
- Marković, Z. (2000). Psychoanalytic conceptions of marriage and marital relationships. *The scientific journal Facta Universitatis*, 2 (7), 379-389
- Marshall, J. L. (1994). The Subject of Discourse: Reading Lacan through (and beyond) Poststructuralist Contexts. In Bracher, M., Alcorn, M. W., Corthell, R. J. ve Kenney, F. M. (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 19-43). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Morse, J. M. (1995). The significance of saturation. *Qualitative Health Research*. 5, 147–148.
- Osterweis, M., Solomon, F., & Green, M. (1984). Bereavement: Reactions, Consequences, and Care. *Committee for the Study of the Health Consequences of Bereavement, Washington, D.C.:* National Academy Press.
- Öksüzler, B. (2015). *Eş kaybının yaşlı bireyler üzerindeki psikolojik etkileri: Kaynakların Korunması Kuramı kapsamında bir inceleme* (Master thesis). Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey.
- Quackelbeen, J., Belliet, L., De Wulf, J., Jonckheere, L., Lorre, D., Van de Vijver, L., ... & Verhaeghe, P. (1994). Hysterical discourse: between the belief in man and the cult of woman. In M. Bracher, M. W. Alcorn Jr., R. J. Corthell, & F. Massardier-Kenney (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse. Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 129–137). New York NY/London: New York University Press.
- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2000). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 769-802). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Salecl, R. (1994). Deference to the Great Other: The Discourse of Education. In Bracher, M., Alcorn, M. W., Corthell, R. J. ve Kenney, F. M. (Eds.), *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society* (pp. 163-175). New York, London: New York University Press.
- Schroeder, J. L. (2008). *The Four Lacanian Discourses: or Turning Law Inside-Out*. New York: Birbeck Law Press.

- Silverman, P. R. (2004). *Series in death, dying, and bereavement. Widow to widow: How the bereaved help one another (2nd ed.)* England: Brunner-Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203020975>
- Soler, C. (2006). *What Lacan Said about Women: A Psychoanalytic Study* (J. Holland, Trans.). New York, NY: Other Press. (Original work published 2003).
- Şirin, M. (2016). *An analysis of widowhood and learning experiences of young widows*. (Master Thesis). Boğaziçi University, İstanbul, Turkey.
- Uzunkaya Seçen, H. K. (2017). *Türkiye'de boşanma ve eş kaybı bağlamında dul kadın algısı* (Master Thesis). Selçuk University, Konya, Turkey.
- Uygur, C. V. (2014). Dul (Tul) Kelimesine Dair" (Interpretations On The Word Widow). Conference Paper. Milli Türkoloji Kongresi at: İstanbul
- Verhaeghe, P. (1995). From impossibility to inability: Lacan's theory on the four discourses. *The Letter: Lacanian Perspectives of Lacanian Perspectives on Psychoanalysis*, 3, 91-108. doi: <http://hdl.handle.net/1854/LU-255818>.
- Verhaeghe, P. (1998). Lacan and the discourse of the hysteric. In Does the woman exist? (M. D. Ry). From Freud's hysteric to Lacan's feminine (pp. 95-123). NY: Other Press.
- Vanheule, S. (2002). Qualitative research and its relation to Lacanian psychoanalysis. *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, 7(2), 336-342.
- Wolfenstein, M. (1966). How is mourning possible? *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 21, 93-123.

APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

<p>UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER</p> <p>DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800 ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY T: +90 312 210 22 91 F: +90 312 210 79 59 ueam@metu.edu.tr www.ueam.metu.edu.tr</p>	<p> ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY</p>
<p>Sayı: 28620816 / 381</p>	<p>29 EYLÜL 2021</p>
<p>Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu</p>	
<p>Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)</p>	
<p>İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu</p>	
<p>Sayın Prof.Dr. Faruk GENÇÖZ</p> <p>Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Gizem MİNÇE'nin "Erken Yaşta Deneyimlenen Eş Kaybı ve Yas Üzerine Nitel Bir Araştırma" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 381-ODTU-2021 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.</p> <p>Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.</p>	
	<p> Dr.Öğretim Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT İAEK Başkan Vekili</p>

B. THE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE STUDY

Merhabalar,

ODTÜ Klinik Psikoloji programında doktora tez çalışmam kapsamında eşi vefat etmiş kadınların deneyimlerini ve bu süreci nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını araştırmaktayım. Bu araştırma için eşini 45 yaşından önce kaybetmiş, üniversite mezunu olan ve çocuğu olan kadınlar ile görüşeceğim. Çalışma kapsamında yapılacak görüşme açık uçlu sorular içermektedir ve online olarak gerçekleştirilecek görüşmenin yaklaşık bir saat sürmesi beklenmektedir.

Çalışmaya katılmak ve daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz 05xx xxx xx xx numaralı telefonda ya da [REDACTED] adresinden iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Teşekkür ederim,

Uzm. Psk. Gizem Minçe

C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü Klinik Psikoloji Bütünleşik Doktora öğrencisi Gizem Minçe tarafından Prof. Dr. Faruk Gençöz danışmanlığında ve Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sevda Sarı Demir eş danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, 45 yaşından önce eşini bir hastalığa bağlı olarak ya da bir kaza sebebiyle kaybeden kadınların bu kaybı nasıl deneyimlediğini ve bu yaşantıyı nasıl anlamlandırdığını araştırmaktır.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden beklenen, araştırmacının size yönelttiği açık uçlu soruları cevaplamanızdır. Görüşmenin yaklaşık bir saat sürmesi beklenmektedir. Araştırmacı, katılımcıdan ihtiyaç durumunda birden fazla görüşme talep edebilir.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya kurum belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Sağladığınız veriler gönüllü katılım formlarında toplanan kimlik bilgileri ile eşleştirilmeyecektir. Görüşme boyunca ses kaydı alınacak ve araştırma sonlandığında ses kayıtları silinecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler sadece bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Görüşme kişinin kaybettiği eşi ile ilgili sorular içermektedir. Katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda araştırmacıya görüşmeyi bitirmek istediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır. Bu konuda desteğe ihtiyaç duyarsanız AYNA Klinik Psikoloji Destek Ünitesi'ne ya da araştırmacının sizi yönlendireceği uzmana başvuruda bulunabilirsiniz.

Arařtırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Görüşmelerin sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Gizem Minçe (E-posta:) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

Ad Soyad

Tarih

İmza

D. QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Can you introduce yourself?
 - a) How old are you?
 - b) What is your level of education?
 - c) What do you do?
2. Can you talk about your family?
 - a) Who are your family members?
 - b) Who do you live with?
 - c) How is your relationship with the family members?
3. Can you talk about your views about marriage? What, in your view, is marriage like?
4. Can you talk about your spouse, whom you have lost?
 - a) How did you meet him?
 - b) How old were you at the time you met him?
 - c) What kind of a person was he?
 - d) How did you decide to get married?
 - e) Can you talk about your relationship?
5. What do you think about death? Have you previously lost a relative?
6. Can you talk about how you lost your spouse?
 - a) If due to an accident:
 - i) Can you talk about the accident? How did it happen?
 - ii) Were you with your spouse when your spouse passed away? If not, how did you receive the news?
 - iii) What happened after the accident?
 - iv) How did the course of events proceed in the aftermath of the accident?
 - v) What did you think and what did you feel in relation to this accident?
 - b) If due to an illness:
 - i) Can you talk about the diagnosis process?
 - ii) When and how did you first notice the illness?

- iii) What did you experience after the diagnosis?
 - iv) Was there a treatment process? How was that period?
7. Can you talk about the times after losing your spouse?
 - a) What kind of a period was it for you? What did you experience? What thoughts did you have? How did you feel?
 - b) Were there people by your side to support you? If not, how was it to undergo this experience on your own?
 8. What kind of an impact did this loss have on your life?
 - a) How did it affect your relationship with others (your family and social environment)
 - b) How did the people in your surrounding approach you after the loss?
 9. What kinds of changes happened in your life after losing your spouse? How did you cope with these changes?
 10. What does the loss of your spouse mean to you?
 - a) What did you lose with the death of your spouse?
 - b) Is there a dream about your spouse that that you remember seeing after he passed away?
 11. Did you receive any treatment in the aftermath of the loss?
 12. Do you talk about your deceased spouse at home or in your social environment?
 - a) If not, how would you account for this?
 - b) If so, what kinds of things do you talk about?
 13. Did you get married again? If not, have you ever thought of getting married?
 - a) What do you think were the factors that contributed to making this decision?
 14. Taking into consideration all the things we talked about in relation to the loss, how would you describe the experience you underwent during this course of time as a woman?
 15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

E. TURKISH VERSION OF THE QUESTIONS FOR THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - a. Kaç yaşındasınız?
 - b. Eğitim seviyeniz nedir?
 - c. Ne iş yapıyorsunuz?
2. Ailenizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - a. Aileniz kimlerden oluşuyor?
 - b. Kimlerle yaşıyorsunuz?
 - c. Ailedeki kişilerle ilişkileriniz nasıldır?
3. Evlilik hakkındaki düşüncelerinizden bahsedebilir misiniz? Evlilik sizce nasıl bir şey?
4. Kaybettiğiniz eşinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - a. Nasıl tanıştınız?
 - b. Tanıştığınız dönemde kaç yaşındaydınız?
 - c. Nasıl biriydi?
 - d. Evlenmeye nasıl karar verdiniz?
 - e. İlişkinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
5. Ölüm hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Daha önce bir yakınınızı kaybettiniz mi?
6. Eşinizi nasıl kaybettiğinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - a. Kaza sebebiyle ise:
 - i. Kazadan bahsedebilir misiniz? Nasıl oldu?
 - ii. Eşinizi kaybettiğinizde yanında mıydınız? Eğer değilse nasıl haber aldınız?
 - iii. Kazadan sonra neler oldu?
 - iv. Kaza sonrası süreç nasıldı?
 - v. Bu kazayla ilgili neler düşündünüz, neler hissettiniz?
 - b. Eğer hastalık kaynaklı ise:
 - i. Tanı sürecinden bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - ii. Hastalığı ilk kez nasıl/ne zaman fark ettiniz?
 - iii. Tanı konduktan sonra neler yaşadınız?

iv. Tedavi süreci oldu mu? O süreç nasıldı?

7. Eşinizi kaybettikten sonraki zamanlardan bahsedebilir misiniz?
 - a. Sizin için nasıl bir dönemdi? Neler yaşadınız? Neler düşündünüz? Neler hissettiniz?
 - b. Yanınızda size destek olan kişiler var mıydı? Yoksa bu süreci tek başınıza deneyimlemek nasıldı?
8. Bu kaybın hayatınıza nasıl bir etkisi oldu?
 - a. Diğerleriyle olan ilişkinize nasıl bir etkisi oldu? (ailenizle ve sosyal çevrenizle)
 - b. Çevrenizdekilerin kayıp sonrasında size yaklaşımı nasıl oldu?
9. Eşinizi kaybettikten sonra hayatınızda nasıl değişimler oldu? Bu değişimlerle nasıl başa çıktınız?
10. Eşinizin kaybı sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
 - a. Eşinizin vefatıyla neyi kaybettiniz?
 - b. Vefat ettikten sonra eşinizle ilgili aklınızda kalan bir rüya var mı?
11. Kayıp sürecinden sonra herhangi bir destek aldınız mı?
12. Evde ya da sosyal çevrenizde kaybettiğiniz eşinizle ilgili konuşur musunuz?
 - a. Konuşulmuyorsa/ konuşmamanızı neye bağlıyorsunuz?
 - b. Konuşuluyorsa/ nelerden bahsedersiniz?
13. Tekrar evlendiniz mi/ (evlenmediyse) evlenmeyi hiç düşündünüz mü?
 - a. Bu kararı almayı etkileyen sebepler sizce nelerdi?
14. Kayıp süreciyle ilgili tüm bu konuştuklarımızı düşündüğünüzde bir kadın olarak bu süreci yaşamak nasıldı?
15. Eklemek istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?

F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

BÖLÜM 1

GİRİŞ

Bu tez, kadınların eşlerinin ölümünden sonraki yas deneyimlerinin incelendiği niteliksel bir çalışmadır. Araştırma, bir hastalık veya kaza nedeniyle eşini kaybeden kadınların deneyimlerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Giriş kısmında, yas, eksik, nesne a, üç düzen, eksiğin üç formu, kültürel konular, aşk, evlilik ve söylem teorisi gibi konular kavramsal açıdan ele alınmıştır. Daha sonra çalışmanın amacı psikanalitik literatür bağlamında ayrıntılı olarak sunulmuştur. Son olarak, mevcut çalışmanın kapsamı, gerekçesi ve amacı açıklanmıştır.

1.1. Yas

Birini kaybetmek hayatın her aşamasında acı verici bir deneyim olarak kabul edilir. Her kayıptan sonra kişinin hayatında önemli değişiklikler meydana gelir ve dış dünyaya yeniden uyum sağlamak zorlu bir süreç olabilmektedir. Bu anlamda biri öldüğünde sadece kişinin kendisini değil, hayatta onlara atfettiğimiz rolleri, kurduğumuz ilişkilerimizi ve daha da önemlisi bizi nasıl algıladıklarını da kaybederiz. Derin bağlar kurduğumuz kişilerin kaybı, nihayetinde kişiyi sevildiği kaynaktan mahrum eder. Bununla birlikte, zamanla oluşan ve oldukça karmaşık olan bu bağlar, bir kişinin ölümüyle aniden yok olmaz. Bu bağlar zamanla yavaş yavaş kopar ve yeni anlamlar kazanır. Bu anlamda, ölen kişi asla unutulmasa da yas tutanların ölümü kavraması zaman almaktadır ve böylece kayıp, başlangıçta olduğundan daha az acı verici hale gelir. Bu dönem, yas dönemi olarak adlandırılır.

Eksik ve Nesne a

Lacanyen psikanalizde "eksik" terimi, özneyi karakterize eden içsel ve temel bir eksiklik veya yetersizliğe işaret etmektedir. Bu anlamda eksik, arzuyu ve

bilinçdışının yapısını anlamakta merkezi bir konumdadır. Lacan (1964/1998), arzunun esasen Başka'nın arzusu olduğunu ve bu arzunun bir nesneyle değil, bir eksiklikle ilişkili olduğunu belirtir (Lacan, 1956-1957/ 2020). Başka bir deyişle arzu, a nesnesiyle ilişkilidir. Bu bağlamda arzunun nesnesi olarak ortaya çıkan a nesnesi, her zaman eksikle ilgilidir (Lacan, 1964/1998). Bu nedenle a nesnesi tam olarak Başka'nın yokluğunda konumlandırılır. Dolayısıyla eksikliğin yerini alacağını düşündüğümüz nesnelere bunu asla tam olarak yapamayacaktır (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). Freud, yas döneminde öznenin kaybolan nesneyle bağlantısının kesilmesi gerekliliğini vurgularken, Lacan, yasin gerçeklikten sürekli bir kaçış halinde olan nesneyi yeniden bulma ihtiyacı ile ilgili olduğunu belirtmiştir (Boothby, 2013). Ancak, kaybedilenin yerini tamamen alacak yeni bir nesne bulmak imkansızdır. Öznenin kaybettiklerini tam olarak kavraması ve dilbilimsel olarak ifade etmesi ya da deneyimlerini anlatması imkansızdır. Sonuç olarak, Freudyen terimlerle kaybedilen nesne veya Lacanyen terimlerle eksiklik, yasin odak noktası haline gelir.

1.2. Üç Düzen: Gerçek, İmgesel ve Simgesel

Lacan psikanalitik literatürde gerçek, imgesel ve simgeselden oluşan üç düzen kavramını tanıtmıştır. Lacan'ın ilk çalışmalarından itibaren kullandığı Borromean düğümü, bu üç düzenin topolojik olarak birbirleriyle ilişkisini tasvir etmektedir. Lacan'ın psikanalitik çerçevesi için temel bir noktada olan bu topolojik gösterim, insan özneliği ve anlamın inşası hakkında önemli bakış açıları sunar. Bu üç düzen birbirine bağlıdır ve öznelerin gerçeklik deneyimlerini şekillendirir. Lacan, özneliğin bu düzenler arasındaki etkileşim yoluyla ortaya çıktığını savunmuştur. Yas süreci bir kayıpla başlar ve kayıptan sonra özne gerçekle karşılaşır. Gerçek, bilinçdışı ve travma ile yakından bağlantılıdır. Gerçek, dil alanının dışında var olur ve sembolik düzene entegrasyonunu imkansızdır (Lacan, 1964/1998). Kişi, gerçek düzenine ait olanı anlamlandırmaya, hayal etmeye ve dile dökmeye başladığında, ölüm simgesel ve imgesel düzenlerde yerini alır. Bu şekilde özne, gerçeğin yarattığı hiçliğin yerini gösterenlerle değiştirme fırsatı bulur. Ölüm genellikle somut bir biyolojik olaydan ziyade imgesel bir kavram olarak algılanabilmektedir. Ölüm deneyimi, simgesel ve imgesel düzenler tarafından şekillendirilir. Ölümü temsil

etmek ve anlamak için kültürel, sosyal ve kişisel faktörlerden derinden etkilenen imgeler, anlatılar ve semboller kullanılmaktadır. Kişi, birinin ölümünü duyduğu ilk anda hiçbir şey hissetmeyebilir veya düşünemeyebilir, ancak bu kaybı belli bir süre sonra simgesel alana doğru taşır. İnsan bir gün öleceğini bilse de bunu görmezden gelerek yaşamaya devam etmek zorundadır; yani bir anlamda ölüm kavramına direnir. Ancak bu kaçınma sayesinde kişi, varlığını bedeninin ötesine taşıyarak özne olma fırsatını bulur. Başka bir deyişle, özne bu eksikliğin veya kaybolan nesnenin ötesine geçer. Kaybolan nesneyle ilgili tüm anılar ve beklentiler simgesel olarak yeniden işlenir ve kişi yeniden 'özgür' hale gelir (Freud, 1917).

1.3. Eksikğin Üç Formu

Lacan dördüncü seminerinde eksik kavramına detaylı şekilde değinmektedir (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020). Öznenin gelişim sürecinde üç eksiklik biçimi, bu biçimlere eşlik eden eksik nesnelere ve eksikliğin aracısı olan failler bağlamında değerlendirilir. Eksikliğin üç biçimi kastrasyon, frustrasyon ve privasyon olarak sunulurken, eksik nesnelere sırasıyla imgesel penis, gerçek meme ve simgesel penis olarak sunulmuştur (Tablo 1). Üç eksiklik türünden biri olan kastrasyon, Oedipus kompleksi ile yakından ilgilidir. Freud'a göre, her iki cinsiyet için de sevginin ilk nesnesi, temel bakım sağlayan annedir. Buna göre Oedipus kompleksinin anneye birlikte olmak istemekten çok anneye sahip olmak istemekle ilgili olduğu söylenebilir (Freud, 1925). Bununla birlikte, çocuğu annesinin mülkiyeti ve bir zevk nesnesi olmaktan koruyan şey imgesel fallustur. Freud, kastrasyonu biyolojik bir tanım haline getirirken (cinsiyetler arasındaki anatomik farklılıklar açısından değil), Lacan kastrasyonu imgesel bir nesnenin gerçek baba tarafından ele geçirilmesiyle ilişkilendirmiştir. Kastrasyonla özne, annenin arzusunun nesnesi olmaktan vazgeçer; bu nedenle özne, annenin ona sağlayabileceği sonsuz ve sınırsız zevki reddeder. Yani özne, hayali bir fallusa sahip olma olasılığına ancak sembolik bir işlev aracılığıyla, yani jouissance'dan vazgeçerek erişebilecektir (Lacan, 1958/2006).

Frustrasyonun nesnesi ise gerçek memedir. Anne ve çocuk arasındaki simbiyotik ilişkide anne, çocuğa bir noktada ihtiyaç duyduğu memeyi vermeyebilir. Bu noktaya kadar meme, anne ile çocuk arasındaki ortak nesne olarak işlev görür ve çocuk,

annenin meme yoluyla bir uzantısı olarak görülmektedir. Ancak çocuk her istediğinde anne memelerini çocuğa veremez. Bu noktada doğumdan itibaren çocuğun hakkı olarak kabul edilen meme yeni bir anlam kazanır ve annenin çocuğa vermediği bir nesneye dönüşür. Esasen memenin çocuğa verilmemesi bambaşka bir nedene dayanırken, çocuk bunun onun için bir engel olduğunu düşünmektedir (Evans, 1996). Bu aynı zamanda çocukta hayal kırıklığına yol açar. Sonuç olarak, sevgiye olan talep fiziksel ihtiyacın önüne geçer. Özne, diğeriyle olan ilişkisinde hakkının kendisine verilmediğini ve sevgiye olan talebinin karşılanmadığını düşünerek hayal kırıklığı yaşar.

Lacan, privasyonu ise başka bir eksiklik türü olarak tanımlar. Privasyonun faili hayali babadır ve nesnesi sembolik fallus'tur. Başka bir deyişle privasyon, sembolik olarak işlev gören fallusun hayali baba tarafından ortaya çıkarılmasıdır (Lacan, 1956-1957/ 2020). Sonuç olarak eksik olan, gerçek babanın değil hayali babanın çocuğu fallustan mahrum bırakmasıdır. Bunun nedeni, gerçek düzleminde eksikliğe yer olmamasıdır; penisin yokluğu bir kadın için eksiklik değildir. Bunun eksik algılanması ancak hayali düzende mümkün olabilir (Evans, 1996). Sonuç olarak, privasyonda eksiklik simgelenerek algılanabilir.

1.4. Yas ve Kültürel Konular

Ölümden sonra yapılan (çeşitli inanç ve kültürlere göre değişebilen) ritüeller, bu kayıp nesneye sembolik düzende bir yer sağlama işlevini yerine getirir ve bu ritüeller, gösteren zincirine yeni zincirler ekledikleri için yas tutanlar için çok önemlidir. Sembolik düzen, kimlikleri şekillendiren ve dünyayla ilişkiye aracılık eden dil, kültür ve sosyal sistemler alanını temsil eder (Lacan, 1966/2006). Türk kültüründe cenaze törenleri, ölümden sonra cenazeye gelenlere dağıtılan yemekler, mezar ve mezarın bir köşesindeki içi boş vazo simgeselleştirme sürecinin unsurlarıdır. Bu sembolik temsiller, bireylerin ölümle ilgili varoluşsal soru ve endişelerini anlamlandırmaya yardımcı olur. Lacan'ın da belirttiği gibi vazo eksiklik ya da hiçlik anlamına gelir; başka bir deyişle boşluk yaratır ve böylece onu doldurma olasılığını ortaya çıkarır (Lacan, 1959-1960/1992). Varlık ve yokluk kavramları birbirinden ayrılamaz ve birbirini doğurur ve sembolik düzen, yokluk ve varlığın

temel diyalektiğiyle şekillenir (Lacan, 1956-1957/ 2020). Böylece yas dönemi, kaybedilen nesne asla unutulmayacak olsa da bağların zamanla kopmasıyla sona erer. Sembolik düzen içinde, ölümün tetiklediği varoluşsal kaygının üstesinden gelme biçimleri vardır. Bunun bir yolu, bireylerin fiziksel varlıklarının ötesine uzanan kalıcı bir etki veya miras için çabaladıkları sembolik ölümsüzlük arayışıdır. Böylece, kaybolan nesne gösterenler zincirine farklı şekillerde eklenerek kişi üzerinde bir iz bırakacaktır (Freud, 1917),

1.5. Aşk ve Evlilik

Sevilen birinin ölümünden sonra yas tutmak, daha önce varlığın olduğu bir yokluğa yeniden uyum sağlamayı gerektirir. Başkayla ilişkili olarak varlık ve yokluk ilişkisinde tanımlanan yas, esasen aşkın tanımını da verir (Boothby, 2013). Lacan 10. Seminerde “...aşk, insanın sahip olmadığını vermesidir, kastrasyon kompleksinin arkasındaki ilke bile budur. Fallusa sahip olmak, onu kullanabilmek için kişi o olmamalıdır” ifadesini kullanmıştır (1962- 1963/2014). Aşk ve ölüm kavramları belirli benzerlikleri ve bağlantıları paylaşır. Hem aşk hem de ölüm, insan öznelliğinin ve arzusunun temel yönleriyle ilişkilidir. Bu bağlamda, insan arzusu Başka'nın eksikliği etrafında şekillenir. Sevilen birinin ölümü durumunda, öznenin a nesnesiyle ilişkisini düzenleyecek kişi artık var olmadığı için özne sembolik düzendeki konumunu değiştirmelidir. Aşk, hayali, sembolik ve gerçek düzenler arasındaki karmaşık etkileşimde konumlandırılır. Aşk bir imge ile başlar ve ardından ilişkinin getirdiği sosyal ve kültürel roller de dahil olmak üzere sembolik düzende güçlenir. Ama her zaman bunların altında yatan gerçek düzeni vardır. Kişi başlangıçta kendi ideallerini, fantezilerini ve arzulayışını sevdiği kişiye bağlar. Başka bir deyişle seven kişi, esasen arzusunun nesnesi olan kişinin kendini tamamlayacağını hayal eder. Ancak bu hayallerin asla sevgili ile doğrudan bir bağlantısı olmaz; bu bir yanılgıdır. Tıpkı bir insanın nasıl görüldüğünü tam olarak bilemeyeceği gibi, bu durum sevdiği kişi için de aynıdır (Demandante, 2014). Kişi neden o kişiyi sevdiğine dair makul sebepler sunsa da neden o kişiyi seçtiğini tam olarak bilemez. Fakat bu sebepler genellikle kişinin eksikliğine dair sebeplerde yatar. Öte yandan bir insanda eksik olan şey sevgilide saklı değildir ve bu sevginin temel sorunudur. İlişkinin mümkün olabilmesi için bu eksikliği korumak gerekir. Bu nedenle Lacan, “Cinsel ilişki diye

bir şey yoktur (il n'y a pas de rapport sexuel)” (1972-1973/ 1998) demiştir. Bu, cinsel aktivitenin veya ilişkilerin olmadığı anlamına gelmez. Bunun yerine, çiftler arasında bir boşluk, anlayış eksikliği ve iletişim kopukluğu olduğu fikrine atıfta bulunur. Aynı zamanda kadın ve erkeklerin birbirlerini tam olarak anlama ve uyumlu, tatmin edici bir cinsel ilişkiye sahip olmadaki zorluklarını da vurgular.

Kişinin eşin ölümüyle ne kaybettiği sorusunun cevapları ise medeniyetin temellerinde yatmaktadır. Freud, bilinçdışı keşfetmesiyle simgesel yasayı teorisinin hemen merkezine yerleştirmiştir, çünkü “Rüyaların Yorumlanması” ve “Oidipus Kompleksi” eserlerinde bilinçdışı mekanizmalardan bahsederken, bilinçdışı teorisini evlilik ve akrabalık ilişkileri yasalarına dayandırmıştır (Lacan, 1966/2006). Erkekleri ve kadınları bir arada tutabilecek en iyi şeyin simgesel olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda kısıtlama olarak değerlendirilebilecek tüm faktörler (görevler, çocuklar, dini ve ekonomik nedenler vb.) ve bazen de zevkin yokluğu ile evlilik mümkündür. Gösterenler, eksikliğin en saf sembolüdür ve bu eksiklik arzunun itici gücüdür (Gürsel, 2017).

1.6. Söylem Teorisi

Lacan, söylemi dile dayalı bir sosyal bağın işlevi olarak tanımlar (1969- 1970/2007). Başka bir deyişle, söylem kavramı, özneler arasındaki ilişkilerde dilin rolünü ve bu ilişkilerde sosyal bağların doğasını deşifre etme yeteneği açısından ele alınmaktadır. İnsanlar tarafından üretilen bir şey olan konuşma, dilden çok farklıdır. Dil, insanlar tarafından benzersiz bir şekilde sahip olunan ve insani niteliklerle yüklü bir şeydir. Konuşma benzersiz bir anlam üretir çünkü konuşma, özneler tarafından benzersiz bir şekilde "yapılandırılmış" bir "dil" dir. Konuşmayı anlamak için bir dilin aksine özne olmanın ne demek olduğunu anlamak gerekir.

Lacan, söylem teorisi ile özneler arasındaki ilişkiyi deşifre etmek için yeni bir bakış açısı sunmuştur. Lacan'ın dört temel söylemle toplumsal yapıları ve öznel konumlandırmayı anlamak için bir biçimlendirme mantığı geliştirmiş ve bu söylemleri anlamak için oldukça zengin bir altyapı oluşturmuştur (1972-1973/1998). Lacan'ın teorisinde bu pozisyonların içine yerleştirilecek dört konum ve bazı

semboller vardır. Bu formülasyon ile Lacan, öznenin çeşitli sosyal yapılardaki konumunu anlamının yolunu ve bunun öznelere üzerinde nasıl bir etki yarattığını incelemiştir. Bu dört söylem, bu sembollerin bu dört sabit pozisyon arasında yer değiştirmesiyle oluşur. Lacan'ın bahsettiği dört temel söylemi anlamak için öncelikle söylemlerdeki pozisyonları ve sembollerini anlamak gerekir. Lacan'ın söylemi bu şekilde açıklarken matemleri kullanması, ona çok karmaşık yapıları sembolik düzende somutlaştırabilme avantajı sağlar; benzer şekilde seminerlerinde de bu sebeple topolojiyi kullanmayı tercih etmiştir. Matem kullanmanın en büyük avantajı, hayal ederken olası farklılıkların oluşmasını engelleyerek herkesi sembolik düzende birleştirmeye imkan sağlamasıdır. (Quackelbeen ve ark., 1994).

Pozisyonlara bakıldığında ilk konum söylemin başlatıcısına yani faile aittir. Birisi konuşurken, başka birine konuşuyor demektir. Yani, bir adres ya da başka vardır. Amaç, fail ile başka arasında kurulan bu ilişki sonucunda bir etki elde etmektir. Yani bu söylemin etkisi olarak oluşan bir ürün vardır. Bunu çok basit bir şekilde somutlaştırmak için birinin bir başkasına konuştuğu düşünülebilir ve sonuç olarak bir ürün ortaya çıkar. Psikanalitik bakış açısının getirdiği farklılık dördüncü ve aslında birinci pozisyonda yatmaktadır. Bu pozisyon hakikattir. Freud, fail için hakikat bilinmemesine rağmen, biri konuştuğunda bu hakikat tarafından yönlendirildiğini söylemiştir. Bu anlamda hakikatin söylemin motor gücü veya itici gücü olduğu söylenebilir (Schroeder, 2008).

Lacan söylemi dört pozisyon ve dört sembolle açıklar. Lacan'ın bahsettiği dört söylemin tümü, belirli bir sosyal ilişki içinde olan bir arzuyu ve bunu başaramamayı örneklemektedir. Bu dört söylemin karakteri, pozisyonlara yerleştirilen sembollerle belirlenir. Pozisyonlar sabit kalırken sembollerin konumları değişir. Bu dört sembol aslında Lacan'ın bilinçdışı ve dilin yapısından bahsederken de kullandığı sembollerdir (S_1 , S_2 , $\$$, a). Bu dört sembolün yer aldıkları söylem konumlarına göre farklılık gösteren işlevleri de vardır ve 24 farklı konuma yerleştirilebilirler. Ancak Lacan bu sembollerini belli bir düzende (S_1 , S_2 , $\$$, a) ele almış ve bu düzeni koruyarak dört söylem üzerinde çalışmıştır (Lacan, 1969-1970/2007).

S_1 veya temel gösteren, her söylemde hakimdir çünkü diğer tüm gösterenlere anlam veren odur. S_1 , gösterenler zincirinin başlangıcıdır ve ona ulaşmak imkansızdır çünkü artık dile girildiğinde söylemden bastırılmış olandır. S_2 veya bilgi, göstergeler zincirini temsil eder. Anlam, özneyi asla tanımlayamadığı için, onu her zaman başka bir gösterene gönderir. Özne (\$), egonun ve bilinçdışının dile ile bölünmesi, yani dilde yabancılaşmanın sonucudur (Lesourd, 2018). Arzunun nedeni olan *a* nesnesi ise, her gösterilenin bir gösteren tarafından temsil edilmesiyle oluşan kaybı temsil eder. Hiçbir gösteren özneyi tam olarak temsil edemez; her gösteren, özneyi temsil ederken başka bir gösterene gönderir ve bu sonsuza kadar devam eder. Bu durum, bir nesne olan temsile direnen, gösteren zincirinde temsil edilemeyen bir kalıntıyla ilgilidir. Özne temsil edilirken her gösteren bir diğerine yollar ama bu gösterenler arasında bazı çatlaklar ya da boşluklar vardır. Bu boşluklar aynı zamanda aşırı bir zevk veya artı zevk olarak da düşünülebilir (Bracher, 1994).

Lacan'ın teorisine göre söylemler, özneler arası ilişkilerde sosyal bağların doğasını belirler (Fink, 1996). Bu dört temel söylemin yanı sıra, bazı analistler Lacan'ın geliştirdiği matemleri farklı sosyal bağları anlamak için kullanmış ve din, eğitim, siyaset ve psikolojik yapıları söylem bazında incelemişlerdir (Salecl, 1994; Casenave ve ark., 1994; Garcia ve ark., 1994; Apollon, 1994). Bu bakımdan eşlerini erken yaşta kaybeden kadınların söylemlerinin incelenmesi, sosyal ilişkilerdeki konumlarının ve söylemlerinin yapısının anlaşılması açısından önemlidir.

1.7. Çalışmanın Amacı

Bahsi geçen literatüre dayanarak, bir partnerin kaybından sonraki yas sürecinin kişinin eksikliği etrafında yapılandığı iddia edilebilir. Ancak eş kaybına ve yas sürecine ilişkin literatür, kadın ve erkeklerin bu süreci farklı yaşadığını ortaya koymaktadır. Yas bittikten sonra toplum erkekte hayata yeni bir başlangıç yapmasını, kadının ise yaşamı boyunca dul statüsünü korumasını bekler (Şirin, 2016).

Türkiye'de eşini kaybetmiş kadınlarla ilgili yapılan çalışmalar, kadınların bir kayıptan sonra karşılaştıkları sorunlara odaklanma eğilimindedir (hızlı yoksullaşma,

iş bulmadaki zorluklar, başa çıkmaları gereken yeni sorumluluklar, aileleri ve çevreleriyle ilişkilerinde meydana gelen değişiklikler ve sosyal ayrımcılık). Bu araştırmalardan elde edilen bulgular, bu kadınların eşlerini kaybettikten sonra kendilerini yalnız hissettiklerini, kendilerini korumak için kısıtlı bir yaşam tarzı sürdürdüklerini ve sosyal etkinliklere katılmaktan kaçındıklarını ortaya koymaktadır (Koçyiğit, 2019; Şirin, 2016; Uzunkaya Seçen, 2017; Öksüzler, 2015). Bununla birlikte, dul kadınların yas tutma sürecini daha hızlı ve daha kolay aşmalarına yardımcı olacak cevaplar sağlamaya çalışan mevcut çalışmalardan neredeyse hiçbiri dul kadınların öznel deneyimlerini psikanalitik bir bakış açısıyla incelememiştir.

Bu bilgiler ışığında, bu çalışmanın temel amacı, bir kaza veya hastalık nedeniyle eşini 45 yaşından önce kaybeden kadınların deneyimlerini incelemektir. Çalışma aşağıdaki araştırma sorularını yanıtlamaya çalışmıştır.

1. Kadınlar eşlerinin kaybını nasıl yaşar ve algılar?
2. Kadınlar, eşlerinin ölümünden sonra neyi kaybetmektedirler?
3. Eş kaybı, katılımcıların bir kadın ve eş olarak kimliklerini nasıl etkiler?
4. Eşini kaybetmiş bir kadın için evlilik ve eş ne anlama gelir?

BÖLÜM 2

METODOLOJİ

Bu bölüm, çalışmada kullanılan araştırma metodolojisini, örneklem seçimini, izlenen prosedürü ve veri analizi yöntemlerini açıklamaktadır.

2.1. Araştırma Metodolojisi

Mevcut araştırmada nitel araştırma metodolojisi kullanılmış ve yazarın epistemolojik duruşu yapısalcı ve sosyal yapılandırmacı görüşlere dayanmaktadır. Yapısalcı ve ilişkiyel yaklaşım, dünyanın ve öznelliğin ayrılmaz bir şekilde iç içe geçtiği varsayımına dayanır ve bu nedenle sabit bir gerçeklik yoktur. Bu anlamda birey ve bilgi birbirinden ayrılamaz (Gearing, 2004). Bu çalışmada tematik analiz (TA)

kullanılmıştır. TA, bir veri kümesindeki anlam kalıplarını sistematik olarak tanımlamak, düzenlemek ve bunlara ilişkin iç görü sağlamak için kullanılan bir yöntemdir. Bir veri kümesindeki anlama odaklanarak, TA arařtırmacının kolektif veya paylaşılan anlamları ve deneyimleri görmesini ve anlamlandırmasını sağlar. Bu nedenle bu yöntem, bir konunun anlatılma biçiminde neyin ortak olduğunu belirlemenin ve bu ortaklıkları anlamlandırmanın bir yoludur. Bununla birlikte, ortak olan her şey mutlaka anlamlı veya çalışma kapsamında önemli olarak değerlendirilmeyebilir. Arařtırmacının veri dahilinde arařtırdığı anlam kalıpları ve tekrarlayan temalar, arařtırılan belirli konu ve arařtırma sorusu ile ilgili olmalıdır. Herhangi bir veri kümesinde tanımlanabilecek birçok anlam modeli vardır ve analizin amacı, belirli bir arařtırma sorusuna cevap verebilecek ortaklıklardan oluşur (Braun ve Clarke, 2012). Özetle, bu çalışmada tematik analiz, özellikle verilerin bu kadar ayrıntılı arařtırılmasına izin verdiği ve arařtırmacıya epistemolojik bir bakış açısı getirmeden verilerin incelenmesinde esneklik sağlaması nedeniyle tercih edilmiştir.

2.2. Örneklem Seçimi

Bu çalışmanın amacı, eşini erken yaşta kaybeden kadınların deneyimlerini arařtırmaktır. Bu sebeple amaçlı örneklemeden yararlanılmıştır. Katılımcı seçim kriterleri şu şekilde belirlenmiştir: (1) kadın olmak (2) eşini 45 yaşından önce kaybetmiş olmak (3) kaybettiği eşten çocuk sahibi olmak ve (4) en az üniversite mezunu olmak. Bu arařtırmada katılımcıların eğitim düzeyine ve çocuk sahibi olma durumuna göre getirilen seçim kriteri, verinin arařtırma soruları doğrultusunda homojen olmasını sağlamıştır. Böylece genç yaşta eşini kaybeden, eğitimli ve çocuğu olan kadınların deneyimlerini çalışmada daha ayrıntılı bir şekilde arařtırmak mümkün olmuştur. Çalışmada akut veya kronik bir hastalık veya kaza sonucu eşini kaybetmenin yas tutma sürecini nasıl etkilediğine de bir değişken olarak odaklanılmıştır. Tematik analizde, verilerin doygunluğu ile ilgili örneklem büyüklüğü için kılavuz yoktur ve doygunluk elastik bir kavram olabilir (Morse, 1995). Tümevarımsal bir yaklaşıma dayanan bu çalışmada örneklem büyüklüğü veri ve temaların doygunluğuna bağlıdır. Sonuç olarak, söz konusu kriterleri karşılayan

ve Türkiye'nin farklı illerinde yaşayan sekiz kadın çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. (bkz. Tablo 2).

2.3. Prosedür

Araştırma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan gerekli iznin alınmasının ardından sosyal medyada duyurulmuştur. Daha sonra, çalışmaya dahil olmak istediğini ileten katılımcılarla randevular oluşturulmuştur. Görüşmeler Skype veya Whatsapp uygulamalarından görüntülü ve sesli olarak planlanan saatte gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu görüşmelerin öncesinde, katılımcılar çalışmaya dair bilgilendirilmiş ve çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılmaya istekli olduklarına dair bir beyan vermişlerdir. Görüşme esnasında ise katılımcılara yarı yapılandırılmış sorular sorulmuştur ve görüşmeler ses kaydına alınmıştır. Araştırma için herhangi bir ölçek veya anket kullanılmamıştır. Her katılımcıyla yapılan görüşme tek oturumda tamamlanmıştır ve görüşmelerin süresi 30 ile 90 dakika arasında değişmektedir. Sonrasında bu görüşmeler harfi harfine deşifre edilerek transkriptler oluşturulmuştur. Yorumlayıcı nitel metodolojide deşifre, veri analizinin temel adımlarından biri olarak kabul edilir ve anlamların oluştuğu yorumlayıcı bir süreç olarak görülür; bu nedenle, sözlü ifadelerin kağıda döküldüğü mekanik bir süreç değildir. (Lapadat ve Lindsay, 1999). Bu kapsamda toplanan veriler tematik analiz kapsamında analiz edilmiş ve analizin adımları Braun ve Clark (2006) tarafından oluşturulmuş Tematik Analiz yönergesi takip edilerek yapılmıştır. Bu bağlamda araştırma sonuçları yorumlanarak sonuçlandırılmıştır.

Tüm süreç boyunca etik standartların karşılanmasına önem gösterilmiştir. Bu bağlamda araştırmaya dahil edilen ve yayınlanan veriler dahilinde, katılımcıların gizliliğini korumak amacıyla kimlik bilgileri dahil edilmeden sunulmuştur. Bu sebeple katılımcıların ve yakınlarının isimlerinin yanı sıra, kimliği ifşa edebilecek belirli şehir ve kurumların isimleri gizliliğin sağlanması için değiştirilmiştir.

2.4. Analiz Metodu

Analiz süreci, araştırmacının ilgisini çekebilecek konuların belirlenmesi ve verilerdeki anlam kalıplarını araştırılmasıyla başlar; bu araştırma, veri toplama

sürecinde de devam edebilir. Veri analizi sürecinin son aşaması, araştırmacının analiz öncesinde, sırasında ve sonrasında tanımladığı soyut yapılar olan temaların yani verilerdeki içeriğin raporlama aşamasıdır (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). Analiz, mevcut tüm veri kümesinin analizini, analiz edilen verilerden kodlanan içerik ile üretilen veriler arasındaki ilişkinin paralel olmasını gerektirir. Bu nedenle yazma, analiz sürecinin ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır. Yazma süreci ilk etapta fikirlerin ve olası kodlama şemalarının oluşturulmasıyla başlamalı ve tüm kodlama ve analiz süreci boyunca devam etmelidir (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun ve Clarke tarafından oluşturulan Tematik Analizin aşamaları Tablo 3'te sunulmuştur. Fakat, tematik analiz sadece bir aşamaya geçmeden önce bir aşamanın gerçekleştirildiği doğrusal bir süreç değildir; aşamalar arasında ileri geri geçişlerin olabileceği yinelemeli bir süreçtir.

Tematik analiz aşamalarına uygun olarak, ilk aşamada ses kaydı alınmış görüşmelerin transkriptleri hazırlanmıştır. Transkriptler oluşturulurken olası yan anlamları görmek için noktalama işaretleri kullanılmamıştır. Daha sonra, deşifre edilmiş dokümanlar MAXQDA programına yüklenmiştir. Tüm kodlama ve analiz süreci, nitel analizler için kullanılan MAXQDA programı ile tamamlanmıştır. Bu aşamada, veri tekrar tekrar okunmuş, bu sırada notlar alınmış ve yeni kodlar oluşturulmuştur. Bir sonraki aşamada bu kodlar düzenlenmiş ve alt temalar oluşturulmaya başlanmıştır. Daha sonra bu alt temalar daha geniş temalar altında gruplandırılmıştır. Her katılımcıdan toplanan veri, analiz sürecine dahil edilerek bahsi geçen aşamalar yinelenmiştir. Oluşturulan temalar tekrar tekrar düzenlendikten sonra son şeklini almıştır. Bu bakımdan analiz doğrusal bir şekilde yapılmamış ve tüm çalışma boyunca sürekli geriye dönük yeni düzenlemeler ve eklemeler yapılarak sonuçlar bölümü oluşturulmuştur.

BÖLÜM 3

SONUÇLAR

Çalışmanın sonuçları bu bölümde sunulmuştur. Tablo 4, temaları ve alt temaları belirli bir sırayla sunmaktadır. İlk tema, eşe katılımcılar tarafından atfedilen rollerle ilgilidir. Bu tema altında, erkeğin ailede eş ve baba olarak üstlendiği roller ve bu

rollerin katılımcılar tarafından nasıl aktarıldığı açıklanmaktadır. İkinci tema ölümün travmatik karakteri ile ilgilidir. Bu tema altında katılımcılar eşlerinin ölümünden sonraki deneyimlerinin dil yoluyla ifade edilemez olduğundan bahsedilmiştir. Üçüncü temada ise eşin ölümüyle kaybedilenin sadece vefat eden kişi ile sınırlı kalmadığı, aynı zamanda eşin taşıdığı anlamların ve toplumda evli olmanın getirdiği pozisyonun da kaybolduğu belirtilmektedir. Bu bakımdan katılımcılar, eşlerini kaybettikten sonra kendilerini bu kaybı reddettikleri bir konumunda bulduklarından bahsetmiş ve zamanla bu kayıpla başa çıkmanın yeni yollarını bulduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Son kısımda ise katılımcıların toplumda yeni bir kimlik bularak artık “dul” bir kadın olduklarından bahsedilmiştir.

3.1. Eşin Rolü

Bu bölümde erkeğin eş olarak aile içindeki konumundan bahsedilmektedir. Kadın katılımcıların söylemleri, eşlerini ailenin babası ve evin lideri olarak gördüklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Katılımcılar evlendikten sonra ise eşlerinin özgürlüğünün kısıtlanmadığından ve aldatmaya meyilli olduklarından bahsetmişlerdir. İlk alt tema olan “Evin babası” başlığında, erkeğin evdeki herkesin babası olduğu söylemine dayanarak oluşturulmuştur. “Evin babası” ifadesi Türk kültürüne özgü bir söylemdir. Bu anlamda katılımcıların söylemlerinde de erkeğin eş konumunun yanı sıra baba konumuna olan atıflarının da baskın olduğu görülmüştür. Örneğin Seren, kadının eğitim ve kültür düzeyi ne olursa olsun erkeğin Türk kültüründe ailenin reisi olarak kabul edildiğini ifade etmiştir. Bu anlamda erkeğin evdeki kararları yöneten bir sistem getirdiğini ve belki de evde bir lidere sahip olmanın kadınları güvende hissettirdiğini iletmiştir. Ayrıca Seren ve Ceyda, eşleri ve babaları arasındaki benzerliklerden bahsetmişlerdir. Seren çocukluğunda babasının evde olmayışından bahsederken bu durumun evliliğinde de tekrarladığını ve eşinin de evde olmadığını belirtmiştir. Ayrıca kendi deneyimiyle paralel olarak en büyük korkusu olan çocuklarını babasız büyütmenin kendi evliliğinde de tekrarlandığını söylemiştir. Ceyda ise babasının annesini defalarca aldatmasına rağmen annesinin hiçbir şekilde babasından ayrılamadığını ve kendi evliliğinde de benzer şeyler yaşadığını belirtmiştir. Ceyda, eşinin de babası gibi saldırgan bir adam olduğunu ve yaşadıklarına annesi gibi katlanmaya çalıştığını söylemiştir. Ceyda anne ve babasının

ayrılmasından bahsederken “annem ve babam da ayrı” ifadesini kullanmış ve bir anlamda ayrılığın farklı bir nedenle de olsa kendi hayatında da tekrarlandığını eklemiştir. Bir bakıma kurduğu ailede de çocukluğunda yaşadıklarını tekrarladığı söylenebilir. Seren de Ceyda’ya benzer şekilde eşi tarafından aldatılsa da bu durumu bir şekilde kabul ettiğini anlatmış ve özellikle evlendikten sonra erkeklerin başka kadınlara gitmeye daha yatkın olduklarından bahsetmiştir.

Seren, evde kadın ve erkeklerin farklı rolleri olduğunu açıklamış ve evlilikte kadınlara yüklenen sorumlukların, erkeklere yüklenen sorumluluklardan daha ağır olduğunu eklemiştir. Kendisinin bu rolleri üstlenmekteki payı sorulduğunda söylemde pasif bir pozisyonda kalarak bu rollerin ona yüklendiğini, kendi tercihi olmadığını belirtmiştir. Bu bölümde Elif ve Fatma, evlilikleri sırasında eşlerinin çok kıskanç erkekler olduğundan bahsetmişlerdir. Kıyafetleri, davranışları, işyerleri ve görünüşleri açısından bazı kısıtlamalara maruz kaldıklarını ve bu kısıtlamalardan çok rahatsız olmalarına rağmen bir şekilde uyum sağladıklarını eklemiştir. Ancak bu kısıtlamaların erkekler için geçerli olmadığı söylemişler; kıskançlığın nesnesi olan ve kısıtlananın çoğunlukla kadın olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

3.2. Konuşulamayan şey: Ölüm

Semptomlar, rüyalar, dil sürçmeleri veya sakarlık gibi eylemler bastırılanın geri dönüşü olarak ortaya çıkar. Gösterenler zincirinde temsil edilemeyen ve dile dökülemeyen şeyler bedende ortaya çıkar. Bu anlamda kişinin semptomları ile öznel yapısı arasında karmaşık ve derin bir bağlantı vardır. Psikanalizin diğer klinik yöntemlerden farklılaştığı en önemli noktalardan biri, semptomlardan ziyade yapılarının odak noktası olmasıdır. Bununla birlikte, semptomların kişi hakkında önemli miktarda bilgi aktardığı inkâr edilemez bir gerçektir. Bu bağlamda, bu temada eşini kaybeden kadınların yaşadığı semptomlar aktarılmıştır. Aşağıdaki bölümlerde dul kadınların bedenlerinde hangi semptomları yaşadıkları detaylandırılmaktadır.

Seren, eşiyle tanıştığı dönemde bir böbreğini kaybettiğini ama eşini kaybedene kadar herhangi ciddi bir sağlık sorunu yaşamadığını söylemiştir. Ancak eşini kaybettikten yedi ay sonra kalan böbreğinin işlevini kaybettiğini ve her gün diyalize girmek

zorunda kaldığını iletmiştir. Eşinin kaybına duyduğu üzüntünün bu sağlık sorununu tetiklemiş olabileceğini de eklemiştir. Seren'in çocuğu için hem anne hem baba rolünü üstlenmeye çalıştığını söylemiş; öte yandan büyük sağlık sorunları yaşadığını ve kalan tek böbreğinin düzgün çalışmadığını eklemiştir. Yani, iki olması gereken şey şimdi sadece bir tanedir ve kalan bir tanesi işlevsel değildir. Bu nedenle Seren'in yas sürecinin bedensel bir yansımasının da olduğu söylenebilir.

Eşi öldükten sonra ciddi bir şekilde mide ağrısı çektiğinden bahseden Büsra, daha sonra reflü teşhisi aldığından bahsetmiştir. Anlattıklarına göre Büsra, eşinin hastalık döneminden itibaren iştahsızlık yaşamaya başlamış ve bunun sonucunda neredeyse yirmi kilo vermiştir. Eşinin de hastalık döneminde aldığı tedaviler sebebiyle yemek yiyemediği ve çok fazla kilo verdiği bilgisi bu noktada önem taşımaktadır. Elif ise eşini kaybettikten sonra uzun süre uyku problemleri yaşadığını ve uyuyabilmek için ilaç desteğine ihtiyacı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ancak, ilaçların bile uyumasına yardımcı olamadığı zamanlar olduğunu da eklemiştir. Seren, eşinin kanser teşhisi aldığını bildiğini, ancak ölüm riskinin ne kadar yüksek olduğunu bilmediğini söylemiştir. Eşinin bu durumu fark ettiğini söylemiş ama ikisi de sona yaklaştıklarını hissetmelerine rağmen, bir şekilde veda edemediklerini ve bu durumdan daha sonra pişman olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Daha kötü hissetmesini istemediği için Seren bu riski eşine söylememiştir. Fatma ise vefat etmeden önce eşinin kan tükürdüğünü ama bu durumu eşinin kendisinden sakladığını anlatmıştır. Eşi ona bu durumdan bahsetseydi belki de durumun ciddiyetini daha hızlı idrak edeceğini ve farklı bir müdahalede bulunabileceklerini ancak bundan haberi olmadığı için yanlış müdahale etmiş olabileceğinden bahsetmiştir.

Büşra'ya göre ise kaybettiği eşini anmasının oğlunu üzebileceğini, bu sebeple onu neredeyse hiç anmadığını söylemiştir. Eşinin anılarının olduğu klasörlere bakmanın da oğlu için zor olabileceğini eklemiştir. Bu ifadelerle, Büsra'nın kendi yaşantılarını oğlu üzerinden aktardığı düşünülmüştür. Güler ise eşinin ölümünün ardından, bu durumu çocuklarıyla hiçbir zaman konuşmadığını belirtmiş ve çocukları durumun farkında olsalar da babalarına çok düşkün olduğu için hastalık döneminde bile bu durumu onlara yansıtmamaya çalıştığını eklemiştir. Seren, eşinin hastalığını ilk öğrendiklerinde önce ailece ağladıklarını ama sonra herkesin birbirine rol yapmaya

başladığını söylemiştir. Duyguları gizlemenin ve belki de en kötü senaryoları dile getirmemenin aile içinde konuşulmayan bir anlaşma gibi olduğu belirtmiştir. Bu durum, ölüm hakkında konuşmanın ve onu sembolize etmenin gerçek düzleminde mümkün olmayışıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir.

3.3. Kayıpla birlikte kaybolanlar

Freudyan terimlerle kayıp nesne veya Lacanyen terimlerle eksiklik, yas sürecinin odak noktası haline gelir. Bu bölümde nesne kaybı olarak da değerlendirilebilecek eş kaybının özne üzerinde nasıl izler bıraktığı ve öznenin eksiklik etrafında nasıl şekillendiği anlatılmaktadır. Kaybedilen eksikliğin bir temsili haline gelir ve özne bu temsillerle yeniden bir pozisyon alır. Bu bölümde katılımcıların kayıpla ilgili temsilleri incelenmiştir. Ölümün ardında bıraktığı eksiklik, aile bireylerinde kalıcı bir iz bırakmıştır ve bu yokluğu başka şeyler ile doldurmaya çalışsalar da eksiklik bir gösteren olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Örneğin Seren, çocukluğunda baba figürü olmadan büyüdüğünü ve baba figürünün her zaman özlediği bir şey olduğunu söylemiştir. Bu nedenle en büyük korkusunun, oğlunun da kendisiyle benzer şeyler yaşaması ve babasız kalması olduğundan bahsetmiştir. Ancak en büyük korkusuyla yüz yüze gelerek eşini kaybetmiş ve oğlunu babasız büyütme zorunda kalmıştır. Sahip olamadığı baba figürünü, güvenebileceği ve desteğini hissedebileceği bir güç kaynağı olarak tanımlamıştır. Eşinin ölümü ile bu pozisyondaki kişinin aniden hayatından çıktığını ifade etmiştir. Fatma ise, eşi öldükten sonra sadece eşini değil, aynı zamanda aile olmaya dair hayallerini, taşınmak zorunda kaldığı evde bıraktığından söz etmiştir.

Ceyda'ya eşinin kaza geçirdiği söylendiğinde ölümü aklının ucuna bile getirmediğini ifade etmiştir. Ceyda ile benzer şekilde Fatma, eşi nefes alamasa da onun başına bir şey gelmeyeceğini düşündüğünü eklemiştir. Bu söylemler, tüm belirtilere rağmen eşlerini ölümsüz bir konumda görmeleriyle ilişkilendirilmiştir. Aile olmanın önemini hayattaki zorluklara dayanacak güce sahip olmakla ilişkilendiren Seren, bu "gücün" eşinin ölümünden sonra artık var olmadığını ve yalnız kaldığını vurgulamıştır. Onu destekleyecek insanların varlığına rağmen, hiç kimsenin eşinin pozisyonunu dolduramayacağını eklemiştir.

Ceyda ise, tek ebeveyn olarak iki kişinin sorumluluğunu üstlenmesi gerektiğinden ve bunun bazen kendisini sorgulamasına neden olduğundan bahsetmiştir. Eşi hayattayken de çocukların sorumluluklarının kendi üzerinde olmasına rağmen, onu kaybettikten sonra bir karar alırken daha temkinli olduğunu eklemiştir. Fatma da benzer şekilde, eşinin çocuklarına sağladığı şeyleri kendisinin sağlayamayacağından bahsetmiş ve çok çabalamasına rağmen yalnız hissettiğini eklemiştir.

Büşra, evliliğin özellikle muhafazakâr ülkelerde kadına özgürlük tanıdığını ve aslında gerçekten istemese de toplumda daha rahat hareket edebilmek için evlendiğini söylemiştir. Eşini kaybettikten sonra ise bu özgürlüğü tekrar kaybettiğini belirtmiştir. Elif ve Fatma ise, eşlerinin yokluğunda hem erkeklerin hem de kadınların olduğu sosyal ortamlarda yer alamadıklarından iletmişlerdir. Bu durumu hem bir tercih hem de bir zorunluluk olarak açıklamışlar ve sosyalleşmekten mahrum kaldıklarını eklemiştir. Elif ise eşinin vefatından sonra sanki hayali bir baba konumunun boşlukta kaldığını ve oğlunun bu rolün getirdiği sorumlulukları üstlenmek zorunda hissettiğinden bahsetmiştir. Ayrıca nişan ve düğün gibi özel günlerde baba figürünün eksikliğini daha çok hissettiğini de ifade etmiştir. Anne ne yaparsa yapsın, babanın yerini hiçbir zaman tam olarak alamayacağını ifade eden Büşra, bu boşluğu doldurmaya çalışmaktan çok iyi bir anne olmaya odaklandığını söylemiştir. Eşinin vefatıyla birlikte hayatının bir anda altüst olduğunu anlatan Hayat ise, eşinin yokluğunu oğlu için daha az üzücü hale getirmeye çalışmasına rağmen zamanla böyle bir şeyin mümkün olmadığını fark ettiğinden bahsetmiştir.

Ceyda, eşinin vefatından sonra hissettiği boşluğu normalde görüşmeyeceği bazı erkeklerle görüşerek telafi etmeye çalıştığını belirtmiş ve bunu anlatırken “..o açığı aslında kapatma isteğiyle hayatıma birini sokmuş olduğumu görebiliyorum şu anda orası kapansın yeter ki..” ifadesini kullanmıştır. Bu bakımdan “orası kapansın” ifadesinin hem cinselliğe hem de duygusal bir boşluğu doldurma ihtiyacına işaret ettiği düşünülmüştür. Deniz ise ölen eşini sonradan ilişkide olduğu diğer erkeklerle karşılaştırmış ve kaybettiği eşinin farklı olduğunu, yerini kimsenin dolduramayacağını belirtmiştir. Seren, eşinin ölümünden sonra bir erkekle birlikte yaşamayı denediğini ancak bu ilişkinin yürümediğini anlatmıştır. Sonraları başka bir erkekle ilişki kuramayacağına karar vermiş ve aslında eşinin ölümüyle romantik

ilişkilere de son verdiğini eklemiştir. Benzer şekilde Elif, birilerinin kendisiyle ilgilendiğini fark ettiği anda buna engel olduğunu ve kimseyi hayatına almak istemediğini kesin bir dille ifade etmiştir. Aynı şekilde Fatma, çocukları yeni bir babayı kabul etmediği için gerekirse hayatına yalnız bir şekilde devam etmeyi kabul ettiğini söylemiştir.

3.4. Ölümle baş etme yolları

Kayıptan sonra, Özne zamanla eksiklikle başa çıkmanın yollarını geliştirir. Libido kayıp nedeniyle dengesiz hale geldikçe, özne bu dengeyi sağlamanın yollarını arar ve herkes bu eksikle baş etmek üzere kendine has savunma mekanizmaları geliştirir. Yas döneminde, kişi kaybedilen nesnelere yenileriyle değiştirerek bu dengeyi yeniden kurmaya çalışır. Bilinç düzeyinde olmayan bu başa çıkma stratejilerinden bazıları kişi için yapıcı ve geliştirici olabilirken, bazıları kişiye zarar verebilmektedir. Bu kısımda ölümle başa çıkmayı kolaylaştıran bazı faktörler sunulmuştur.

Büşra, eşi hayattayken onun iyileşmesini gerçekten istediğini ancak bunu kendisi için mi, oğlu için mi yoksa eşi için mi istediğinden emin olmadığını söylemiştir. Sonrasında “*..dedim iyileşsin gerekirse benden ayrılınsın bir insanın sağlığı her şeyin üstünde..*” ifadesini kullanmıştır. Benzer şekilde Ceyda ve Seren de boşanmayı ölüme tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Fatma'ya ise, çocuklarına babalarını kaybettiklerini söylediğinde, çocukların bunu önce boşanma olarak algıladıklarını iletmiştir. Fatma'ya eşini kaybetme konusunda daha önce herhangi bir düşüncesi olup olmadığı sorulduğunda, bunun ilişkide bir ayrılık olarak anlamıştır. Sonrasında boşanmayı düşündüğünü, ancak ölüm olasılığının hiç aklına gelmediğini belirtmiştir. Eşinin hastalık zamanında dine yönelen Büşra, ibadet etmenin kendisini rahatlattığını söylemiştir. Eşinin ölümünden sonra ise durumu kabullenmekte çok zorlandığını ve bu süre zarfında temel ihtiyaçlarını bile zar zor karşılayabildiğini söylemiştir.

Güler'e eşinin kaybıyla neyin değiştiği sorulduğunda, hayatında birçok şeyin değiştiğini, ancak değişenlerin onun yokluğunun yerini doldurmadığını ve aile içinde hep bir gün dönecekmiş gibi davrandıklarını ifade etmiştir. Ceyda ise, eşinin ölüm haberini aldıktan sonra kendisinden beklenmeyecek ölçüde sakin kaldığını anlatmış

ve hissizleştğini belirtmiştir. Görüşmenin bu bölümünde kullandığı *“sanki her şey kontrol altındaymış gibi normalmiş gibi”* ifadelerinin bu haberle baş edebilmek için ortaya çıkan savunma mekanizması olabileceği düşünülmüştür. BÜsra ise, eşini kaybettikten sonra uyku düzeninin dengesizleştğini ve dinlenemediğini ifade etmiştir. O da uyuyamadığı bu zamanları yalnız kalabileceği ve kimsenin onu rahatsız edemeyeceği özel bir zaman olarak görerek geceleri sınavlara hazırlanmaya başlamıştır. Eşinin hastalığında yüksek lisans sınavları için hazırlanmaya başlamış ve bu çalışmalarını kayıptan sonra da sürdürmüştür. Deniz ise eşini kaybettikten sonra bir şeyler yapma ve harekete geçme ihtiyacı hissettiğini, bu yüzden kendini işe adadığını söylemiştir.

Seren, eşinin hastalığını öğrendikten sonra Cipralex kullanmaya başladığını ve halen kullanmaya devam ettiğini söylemiştir. İlacı bir destek olarak gördüğünü ve günlük hayatına devam etmesine yardımcı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Fatma ise, kız kardeşinin yas döneminde en büyük destekçisi olduğunu ve üzüntüsünü ancak onunla paylaşabileceğini söylemiştir. BÜsra, eşini kaybettiğinde artık odak noktasının oğlunu "kurtarmak" haline geldiğini ve bütün hayatını oğlunun etrafında şekillendirdiğini iletmiştir.

3.5. “Dul” kadın olmak

Eşini kaybettikten sonra ailesinin önceki zamanlara göre kendisine karşı çok daha koruyucu bir tavırla yaklaştığını belirten Ceyda, bu durumun kendisi ve ailesi arasında bir sorun olmaya başladığını söylemiştir. Ailesine sürekli yetişkin bir kadın olduğunu ve kendi kararlarını verebileceğini hatırlatması gerektiğini eklemiştir. Ayrıca eşi vefat ettikten sonra kendisinin ve eşinin ortak tanıdıklarının ona romantik anlamda ilgi duymaya başladığını ve bu durumla farklı insanlarla defalarca karşılaştığını belirtmiştir. Bu anlamda dulların cinselliğe açık olarak görüldüğünden ve evli erkeklerin bile kendisine bazı uygunsuz tekliflerle geldiğinden bahsetmiştir. Elif de benzer şekilde, eşini kaybettikten sonra çevresindekilerin yaklaşımının değiştiğini ve onu cinsel bir “hedef” olarak görmeye başladıklarını belirtmiştir. Asla tahmin edemeyeceği insanların bile ona flört ederek yaklaştığını ve bundan çok rahatsız olduğunu eklemiştir.

Ceyda, eşini kaybettikten sonra hayatına devam ettiğini, normalde yaptığı şeyleri yaptığını ve kendini kısıtlamadığını belirtmiştir. Bu durumun ailesini rahatsız edebileceğini söylemiştir. Sadece ailesinin değil, toplumun da Ceyda'nın yasını devam ettirmesini beklediğini ama kendisinin bunu umursamadığını belirtmiştir.

Ceyda, Büsra ve Seren yaşadıkları kayıptan sonra kendine acıma duygularını farklı bakış açılarıyla anlatmışlardır. Ceyda, kendisi için üzüldüğü bir konumda kalmayı tercih etmediğini, bunun yerine harekete geçerek hayata dönmeye çalıştığını söylemiştir. Büsra ise acınası bir durumda olduğundan bahsederken, insanların kendisine acımasına vurgu yapmıştır. Seren ise, zaman zaman hala kendine acıdığından ve yaşananları kendisine hatırlattığından ve bu duyguyu yenemediğinden bahsetmiştir.

Büsra, Elif ve Fatma, eşleri vefat ettikten sonra hayatta birçok zorlukla karşılaştıklarını ve tüm bu zorluklara karşı tek başlarına mücadele etmek zorunda kaldıklarını açıklamışlardır. Kimseden yardım beklemediklerini, her türlü maddi ve manevi zorluğun kendi başlarına üstesinden geldiklerini ifade etmişler, toplumun yargıları ve baskılarının yanı sıra kişisel olarak yaşadıkları zorluklarla da yalnız mücadele ettiklerini eklemişlerdir. Ayrıca her üç katılımcının söyleminde de “Keşke ölmeseydi de biz boşansaydık” ifadesi tekrarlamıştır. Bu anlamda, her üç katılımcı da evlilikleri sırasında ayrılmayı düşünmüşler, ancak bunu eyleme dönüştürememişlerdir. Dolayısıyla eşlerinin vefatıyla herhangi bir karar almadan bir bakıma istekleri gerçekleşmiş gibi görünmektedir. Yas döneminde özellikler çocukların yaşadığı zorluklara işaret etmeleri ve kendi hislerine neredeyse hiç değinmemeleri bu noktada önemli görülmüştür.

BÖLÜM 4

TARTIŞMA

Bu çalışmada, erken dönemde eşini kaybetmiş kadınların deneyimlerinin araştırması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla, eşlerini doğal sebeplerle veya kazayla nedeniyle kaybetmiş sekiz kadınla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Yaşamın ilerleyen

aşamasında meydana gelen bir kayıpla karşılaştırıldığında, eşin genç yaşta kaybedilmesinin kişinin hayatında önemli bir fark yarattığı için (Jones ve ark., 2019), bu çalışmaya eşini 45 yaşından önce kaybetmiş kadınlar dahil edilmiştir. Örneklem seçiminde yaş kriteri dışında en az üniversite diplomasının olması, kaybettiği eşinden en az bir çocuğun bulunması ve daha sonra evlenmemesi gibi başka kriterler de oluşturulmuştur. Ayrıca eşin kaybından sonra en az bir yıl geçmiş olması, yas döneminin incelenebilmesi için bir gereklilik olarak görüşmüştür. Araştırmanın cevap aradığı temel araştırma sorusu şu şekildedir: 1) Kadınlar eşlerinin kaybını nasıl yaşar ve algılar? 2) Kadınlar, eşlerinin ölümünden sonra neyi kaybetmektedirler? 3) Eş kaybı, katılımcıların bir kadın ve eş olarak kimliklerini nasıl etkiler? 4) Eşini kaybetmiş bir kadın için evlilik ve eş ne anlama gelir? Araştırma verilerine dayanarak tematik analiz yapılmış ve sonuçta beş ana tema ortaya çıkmıştır: “Eşin rolü, Konuşulamayan şey: ölüm, Kayıpla birlikte kaybolanlar, Ölümle başa etme yolları ve “dul” kadın olmak”

4.1. Eşin Rolü

Katılımcılara eşlerinin nasıl biri olduğu, nasıl tanıştıkları ve evliliklerinde neler yaşadıkları hakkında sorular sorulduğunda, cevapların genellikle erkeklerin rolleri etrafında toplandığı görülmüştür. Bu nedenle ilk başlık erkeklerin, eş ve baba olarak üstlendiği rollerle tanımlanmıştır. Katılımcılar eşlerinden bahsederken özellikle eşlerinin baba rollerini vurgulamışlardır. Bu bakımdan eş, evde herkesin babasıymış gibi tanımlanmıştır. Eşin rolü temasının altında “evin babası” ve “evlilikte özgür olan erkek” alt temaları bulunmaktadır. “Evin babası” ya da “babamız” deyişleri Türk kültüründe yaygın ifadelerdir. Bu ifadelerin muhatabı esasen çocuk olsa da söylem içinde erkeğin kadın için de baba rolü taşıdığı anlamı ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Freud'a göre eş veya partner seçimi, bu seçim yapılmadan çok önce ebeveynlerle olan ilişkilere göre şekillenmektedir. Kişinin partneriyle olan ilişkisinde, çocuğun ebeveynleriyle kurduğu ilişkinin izleri görülmektedir (Marković, 2000). Bu nedenle katılımcıların babaları ile eşleri arasındaki benzerlikleri tartışmaları veya eşlerini evdeki herkesin babası olarak tanıtmaları psikanalitik teoriyle tutarlılık göstermektedir. Ceyda, annesi ve babasının boşanmasından bahsederken “*annemle*

babam da hani ayrılır” ifadesini kullanmıştır. Eşinden boşanmış olmamasına olmasına rağmen, ilişki durumlarını bu şekilde bir benzerlik altında ifade etmesi, Ceyda'nın ebeveyn ilişkilerinin bir tekrarını yaşadığını düşündürmektedir. Aynı şekilde ilişkilerinde mutsuz olan ve boşanma kararını bir türlü alamayan bir çiftin çocuğu Ceyda, eşiyile mutsuz bir evlilikleri olmasına rağmen boşanmadıklarından bahsetmiştir.

Eş seçimine ilişkin tercihler ve çocuğun ebeveynleriyle kurduğu ilişkiler arasında bağlantılar bulunmaktadır. Oedipal süreçlerin sonunda, libidinal yatırımını karşı cinsten ebeveyninden geri çeken özne, daha sonra ebeveynlerini modelleyerek sevgi nesnesini seçer (Freud, 1905). Örnek vermek gerekirse Seren, babasının yokluğundan bahsederken eş seçiminde yanında olacak ve ona destek olabilecek birini istediğini ancak babasının yaptığı gibi eşinin onun yanında olamayacak biriyle evlendiğinden bahsetmiştir. Ayrıca Seren'in görüşme içindeki, “*..hep bir baba duygusuna hasret misin hasrettim aşlında eşimde onu da birazcık bulmuştum..*” ifadesi, bu bağlantının çok da bilinçsiz bir noktada olmadığını göstermektedir.

Kadın ve erkek arasındaki farklılıkların kaynağı sadece anatomik farklılıklara dayanmamaktadır. Cinsiyetlenmenin göstereni olan fallusun, kadın için bir karşılığı bulunmamaktadır. Bu nedenle, erkekle kadının cinsiyetlenme süreçlerinde bir dissimetri vardır (Lacan, 1966/2006). Oedipus kompleksinin erkeklerde ve kadınlarda farklı işleyişi de bu dissimetriden kaynaklanmaktadır. Oedipus kompleksi her iki cinsiyet için var olsa da, bir kadının cinsiyetlenme süreci daha karmaşıktır. Erkek annesinden ayrışıp babasıyla özdeşleşirken, bu yol bir kadın için daha karmaşıktır. Kadın oedipal süreçleri tamamlamak için önce annesinden ayrışmalı, babasıyla özdeşleşmeli, sonra babasından ayrışmalı ve annesiyle özdeşleşmelidir. Buna dolambaçlı yola “detouring” denir. Bu karmaşık yolu tamamlamış bir kadının seçimlerinde annesiyle benzer tercihler yapması, böylece babasına benzeyen bir eş seçmesi ya da babasına tamamen zıt bir eş seçmesi şaşırtıcı değildir (Lacan, 1938).

Bir kadın, kadınlığı kendisi üzerinden anlamlandıramaz; Bunu yapmak için her zaman bir diğeri gereklidir. Lacan'ın "Kadın yoktur" argümanı da kadınlığın bilinçdışında bir temsili olmayışıyla ilgilidir (Soler, 2006). Bu nedenle bir kadının kadınlığı anlayabilmesi için ilişkide her zaman bir üçüncüye ihtiyacı vardır ve diğeri

kadınlarla özdeşleşme kurarak kendisini tanımlayabilir. Bu bakımdan Seren'in, eşinin diğer kadınlarla olan mesajlarını gizlice okuması ve Ceyda'nın evlenmeden önce aldatıldığını bilmesine rağmen ilişkisini sürdürmesi basit kıskançlıklar olarak değerlendirilenin ötesinde, bu kadınların kendisini konumlandırabilmesi ve ilişkideki arzuyu sürdürmenin bir aracı olarak ele alınmıştır. Diğer kadınların varlığı, eşlerinin bir kadından ne beklediği sorularına cevap niteliği taşımaktadır ve esasen, bu soruların kökeni çocukluk döneminde Başka'ya yöneltilen "Ne istiyorsun?" veya "Che Vuoi?" sorularına kadar takip edilebilir (Lacan, 1966/2006). Bu sorular, çocuğun annenin davranışlarını ve beklentisini anlayabilmeye yönelik sorgulamalardır. Çünkü, anne ve çocuk arasındaki ilişki ne kadar güçlü olursa olsun, her zaman annenin istediği başka bir şey vardır. Bununla birlikte, annenin arzu ettiği bu diğer şeylerin belirli bir nesnesi yoktur; bazen bir iş, bazen eş veya başka şeyler olabilir. Her halükârda, bunlar arasında annenin dikkatini çocuktan çeken, adlandırılacak ve belirgin tek bir nesne yoktur (Lacan, 1953-1954/1988).

4.2. Konuşulamayan şey: Ölüm

İkinci temada ise ölümün dilde tam olarak ifade edilemeyen bir olgu olduğu açıklanmaktadır. Yas süreci bir kayıpla başlar ve kayıptan sonra özne gerçekle karşılaşır. Gerçek, simgesel olanın ötesinde, dilin dışında konumlandırılır ve simgeselleşmeye karşı dirençlidir; dolayısıyla gerçek imkansızdır (Lacan, 1966/2006). Gerçek, imkansızlığı ve dilin dışındaki bulunması nedeniyle travmatiktir (Evans, 1996) ve esasen gerçek alanında olan ölüm, dil yoluyla tam olarak ifade edilemez.

Bu nedenle ölüm tamamen anlaşılabilir bir olgu değildir. Katılımcıların eşlerine veda edememeleri, ölüm hakkında konuşamamaları ve vücutta semptom veya somatik yer değiştirmeler olarak konuşulamayanların geri dönüşlerinin ölümün travmatik karakteri ile ilişkili olduğu düşünülmektedir (Lindemann, 1944). Her şeyden önce katılımcılar eşlerini kaybettikten sonra bazı bedensel semptomlar yaşadıklarından bahsetmişlerdir. Örneğin, yas döneminde kilo verdiklerinden, uykusuzluk çektiklerinden, sindirim problemleri yaşadıklarından veya solunum yollarında bazı sorunlar ortaya çıktığından bahsetmişlerdir. Yas döneminde fiziksel semptomların

ortaya çıkması birçok çalışmada gözlemlenen bir olgudur (Osterweis, Solomon ve Green, 1984). Ancak katılımcıların bu semptomları anlatırken kullandıkları ifadelerin hikayeleriyle öznel bir bağlantısı olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Örneğin Büşra, eşini kaybettikten sonra kronikleşen mide ağrısı çekmeye başladığını ancak bu ağrıların fizyolojik bir nedeninin bulunamadığını belirtmiştir. Eşine kanser tanısı koyan doktora danıştığını söylemiş ve konuşmayı şu şekilde iletmiştir "*..burada eşimin karaciğer kanseri diyen doktoru bana şey dedi bu sefer miden için hiç bir şey yapmayacağım önce bir psikoloğa görün muhtemelen strestir dedi*". Eşine ölümcül bir hastalık teşhisi koymuş bir doktora gitmek ve ölümcül olmasa da doktorun müdahale edemediği bir hastalığa sahip olmak bilinçdışı bir eylem olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bir sevgi nesnesinin kaybı, kaybın yarattığı karışıklığı dengelemeye çalışan süreçleri başlatır. Wolfenstein, bu dengeyi bir nesnenin kaybıyla veya kaybolan nesneyi terk etme direnciyle yeniden tesis etmek için bir kişinin bu nesneyle özdeşleşebileceğini savunmuştur (1966). Benzer şekilde, Büşra Hanım'ın eşinin hastalığı sırasında eşiyile birlikte çok fazla kilo vermesinin, bir özdeşleşme olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Katılımcılar için hastalık döneminde ölümden bahsetmek oldukça zorken, bu zorluk kayıptan sonra da devam etmiştir. Kayıp nesneye karşı hissedilen ambivalans duygular psişede çatışmaya yol açabilir. Yas tutanların hissettiği öfke, hayal kırıklığı ve hatta nefretin tarif edilemez olduğu görülmüştür. Üzgün olması beklenen kişinin bu tür duyguları hissetmesi, kişide içsel bir çatışmaya sebep olur (Hagman, 1996). Katılımcılar öncelikle bu kaybın çocuklarına açıklanmasında yaşadıkları güçlükten bahsetmişlerdir. Örneğin Büşra bu çatışmayı şays "*..hatırlatmak bana hatırlamak acı veriyorsa bazen ona da acı verebilir diye düşünüyorum..*" şeklinde ifade etmiştir. Ölümün dile dökülemeyen özelliği ölenin baba olmasıyla da ilişkilidir. Çünkü ölen sadece gerçek babadır, imgesel babanın yarası hala geçerlidir. Fakat artık faili olmadığı için tam olarak isimlendirilemez ve geride kalanlar bu eksikliği psivasyon şeklinde yaşarlar (Lacan, 1956-1957/ 2020). Gerçek babanın yokluğundan ziyade imgesel babanın yokluğuna işaret edildiğinde; babanın yokluğu artık privasyon olarak deneyimlenmektedir.

4.3. Kayıpla birlikte kaybolanlar

Bu temada eşin kaybıyla nelerin kaybedildiği açıklanmıştır. Tüm katılımcılar eşlerinin ölümüyle kaybettikleri şeyler hakkında konuştuklarında bu anlatıların bazı ortak noktaları olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Katılımcıların anlatımlarına göre eş kaybıyla kaybedilenler üç başlık altında toplanmıştır: gücü kaybetmek, evin babasını kaybetmek ve partneri kaybetmek. Katılımcılar, aile ile ilgili hayallerin kaybindan, yalnız kalmaktan veya bunun eşlerinin başına geleceğini hiç düşünmemekten bahsederken her zaman ‘güce’ atıfta bulundular. Örneğin Seren, eşinin kaybının onu nasıl etkilediğinden bahsederken, kaybettiklerini şu şekilde anlatmıştır: “..hani bazıları büyük aşık olarak evlenir yok güven vermek şöyle arkanda güç olduğunu hissetmek ben onu çok hissetmişim benim e tabi o birden hayatım alt üst oldu..”. Yani bir anlamda bu gücün elinden alındığını da ima etmiştir.

Benzer şekilde, katılımcılar eşlerini kaybetmeyi hiç düşünmediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Eşi nefes almazken bile Fatma onun öleceğini hiç aklına getirmediğini söylemiş ve “..hani kötü bir şey olmaz hava takarlar bir süre yoğun bakımda kalır diye çıktım gittim ben hastaneye o düşünceyle gittiğimi öleceği hiç aklıma gelmedi..” ifadesini kullanmıştır. Katılımcılar, eşleri hayattayken ilişkilerinde sorunlar yaşamalarına ve bazen kendilerini yalnız hissetmelerine rağmen, öldükten sonraki yokluğun önceki yoklukla kıyaslanamayacağını ifade etmişlerdir. Bu bakımdan evlilikleri sırasında kendilerini yalnız hissettiklerini söyleyen katılımcılar eşlerinin ölümüyle baş başa kalmışlardır. Böylece, yokluğunda eşin işlevini anlamak mümkün olmuştur ve bu işlev babalık rolleri etrafında toplanmıştır. Başka bir deyişle, evdeki babanın gerçek varlığından ziyade fallusla ilgili bir işlevin kaybının söz konusu olduğu, yani babalık işlevinin artık gerçekleştirilememesinin, babanın fiziksel yokluğunun ötesine geçtiği düşünülmektedir. Bu bakımdan anne çocuklara da benzer imkanlar sağlasa da babanın yokluğu yine de bir eksiklik yaratır. Dolayısıyla eksik olan gerçek baba değil, yokluğuyla çocuğu fallüsten mahrum eden hayali babadır ve bu eksiklik privasyon olarak deneyimlenmektedir. (Lacan, 1956-1957/2020).

4.4. Ölümle baş etme yolları

Bu bölümde eşini kaybeden katılımcıların ölümle nasıl başa çıktıkları anlatılmaktadır. Katılımcılar eşlerini kaybettikten sonra başlangıçta bu ölümü

reddettiklerini belirttiler. Bu bakımdan boşanmayı ölüme tercih edeceklerini söyleyen katılımcılar, ölüm gerçeği ile yüzleşmelerinin çok zor olduğunu ve bu haberi aldıktan sonra gerçeklikle bağlarını kaybettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Eşlerinin ölümünün ardından bir süre geçtikten sonra yaşamlarına devam ederek bu kayıpla başa çıkmak için yeni yöntemler geliştirdiklerini de eklemişlerdir. Örneğin, yas döneminde çalışmanın ve ilaç desteğinin yardımcı olduğunu vurgulamışlardır. Bu süreçte kardeş desteğinin çok önemli olduğundan da bahsetmişler ve çocuklarına odaklanarak kendilerini daha güçlü hissettiklerini iletmişlerdir.

Yas döneminin ilk aşamalarına ait bir savunma mekanizması olan inkar, kaybın ardından katılımcıların söyleminde yoğun bir şekilde gözlemlenmiştir. Freud, özne travmatik bir deneyimin gerçekliğini tanımayı reddettiğinde ortaya çıkan bir savunma mekanizması biçimini tanımlamak için *Verleugnung* terimini kullanır (Laplanche ve Pontalis, 1973). Bu bakımdan kaybın niteliğinin de önemli olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Birçok katılımcı, evlilikleri sırasında hem boşanmayı düşündüklerinden hem de bu konuyu eşleriyle değerlendirdiklerinden bahsetmişlerdir. Eşlerini kaybettikten sonra ise bu konunun tekrarlı şekilde söylemde ortaya çıkması önemli görülmüştür. Katılımcıların ölüm yerine boşanma yoluyla eşlerini kaybetmeyi tercih edeceğini iletmeleri, çocuklarının babasını yaşatma isteği olarak da değerlendirilmiştir.

4.5. “Dul” kadın olmak

Son ana tema "dul" kadın olmak şeklinde sunulmuştur. Bu bölüm toplumun yargıları, mağduriyet ve suçluluk alt temalarından oluşmaktadır. Katılımcılar, eşlerini kaybettikten sonra ailenin kendilerine daha koruyucu yaklaştığını, cinsel olarak nesnelleştirildiklerini ve toplumun kendilerinden yas tutmaya devam etmelerini belediklerini iletmişlerdir. Katılımcıların söyleminde mağduriyet önemli ölçüde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ayrıca katılımcılar, rahmetli eşlerine karşı hala suçluluk duyduklarını ve bu suçluluğu sonraki ilişkilerinde sürdürdüklerini söylemişlerdir.

Eşlerden birinin ölümü veya evlilik birliğinin boşanma ile sona ermesi durumunda, bir kadın kanunla “dul” ifadesiyle tanımlanır. Birkaç yıl öncesine kadar boşanmış veya eşi vefat etmiş kadınların nüfus cüzdanının medeni hal bölümüne “dul” yazılmaktadır. Yeni düzenlemelerle bu kadınların medeni halleri 'bekar' olarak

belirtilmektedir. Sonunda medeni hal kimlik kartından tamamen çıkarılır, ancak Lopata, kadının sosyal sonuçları nedeniyle hayatının geri kalanında dulluk kimliği taşıdığını savunur (1996). Boşandıktan veya eşini kaybettikten sonra kadının "dul" olarak etiketlenmesi nedeniyle çok sayıda sorun yaşadığı görülmektedir. Evli olmak insanlara güvenilirlik kazandırırken, bekar bir kadın olmak toplumda güvensizlik yaratır (Uzunkaya Seçen, 2017).

Ailenin dul kadına karşı koruyucu yaklaşımı katılımcılar tarafından olumlu bir destek olarak algılanmamaktadır. Bu bakımdan eşlerini kaybederek bir anlamda özgürlüklerini yitirdiklerinden bahsetmişlerdir. Ceyda, ailesinin bu durumla ilgili olarak sosyal hayatını kısıtlamak için müdahalelerde bulunduğu bahsetmiş ve düşüncelerini şu şekilde aktarmıştır: "... *..ailenin yaptığı şeyler hâlâ senin çocuk gibi görüp böyle iki tane kocaman çocuğun varken hâlâ korumaya çalışma durumları falan mesela çok zorladı işte yıllardır hiçbir şeyi birlikte yapmadığımız halde ki birlikte yapmamız gerekiyormuş gibi böyle davranışlar çok zordu..*.." Benzer şekilde Elif, ailesinin kendisi adına kararlar aldığını, ama bu durumdan çok rahatsız olduğunu söylemiştir. Ailesinin kurallarına uyup tekrar ailesinin evine dönerse kimliğini, benliğini ve diğer her şeyi kaybedeceğini belirtmiştir.

Katılımcılar ayrıca eşleri öldükten sonra cinsel olarak nesnelleştirildiklerini de belirtmişlerdir. Cinsel hedef haline geldiklerini bildiren katılımcılar, beklemedikleri kişilerden uygunsuz teklifler aldıklarını açıklamışlardır. Örneğin Ceyda, çok yaşlı bir kişinin kendisiyle tatile gitmeyi teklif ettiğini ve bu durumdan çok rahatsızlık duyduğunu söylemiştir. Toplum tarafından cinsel olarak nesnelleştirildiklerini söyleyen bu kadınların aynı zamanda yaslarını sürdürmeleri beklenmektedir. Bu bağlamda Ceyda, bir kadının hayatına kaldığı yerden devam etmesi halinde ailesinde, dostlarında ve akrabalarında rahatsızlık yaratacağını söylemiştir ve bu durumu şu şekilde aktarmıştır: : *“..tabi benim bitik vaziyette işte kendini bırakmış perişan olmuş işte sürekli ağlayan bir insan olmam bekleniyor anladığım bu yani ama böyle olmayınca da işte bu sefer etrafından izlenme hali..”*. Sanki bir çift göz Ceyda'yı sürekli izliyormuş gibi tarif edilmiştir. Toplumsal yargılara paralel olarak katılımcıların da mağdur hissetmeleri görüşmelerde öne çıkan bir konu olmuştur. Katılımcılar hem anne hem de baba olma çabalarını babanın eksikliğini telafi etme

çabası olarak tanımlasa da bunun kendileri için ne kadar yorucu olduğunu da vurgulamışlardır. Dolayısıyla, “dul” bir kadın olmanın, kadını hem savunmasız hem de güçlü olması gereken bir konuma getirdiği söylenebilir.

4.6. “Dul” Kadın Söylemi

Lacan, söylemi dile dayalı sosyal bağların işlevi olarak tanımlar (1969-1970/ 2007). Bunu derken, belirli bir dile değil, dilin yapısına atıfta bulunmaktadır. Söylemleri yorumlamak için pozisyonların ve sembollerin anlamlarını bilmek gerekmektedir. Her söylemde dört sembol vardır ve söylemin yorumu sembollerin farklı pozisyonlara gelmesiyle değişmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, söylemin yapısı ve yapı içindeki öznellik, sembollerin pozisyonlarına göre değişebilir (Quackelbeen ve ark., 1994). Lacan, bu söylemleri belirleyen gerçekliğe analitik bir yaklaşım benimseyerek öznel söylemi belirleyen yapıyı açıklamaya çalışır. Kavramların soyutlanmasında büyük avantaj sağlayan sembollerini kullanarak söylemleri açıklar.

Söylemler, dört bölmeli çantalar olarak düşünülebilir. Bu bölmelere pozisyonlar denir ve semboller bölmelere yerleştirilir. Bu dört pozisyon sabittir ve pozisyonlar arasındaki ilişki de her söylemde sabittir. İlk pozisyona "fail" denir. Konuşan her failin bir muhatabı vardır. Bu ikinci pozisyon ise "başka" olarak adlandırılır. Bu ilişkide fail diğeri üzerinde belirli bir etki yaratmayı amaçlar. Bunun bir sonucu olarak, söylemin gözlemlenebilir bir etkisi olarak, “ürün” ortaya çıkar. Bu kısma kadar, her klasik iletişim teorisi ile aynı mantıkta çalışmaktadır. Dördüncü ve son konum, psikanalitik bakış açısını kazanılan asıl konum olan "hakikat"tir (Verhaegne, 1995). Pozisyonlar çanta ise sembollerini bu çantaların içine yerleştirilen ve söylemden söyleme'ye farklı pozisyonlar alabilen unsurlar olarak düşünülebilir. Özne (\$), egonun ve bilinçdışının dil yoluyla bölünmesidir, yani dilde yabancılaşmanın sonucudur (Verhaeghe, 1998). S_1 veya temel gösteren, her söylemde baskın olan semboldür. S_1 , gösteren zincirinin başlangıcıdır ve ona ulaşmak imkansızdır çünkü artık dile girerek söylemden bastırılmış olandır. S_2 veya bilgi, göstergeler zincirini temsil eder. Anlam, özneyi hiçbir zaman tanımlayamadığından, her zaman başka bir gösterene gönderir. Arzunun nedeni olan a nesnesi ise, bir gösterenin diğeri bir gösterenle arasındaki bağlantıdaki kaybı temsil eder. Artı zevk olarak da adlandırılan

a nesnesi, özneyi anlaşılacak için konuşmaya devam etmeye zorlar, ancak her zaman tatminsiz kalır. Çünkü hiçbir gösteren özneyi tam olarak temsil edemez; Her gösteren özneyi temsil ederken başka bir gösterene gönderir ve bu sonsuza kadar devam eder (Verhaeghe, 1998).

Bu çalışmanın sonuçları beş ana tema altında sunulmuştur: “Eşin rolü, Konuşulamayan şey: ölüm, Kayıpla birlikte kaybolanlar, Ölümle başa etme yolları ve “dul” kadın olmak”. Bu noktaya kadar verilen bilgilerin yanı sıra katılımcıların görüşmeler sırasında anlatım biçimleri de bazı ortak noktalar göstermektedir. Örneğin katılımcılar eşlerini kaybettikten sonra karşılaştıkları zorlukları ve bu zorluklar karşısında nasıl bir pozisyon aldıklarını detaylı bir şekilde anlatırken, neredeyse hiçbir katılımcı güçlü hissettiği konular hakkında detaylı bilgi vermemiştir. Benzer şekilde, bazı katılımcılar görüşme sonunda bu konular hakkında konuşma fırsatı buldukları için minnettarlıklarını dile getirmişlerdir. Bir bakıma bu çalışmanın hayatlarındaki zorluklardan bahsetmek için bir kanal haline geldiği düşünülmektedir. Bu nedenle katılımcıların söylemlerine dayanarak “dul” kadın söylemi şekillenmiş ve kültürel bağlam dikkate alınarak son halini almıştır.

Ataerkil bir toplum olan Türk kültüründe evliliğin ve aile kurumunun önemi her zaman vurgulanmıştır. Bu bakımdan katılımcıların ifadelerinde aile olmanın gücüne atıfta bulunulduğu da görülmektedir. Bu noktada fallus, söylemi harekete geçiren hakikat konumuna getirilmiştir. Penis erkekliğe yönelik bir atfı olmasına rağmen, cinsel organdan bahsedilmez. Katılımcılar, eşlerinin ölümüyle kaybedilenleri anlatırken her zaman güce veya fallusa atıfta bulunmuşlardır. Dolayısıyla Türk kültüründe evli olmak kadına hayali bir fallus verir. Fallus imgesel düzende olmasına rağmen eş kaybıyla kaybedilenlerin her zaman fallus etrafında şekillenmesi bu söylemi, kaybettikten sonra kadınların sahip olamayacağı bir şeye sahip olma yanılgısına götürür (Lacan 1956-1957/2020). Bu nedenle söylemde fallus, söylemde S_1 ya da temel gösteren niteliği taşıyarak söylemden bastırılmıştır. Fallusun söylemdeki izleri şu ifadelerde takip edilebilir: “*arkanda güç olduğunu hissetmek*” or “*e hayatta olabileceklere dayanma gücün artar e bi tek başına dayanmak var..*”. Bu alıntılarda güç, ”arkamdaki güç“ veya ”hayatta olabilecek şeylere dayanma gücüm” gibi kullanılmaz; bu nedenle, bahsedilen güç, kadının kendisinde olmayan

ama kime ait olduğu belli de olmayan bir şekilde ifade edilir. Katılımcıların bu konuya ilişkin anlatımları, oedipus kompleksinin sonunda penisi olmadığını fark eden bir kızın deneyimleriyle benzerlik göstermektedir (Freud, 1924/1961). Fallus, söylemi harekete geçiren bir noktadadır. Örneğin Fatma, “*ben eşim yok eksikli hissediyorum kendimi, ne bileyim ben gitmek istemiyorum..*”. Penis sadece fallusun bir göstereni olsa da, kız çocuklarının penisinin olmayışına dair algısının, eşin kaybıyla yine bir eksiklik olarak tekrarladığı görülmektedir.

Söylemdeki oklar takip edildiğinde, bir kadın olarak eş olmanın fail pozisyonunda olduğu görülebilir. Bu anlamda bir kadın için evli olmanın ve bir aile olmanın gücüne dair atıflara dayanarak eş pozisyonu oluşturulmuştur. Söylemde evliliğin beraberinde getirdiği sorumluluklar ve rahatlıklar katılımcılar tarafından ayrıntılı olarak anlatılmıştır. Katılımcıların evli bir kadın olmaya dair bilgileri ise kültür yoluyla çok önceden içselleştirilmiştir. Evli bir kadın olmak, bilgi veya S_2 olarak fail pozisyonundadır. Evli bir kadın olmak, beraberinde ne gibi zorluklar getirdiğine bakılmaksızın kültürde önemli bir konumda bulunmaktadır. Evin her sorumluluğunu üstlenen, çocuklara iyi bir anne olmaya çalışan ve eşinin tüm kıskançlıklarına ve kısıtlamalarına rağmen tüm bunlara dayanan bir eş olmak, söylemdeki bu konum hakkında ortaya çıkan bilgilerdir. Katılımcılar boşanmayı düşünmüş olsalar da, evlilikleri sırasında bunu eyleme geçiremediklerini söylemişlerdir. Türk kültüründe onaylanan ve desteklenen eş olma özelliklerinin kadınları bir bakıma özgürleştirdiği ve tüm zorluklarına rağmen bu konumu vazgeçilmez kıldığı düşünülmektedir. Katılımcıların bir kadın olarak eş konumunda bahsettiği yerlerde, fallusun izleri örtük şekilde takip edilebilir.

Şekil 4'teki oklar takip edildiğinde eşinin ölümü ile artık “dul” olan kadının başka pozisyonunda olduğu görülmektedir. Türkçede "dul" kavramı hem erkekler hem de kadınlar için geçerli olsa da, bu kavramın Türk kültüründe daha çok kadınları tanımlamak için kullanıldığı Şirin (2016) tarafından açıklanmıştır. Güce dair yapılan tüm toplumsal atıflar, eşinin kaybıyla birlikte kadının elinden alınmıştır. Bu nedenle öncesinde eş olan kadın artık bir "dul" a dönüşmüştür. Bu noktadan itibaren kadın artık toplum tarafından korunmasız, cinsel olarak nesneleştirilen, sürekli olarak eksikliği hatırlatılan ve bu kaybın yasını tutmaya devam etmesi beklendiği bir

konumdadır. Bu nedenle "dul" pozisyonu, söylemdeki özne (\$) ile temsil edilir. Bu kayıp ile artık kadının elinden eş konumu alınmış ve eksik bir pozisyona gelmiştir. Örneğin, bir kadın çocukları için hem anne hem de baba olmaya çalışsa da bunu asla başaramaz.

Son pozisyon, "dul" kadının bir ürün olarak mağduriyet etrafında örülen ifadeler üretmesine neden olur. Toplum tarafından bir kadına aile olması halinde sahip olacağına dair vaat edilen ancak daha sonra elinden alınan fallus, artık kadının söyleminde mağduriyet şeklinde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu sebeple de artık tüm zorluklar karşısında yalnız kalan kadın ancak çocukları için hayatta kalabilir ve kendisine üzölmeye devam eder. Ayrıca, bir kadının eşinin ölümlüyle ilgili suçluluđu, sonraki romantik ilişkilerinde de bir engel olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Tüm bu mağduriyetin görüşmelerde çok detaylı bir şekilde anlatılması ve zevk fazlasının söylemde bir ürün olarak ortaya çıkmasıyla ilişkilendirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, a nesnesi ürün pozisyonuna yerleştirilir.

Mağduriyetten eş olmaya giden ok takip edildiğinde eşini kaybettikten sonra tüm maddi ve manevi desteđini kaybeden bir kadın esasen eş konumunu güçlendirir. Ancak kaybedilen bu gücün kaynađına asla ulaşamayacaktır. Bu imkânsızlık, okları takip ederken "dul" kadının fallusa asla erişimi olmamasında da görölebilir. Bu nedenle söylemin motor gücü olan fallus ile ürün olarak ortaya çıkan mağduriyet arasında bir imkânsızlık vardır. Bu nedenle, "dul" kadın söylemdeki öznelere asla fallusa erişemeyeceklerdir. Sonuç olarak, bu eksikliği bir iş, kardeş veya çocukları ile gidermeye çalışan ancak yine de bu üzüntüden tam olarak kurtulamayan kadınlar, çok daha eskiye ait olan bir kaybın tekrarını yaşarlar.

4.7. Sonuçlar, Klinik Çıkarımlar ve Araştırmanın Kısıtlılıkları

Bu çalışmada eşini erken dönemde kaybetmiş kadınların deneyimleri ve bu deneyimleri nasıl anlamlandırdıkları çalışılmıştır. Bu kapsamda eşini doğal yollarla ya da kaza sebebiyle kaybeden sekiz kadınla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmış ve veri tematik analiz metoduyla incelenmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda beş ana tema bulunmuştur: "Eşin rolü, Konuşulamayan şey: ölüm, Kayıpla birlikte

kaybolanlar, Ölümle başa etme yolları ve “dul” kadın olmak”. “Eşin rolü” olarak isimlendirilmiş ilk temada eşin kadının hayatındaki ve evlilikteki roller ve bu konunun kadının hayatına nasıl bir etkisi olduğu incelenmiştir. Erkeğin evde eş olma konumundan çok baba olması konumuna vurgu yapılması ve kadının kendi ebeveynleriyle erken dönem ilişkilerindeki benzerlikler ayrıntılı şekilde sunulmuştur. Bunun haricinde erkeğin evlilikte kadına kıyasla daha az sorumluluğa sahip olan, kıskanç ve aldatılabilir konumda olabilmesi, aşkın doğası incelenerek tartışılmıştır. İkinci alt tema olan “Konuşulamayan şey: Ölüm” teması altında ise ölümün dile dökülemez niteliği tartışılmıştır. Ölümün gerçek düzlemine de ait olması sebebiyle tam olarak dile dökülemediği (Lacan, 2006/1966), katılımcıların bu konuyla ilgili ne eşiyne ne çocuklarıyla ne de çevresiyle rahatça konuşamadığı görülmüştür. Fakat konuşulamayanlar bedenden semptom olarak çıkmaktadır ve bu semptomların katılımcılarla öznel bir bağlantısı olduğu açıklanmıştır (Freud, 1893/1955). Ayrıca bu kayıpla birlikte kaybedilenin sadece eş olmadığı, bu kadınların gücü, evin babasını ve partnerini de kaybettiği “Kayıpla birlikte kaybolanlar” temasında açıklanmıştır. Kaybedilen şeyin hep güce dair bir atıfla anlatılması katılımcıların bu kaybı privasyon ya da frusturasyon şeklinde deneyimlediğini göstermektedir. Bu kadınlar eşini kaybettikten sonra bu kayıpla baş edebilmenin yeni yollarını geliştirmişlerdir. İlk başta eşin ölümüyle ve dolayısıyla ölümlülükle karşı karşıya gelen kadınlar, bu gerçeikle ilk zamanlarda ancak inkâr ederek baş edebilmişlerdir. Fakat bir zaman geçtikten sonra katılımcılar çeşitli yollarla hayatlarını yeniden kurduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Nihayetinde bu kayıpla birlikte toplum içinde yeni bir kimlik aldıklarını ve artık “dul” bir kadın olduklarını anlatmışlardır. Dul olmanın toplum tarafından nasıl algılandığı, suçluluk ve mağduriyet alt temalarıyla birlikte “dul” kadın olmak temasında açıklanmıştır.

Eğitimli, çocuğu olan ve hayatını kurmuş bu kadınların görüşmeler içerisinde mağduriyetlerinden bu yoğunlukta bahsetmeleri önemli görülmüştür. Bu anlamda sosyoekonomik ya da kültürel olarak toplumda avantajlı olarak görülebilecek bu kadınların bu kaybın üstünden ne kadar süre geçerse geçsin olumsuz etkilerini bu kadar vurgulamaları artık bu deneyimin eşin kaybından öte bir şeyle açıklanabileceğini düşündürmüştür. Bunun da “dul” kadının toplum içindeki konumuyla alakalı olabileceği ve kadının kendi benliğini bu kimlikle birlikte nasıl

inşa ettiđiyle açıklanmıştır. Dolayısıyla kadının imkanlarından, sahip olduklarından ve yeteneklerinden bağlantısız olarak sosyal olarak “dul” söyleminde bulunduđunda belirli bir örüntü olduđu görülmüştür. Bu anlamda, toplumun beklentisi olarak görülen aile olmanın, evli olmanın ve bir erkekle birlikte sosyal olarak tanınmanın gücü ölümle birlikte kadının elinden alındığında, kadının bu durumda mağdur olmasına bir sonuç olarak karşılaşılmaktadır. Kadınların deneyimlerinin onlar için çok önemli bir kişinin kaybının deneyimlenmesinin beraberinde getirdiđi yas döneminin ötesine geçtiđi görülmektedir. Bu anlamda kaybın bu kadar büyük bir suçluluđu ve mağduriyeti beraberinde getirmesi kadınların bu söylemi bir zevk fazlası olarak da üretebildiđini göstermektedir. Bu anlamda üzüntülü olmak kadından beklenen şeydir (Şirin, 2016) ve kadının bu beklentinin dışına çıkması bir suçluluk doğurmaktadır. Kadınlar eşleri ölse bu yası devam ettirerek evliliklerine dair yaşantılarını canlı tutmaktadırlar. Eşin hastalık yoluyla ya da ani bir şekilde ölmesinin ise söylemde kayda değer ölçüde bir farklılık yaratmadıđı görülmüştür. Bu da kaybedilen nesnenin nasıl kaybedildiđinden çok ne sonuçlar doğurduđunun önemli olmasıyla ilişkili görülmüştür. Eşin kaybıyla birlikte kaybedilen gücün esasen çok eski zamanlara, kız çocuđunun penisini olmadıđını anladıđı zamanlara dayanması, bu kadınların yeni ilişkiler kurmasının ve bu eksikliđin kendisine tekrar hatırlatılmasının önüne geçtiđini düşündürmektedir (Freud, 1924). Katılımcıların bazıları daha sonra romantik ilişkiler içinde bulunsa bile hiçbirisi daha sonra tekrar evlenmemesinin bu kaybın dolayısıyla tamlık hayalinin sürdürülmesiyle ilişkili olabileceđi sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Sonuç olarak kişinin bu kayıpla olan ilişkisi ve eşini erken dönemde kaybetmiş bir kadın olmanın herhangi bir yas döneminden nasıl farklılaşabileceđinin nitel bir yolla ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelenmesi bu araştırmanın gücünü oluşturmaktadır. Dolayısıyla eş kaybıyla birlikte “dul” olan kadın, hayatta kurduđu ilişkiler ađını ve sosyal statüsünü yeniden şekillendirmekte ve bu deđişikliklerin kültürel referanslarla olan bađı söylemde gözlenmektedir. Bu sebeple klinikte eşini kaybetmiş yas döneminde olan bir kadınla çalışırken kişinin bu kayıpla olan bağlantısının ötesinde kültür içindeki atıflarının da önemi göz ardı edilmemelidir. Ayrıca bu kaybın kişinin tarihçesiyle ilişkisinde başka bir kaybın tekrarı olup olmadıđı ve kişinin bu kayıp karşısında nasıl baş etme yolları geliştirdiđi göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Bu

anlamda kiři bu kaybı privasyon ve frusturasyon olarak deneyimledikçe “dul” kelimesi bir etiket olarak kalacaktır. Fakat bu kaybın en erken dönemdeki bağlantılarıyla birlikte klinikte çalışılmasının özneyi bu kaybı bir kastrasyon olarak deneyimlemeye götürmesini (Lacan 2020/1956-1957) ve “onu” unutmasa da bırakabilmesini sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Bu çalışmada sadece Türk kültürüne odaklanılmıştır. Dolayısıyla farklı kültürlerle yapılan çalışmalarla eşini erken dönemde kaybetmiş kadınların bu deneyimleri nasıl anlamlandırdıklarının değişebileceği düşünülmektedir. Bu anlamda farklı kültürlerde eşini erken dönemde kaybetmiş kadınların deneyimlerinin nitel olarak incelenmesinin literatüre katkı sağlayacağı ön görülmektedir. Ayrıca nitel çalışmaların doğası gereği oldukça homojen bir grupla çalışılmasının hem bu araştırmayı zenginleştirdiği görülmekte hem de eğitimsiz, çocuk sahibi olmayan ya da yaşlılık döneminde olan kadınların deneyimlerini anlamaya dair bir kısıtlılık oluşturmaktadır. Son olarak boşanma ve ölüm arasında nasıl bir farklılık olabileceği, kadının “dul” statüsünde ve söyleminde bu farkın bir değişken olarak ele alınıp alınamayacağı gelecek çalışmalarda tartışılabilir.

G. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

(Please fill out this form on computer. Double click on the boxes to fill them)

ENSTİTÜ / INSTITUTE

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Social Sciences
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Applied Mathematics
- Enformatik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Informatics
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences

YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : Minçe
Adı / Name : Gizem
Bölümü / Department : Psikoloji / Psychology

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): A QUALITATIVE EXAMINATION OF DEATH OF A SPOUSE AND BEREAVEMENT

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: Yüksek Lisans / Master Doktora / PhD

1. Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır. / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.
2. Tez iki yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of **two years**. *
3. Tez altı ay süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for period of **six months**. *

* Enstitü Yönetim Kurulu kararının basılı kopyası tezle birlikte kütüphaneye teslim edilecektir. / A copy of the decision of the Institute Administrative Committee will be delivered to the library together with the printed thesis.

Yazarın imzası / Signature

Tarih / Date

(Kütüphaneye teslim ettiğiniz tarih. Elle doldurulacaktır.)
(Library submission date. Please fill out by hand.)

Tezin son sayfasıdır. / This is the last page of the thesis/dissertation.