WHAT POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION BRINGS TO THE
HOUSEHOLD: A CASE STUDY OF ZAZAKI HOUSEWIVES’ BEADWORK IN
ADANA

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WHAT POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION BRINGS TO THE HOUSEHOLD: A CASE STUDY OF ZAZAKI HOUSEWIVES’ BEADWORK IN ADAŇA

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ABSTRACT

WHAT POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION BRINGS TO THE HOUSEHOLD: A CASE STUDY OF ZAZAKI HOUSEWIVES’ BEADWORK IN ADANA

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This thesis investigates a home-based beadwork performed by a group of migrant Zazaki women living in a slum neighborhood of Adana. The aim of the research is to reveal how these women, who are located at the intersection of social exclusion, poverty, and gender, participate in the informal sector and how their ethnicity affects their empowerment and exploitation. The findings of the research have showed that Zazaki men with the same ethnic identity are involved in a large trade by exploiting women and ignore their labor despite the fact that they are able to develop economically thanks to women. The dominant patriarchal values in the society in which women live devalue their labor and act as a barrier to women's empowerment.

Keywords: Social Exclusion, Poverty, Gender, Informal Economy, Home-Based Work
ÖZ

YOKSULLUK VE SOSYAL DIŞLANMANIN HANEYE GETİRDİKLERİ:
ADANA’DAKİ ZAZA EV KADINLARININ BONCUK İŞİ ÖRNEĞİ

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Dışlanma, Yoksulluk, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Kayıt dışı Ekonomi, Ev Temelli İş
To all women who have yet to discover their power
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This thesis has seen a pandemic, devastating earthquake disasters and many personal struggles but it has been a part of my entire life. The case study is deeply personal to me, so I have done my best to reflect the reality of it in the best possible way.

I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis committee members, all of whom, by a pleasant coincidence, are “Ayşе”; Prof. Dr. Ayşе Gündüz Hoşgör, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayşе İdil Aybars and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayşе Gönüllü Atakan for their evaluations and suggestions for a second field study that unveiled many important aspects of the research.

I would like to thank another Ayşе and Hatice who gave me life; my grandmother Ayşе who calls me “my baby’s baby” and my mother Hatice who has been the powerful figure for me and my sister. As this thesis revolves around females, I would like to thank all hardworking Zazaki women; this thesis would not exist without them.

Lastly, I want to thank myself for writing this thesis, I want to tell myself that I am proud of you.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSO</td>
<td>Bead Store Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Current Middleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>Former Middleman</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBW</td>
<td>Home-Based Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>PW</td>
<td>Prison Warden</td>
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<td>WIEGO</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Women from all parts of the world, in all time periods, might have one thing in common: gender discrimination. Whether they have lived in the ancient history or modern society today, all women have struggled with socially constructed gender norms that see them as inferiors to the male species. Studying the historical trajectory of gender-based discrimination would reveal that only its forms have changed but that it still remains because it is deeply rooted in the cultural, economic, and political realms of life. Writer Fran Lebowitz said (2021) “Being a woman was the same from Eve to like 8 months ago” and she stands correct to this day. Women had to - and still have to - fight for every right they have and for less. Their exposure to gender-based discrimination in all spheres of life has not changed, whether in the labor market, in the household or in their social environments outside. Today, we still see the struggle for the most basic human rights to be equal: right to life, rights against violence and harassment alongside for equal opportunities, access to education and equal pay.

Women carry all types of burdens throughout their lives for their loved ones, from birth to death. I grew up observing the female members of my family carrying this burden in bowls of beads; trying to earn income. Their families migrated from a small village in Bingöl to slum neighborhood in Adana with almost nothing and they had no education. I watched my aunt and other Zazaki women go to evening school to become literate, threading beads during the day. They made a difference for their families, and I watched them in awe while growing up. I could not comprehend why they spend hours threading tiny beads until I decided to write this thesis. Zazaki women and their bowls of beads are the main reason why I chose to write this thesis.
1.1. Purpose of the Study and Previous Research on the Subject

Informal economy offers women quick access to income as it includes few barriers for working. Furthermore, it gives them flexibility to take of household and caregiver work at home. This type of employment model involves the most exploitative forms of women's labor and the least paying jobs despite unsafe working conditions. Turkey faces challenges such as declining agricultural population, low economic growth capacity, young working-age population, low female labor force participation, and a large informal sector, with poverty and income causing women to work informally (Kalaycıoğlu et al., 2016). It is possible to find an informal working group in almost every field of business and in Turkey, the main areas of women’s informal sector work are textile manufacturing and home-based economy in which poor and socially excluded women tend to join.

Previous research on the informal economy shows various examples of women working informally or working at home. Women in textile industry, especially garment making and women in food industry are the most common cases studied. Due to shift in production sites in search of unskilled labor, women have become the face of cheap labor in the global south. Particularly in food industry where it is seen as a womanly job and continuation of household labor, women are forced to work long, monotonous hours without decent pay and social security (Gündüz Hoşgör & Suzuki Him, 2016). Sea snail production in Turkey emerged from a demand in lower cost marine products and the Black Sea region has become a part of this global commodity chain. Specifically in Japan, East Asian countries were in search for a new location for production of these snails and to gain optimum profits, rural women in couple Black Sea villages has taken over the most labor-intensive part of this work; sorting and cleaning (Suzuki Him & Gündüz Hoşgör, 2019). To answer the global production needs, Istanbul have become one of the top manufacturing locations for the fast fashion industry due to simultaneous migration waves and the increase in unskilled, informal workers. The garment making industry in Istanbul is predominantly based on workshop production and home-based piece works. Pieceworkers, often unskilled with low levels of education, married with children, are seen as passive victims in
global garment production. They are often the neediest women, lacking economic support from husbands or seeking extra cash for home ownership (Dedeoğlu, 2020).

Informal economy is predominantly women work, including subcontracted home-based workers and self-employed workers. Today, women of every culture have their hands on of some type of jewelry making at home, including much colorful types of beads. On a global scale, there are much research on beadwork. Cultural African beadwork, Indigenous and Native American beadwork are the most popular cultural bead types. African culture and African ethnic identity are carried out through many traditions and bead work is one of them. Not only it is used for displaying different cultural and ethnic orientation, but it is also used for restoring cognitive skill in rural areas. While learning the skill of bead work, people are taught mathematical skills as well, so beads carry both aesthetic and mathematic value for the African culture (Rozani, 2013).

While jewelry beads are the first thing that comes in people’s mind, there is one type of bead that has remained unseen and unknown for many people. It is a type of bead so small that it is tiring to the eye and threaded with very thin needles by a minority group of women, creating a bulk of beads that are eventually traded by a group of middlemen of the same ethnicity. Today, most of these beads are sold to prisons and made into small ornaments by prisoners (Somçağ, 2022), some amount is sold online for jewelry making purposes. The purpose of this thesis is to discover the common characteristics of this unique home-based work in the informal economy. It aims to find the links between poverty, social exclusion, and gender to see how these three concepts create an ethnic solidarity between a group of migrant Zazaki women in Adana. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature by investigating this informal beadwork, where women's labor is exploited the most.

1.2. Theoretical Background and Significance of the Thesis

Rural-urban migration constitutes the largest labor market for the informal economy, where cheap labor is concentrated. The migration waves from rural areas to urban
cities in Turkey during 1980’s carries great importance as the world economy simultaneously shifted towards a more liberal approach, creating a labor market for mass manufacturing companies in developing countries. The socially excluded rural migrants with poverty backgrounds in the cities found opportunities in the informal economy to combat poverty. Nonetheless, poverty and informal economy forms a vicious circle, resulting in chronic poverty traps in urban slums. Restructuring of global markets also established a new understanding of industrial division of labor and gave birth to terms such as “feminization of employment” and “women as reserve army of labor”. Braverman explains this as the modern capitalist way of thinking to maximize profits, including deskilling of jobs to hire cheap labor that is women (1974). Most part of the informal economy is dominated by poor women that cannot take part in the formal economy due to low levels of education, language barriers, patriarchal restrictions, or their caregiver roles. They often engage in home-based work, the most invisible form of informal labor where they can perform their household responsibilities while working.

There are various types of informal home-based work and the case work studied in this thesis plans to contribute the literature by showing the multidimensional aspects of a specific beadwork and how it is embedded in common ethnic identity of a group of Zazaki migrants. Ethnicity is one of the important objectives to be checked in this thesis paper, in addition to intersectionality of poverty, social exclusion and gender inequality. Their poverty and migration background, social exclusion, cultural patriarchal norms intersect to create an ethnic solidarity. In addition, their ethnic identity naturally forms a solidarity to help each other settle down. As they are urban migrants, Zazaki men fall into informal sector when they first come to the city. They find opportunity in informal bead business and maintain their ethnic solidarity by giving the work to women of their own ethnicity. Although they owe their ability to overcome extreme poverty to the beadwork of their hard-working women, women earn very little from this business. Not only their financial development but also women’s agency and empowerment remain restricted because patriarchy still exists in this community.
This thesis aims to see how a unique beadwork traded between Zazaki men and women within a small neighborhood of Adana impacts the women and to reveal the main common characteristics of this ethnic minority group. The questions this thesis seeks to answer are:

- What common characteristics have led them to do beadwork,
- What does beadwork bring to their lives, what does it take away from their lives and what are their main motives for engaging in this work,
- To what extent engaging in beadwork was their own choice and in what ways the money they earn helps them,

to reveal the impact of beadwork on the women's agency and empowerment and to see the level of exploitation women are exposed to by analyzing a series of interviews and the collected data.

1.3. Research Design and Methodology

As a form of qualitative data collecting techniques, in-depth interviews with 30 women are conducted in addition to gathering demographic information and migration history to study the concept of intersectionality. In addition to 30 women, four men will also be interviewed: one former and one current middleman who distributes the beads to the women, a bead store owner and a prison warden that takes part in the end product. Their interview questions will be different in light of further investigation into the exploitative aspect of this home-based beadwork and its place in the global commodity (value) chain. The collected data is used to analyze the various impacts embedded in this beadwork on women’s lives, to provide insights into the degree of women's agency and empowerment, as well as to measure the levels of exploitation they experience.

1.4. The Plan of Chapters

After laying out the thesis design and briefly explaining the background in the chapter one, I am going to further elaborate on the theoretical background of this research in more detail; addressing the intersectional relationship between social exclusion,
poverty, and gender and how they are interconnected to the informal economy based on existing literature. Main focus on this chapter will be women, exploring the place of women in the informal sector, gender-based inequalities at home and home-based work that is dominated by women. Lastly, a few similar case studies will be discussed for a better insight.

I divided my field research into two chapters. In the third chapter, I am decomposing my research on the area with a unique case study, starting with the description of the field and the women who are the original source of inspiration for this thesis. This chapter will provide insight into the migration history and demographic information about a group of Zazaki women living in Adana who spend their free time at home with a special kind of beadwork. Findings provide information on their ancestors, when and why they started to migrate from Bingöl to Adana, and eventually to the neighborhood where they currently live, which became the starting point of this beadwork. Their demographic information shows the common characteristics that are related with their involvement in the beadwork.

The second part of my field research will be in the chapter four. Through a comprehensive analysis of the interview data, I intend to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics underlying women's experiences, their capacity to act autonomously, and the challenges they face that can make them vulnerable to exploitation. I hope to discover their motives to do beadwork, to find out if it is only about money or if it is also a form socialization and solidarity. I expect to uncover where beads fit into their lives, what it offers and what it takes away from them. In addition to women, I will analyze the results of interviews with two middlemen and try to see the role they play in women’s empowerment and exploitation. Demographic information is collected to create a link how women’s ethnicity connects them to the work they do. To place the beads in a global market chain, I interviewed with a bead store owner and a prison warden about final products of these beadwork. I also try to understand whether ethnicity plays a role in this process as well.

I will conclude this research in chapter five by reviewing this research process with my personal experience with the beads. I grew up watching the female members of my
family, carrying around endless bowls of beads, getting together in a different house every day to chat and earn money. With this thesis, I aim to explore the social norms, economic reasons, and patriarchal influences behind the beadwork. Chapter Three and Chapter Four will bring the background and the end product together on the basis of conceptualization of previous literature discussed in Chapter Two. Zazaki women’s socio-economic background led them into finding a suitable work for both themselves and their families. The patriarchal figures in their lives greatly impacted their economic freedom, but also gave them an opportunity to earn money. Beadwork, as an informal home-based occupation, offers women the autonomy to decide whether or not to do it, depending on their personal preferences and circumstances. However, these choices are subject to various influences arising from different aspects of their lives.
CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: UNDERSTANDING THE INTERSECTIONALITY BETWEEN POVERTY, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, AND GENDER WITH THEIR RELATION TO THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

2.1. Understanding the Informal Economy

The world has entered a new level of integration at the second half of the 20th century in terms of finance, trade, and information technologies. This trend referred as ‘Globalization’ that is a multidimensional, open-ended process that evolves over the course of time. It refers to the connection of human life across the world; economies, technology, politics, societies, and culture. This has made the world an interconnected structure where changes and discoveries in one place can have a global impact elsewhere. Recognizing such connections plays a crucial role in addressing global trends and building relationships on a broad front. However, such links do not occur overnight, rather it has a trend that has no direct beginning; but has grown dramatically over time. Globalization has increased dramatically during the late 20th century as a result of technological advancements, the opening up of trade and investment laws, and the rise of multinational corporations. At the very beginning of this rapid growth, Harry Braverman observed that “capitalism transformed all of society into a gigantic marketplace” and complained how it has not been further explored yet (1974, p.271). Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to see how it has been the most popular topic of discussion since then.

With globalization gaining momentum, world economy shifted towards a more liberal stand; deregulation, privatization, and reduced government intervention were among the first policies of market-oriented economy that many nations began to adopt. The growing scope of the market was reflected in both volume and geographical dispersion. One of the main institutional innovations in this field has been the
establishment of national marketing organizations with the potential for international expansion (Braverman, 1974). These transitions opened the doors to rapid and easy global trade as well as foreign investment options. Worldwide manufacturing systems evolved quickly known as, global commodity (value) chains. The phrase “global value chain” refers to the chain of activities in which value is added at each stage, starting from the production of a good or service to its delivery to the consumer, and at least two countries take part in the process (World Bank, 2020). In terms of economic growth and prosperity, global value chains served many countries to thrive, but this assistance has not been unfolded evenly. Some nations became extremely rich, but some nations could not take advantage of this opportunity and fell far behind others, resulting in unequal distribution of wealth both within and between countries.

In developed societies, employment opportunities expand in response to the advancements in the market, and as industries become more globally connected to one another, they are often in need of a more versatile and skilled workforce. Developed countries provide a wide range of job opportunities with better wages, numerous benefits, and legal protections as well as work-life balance. On the other hand, underdeveloped or developing countries mostly fail to create such opportunities and unable to support workers, making them more vulnerable to economic crises. The level of economic, social, and organizational development of a country is closely linked with the informal economy. Financial and labor market structures strongly influence the dominant labor type. Informal economy is seen in every country, but it is more common in low-income countries, going high as 89% of total employment (ILO, 2023). Liberalization process of the world economy, open trade policies and labor market reforms have all led to expansion of the informal sector, especially in developing countries. Evidence has shown that highly engaging in value chains deranges labor relations by affecting workers’ bargaining power through outsourcing, substandard production locations and labor rights restrictions. Suppliers to multinational corporations rely on contract and agency labor, which leads to low wages, mandatory overtime, and higher production targets (Guschanski & Onaran, 2023).
According to International Labour Organization (2015), informal sector represents all economic activities carried out by workers and economic agents that are not covered or inadequately covered by formal regulations. Informal employment includes two primary categories: paid work in informal sector and self-employment in informal sector. Some of the paid work in informal sector consists of domestic workers, casual and contract employees, and outworkers. Most common self-employment types in the informal sector are unpaid family workers and own account workers (UN Women, 2018). The traditional understanding of the informal sector centered around the idea of that businesses stayed away from formalities such as taxation and registration. The new perspective suggests that people want to enjoy the benefits of formality such as job security, social protection, and labor rights, but that formal regulatory framework exclude them from these advantages. The new conceptualization considers informal employment as the outcome of exclusion process from the non-wage benefits of employment (Carr & Chen, 2004).

Recent International Labour Organization (ILO) data shows that, more than six workers among ten and four enterprises among five in the world take part in the informal economy and contrary to expectations, the size of the informal sector is growing rather than shrinking in numerous countries. The top three sectors in the informal employment comes up as agriculture, domestic work, and construction. In addition, within service industries such as accommodation and food, wholesale and retail, domestic work is predominantly done by women (ILO, 2023).

2.2. Gender Dynamics Within the Informal Economy

Gender norms, social standards and gender discrimination push women into the informal sector and even limit their ability to grow and expand. Deeply rooted expectations and lack of support for women’s caregiver role at home limits them to the domestic sphere of the life, unequal access to education and resources prevents them from developing skills and drag them into informal sector where little is expected of them. In many developing nations, women are overrepresented in the workforce and informal employment has become their standard. The great majority of these are low-
paying, typically survival-focused informal self-employment jobs and often neglected by policy makers (UN Women, 2018). On top of that, even within the same business, men and women appear to be involved in different forms or proportions of activity. For further elaboration, in most countries male entrepreneurs deal with larger proportions of trade in nonfood products whereas female entrepreneurs are more likely to engage in smaller scale activities on food products. Lastly, even though both traders’ incomes are in much smaller portions in the informal compared to the formal sector, this time gender wage gap come into the picture. This is due to the fact that informal income is exposed to shrinkage once there is such a movement in the employment types followed as: employer - self-employed - casual worker - subcontract worker (Carr et al., 2000). The term ‘gender segmentation of the informal economy’ seems to be self-explanatory when the overlap of being a poor woman that works in the informal economy is taken into account. This spiral is explained in to Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) as: In the informal economy; women are more likely than men to work, women in poor households are more likely to work than men in poor households or women in non-poor households; and women's average wages are lower than men (2004).

Figure 1 below visualizes the pyramid of the income hierarchy segmentation by gender. This model reflects the hierarchy and gendered distribution within informal employment, as well as the economic consequences at different levels. Moving up the pyramid is where the higher average earnings and the risk of poverty tends to decrease as one moves towards the top of the pyramid. Women are at the bottom of the pyramid as unpaid family workers. They are typically work for their families with little or no income and carry higher poverty risks. Just above them, there is industrial outworkers or homeworkers which is again mostly consists of women trying to earn income working from their homes. At the center there is the casual informal wage workers who are more likely to have no job securities and very low wages. Above them, there are own account owners who are individuals who run their own businesses or work independently, and they may have some level of autonomy in their work. Right below the top of the pyramid, there are regular informal wage workers who may have more stable employment. Men tend to dominate the top of the pyramid; being employers
who own businesses that keep the below ranks working for them. They are likely to have the highest income and the lowest risk of poverty.

![Poverty risk vs. Average earnings](image)

Figure 1. WIEGO Model of Informal Employment: Hierarchy of Earnings & Poverty Risk by Employment Status & Sex (Chen, 2012).

### 2.3. Poverty and Social Exclusion

Traditional policies favor free markets over government intervention, and it makes it harder for developing countries to build up a balanced growth rate to eliminate poverty because it is multidimensional; there are constant and changing factors that affect poverty. One important dimension is the temporal aspect of poverty, meaning that there could be different temporal types such as one might be in and out of poverty once, or one might become stranded in this circle. Chronic poverty is referred to an occurring deprivation of a person, for five years or longer but it shall not be based merely on income and consumption indicators given that multidimensional forms deprivation most likely to be underlying causes of long-term poverty (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003). Chronic poverty is about the severity, duration, and characteristics of poverty; there is no chance of getting out of poverty and there is intergenerational continuity (Mitlin, 2005). Even though the poor work, they rarely find a way out of
poverty. This is because being poor and working in the informal economy means lower income and being more exposed to financial risks and social exclusion in comparison to those who work in formal sector (Chen et al., 2004). The spatial dimension of poverty stresses the importance of location in having access to livelihoods and basic services. There might be areas as geographical traps that makes one unable to get out of chronic poverty. Dynamics of rapid urbanization and the slum areas that were created by rural people when they migrated to urban cities could be examples to such territorial traps (Mitlin, 2005). When they migrate to big cities, first thing they would do is to find an available land in the outskirts of the center to squat, save enough money to build a house on because their first goal is to “settle down”. Before deciding whether to buy or rent a house, a household should consider the neighborhood based on its location; distance to hospitals, workplaces, and schools (Dikici, 2023). As they get more far away from the center, access to basic needs such as education and health, job opportunities and services becomes more of an issue.

Poverty and social exclusion are usually in a vicious circle; one fueling the other. Poverty affects one’s mobility, access to basic human needs such as healthcare, education, and social services closely linked to one’s position in the urban environment, all of which are essential for social inclusion in society. The further away from these services, the less access to opportunities, networking with others and participation in social life. This type of limitations often leads to social exclusion of individuals or marginalized groups because of their economic deprivation. Vice versa, social exclusion may cause individuals to lack support systems to overcome financial barriers, leaving them trapped in a poverty circle.

Social exclusion is multidimensional as well, since one exists in different domains in life at the same time, therefore exclusion might occur in different institutions, social groups, and events. It also shows itself in different forms based on time, place, and circumstance. Social dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are in rapid change thus they take shape based on social habits, entitlements, and rights within different relational and distributional circumstances (Reimer, 2004). Social policies on the distribution of goods and services usually form around status of age, gender, or personal ties (Reimer, 2004). Urban migrants tend to use their collective voting power in use of personal
needs; they might have influence over urban management through their ethnicity based semi-formal organizations. While they might be able to exert pressure on political mechanisms, to what extent this power is used for the common problems of the neighborhood and to what extent used on individual interests varies according to the circumstances (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000). Intra-communal relations based on shared identity also affect treatment; where members are considered equals based on the attributed characteristics such as birth place, ethnicity and location. However, members often receive treatment based on personal ties or needs, age and gender rather than their financial capabilities. In other words, certain individuals or groups might not have access to resources or services that are offered to others (Reimer, 2004). Violation of trust or misbehavior against community rules can be punished in social exclusion since ethnicity-based solidarities work through trust and loyalty. Family members of an indebted person usually face social exclusion within their own communities as well; they also face barriers to access to resources.

Poverty and social exclusion are also culturally defined; social and cultural determinants lead to different forms of poverty and social exclusion and human needs vary around the world. They are closely associated with a lack of resources, assets, and opportunities, as well as low levels of participation in both social and political spheres. From a gender perspective, a constant variable of poverty is the feminization of poverty. Women are poor because they do not have time to join workforce partly as they involve care work, partly they cannot seek more opportunities, provide income for themselves (Arriagada, 2005). Economic and gender-based discrimination has a significant impact on women's poverty in Turkey. Women experience poverty due to

inequalities in income distribution and the fixed norms of patriarchal societies. In patriarchal societies, women are identified on the basis of their male family members; defined as someone’s daughters, someone’s wife or someone’s mother. Women are treated as second-class citizens in family life, education, and business life, and are excluded from management and decision-making processes due to the gender roles assigned to them within the household. Their natural duty is to take care of their family and they do it out of love; it cannot be categorized as a job; it is not paid. Therefore, there cannot be working hours, weekends, or holiday vacations to this job. Women are
only free when they are asleep, as a result it is almost impossible to separate women’s leisure times from their daily lives. Care work is often time consuming and labor-intensive, exposing them to more poverty than men (Tire, 2017). The fact that women are not seen as equal to men due to gender roles and inherent care responsibilities are the main factors that increase women's poverty. Women are more disadvantaged and powerless than men due to their subordinate position and systemic exclusion. Biased perspective of women’s participation in society places a social barrier to possession of resources and equal having opportunities with men. Limited access to basic needs such as nutrition, health, and education before gaining control over assets suggests that social exclusion can result in a lack of opportunities for women’s empowerment.

2.4. Gender Based Inequalities at Home

Running a household is a physically demanding, productive work that provides a clean and livable environment for the household members. It is actually more routinized than many jobs that pays minimum wage however it is almost never recognized or even shown gratitude (Bird, 1999). Economically dependent women who are not a part of the wage production process, is associated with wage through her social existence in the house. The exchange of money between man and woman in a marriage is originated in wage relationships of the labor market. However, this exchange model revolves around on a materialistic union instead of the process itself; it controls how household work and resources (money) are divided between a married couple (Acker, 1988). The dependency model suggests that most married women are financially dependent on their husbands. In exchange for financial income, women do the housework which contributes significantly to the unequal division of household labor (Walby, 2002). The structural characteristics of gender-based division of household labor shows itself in social welfare regimes in which we see gender dimension of poverty. Even when receiving social aid, women face great inequalities and forms of exclusion. In his book on social welfare regimes in Turkey, Kutlu argues that the creation and maintenance of livelihoods of women and households has a male-dependent nature. Social aid in Turkey is distributed to women with male related
categorizations: death of the father/spouse, divorce, or unemployment of the male breadwinner. The application process includes revisions of the households which usually puts the burden on the women’s shoulder. The aid itself aims to relieve household’s needs and since women is in charge of the household labor, keeping track of the food therefore she is the one who applies and gets evaluated to become a recipient on behalf of the household (Kutlu, 2015). The woman never becomes the focus group of social aid, she remains as an instrument therefore she is exposed to social exclusion within the household.

In patriarchal societies, unemployed women struggle with the idea of working as they fear the outcomes; they may face consequences even if they express their ideas to work, they may find it hard to balance the work-home life because of the gender-based inequalities at home, and actual challenges at workplace. Even if they do get in the formal labor market, paid jobs for women are distributed unequally. Greater participation of married women in the workforce has not eliminated egalitarian views and the division of domestic labor is still more unequal than predicted (Brines, 1994). When gender-based division of labor adds on to that, women’s unpaid housework and their ‘natural’ duty of caregiver more likely to increase the gap between male and female income levels. More specifically, in this type of gendered division of labor, time is taken into account as an important relational dimension of poverty, while housework is not given a material value. Patriarchal norms play colossal role in the way work is perceived. “The decision to enter the workforce is not confined to women” (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000, p.127). The male-dominated family structure, especially in poor urban families, has a direct influence on this decision. Male members do not want female members of their family to work outside because then the household labor is disrupted. When women have to work due to financial instabilities, husbands and other family members play the intermediary role to choose jobs and workplaces for women. Their motive is to find a “safe” workplace for women in order to protect their “family honor”. For instance, husbands may use their contacts to reach out families that are looking for a cleaning, cooking or childcare jobs and actually take them to the house at first to make sure they are not a threat (Erman et al., 2002).
If we wanted to examine and evaluate a household within the context of income adequacy, we would find different aspects that affect a household’s status of poor, middle-income or high-income. In a patriarchal society, if there is a single breadwinner -traditionally the husband- and his income is enough to feed his family then there is no need for the wife to work, she is the dependent. Having a job means more than employment and income for women. It reduces women’s dependence on their families and liberates them from oppressive grip of patriarchal norms (Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits, 2008). In the modern world, women’s economic independence is especially crucial due to the diversity of families that are growing, including single parenthood. Even if they are employed, single parents—often mothers in particular—are far more likely to live in poverty than other kinds of families which leads to intergenerational poverty (Nieuwenhuis et al., 2018). According to Rahman (2013), poverty is a household characteristic, and the dependency theory suggests that the number of dependent household members increases the chances for a household to become poor. The internal causes of poverty are not limited to household members. Households with very young and very old members also increases the chances to stay poor. However, if the head of the house of old aged, with his experiences and skills poverty may come out of the picture (Rahman, 2013). Female leading households become more vulnerable to poverty due to inequalities of income; female workers earning less for the same work they do with their male counterparts.

2.5. Home-Based Workers

The recent shifts in the global economy and the restructuring of the international manufacturing process that has been taking place over the past decades, have had distinct effects on the working men and women. Women’s participation in the wage work is dependent on their ability to take care of their families as women continue to bear the majority of household work in most countries worldwide (Chant & Pedwell, 2008). According to Women’s Labor Report, 13.3 million women in Turkey are unable to participate in working life due to domestic and care responsibilities. Out of those working, three out of every ten women are informally employed and 73% of part-time workers are unregistered (2022). Unequal distribution of resources, gender
discrimination and educational and systemic inequalities lead women to look for ways to survive.

According to WIEGO (2012), there are two types of home-based workers. First one is self-employed home-based workers who are self-reliant; along with paying for utilities and transportation, they purchase their own equipment, supplies, and materials. Although they occasionally sell to foreign markets, they mainly sell their products and services locally. While some may have unpaid family members working with them, the majority do not hire outside help. Second type is called sub-contracted home-based workers and might be known as ‘homeworkers.’ They are usually hired through a middleman by bigger firms, materials are given but unaware of the end product. They get paid by piece, but they might have to pay for most of the costs of production such as workplace, equipment, and electricity (Sarıoğlu, 2012).

As a part of the globalization trend that accelerated around 1980’s, Turkey adopted export-led approach to the industrialization process and one of the most notable outcomes has been “normalization of the informal employment relations” (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008, p.1). While most of the business enjoyed the ‘flexibility’ of the recruitment process, they also suffered from the unpredictability of the market; interest rates, energy prices and currency rates that are constantly in motion. In order to continue to benefit from the flexibility, firms have developed new ways to divide the growing industrial cities into multiple types of labor. In this setting, women emerged as a new source of industrial worker, working from home. HBW comes with its own complications; it is industrial production, but it does not get exposed to surveillance of the administrative figures (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008). It is no coincidence that industrial production factories look similar and most likely is inspired by Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon, an architectural surveillance type created to monitor prisoners (Foucault, 1979).

In order to understand how women fit into the global industrial structure, Balaban and Sarıoğlu examined various studies conducted throughout years, starting from the 19th century. Before the industrial revolution, putting out system was growing popularity throughout England and European Continent and women were at the very center of
this early form of informal employment. Although the factory system was later accepted as the universally ideal form of production, growing need for informal employment brought back the importance of HBW. It has been proven that women are hidden wage workers rather than housewives, and their labor and earnings are crucial to the survival of low-income families. Yet, their role in the society did not heal despite their vital role in the industrialization; they have rather became more prone to exploitation. Plenty of studies put out the conflicting impacts of HBW on women’s position within household; even though they are contributors to both domestic economy and capitalist accumulation they are still viewed as inferior at both spheres. The structural need to regulate labor practices played a crucial role to tie class and gender dynamics together within the worldwide industrial systems. HBW is deeply rooted in societal and familial ties and serves as an active bridge to make a correlation between two determinants: one is labor control, and the other is women's subordination (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008).

In most patriarchal societies, women are left home all by themselves, with nothing but materials and skills on their hands. As women’s labor taken advantage as cheap labor, they are dragged into home-based work. This form of work devalues women labor as a quality component by taking place at home, women experience exploitation caused by informal work in first hand (Aşkın & Aşkın, 2019). They are deprived from the labor rights such as social security, child care, and even minimum wage when they perform “reproduction activities”. As a part of their strategy to overcome financial difficulties, women offer their unpaid labor to household members. Childcare or caregiver roles in general are the first examples that comes into mind and these activities become even more important in times of extreme poverty yet remains unseen. Reproduction activities include a wide range of areas from daily household chores such as cooking, cleaning to reproduction of consumer goods that is usually sourced outside; sewing, knitting, repairs and handicrafts in order to reduce costs (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000).

Economic and socio-cultural factors impact women to find alternative ways to work. In house responsibilities that patriarchal and societal norms put on women every day, prepares a basis for women to involve in informal economy, working from home.
Informal employment does not better women’s place in society and home, on the contrary it reinforces the existing inequalities in the job markets and maintains the feminization of poverty by multiplying it (Aşkın & Aşkın, 2019). In societies dominated by patriarchy, male members of the family are responsible for providing for the home, whereas female members are responsible for managing the daily needs of the household, often with very little given to them. It is not desirable for women to “work outside” and accepted as a shame, not only for the female members of the family but also for the male members as well. It is then seen as that he cannot be a sufficient provider, he is disrespectful and not “male” enough. When the household gets into financial troubles where the male cannot adequately provide, female members of such households look into ways for working from their homes, not going against the patriarchal norms. Flexibility of informal work plays a reconciling role between women's gendered division of labor at home and their income earning obligations (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000). Informal jobs pass through women’s family and social circle’s approval as these jobs reconcile with household labor and actually seen as a continuation of these. These types of work are not seen as a threat to women’s honor and her family’s social image (Erman et al., 2002). To put it in another way, their honor will be protected, their caregiver roles would not be interrupted, and the women will still be able to perform their duties by working from home.

2.6. Case Studies

Fast fashion, especially clothing industry has exploded in the 2000’s and retailers have been trying to keep up with the ever-changing demands. Istanbul has become one of the centers of clothing industry, allowing it to completely take over some neighborhoods. Istanbul has been good at answering demands that require fast production for the biggest retailers around the world (Tokatli et al., 2011), but especially for European-based thanks to its location and cheap-labor offers. Turkish manufacturers have been providing international retailers fast-produced, skilled labor at a very low price.
HBW takes advantage of skilled labor in an adaptable manner; inside the factory settlement organizational options to keep different departments productive all at the same time are limited. Therefore, the managerial choice would be to outsource the routine, unskilled work, hence the informal employment of the women. At this point, HBW practice is divided into two categories based on the distribution of the materials: street networks created by a ‘foremen’ who has mastered the way of reaching out to women through neighborhood relationships. These men tend to load the material to their vehicles and distribute to the women through their first connection of them. This form of HBW has flexibility and almost none control over the workers and the process itself. The other form of HBW has control over workers since women actually come and work in their small HBW shop rather than their own homes. Additionally, these small work places provide opportunities for training of the workers and storage for the materials as well (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008). To further investigate HBW, Balaban and Sarıoğlu looked into garment making process in Istanbul. Reason why Istanbul has become a center for garment production is because it could answer the increasing need of workers with its export-led economy and growing population due to the fast expansion of globalization started at the late 20th century. Simultaneously, big waves of migration took place from rural Turkey to the most urban city: Istanbul. Their research showed that most homeworkers are migrant women from eastern Turkey who are accepted as disadvantaged labor force. They lack support systems such as childcare or not allowed to work outside their homes. Despite working under heavy conditions, mostly under a strict deadline, they earn very less and see it as “pin money” all while continuing their household work (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008). Patriarchy runs heavily within migrant families and shapes the way these families live. Usually, women’s mobility is limited within their families and neighbors. HBW contributes to this restriction by delivering piece works to their doors. Women are often do their work under surveillance of their husbands because in migrant families, men tend to have irregular jobs, or no job at all therefore gives himself the authority to supervise women’s work. In time, some men even open their own workshops at their basement and using female members of his family living upstairs as homeworkers. HBW brings paid work and households into the same circle therefore women’s bargaining power is directly connected to them standing up against male members of their families.
Women under strict patriarchal rules have limited access to different HBW opportunities where women who can negotiate their mobility have more options to choose the work they take (Balaban & Sarıoğlu, 2008).

In her fieldwork on the main garment production district in Istanbul: Merter region, Saniye Dedeoğlu’s interviewees mostly live within walking distance of the garment making workshop in their neighborhood, and home-based workers who got their piece works delivered to their homes. There are two types of workers in these workshops; family members and close relatives who work for the male members. The other type of workers consists of nonrelatives who have almost no connection prior but hired by word of mouth; they are also the first ones to get laid off when necessary. The weakest link of this work is considered the home-based piece workers, seen as the most vulnerable ones because they are usually divorcees or widows or their husbands are unable to support their families (Dedeoğlu, 2010). Even though these workshops rely heavily on female family members, they are always overlooked, controlled, and limited in addition being paid under the minimum wage. Culturally based gender discrimination and patriarchal ideologies limits women’s access to opportunities and better futures. Their household work is unpaid and unseen, their paid work is under paid and overlooked as a mere contribution to the household, while men’s income is considered as the main source of income even if it is less and irregular. However, most women working within their immediate neighborhood or from home seems content about it when they take their domestic role into account. Not spending their time to commute gives them more to focus on their household, so when they work, their decision is limited to the convenience of the circumstances.

Social networks make it an easy access to informal HBW for women; relatives and neighbors play an intermediary role in getting involved in such type of works. For the informal sector, it is generally cleaning, housekeeping, and babysitting jobs that male family members find by asking around their social networks. For the HBW, women are usually involved in the textile sector; labor-intensive HBW that requires hand skills to some extent. Most commons are embroidery and beadwork on clothes and sewing. These jobs usually done by sitting hours fully focused on hands or machines, even without lifting the head. Elif Özlem Aşkıın and Umur Aşkıın conducted research on
home-based work and reached out to 25 women working in garment making sector in Tokat/Erbaa. The women they interviewed had low levels of education, comes from poverty background, and had small children to take care of. HBW is settled based on economic and cultural choices rather than individual preferences. Main reason of their involvement in HBW was financial difficulties both before and after they migrated to city center. They were only able to find informal jobs due to their low levels of education and flexible working. They complained about that these jobs requires patience; they get extremely tired and have pain around neck area; they suffer from backpain and headaches. All of the women stated no one encouraged them to do HBW, they started on their own initiatives and patriarchal figures did not intervene this decision (2019). Just as these small group of women from Erbaa, women in informal HBW constitute the most disadvantaged group among others. Neo-liberal policies that aim to decrease labor costs turn into to such vulnerable groups to maximize profits.

In their research on clothing industry in Turkey, Tokatlı and colleagues interviewed 20 people, 17 whom were women but one of them stood out. One woman working in a garment workshop became a workshop owner herself. After working 10 years in embroidery department, she started her own web of home-based workers, paying by piece work. She believed it is easier for women entrepreneurs like her to access women to work in their workshops because it would be their only option to work (Tokatlı et al., 2011). Thanks to those women, she grew her business in short time and became one of the biggest garment exporters in Turkey. However, it went bankrupt in 2011 and her factory workers had to find it out by shock; they were not picked up by the shuttles and when they went to the factory themselves, they were told they no longer had a job (Barbaros, 2012).

Women factory workers constitutes a large part of exploited paid workers in Turkey. Gender discrimination often leads to being employed at lower costs than men, making women a source of cheap labor in the labor market (Gündüz Hoşgör & Suzuki Him, 2016). In their extensive field work, Gündüz Hoşgör and Suzuki Him followed the long journey a small sea creature named ‘rapana venosa’ from the hands of poor women in Turkey to the table of poor women in Japan. In their study, a specific case was analyzed to examine women’s employment in sea snail production in coastal
villages of the Western Black Sea coast of Turkey. Women are employed through mukhtars of their village who acts as middlemen. Interviews with 31 women revealed that female workers are chosen especially for the most intensive processes such as “sorting/cleaning” because it is seen as a repetition of the work women perform at home. In patriarchal societies, women are seen as the reserve army of labor, a residual population called in when needed and returned when no longer needed. This army shows itself in multiple forms in the modern society and the female population who are mostly domestic workers, constitutes the reserve army for “women’s professions” (Braverman, 1974). In this case, male workers of the factory were registered paid workers but women in the cleaning department were informal, underpaid workers. The cleaning part of the job was monotonous, repetitive and women had small fingers suitable for it. Food related, simple and unskilled work was socially characterized as women’s work. Women accepts this informal job because it is seasonal, flexible and give them room to take care of the housework in the meantime. Just as in other forms of informal work, these women work to make contribution to the household, not become the main provider. They still do not see it as “real work” even though some of them spend every day at the factory, devaluing their hard work (Gündüz Hoşgör & Suzuki Him, 2016).

2.7. Women Empowerment

Migrating to a big city can mean a lot for a rural woman; new environment, modernized social life, and sometimes participation to labor force next to urban women. To some extent autonomy and working outside, economic freedom might even lead to a more egalitarian household, better relationships with their spouses. When patriarchy shows its face in forms of restricting choices for employment under the idea of protecting honor (Erman, 2001), women fall into flexible, informal jobs that are almost invisible to other family members or seen as an extension to their household work. Women’s empowerment has its relative aspects to every sphere one exists in; social, cultural but most importantly economic. Women’s participation in economic life has been a key to empowerment, their bargaining power depends on their portion of household income. Nonetheless, even when they bring money to the
household, women’s labor is almost invisible, particularly in patriarchal societies. They rarely accepted as the main source of income within their families when a male figure brings money as well. More specifically, migrant women’s participation to the labor force is substantially different from active participation into formal labor market. Their low level of education, possible language barriers and lack of work experience cause them to fall behind their competitors in the formal labor sectors in the cities.

For the informal sector urban migrant women tend to lean into cleaning and babysitting and for the HBW, some of the jobs are sewing, knitting, or selling small handcrafts done at home. These jobs are seen as continuation of household labor, not seen as actual work. They are not continuous, do not bring regular income and there is no job security. Moreover, women themselves see these as an extension of their womanly duties, as “leisure occupation”. They do not see it as an actual income they bring in to the household but as a contribution; money they earn becomes invisible therefore their labor is devalued (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000). As they see their work as temporary and insignificant, they still accept the male figures as heads of the family; it is his money that keeps the household together and so are his rules. The unrecognition of their labor helps traditional understanding of patriarchy and puts a barrier to women’s empowerment (Erman et al., 2002). Consequently, lack of self-confidence caused by not being seen as one of the main income providers, not being able to gain economic independence from their male family members and being more subjected to womanly household work even when they work, hinders the empowerment of women. Migrant families’ attempts to control them in participation in economic and social lives even after they take part in labor force in urban areas, prevents women to develop senses of agency and autonomy. Their families keep acting as the main welfare institution in the name of protecting their family honor, limits the empowerment chances of rural migrant women through paid work (Erman et al., 2002). In cultures where women are identified based on their families, they get a taste of empowerment when they prove their worth to their families and communities (Scheyvens, 1998). However, even though they are only able to make “contributions”, they feel “somebody” when they do. They feel important and useful when the little money they make turns into groceries, toys or utensils for their kids, a small kitchen appliance they have been wanting for a long time. They feel powerful only to seize the day, it does not bring
structural changes into their lifestyles, communities they belong. They feel empowered to cope, not to change.

Just as every women have their own understanding of self; they are aware of their capabilities. Often when they challenge their limits, they are also testing their power, sense of agency. Nonetheless, it is also dangerous to romanticize women’s agency and strategies without acknowledging the outcomes for women’s empowerment (Beşpınar, 2010). Beşpınar gave her insight about this theory based on her research with 60 women from different classes in urban Turkey. She argued women’s agency differs based on their class because each women exist in different social structures. Looking into various work-related strategies of different women would reveal whether those strategies contribute to their empowerment or not. Women of all classes develop strategies to gain economic security and their daily tactics are often effective. While lower class women afraid of their spouses’ reactions if they find out their informal jobs or their purchases, upper-class women may choose to hide some of their income to avoid interference from their husbands. These “tactics born of limited possibilities” do improve their position in short term, but no close to helping them to establish a gender-egalitarian future in the long term. In fact, their negotiations contribute to patriarchal ideologies and traditional gender roles and are therefore in no way helping women’s collective empowerment (Beşpınar, 2010).

Dealing with poverty, social exclusion, and gender inequalities on a daily basis push women to create alternative solutions to meet their needs, whether it is something for themselves or to provide for their families. The informal economy provides quick access to flexible jobs without many requirements, but it comes with costs on women’s wellbeing. To what extent they are willing to sacrifice is determined mainly by their autonomous decisions. They weigh the benefits of income against disadvantages, underpaid wages, lack of social security and long working hours. Additionally, challenging societal and patriarchal norms limits women’s options for work if they “allow” at all. Pressure to fulfill traditional caregiver roles at home lead them to accept poor working conditions and sacrifice themselves. Despite the challenges, many women take a risk to face exploitation to meet their financial needs due to absence of
alternatives. Ultimately, the extent to which women are prepared to compromise for economic survival reflects a complex combination of individual agency, socio-economic restrictions, and cultural implications. Overcoming the root causes of poverty, social exclusion and gender inequality as a society is a crucial step to ensure empowerment is permanent, not temporary to save the day.
CHAPTER 3

FIELD DESIGN: UNDERSTANDING THE BEADWORK

3.1. Introduction

This thesis aims to bring a unique beadwork into light and explore the common characteristics of women, who keep themselves busy with this home-based work. The methodology of this study takes basis from intersectionality aspect of feminist theory. Recognizing and studying the overlapping identities and social classes that women are categorized under every day, helps us understand enigmas laying behind patterns.

Women of poverty in urban ghettos make the most of informal workers in Turkey. Rural to urban migration creates a center for marginalized populations in urban ghettos and social exclusion of such marginalized groups traps these women within their small communities. Women tend to turn to informal work as a result of limited access to formal education and employment opportunities all during the challenging process of adjusting to urban way of living. For many women in the urban ghettos, informal work serves as a flexible option as it is easier to access and quit these jobs. It creates a small room of freedom for them so that they do not neglect their care responsibilities at home.

This case study forms around a group of Zazaki housewives living in a squatter area consisting of two neighborhoods of Yüreğir/Adana, keeping themselves occupied with a unique beadwork and the middleman who is the main provider of these bead to these women. Interview questions aim to understand this beadwork within two contexts: one being the general information and working conditions and other being the outcome of this work the impacts and empowerment aspect on women. As the research area consists of two neighborhoods facing each other, to avoid clutter of names, this zone will be
referred as “the Neighborhood” for the rest of the thesis.

Qualitative research is about studying humans, circumstances, and their interactions in different settings. It is about studying patterns to understand how people shape their world, how they see based on their differences. Qualitative research is predominantly based on case studies and analysis based on the qualitative date collected during the process. Most common qualitative data is text; notes taken, and transcription of interviews conducted during the research (Gibbs, 2007). For this case study, multiple forms of qualitative data collection techniques were used to understand the patterns. Demographic information and migration history were taken into consideration in order to reach an intersection point for these women. In-depth interview questions consist of both open ended and closed ended questions to form a more specific understanding of the circumstances involved. For the middlemen, different set of questions were prepared in order to see how the beadwork making process is operated and what happens to the beads after women are done with their parts. Their demographic and migration information were taken as well to create an association with the women.

3.2. Migration History and Description of the Field

Bingöl

The villagers of Alaaddin including my family (who were prominent), were living in Genç region of the city Bingöl during the War of Independence. Due to long-standing blood vengeances in the region, one group of tribe decided to separate their villages, including my grandfather Ali who was given properties in Alaaddin village of Genç region. Even though the village was one of the most developed ones with 220-250 residences of the region, agriculture and livestock activities were limited as it is located at the foot of a mountain. Even the electricity arrived at the village only 15 years ago. Village people could not go to the city center
since it was far away and there was no roads and transportation facilities. Only mukhtar would go to the center every six or 12 months to register births and deaths. The villagers used to trade their corps and small cattle with travelling vendors who came to the village every 10 days. The vendors traveled by horse or mule like a mini hardware store. The villagers would exchange their wheat, walnuts and buy cloth and utensils. Since money was very scarce, they traded by exchanging goods. The village had walnuts, corn and wheat that was valuable for exchange and the unit of measure was the tin. One tin of walnuts is usually exchanged, for example, pots, needles, and thread, and especially gas oil since there was no electricity.

Going to Egypt to study religion at the Al-Azhar University, my grandfather Ali became a respectable man at his village between the years 1950 - 1962, his words were highly effective and important. His nickname was Hoca Ali (Teacher Ali), and even the teachers who came to the village had consulted him because there was no other educated person in the village, and very few were literate. At that time, it was almost impossible for anyone from village to have been educated abroad so people treated him as a decision-maker, one of the leaders. He was literate in Zazaki, Turkish, Arabic and a little Kurdish. When he was living in Adana, the police even used to call him for translation in the years 1972 - 1978.

My grandfather and his tribe had worked hard to improve the village, especially a community clinic to be built because the government were not really paying attention to the district. They also had to deal with a lot of serious problems at the village during the Second World War. Fugitives and bandits would take refuge in the village for food and shelter and the villagers were oppressed by soldiers from time to time because of helping them. They would sometimes oppose and sometimes took the role of a mediator to talk with the commander. Blood vengeances, upheavals and livelihood problems grew in Alaaddin and surrounding villages and villagers started to go for seasonal work. After losing his two brothers to Korean War, my grandfather joined to seasonal workers going Adana to work in the cotton fields in the late 1950’s. They would work 10 months in the city, save some money and come back to the village for 2 months. However,
my grandfather found another job as working as a head cook (evdeci) for the workers in rich family farms. He worked as a seasonal worker until 1967 with the other villagers, because of both financial difficulties and disorder in the village. When he had made a name for himself and saved some money, he decided not to deal with blood feuds and move with his family to Çukurova, to the big city. Packing all their belongings and taking a train in Genç, my father remembers well that it was a long journey with lots of bread and boiled eggs.

**Adana**

The Yüreğir region of Adana was one of the first squatter choices of Zazaki migrants when they first started to migrate from Bingöl in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, thus it became an urban ghetto in the city. My grandparents were one of the first generation of settlers arriving at Yüreğir, and they usually rented slum houses in Akıncılar or Yavuzlar neighborhoods. At the times, there were almost no proper houses, no small shops to buy basic foods, the roads were terrible, and the nearest bus stop was in another neighborhood. In such neighborhoods, migrants including children, tend to work temporary jobs until they settle down and in Çukurova region this job is usually seasonal cotton-picking work. A farmer’s truck picks up the workers early in the morning and brings them back in the evening. The farmer takes notes of how many kilograms of cotton they picked every day and pays them weekly.

My grandfather Ali kept working as a cook until he opened a small variety store in 1972 and later on a tea shop in the historical city center, nearby Taşköprü and Büyüksaat. The tea shop carried great importance for Zazaki migrants from Bingöl and nearby cities, and also for the police department. His tea shop was in a historical landmark named “Tuzhani” with other small stores, it resembled a small shopping mall where everyone in Adana would stop by. The old police department was right behind Tuzhani, and they would put someone in the tea shop as a waiter to catch up on the latest news of illegal businesses. My grandfather’s tea shop carried greater importance for the Zazaki community. After seasonal workers arrived at the bus station, the first place they would come was his tea shop. They would drop their beds and bags at the tea shop to meet
brokers. The brokers/intermediaries were people who found workers for farmers, and they would get money both from the farmer and the worker. If the worker did not have any money to give the broker, the broker would tell the headman of the farm to cut off from their first payment. Seasonal workers would work for 10 months and leave their belongings with my grandfather. They were usually illiterate and had no one they knew in the city; they would leave the money they earned to my grandfather to take it back when they go back to the village for 2 months. My grandfather would keep everyone’s account on his notebook and helped a lot of Zazaki migrants to settle down. One of the Zazaki settlers from Elazığ that came to Adana with nothing also stopped by my grandfather’s tea shop and borrowed money to work in farms. Later when they settled in the Neighborhood as a family, they started doing beadwork and accumulated a good amount of capital in a short time. They invested it tea business and this family is now one of the biggest tea suppliers in Turkey and abroad.

After living in extreme poverty and constantly moving different neighborhoods, my grandparents saved enough to build their own home at their current Neighborhood during late 1980’s. As a result of working very hard on the fields, other migrants were also able to save money to buy lands and build their own homes and opened small shops at the city center just like my grandfather Ali. After the first successful settlers gaining status in the region, rest of the Zazaki community in Bingöl and nearby cities started to migrate to the Neighborhood as well, slowly forming it as a small copy of Bingöl. Once these families settled down properly and men got more permanent jobs, women started to focus on their household. Even though these families had gained the means and opportunities to move to the more urban parts of town later, they chose to stay within their comfort zone, knowing their neighbors and speaking the same language, coming from a common cultural background and being able to understand each other through similar societal norms.
3.3. Selecting Participants

The field for this study was not chosen between similar cases but the study itself is based on the uniqueness of the field. Therefore, it is safe to say that this study has emerged from these participants and became a case study. Table 1 shows the migration history of the women engaged in beadwork; almost all of them being from a small village in Bingöl and either they or their families moved to the Neighborhood in Adana that introduced them to beadwork. Sixteen women were born in Bingöl and later migrated to Adana. Those with ‘Not Applicable’ in the table are second or third generation women born in Adana. Those who were born in different cities (W14, W24) in the table are those who came to their families as brides and were introduced to beadwork in this way.

Table 1. Migration history of the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Previous places lived</th>
<th>Year of Birth</th>
<th>Arrival to Adana</th>
<th>Arrival to the Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>Bingöl/ Genç</td>
<td>Bingöl</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>Bingöl/ Genç</td>
<td>Bingöl</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W7</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>Bingöl/ Genç</td>
<td>Bingöl</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1983-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
<td>Previous places lived</td>
<td>Year of Birth</td>
<td>Arrival to Adana</td>
<td>Arrival to the Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W12</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W14</td>
<td>Diyarbakır</td>
<td>Diyarbakır</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W16</td>
<td>Bingöl/Genç</td>
<td>Bitlis, Elazığ, Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W20</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W21</td>
<td>Bingöl/Genç</td>
<td>Bingöl</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W22</td>
<td>Bingöl/Genç</td>
<td>Bingöl</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W25</td>
<td>Adana</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the first women migrants were illiterate and spoke only Zazaki language hence getting a formal job in the city was out of the question. The second generation of settlers went to school and adapted to Turkish language quickly but very few daughters were allowed to go to school. Most of these women later attended the evening school to learn how to read and write Turkish and were qualified to receive a literacy certificate that is accepted as primary level education. I myself remember going one of these classes with my aunt while I was in primary school and witnessed her dedication to improve her reading and writing skills over the following years. We were reading books together and even drafted a small recipe book for her cooking as well. Just like my aunt, many women of a wide age range in the neighborhood were determined to become literate in Turkish. Those women later became the subject of this thesis.

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1 Not only they could not read and write in Turkish but there is only a small number of people that can read and write in Zazaki in the Neighborhood. Currently, the third generation of these migrants do not even speak Zazaki. The language is fading away with the natural assimilation process.
3.4. Introducing Participants and Their Household Characteristics

Almost all of the women I interviewed are Zazaki and rooted back to Genç village of the Eastern city Bingöl whether they were born there or in Adana. There is only two of them (W14, W24) that are not Zazaki, but they are married with someone from Zazaki backgrounds and join the families. One woman hesitated to state her ethnicity, so she identified herself as Turkish. Almost all of them are owners to their homes (built/bought by the first generation of the family) and live as a nuclear family so I ruled out the ‘type of family’ column of the Table 2. The primary source of income for households was most commonly stated as the patriarchal figure of the family. One pattern I noticed while asking this question was that even if the woman herself or more than one person in the household was working, the main source of income was seen as the patriarchal figure’s income, even if it was his pension.

First and most of the second generation Zazaki housewives living in the neighborhood were not allowed to go to school because of partly extreme poverty. They had just come from a small village with almost nothing and every member of the family had to work but because of the language barrier and limited job opportunities, only option was to work in the big fields of Çukurova region. As Table 2 indicates the demographic information of the participants, the youngest interviewee is 22 years old and the oldest one is 68. Four women (W4, W11, W26, W27) had no education at all, eight are primary level educated, four are middle level, seven are high school, three are associate degree graduates, one is a vocational school graduate and only two of them are university graduates. Currently, 10 out of 30 women are employed and 20 women are housewives. 17 of the 20 housewives are married. Except for one (W16), all other married women are housewives.

Before beads arrive to the neighborhood, six of the women who are now relatively older than the others, had worked in the agricultural fields of Çukurova region. It was not preferable for a married woman to work in the fields, so they had stopped once they got married.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Number of Child</th>
<th>Main source of income in the household</th>
<th>Number of people living in the house</th>
<th>Number of people working in the house</th>
<th>Property status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Factory worker</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Previously small grocery owner</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Her father’s pension</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Her father’s pension</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Number of Child</td>
<td>Main source of income in the household</td>
<td>Number of people living in the household</td>
<td>Number of people working in the house</td>
<td>Property status</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W9</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W11</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Her husbands pension</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Family apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Medical Secretary</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself and her sister</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Number of Child</td>
<td>Main source of income in the household</td>
<td>Number of people living in the house</td>
<td>Number of people working in the house</td>
<td>Property status</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Her fathers pension</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W16</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Herself and her husband</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself and her sister</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Small clothing store owner</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Herself and her sister</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Open High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her fathers pension</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W21</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Number of Child</td>
<td>Main source of income in the household</td>
<td>Number of people living in the house</td>
<td>Number of people working in the house</td>
<td>Property status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W23</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W26</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Her husband</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W27</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Her daughter and her 2 sisters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself and her 2 sisters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sixteen of the women had never worked, four of them were students, two of them were factory workers, one was a teacher, and one was a hair dresser when they first met the beads. Arrival of the beads created an extraordinary opportunity for women and young girls since now there was a way to earn money without leaving their home or as it is commonly described as ‘going out to work.’ Currently, nine of the women have regular jobs and they do not regularly do beadwork. They stopped doing beadwork after they got jobs and only do it occasionally to help their relatives or rarely for themselves. Briefly, there is a pattern that when women find regular jobs outside home, they do not involve in beadwork anymore.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Number of Child</th>
<th>Main source of income in the household</th>
<th>Number of people living in the house</th>
<th>Number of people working in the house</th>
<th>Property status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Laboratory Biologist</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Herself and her brother</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W30</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Her mothers pension and her brother</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5. Interviewing Process

Thirty women, two middlemen, one bead store owner and one prison warden were interviewed for this thesis in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of the beadwork and the process from beginning to end product. Finding 30 women, who are occupied with the beadwork and is willing to give an interview would have been difficult if I had not any connection and be a total stranger from outside. However, as it was stated earlier, this thesis has formed around these Zazaki housewives whom I watched threading beads for years. Some of them are my relatives, some are neighbors and acquaintances and a few
of them are women I found by knocking on doors. With the help of W30, I started by making a list of those who I already knew that is involved in beadwork. She contacted with most of the women and each of them recommended another woman, a neighbor, or a friend, therefore the interview process moved as a snowball sampling method. There were a couple of women who did not want to be interviewed at all, they were concerned that it might cause trouble for them or their relatives who are the bead traders. Just the opposite, there was a woman that constantly asked to be interviewed even though she have not done any beadwork at all. She insisted that she had watched W30 do it for years and she has enough knowledge to say a thing or so, but I had to reject her. Almost all of the women participants were interviewed individually in their homes. One participant (W27) did not speak Turkish, so her daughter had to translate the answers to me. Some of the participants’ kids were also present during the interviews. The former middleman now runs a small grocery store, so several customers interrupted the interview.

Interview questions include demographic background information, bead making process, women’s empowerment, middlemen and end product related questions that are given in Appendix C. The interviews with the women and the middlemen were conducted in December 2023 and took around a week to complete. Given that all of the beadwork runs in the same neighborhood, similar to a hub, it was not challenging to reach those who are involved in this business. The middlemen were relatives of some the women I talked to, and those women introduced me to them.

All of the interviews were tape recorded and notes were also taken during the interviews. All participants signed a consent form and I specifically underlined that it was anonymous in order for them to not feel under pressure. Even though few of the women and one of the middlemen were hesitant about the recording, they agreed to do it. However, once I stopped the recording and thank the interviewee, there was a general tendency to tell more and speak more comfortably. On average, at the beginning of the research interviews lasted around 15 minutes as I was not experienced. Over time, it lasted much longer as it continued as conversations.
W30 accompanied me for most of the interviews and during some of those, she would take over the bowl of beads from the woman and kept threading for her while we were in the other room, interviewing. One of the women was cleaning out her kitchen when we got to her house and W30 took over the cleaning cloth and kept going. This was another pattern that I had actually caught up even before this thesis; these women would thread each other’s beads without a single mention of getting a share or expecting anything in return. It was just an act of selflessness and example of social solidarity that the beads created for the Zazaki women.

The interviews with the bead store owner and the prison warden were conducted in February 2024. I found the bead store by asking around and found it in the historical city center, in an old bazaar where artificial flowers and toys are sold wholesale. The store owner was also Zazaki, but he moved out from the neighborhood almost 20 years ago. In general, he was not willing to talk about the financial parts of the interview, he rather chose to talk about the traditional aspects of it. He did not give me answers on how much they make from beads, he told me to write down some amount of profit only and told me rest is “trade secret”.

I reached out to the prison warden through W29, he was one of her close friend’s husbands and I talked to him over the phone. He was very helpful, answered all of my questions and talked to a few prisoners about beadwork and gathered information about the process of selling it afterwards. He explained how such type of activities look from an administrative perspective and gave his insight as the person in charge and responsible for everything that happens in prison.

In Turkey, there are shops that sell products made by convicts and prisoners under the Ministry of Justice, named as Institution of Prisons and Detention Houses Workshops.² They aim to help prisoners reintegrate into society by helping them to pursue a career by allowing them to take part in work related activities (Ceza

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² https://iydb.adalet.gov.tr/
There are two shops in Adana, and I visited both of them in February 2024, hoping to find beadwork products and get information. Unfortunately, there was no beadwork products and execution and protection officers in both shops explained to me that they are not sold there.

3.6. Data Analysis Process

To shape the interview, I used a 3-part table of concepts to gather general information and reveal common characteristics. In the first part, I aimed to bring together the concepts of who these home-based working women are, their working conditions and how they relate to the empowerment aspect of the beads. In the second part, I formed my questions to understand each concept and in the last part, I aimed to analyze the concepts based on answers to the questions. Setting the right tone of my interview questions was important for women to feel comfortable to share details. I grouped my questions into two sections: First is the demographic information with migration history and beadwork related questions, and the second one is the questions related with the empowerment. For the middlemen, demographic information was also collected but the open-ended questions differed from those for women. I took down notes during the interviews to determine discussion points thus making the transcription process easier. I designed my meetings with the bead store owner and the prison warden to learn more about the financial aspect of the beadwork and to properly embed it in the analysis of the Global Commodity Chains chapter.

3.7. Limitations of the Research and Lessons Learned

Throughout the interviews I realized I could have added few more questions and spare a couple of them that seemed repetitive. Some of the women pointed out to me that I already knew the answers to a couple of questions hence they could not comprehend why I was asking them. Two women I had planned to interview
refused to do it because they thought I might get them in trouble. I had also
planned to interview the current middleman’s boss, the owner of the business,
however I found out that he was out of town while I was there in December 2023
and when I went back in February 2024, I tried reaching out to him through two
of the women I interviewed, he was their uncle. Apparently, he had a bad-
tempered reputation and both women were afraid to contact him, they do not even
go to his house. One of them did not even call him and finally when the other
woman could not stand my persistence and called, he strictly rejected to see me
for an interview. In addition, my interviews with the middlemen and the bead
store owner did not go well as I planned. I could not get precise answers to my
questions regarding their income. People close to them told me that it is because
they are afraid to give me details since they do informal business, and they might
think I would either report them to police, cause their businesses trouble or want
to go in this business myself. Regarding the date related questions, some of the
answers have been vague since most women do not know their exact birth dates,
most of the first settlers registered into the population after they had migrated to
Adana and couple of women could not remember dates due to their old age. I had
to calculate estimate dates based on their answers. Despite a few disadvantages
of being the community insider, I benefited more of the advantages of it. Easily
reaching out to 30 women and two middlemen was one of the easiest parts of my
research. Neither the women nor the men questioned who I was, what I was doing
walking around with a notepad in my hand, asking questions around the
neighborhood. Everyone was very welcoming and eager to help me with my
‘homework’. 
CHAPTER 4

FEMALE EMPOWERMENT THROUGH BEADS AT HOME

4.1. Introduction

The second part of the interview consisted of open-ended questions where the answers would provide insight into how, when, and why these women get involved in this unique home-based work, how it has affected them over the years and to understand this trade from the middlemen point of view. Some of the questions the sked of women are: What influenced them to start beadwork, what are some of the side effects of long hours of beadwork, are they satisfied with the income they earn, and if not, why do they continue to do it. I divided the questions for women into two sections: Operational questions and empowerment related questions. Operational questions aimed to gather data on their profile, their ‘beadwork’ habits while empowerment questions are aimed to learn about the advantages and disadvantages of beadwork and its impact on women. The answers should provide insight on aspects of beadwork as follows: intersectionality, agency, and autonomy over beads. Meanwhile, the responses from the interviews with the middlemen, the bead store owner and the prison warden should provide insights into issues such as exploitation and global commodity chains when compared to women’s responses.

4.2. Ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to how individuals perceive themselves as wither members of specific ethnic groups or not and it plays a crucial role in how they socialize, vote, and co-operate; in other words how they put their beliefs into actions (McAll, 1990). On the one hand, it is human nature to form ethnic groups or engage in
ethnic solidarity, while on the other hand, ethnicity is a common culture formed by a group of people sharing a certain way of life. What is important here is that ignoring the differences within ethnic groups and emphasize the commonalities, forming ethnic solidarities to develop urban livelihood strategies (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000).

To make a connection how 30 women started doing beadwork, I asked them about their past, their occupations and in addition to demographic data. The demographic information of the women in the Chapter 3 revealed that, almost all women have the same ethnic background; either they or their families had migrated from the same Zazaki village in Bingöl to the same Neighborhood in Adana, where they are engaged in beadwork. As Table 3 shows below, just like the women, two middlemen I interviewed are also Zazaki, are primary level educated, married, and have children. The interviews also revealed that the middlemen are relatives of some of the women and came from the same village in Bingöl.

Table 3. Demographic information of the middlemen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former middleman</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current middleman</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Zazaki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the demographic information of the women and men interviewed is compared, it is seen that beadwork is done by Zazaki people who come from the same village and currently live in the same neighborhood. Beadwork started as an informal business in Turkey, people were smuggling beads through Gaziantep and Kilis from Syria and Cyprus due to appealing tax-free prices before 1980’s and bead was mostly used on a special needle work on women’s headscarves. After gradual migration to Yüreğir region in Adana started in the late 1960’s and
early 1970’s, Zazaki people of Genç region from Bingöl searched for sources of income. From the moment the migrant arrives in the city, ethnic ties gain strategical importance an economic link in the process of finding shelter and employment and adapting to urban life in socio-economic terms (Ayata, 1991). A few families discovered a unique type of beadwork through their business connections in the mid 1980’s, invested in this business and provide job opportunities to women in their neighborhood. The middlemen buy the beads from a manufacturer in Istanbul, bring them to their warehouse in the neighborhood and distribute them door to door to the women. The women thread these beads and gather them into bulks and wait for the middleman to come back to their door again to collect the beads and pay them for their labor. What is seen here is an example of middleman minority; a theory that an ethnic or religious group that are occupied with similar positions in their societies play an important economic role. They act as intermediaries between producers and consumers, becoming traders or money lenders (Bonacich, 1973). For this case study, the middlemen’s ethnicity and gender intersects as they hold the capital leader status in their own society. Both of them are Zazaki men who exploit women of their own ethnicity, using their skills for a very labor-intensive work and not paying their fair share.

Middlemen themselves might have experienced hostility, discrimination and bullying ranging from attempts to cut off their livelihoods to social exclusion by their host community. Cultural differences in the society, being exposed to prejudices and stereotypes by the host population can lead to tension but this tension is often stemmed from feeling threatened economic competition from minority groups. These labor conflicts increased with the liberalization process in the post-colonial period with the emerging sub-groups as nations seek to gain control over their economies (Bonacich, 1973). While different middleman minorities may experience similar hostilities, the economic role they play varies depending on multiple factors such as their ethnic, cultural, religious, historical, and political background.
4.3. Agency And Autonomy Over Beads

In order to get an understanding of the agency aspect, I asked to understand why women why they do this beadwork, how they got involved in the first place and how much it interrupts their life. In order words, to what extent they allow this HBW to take up from their lives. To what extent that income is adequate.

Table 4 below provides information about what women were occupied with before they engaged in beadwork, when and how they started beadwork, who influenced them to start. Most of the women did not engage in any kind of work before the beads and within those who did, the majority of them worked in the fields of Çukurova, engaged in agriculture as it has been the dominant livelihood of the region. However, they noted that they stopped working after they got married, since now they had a household, a husband, and kids to take care of.

Most of the women started doing beadwork during primary school, age range of 8-10 and several of them during high school age range of 14-17 depending on the year beads first arrive to the neighborhood. Some of first-generation settlers met the beads when they were older (W1, W11, W27) as the middlemen just started to get involved in bead trade in the Neighborhood. Most commonly, women started beadwork by seeing from their relatives and neighbors and they were curious about the beads when they were children. Relatives of W3 and W11 were bead traders when they started and W14, W24 and W25 met the beads when they got married, moved, and saw it from their new neighbors.

Table 4. History before beadwork and starting point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Jobs/Activities before beadwork</th>
<th>When they started beadwork</th>
<th>How they started beadwork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>Working in cotton field before marriage</td>
<td>Around age of 45</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
<td>Seen from elderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Jobs/Activities before beadwork</td>
<td>When they started beadwork</td>
<td>How they started beadwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W3</td>
<td>Working in fields</td>
<td>Age 17</td>
<td>Relative was bead traders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 16</td>
<td>Mother-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>Factory worker</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Mother and sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Around age of 11</td>
<td>Neighbors, curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W7</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>Working in fields (strawberry, pistachio, cotton) before marriage</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W9</td>
<td>Factory worker before marriage</td>
<td>Around age of 11</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W10</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
<td>Bead traders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W11</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 25</td>
<td>Relative was bead trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W12</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>6th grade</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W14</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 30</td>
<td>Relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>When she was a child</td>
<td>Bigger sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W16</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Sisters, enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W17</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 16</td>
<td>Neighbors and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W18</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Neighbors and relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W19</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Neighbors and relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Jobs/Activities before beadwork</td>
<td>When they started beadwork</td>
<td>How they started beadwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W20</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>After primary school</td>
<td>Bigger sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W21</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W22</td>
<td>Working in fields</td>
<td>Age 9</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W23</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Neighbors and relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>When she married and moved to the Neighborhood</td>
<td>Saw around neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W25</td>
<td>Hair dresser</td>
<td>Age 34</td>
<td>Neighbors, enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W26</td>
<td>Working in fields</td>
<td>Age 14</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W27</td>
<td>Working in strawberry fields</td>
<td>Around age 34</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W28</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W29</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Mother and sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W30</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Age 15</td>
<td>Relatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few of the women talked about how they became enthusiastic when they saw beads from their elders and started beading with one needle when they were kids, seen below. Later as they got older, they moved up to six needles and eventually to 12 needles. Women of close age told me how they got together as teen girls and raced each other to see who will finish theirs first and it was just fun then.

**W17:** We used to get together with neighbors and friends and spend joyful times together, I mean, I miss those days very much now. We were competing, whoever was faster, Çiğdem was always beating me, none of us could beat her, and Dr. Hatice. Not just like that, a machine. She did it very super. We couldn't beat Çiğdem, Çiğdem could not beat her... Ah, you took me back to the 90s, those were very good times.
W21: But in the past, when we first started beading, we used to thread beads better when we were crowded and gathered together, we used to compete, but now there is no such thing. We used to learn by looking at each other, wondering how the other one threads it, how she finished her bulk quickly, but I could not. Now everyone can do it, no one needs to get any information from anyone else.

W29: We would thread them while chatting, we would race to see who would finish their beads first, faster.

W30: We used to be a crowded family, many cousins. We used to sit in a different uncle's house every day and thread them, it was very enjoyable. There were hardworking girls who would thread 5 kilograms, 10 kilograms and half a bag.
When they were just getting started, they did not realize that the beads would become a part of their life and identity in such a short time. Since they had limited options to work, these colorful little beads gave them an opportunity to make money from their homes with no training required. Most of them were young girls and beadwork provided an environment for them to get together to socialize without leaving the neighborhood and earn their money at the same time. ‘Back in the day’ has been the most common phrase I heard during my interviews with these women. Almost all of them somewhat romanticize their first interactions and experiences with beadwork, they still yearn for those years. They remember how entertaining and fulfilling it was for them. They were the ones who made it possible for their families to build houses, they feel accomplished and proud.

Nowadays, although they continue to this occupation, beads have lost some of its charm. It does not pay as much; the income has lost its value and the women have taken on caregiver roles as they got older. They got married or have other family members to take care of, households to run and the those who got regular jobs outside have quit beadwork. On top of everything, after decades of threading tiny beads in a sitting and bending position, most women suffer from a number of health conditions, as in other labor-intensive jobs. Most common ones are constant neck and back pains, with a few serious hernia conditions. Beads also creates damage on eyes since they are extremely small and requires constant monotonous work. W16 has a permanent, severe eye damage from years of beadwork, she stated it is because she was always given white beads by the middlemen. Despite all, they continue doing beadwork, with a motivation of “better than sitting at home doing nothing”. They now settle for the beads that once gave them sense of fulfillment.

4.4. Exploitation

It was not easy to measure the scale of exploitation. I first started with gathering data on the beads, where do the women get them, who is that person, how do they contact each other. All women get the beads from the middlemen in the
Neighborhood, whom also relatives to some, their neighbors, and if not, he is from their village in Bingöl. There are currently three men doing this job in the Neighborhood and I reached a former middleman, and a current middleman’s employee. None of the women have direct contact with the wholesaler, nor they have any idea who is it. Usually, the middleman goes door to door a couple of times in a month to distribute beads to the women, but now women can call them on their phones to either ask for new bag of beads or to collect the ones they have finished. On average it takes 7 days to finish 1 bag of beads (25 kilograms). Women with no children and no other job can do it in 2-3 days but it takes longer for the ones with children or other people to take care of, or if they are older in age.

The middlemen used to provide both needles and yarn, but now they only give the yarn. Women themselves have to buy the needles from them. Sometimes the beads, needles or yarn can break due to their quality and some types of beads much harder to string. Either way, the middlemen pay them full price, they do not make deductions. Also, the beads have to be done no matter what the quality or how long it takes.

I asked the women how much they earn and asked the middlemen how much it is sold for per kilogram. To understand the scale of exploitation I had to compare their answers to the numbers that middlemen gave. Unfortunately, I could not get a precise answer. The current middleman stated that he does not know how much it is sold to the manufacturer and the former middleman only gave an estimate number.

**CM:** I do not have any information about wholesale, the owner sells it himself.
*(Toptan satıyorlar onunla ilgili bir bilgim yok, mal sahibi kendi satıyor)*

**FM:** I guess it is 500 Turkish Liras per kilogram right now.
*(Şu an tahminemce kilogramı 500 lira falan var)*

On average, the women get paid 40 Turkish Liras per kilogram, with prices varying depending on the quality of the beads and the middleman they get the
beads from. They usually get the beads in packages of 25 kilograms and earn an average of 1000 Turkish Liras. Most of the women said that the prices have just gone up and were much lower before.³

**W23:** At the moment, 15 kilograms is done for 600 liras, and it has just gone up, it was cheaper before that. After recent raises people really did something but I think this is not enough as well.

(Şu an 15 kilogram 600 liraya takılıyor o da daha yeni öyle oldu öncesinde daha ucuzdu. Son zamanlardan sonra insanlar gerçekten şey yaptilar ama bence bu da yeterli değil.)

**W15:** 5-6 years ago, it was around 280 (liras) for 15 kilograms.⁴

(5-6 yıl önce 15 kilogramı 280 civarıydı.)

Many women talked about the value of their work, the money they earn during 1990’s and 2000’s. Turkish Lira was much more valuable during that time without the inflation. The money they earned was valuable enough to cover much of the cost of building family houses as stated below.

**W17:** When we first started many years ago...1994, it was 2-3 liras per bag (25 kilogram), but we built many houses with those 2-3 liras. 8 years ago I entered the public sector and that was when I quit.

(Çok yllar öncesinde ilk başladığımız zaman...1994, 2-3 liraydı kolisi ama biz o 2-3 lirayla neler neler ... evleri yaptık. 8 sene önce ben kamuya girdim o zaman bıraktım.)

W2 told me about how this business was run between the 1990’s and 2000’s. The money would not be given to the women for at least two months, the middlemen would use the money they earn from the threaded beads from women and multiply it for a couple of months to give back their share.

³ 1 USD = 29.4 TRY When interviews with the women were conducted in December 2023. Women were earning $1.36 per kilogram.
⁴ 1 USD = 4.8 TRY (average) in 2018. Women were earning $3.8 per kilogram.
**W2:** In the old days, the beads used to be endless in the neighborhood, it was an incredible pool of money. The beads that women threaded were noted in a book, they were paid after 2 months. When the money came from Istanbul, the middlemen would invest that money in dollars, make a profit for 2 months and then give it to the women.

*(Eskiden mahallede boncuk bitmezdi, inanılmaz bir para havuzuydu. Kadınların taktiği boncuk deftere not edilir, 2 ay sonra ödeme yapıldı. Aracılar para İstanbul’dan gelince o parayı dolara yatırır, 2 ay kar elde eder sonra kadinlara verirdi.)*

W14 talked about the prices she knew, and she complained about the informality and the exploitation aspect of this business. She had a lot to say as she tried to bring the beads herself, however she claimed that the current middlemen did not allow her. She complained that they avoid taxes and pay very little to the women, exploiting them as described below.

**W14:** He brings it for 100 liras per kilogram and has us lined it for 30 liras, almost half the profit. That offends me. He makes women work like slaves and there is no tax. I would say he is doing it properly if there was a tax, but there isn't. For God's sake, write that down too, he does business without tax. … They use women like porters.

*(Kilogramını 100 liraya getiriyor bize 30 liraya dizdiriyor, neredeyse yarı yarıya kar. O benim zoruma gidiyor. Kadınları köle gibi çalıştırıyor ve vergisi de yok. Vergisi olsa derdim hakkında yapıyor ama yok. Onu da yaz Allah aşkına, vergisiz iş yapıyor. ... Bildiğin kadınları hamal gibi kullanıyorlar.)*

She explained how these middlemen make a lot of money through the women, and they do not give receipts to keep them unregistered, untaxed. She stated below that she wants to get the fair share of her hard work and wants them to pay their taxes.

**W14:** The beads we thread are 1 ton. When 1 ton arrives, the man makes us thread it, think 200 billion (thousand) for that ton. 35 billion (thousand) is given to women and the rest goes to him. Otherwise, would men go and
deal with beads, distribute them, go door to door, give them to women? Who would bother with such a thing? And he doesn't give receipts, it's tax-free ... They should give us what we deserve and pay the tax.

(Bizim dizdiğimiz boncuklar 1 ton. 1 ton geldiği zaman adam dizdiriyor, o tonu 200 milyar düşün. 35 milyarı kadınlara veriyor geri kalan ona düşüyor. Yoksa erkekler gider boncukla mı uğraşır, dağıtması, kapı kapı dolaşması, kadına ver. Kim öyle bir şeyle uğraşır. Bir de fiş kesmiyor, vergisiz ... Hakımız neyse onu versinler bir de vergisini ödesinler.)

When the answers on how much they earn compared, in December 2023, women earn 40 liras per kilogram and the middleman earns 500 liras and pays no taxes, keeping the business informal. However, when asked if this business is registered to the Chamber of Commerce and they have a tax registration certificate, neither gave a definite answer as shown below.

**FM:** It is tradesmanship. You can have it (tax registration certificate)
(Esnaf olarak geçiyor, olabilir tabii (vergi levhası))

**CM:** It is tradesmanship. It has commercial value.
(Esnaflıktır, ticari karşılığı var)

In February 2024, the middlemen in the Neighborhood increased the wages for women, paying the women 50 Turkish Liras per kilogram. The bead store I visited sells beads for 350 liras in packages of 500 grams. He earns 700 liras per kilogram. There are also a couple of websites that sells these types of beads online for making accessories, jewelry, and other purposes. On average, these websites sell beads in packages of 40 grams for 40-50 Turkish Liras, based on the website, type or quality of beads. They earn 1000 liras per kilogram.

As of February 2024, for every 50 liras women make, store owner earns 700 liras and online seller earns 1000 liras. What the middlemen make is remains as a mystery since there have been contradictory and confusing answers every time I asked. The current middleman told me that they do not buy the beads, they have

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5 1 USD = 30 TRY (average) in February 2024. Women were earning $1.6 per kilogram.
women thread them here and send them back to the wholesaler. They do the labor for the wholesaler and claimed that earn 2 Euros per kilogram for this procedure. Their cost for this procedure is 200 liras per kilogram including needles, yarn, and shipment back to wholesaler in Istanbul and they also pay women their share.

4.5. Empowerment

The first question of the second part of my interview was why they do beadwork. Most women answered this question as “It is better than sitting at home doing nothing.” They see it as a small contribution to their household or to provide their personal needs. Very few of them stated that they do it out of livelihood problems.

**W30:** In households where the husband sits in a coffeehouse all day and there is no one working at home, women support the household by wearing beads, they wear them out of necessity. It is better to stay at home and earn our own money than to go to the fields.

*(Kocası tüm gün kahvehanede oturan, evde çalısanın olmadığı evlerde kadınlar boncuk takarak ev geçindirir, onlar mecbur takar. Tarlaya gitmekense evde kendi paramızı kazanmak daha iyi.)*

As given in a row below, a couple of women around 35-40 years old stated that they used to do it because it was the only way to make money when they were teen girls.

**W17:** We did not have any other skills, we did it because we were worried about our livelihood.

*(Başka hiçbir vasfımız yoktu geçim kaygısından takyorduk).*

**W16:** When we were young, we did it because of the financial hardship. The women, you know because of our ethnic background we were generally not allowed to work outside. At least when the man went door to door and brought it home, we did it so that we could have a source of livelihood, to provide financial support.
W19: In the past, we could not go out to work to earn money, we were not as free as we are now, so that also has an effect.

Nonetheless, when I asked them if this money give them financial freedom almost all of them immediately answered “No, of course not” but some of them see it as financial freedom since they can provide for their personal needs such as clothing, accessories or going out. Majority of them stated that they still ask money from the patriarchal figure of their house and only a few said they do not, the money is enough for them.

When asked why they do not come together and ask more from the middlemen, women gave the impression that they were not confident enough to form a unity do it. They believe the middlemen would just give the beads to someone else, even though the middlemen depend on these women because this beadwork requires experience and skill in order for him to meet deadlines.

W30: If we ask for a price increase, someone else will do it. Sometimes there is a deadline, they need it for 3 days later. He says, “If you do not do it, I will take it to someone else”.

When they get together, women complain a lot as they feel like they are not getting paid for their hard work due to rising inflation in Turkey. Women actually talk about asking for increase in pays from the middlemen, but the second new beads arrive in the neighborhood they get a sense of missing out an opportunity and forget all about what they talked for as W2 explained below.
**W2:** In fact, there is more asking for money, there is unanimity, but they do not do it (women). In fact, there is talk, but when the beads arrive, women attack, so it does not work.

(Aslında daha çok para isteme var, ağız birliği var ama yapmıyorlar (kadınlar). Aslında konuşuluyor ama boncuk gelince kadınlar saldıyıyor, işe yaramıyor).

I followed up my question with whether they give the money to the patriarchal figure, and if not, what they spend it on. Only W12 and W13 said below that they used to give it to their mother to contribute home when they were kids because they were in extreme poverty. A couple of women also mentioned how the money coming from beads was much more valuable in the past.

**W19:** In the past, there were many who bought gold with that bead and built houses, now it is not enough even though it is 1000 liras. But think that there used to be 5 girls in a house, think that you thread 1 bag in 2-3 days like me ...but now people earn more outside.

(Eskiden o boncukla altın alan ev yapan çoktu, şimdi 1000 lira olmasına rağmen yetmiyor. Ama eskiden bir evde 5 tane kız olduğuunu düşün benim gibi 2-3 günlük 1 koli taktığını düşün ... Ama şimdi dışarda daha fazla kazanıyor insanlar.)

**W30:** In the past, many people built their houses because they had many daughters, I have many relatives who paid for everything with bead money, they built houses with 2 floors each. I have 3-4 relatives who say that “we have built houses with the bead money of the girls.” The men did not have much income in the past.

(Eskiden çoğu kişi çok kızları olduğu için evlerini yaptılar, her şeylerini boncuk parasyyla karşılıyayın çok akrabam var, 2’şer kat evler yaptıklar. 3-4 akrabam var biz hep kızlarının boncuk parasyyla evleri yaptık diyen. Eskiden çok bir gelir yoktu adamlarda.)

There was a somehow tragicomic anecdote from W2, she told me in the 1990’s, few high school boys would thread beads for their mom after school and their
mother would give them their cut. But they would spend the money in coffeehouses. What stands out in this situation is when girls help their moms threading beads, they would do it as extra and many families in the Neighborhood owe the houses they built to their daughters. On the other hand, when boys helped their mother, they would get a cut from them to spend it outside for fun.

Now, none of the women give the money to the patriarchal figure, they keep it to themselves. Majority of them spend it on clothes, personal care, bags, and shoes. The women with children also spend it on their children’s needs and a few of them use it on grocery shopping. W14 was threading beads to get a carpet when I interviewed her. W26 mentioned that she paid for water and electricity bills and grocery shopping with the bead money when her husband had surgery and could not work. W30 mentioned below that she buys gold as an investment because she does not need the money. Different than the others, W15 recently started to use this income for her hobby, to join city tours.

**W15:** I started to travel a bit. I started to join tours to make a good use of money. I went to Mardin, Diyarbakır, the Black Sea, Nevşehir, I went with my own money. I also bring small gifts from there to my acquaintances.

*(Biraz da artık gezmeye başladım. Turlara katılmaya başladım değerlendirme amaçlı. Mardin’e gittim Diyarbakır, Karadeniz, Nevşehir’e gittim, kendi parayla gittim. Hem oradan ufak tefek hediyeler de getirdim.)*

**W30:** We go to dinner with the girls with the first payment, to eat kebab. … If the bead is good, I will finish it in 5 days and buy 1 more bag. This year, I threaded beads worth 3 thousand (liras) a month, I made my “gold day” money.

*(İlk aldığımız parayla yemeğe gideriz kızlarla, kebaba. … Boncuk güzelse 5 günde bitirir 1 koli daha alırım. Bu sene ayda 3 binlik boncuk taktım, altın günü parımı çıkardım.)*

When I wanted to know about the patriarchal figures’ involvement in the women’s beadwork, I was surprised. All of the women stated clearly that they do
beadwork on their own initiative and none of the patriarchal figures encourage them to do it. In fact, some intervene only to ask women not to do it because it is very tiring for the women. Some of them wants the women to stop doing it because they feel that the women are neglecting their care duties at home. While they think as such, none of them helps women with household chores.

**W2:** Never helps (my husband), he complains that I bought beads on top of it.

*(Hiç yardım etmez (eşim), üstüne boncuk aldım diye söylenir.)*

Almost all of the women said that the beads create a mess in the house and nearly half of the women said it does affect their daily chores or caregiver role at home. They mentioned that they cannot cook ‘heavy meals’ when they are doing beadwork or clean the house until they finish it. The other half do not think it affects their daily work because they do beadwork in their free time after they finish household chores. Women tend to program their day based on their chores and beads. Their caregiver role always remains, they just make adjustments based on their schedule that day. Typically, they spend their morning making breakfast for their family, sending their kids, husbands to school and work, do some household chores and perform their noon prayer. After their prayers, they have a 4–5-hour window for sitting down to thread beads until it is time to prepare dinner. After dinner they get another free time for beads again, usually while watching TV or at a gathering in a neighbor’s house.

**W2:** When it comes to beads, everything else stays. First beads and food, then house tidying. … When the children were little, it was hard to thread beads, so I did not. Some do, but it is very difficult, they do it only if they really need the money, if they are in a very difficult situation.

*(Boncuk olunca her şey kalıyor. Öncelik boncuk ve yemek sonra ev derleme toplama. … Çocuklar küçükken boncuk takmak zordu, takmadım. Takan oluyor ama çok zor, gerçekten paraya ihtiyacı varsa, çok zor durumdaysa yapar.)*
The women tend to do the beadwork at home because it is the most comfortable and most convenient, putting their legs out on the street is discreditable. In the summers, balconies are also good options because of the heat weather in Adana. When I asked to see whether they like to do it alone or with their friends and family, half of the women said it is better to sit together and thread beads while chatting and time passes by quickly. Seeing others also motivates them do it since it is a monotonous work and can be boring after few hours. The other half said they do it faster when they are alone, they can concentrate because talking to others might slow them down. Some of the women mentioned below that it can be like a therapy when they do it alone after everyone in the house is asleep.

W2: I relieve stress while doing it, if my bead is nice, it calms me down.

(Takarken stres atarım, boncuğum güzelse sakinleştirir beni.)

W30 lives with her mother, who is 91 years old and has dementia, so her caregiver role always comes first, she plans her day according to her mother’s mealtimes and medication hours and after her mother is asleep, she threads beads for couple of hours as she said below.

W30: I relax after dealing with my mom all day, threading beads while watching TV or when we get together with girls to do it.

(Bütün gün annemle uğraştıktan sonra rahatlıyorum, televizyon izlerken ya da arkadaşlarla bir araya geldiğimde boncukları takarken.)

While together, the women form a network of information exchange, chatting about everything from market food price comparisons to illnesses and doctor’s appointments, from the latest news in the Neighborhood to weddings or events. They talk about their shopping, clothes, and stores, such as what is cheaper and where. In between these talks, they also discuss the qualities of recent beads, suggesting a certain type or color for better threading. During one of my meetings with the women, W30’s phone rang and the woman on the phone was telling about a job opportunity as a canteen operator for the high school in the neighborhood. All the information about wages, hours and flexibility of the job was given and W30 was asked to spread it around this opportunity. After talking to a few people, they found a woman who really needed a job that, on that day.
Their network and solidarity acts as a coping mechanism with poverty, a sense of unity within their community. They also share their daily struggles whether it is problems with their kids and family members or hardships of being a woman. Socialization gives them comfort; it serves them as collective therapy as they see that they share similar problems and are not alone.

4.6. Global Commodity Chains

The beads mostly come from Czech Republic to a distributor in Istanbul according to both middlemen and the bead store owner. Other countries that beads come from are China, Taiwan, India but currently it is mostly Czech beads. Bead store owner stated that there is only 1 distributor in Istanbul and that is the Czech beads. There is no distributor of the Chinese beads, it is bought directly from there. Bead store owner stated they do buy from the distributor in Istanbul but do not make women thread, they just sell it in their shop. They also sell to the people who sells to prisons. They do not have any connection of ethnicity or anything else. He stated they find their store through word of mouth, years of recognition. However, just like the current middleman, he also did not give me a satisfying answer on how much they earn from bead trade.

**BSO:** This is a trade secret, we have sales but they are small, you can write the profit rate between 10-15%, not even 10%, I sell the goods I buy for 500-600 for 650.

*(Ya bu ticari bir sırr, satışımız var ama çüzi, kar oranı %10-15 arası yazabilirsin %10 bile değil, 500-600’e aldığımı malı 650’ye satıyorum.)*

When I asked why they continue to do this trade if it is such a low profit business, he brushed off my question and did not give me a clear answer. After I left the bead store, I stopped by to a relative’s shop close by, I mentioned how he did not give me an answer on how much they make and told me they only make 10% profit. My relative was shocked and pointed out that it would be unreasonable for them to continue doing this business for only 10%. The artificial florists make
100% profit and that kind of shops in that bazaar operate in a very similar way, so they must be on a close profit scale, if not the same.

Both of the middlemen started this business working for their uncles.\(^6\) They noted there is currently 3 middlemen that does bead trade. Former middleman started in the 2000’s and worked in this business for 10 years and now owns a small grocery store in the Neighborhood. When he was in this business, it was his only source of income and has been the only source of income for the current middleman as well.

**CM:** This business is a 35-40 old reign, 7-8 generations have changed, and now we are the last ones to step in again. … This is a source of income for 200-300 people.

\((35-40 \text{ yıllık bir saltanatı var bu işin, 7-8 kuşak değişti şu an yine en son biz devreye girdik. ... 200-300 insana ekmek kapısı bu.)\)

I was interested to find out whether threading can be done on machines, there are machines in factories in China and Czech Republic and beads can be imported as lined up but only distributors can make such requests. The middlemen in the Neighborhood and the bead store owner cannot and do not wish to get into such type of business as there are women threading the beads.

**BSO:** It needs to be lined up because it is handcrafted, people do not want it in bulk, they want it lined up because there is order, otherwise it is less useful. In 2023-24, threading has declined a lot, it has become almost non-existent because it is only used in prisons. Beads are now 5% of our shop, it used to be 50% because it was used a lot in women's headscarves.

\((El \text{ işçiliği olduğu için dizilmesi gerekıyor, insanlar dökme halde istemiyor, düzen olduğu için dizme istiyor, diğer türlü az kullanılanlı oluyor. 2023-24 yılında artık dizim çok geriledi yok denecek kadar az hale geldi sadece cezaevlerinde kullanıldığı için artık. Boncuk şu an bizim dükkanımızın %5’i, eskiden %50 siydi çünkü kadınların yazmalarında çok kullanılıyor.)\)

\(^6\) These two middlemen are not in the same family, their uncles are different people. Former middleman’s uncle is from his father’s side and current middleman’s uncle is from his mother’s side.
Both of the middlemen also stated that they only distribute the beads mostly in the neighborhood they live in, and few other neighborhoods in Yüreğir region.

**CM:** This area is mostly relatives, all of them are ‘people of the East.’

(*Geneli akraba bu mevkii, ‘Doğu’nun insanı’.*

When asked whether or not they consider removing the distributor in Istanbul and buy the beads directly from the source, the middleman and store owner said it cannot be done, but for different reasons.

**CM:** We cannot afford it because it is a very large amount.

(*Çok yüklü miktar olduğu için gücümüz yetmez.*)

**BSO:** There are distributors that factories give to countries, this is the way trade should be. Due to commercial principles, factories want to give 1 distributor to each country. The factory does not want to deal with everyone.

(*Fabrikaların ülkelere verdiği distribütörler var bu ticaretin olması gerekeni. Ticari prensipler gereği fabrikalar her ülkeye 1 distribütör vermek istiyor. Fabrika herkesle muhatap olmak istemiyor.*)

To understand the scope of this bead business, I asked the women and the middlemen about the source of these beads and the end products. Almost all women believed that the beads are coming from China and used in handbags, garment making, shoes, or small ornaments. Few of the women had no idea about where the beads are used. It shows an example of alienation from the product of labor, the women spend hours to thread these beads, but they are not aware of the end products, they do not consume it.

This research has revealed that there used to be special needle work in the Eastern cities of Turkey, it was used in headscarves of women but now there is no such demand, headscarves do not have beaded sides or embellishments anymore. Almost all of the beads are processed in prisons, very few amount is sold abroad. Inmates spend their time learning a skill to make small ornaments from these
beads. As the current middleman stated below, the beads have a long journey from women to the prisoners who learn a job.

**CM:** Prisons buy the beads, give them to prisoners to make ornaments. They are also sold outside; both the prison earns income, and the prisoners learn a job. They can continue to do this work when they get out. … These ornaments can be given as gifts to factory workers in the industrial estate at the end of the year.

(Cezaevleri boncuğu satın alıyor, mahkumlara veriyor, süs eşyaları yapıyorlar. Onlar da dışarında satılıyor hem cezaevi gelir elde ediyor hem mahkumlar iş öğreniyor. Dışarı çıktıklarında bu işi yapmaya devam edebiliyorlar. ... Bu süs eşyaları da sanayide, fabrika çalışanlarına hediye edilebiliyor yıl sonlarında).

However, as the bead store owner stated below that there was no such work outside since the income is very low, it remains there are contractionary interpretations regarding the end product market value.

**BSO:** It is a correctional activity for those serve time in prison. They need an occupation; it is good for their psychology. But when they get out, there is no such work because income is not high, they just pass the time.

(Cezaevlerinde yatanlar için ıslah faaliyetidir bu. Meşguliyet lazım, psikolojilerine iyi gelir. Ama dışarı çıktıklarında böyle bir iş yok çünkü gelir kaynağı yüksek değil, sadece zaman geçiriyorlar.)

To learn more about the prison beadwork and the end product, I reached out to a prison warden in Adana. He is the husband of one of W29’s friends and has been very understanding and helpful, answered my questions patiently and explained a lot more than I have anticipated. He first explained to me that in prisons, courses, conferences, and activities are organized for the rehabilitation and reintegration of convicts into society. They are usually opened under the name of courses, teachers from public education come and teach them. The products made are sold in the Institution of Prisons and Detention Houses Workshops. Again,

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7 The name of the organization and the person have been withheld for confidentiality reasons.
with that money, items that the convicts can use are bought. However, as I learned when visited these shops, bead ornaments are not sold there. Instead of mass production courses, inmates learn beading individually from each other in the ward. They want to make gifts for their close ones and when they see someone with this skill, they ask them to teach. Because it is a difficult, labor intensive and time-consuming occupation to learn, it is often done by long term prisoners. Supplies are bought from a list given to the canteen in the prison and sold outside through their relatives and friends. The money comes from it can be used in transaction between inmates within the prison such as a pack of cigarettes. It is ingrained as a culture in the wards as the prison warden stated below.

**PW:** When there is demand, the Procurement Unit of the Institution purchases the beads, yarn, and needle from outside through tender offers. The needle is bendable, not sharp but convicts do not usually like it, they secretly try to make crochet needles by adding metals they find to toothbrush handles. And when we find them, we take them because they are classified as piercers and cutters, they are hidden. … They make use of their free time; it is a therapy to engage in this kind of work and they also get something out of it.

(Talep olduğunda Kurumun Satın Alma Birimi ihale yoluyla boncuk, iplik ve iğneyi dışarıdan satın alıyor. İğne bükülebilir, keskin değil ama genelde hükümlüler bunu sevmiyor, diş fırçası saplarına buldukları metalleri ekleyerek çizilce iğnesi yapmaya çalışiyorlar. Biz de onları bulduğumuzda alıyoruz çünkü onlar delici ve kesici olarak sınıflandırılıyor, gizleniyorlar. … Boş zamanlarını değerlendirmeyi, terapi oluyor bu tür işlerle uğraşıp hem de bir şeyler elde ediyorlar.)

He talked to a couple of convicts for me and got information about beading materials and prices. Yarn is 50 and 1 bag of beads is bought for 40 Turkish Liras from the canteen. Usually, inmates are able to get 7-8 small ornaments such as flowers, keychains and lighter case from these materials and sell it outside for 100-150 liras per each. On average, they earn 800-900 liras by spending 90 liras and their time.
I was also curious to find out how beadwork got affected during the pandemic; I asked both the women and the middlemen whether they were more involved in beadwork or not. When the pandemic first hit, people were locked in their homes and had more free time than ever, I assumed that the volume of bead trading would have doubled. Expecting to hear an exaggerated yes, I was taken aback by the answers. Almost none of the women were involved in beadwork; they believed that beads came from China and could carry the virus and be contagious, so they did not want to touch the beads at all. Some of them mentioned that they were too sick to even consider doing beadwork and had to take care of others in the household. They also believed that the beads had not actually arrived in Turkey due to the pandemic restriction on trade. Only one of the women I met said she did more beadwork during the pandemic.

**W26:** I did it more, no one was going to anyone's house, we were all at home, the girls were also at home and not going to school, so we did it more.

*(Ben daha çok taktım, kimse kimsenin evine gitmiyordu hepimiz de evdeydi, kızlar da evdeydi okula gitmiyordu daha çok taktık.)*

When I asked the same question to the middlemen, they provided another insight on the issue.

**FM:** Beads did not arrive at all. We had in storages but could not distribute it.

*(Boncuklar hiç gelmedi. Depolarımızda vardı ama dağıtamadık.)*

**CM:** It did not have an impact. We buy fixed amount annually and have them in storages. Women were already at home, they worked as usual in fact it was better for them. They earned income from their homes.

*(Bir etkisi olmadı. Yıllık olarak sabit miktarda satın alıyoruz ve depolarda tutuyoruz. Kadınlar zaten evdeydi, her zamanki gibi çalış玥lardı, aslında bu onlar için daha iyiydi. Evlerinden gelir elde ettiler.)*

The COVID-19 Pandemic seems to have had different impacts on the women and the middlemen. Whereas most women believed that the beads were contagious, and they
chose to stay away, the middlemen were almost unaffected by the situation. They had already received their annual amounts in advance and distributed to those who did not consider it being contagious.

Shortly, being an informal home-based work, beads give women freedom to choose to do it or not, depending on their independent and individual choices. However, these choices are influenced by different aspects of their lives; their financial status, education levels, caregiver roles are the most common factors affecting their decision-making process.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has been based on a case that has been very familiar to me since the day I was born. I grew up watching my aunt, cousins, and other female members of my family spending hours with endless bowls of beads. Sometimes it would be just one of them sitting in front a TV in the evening, with their backs against the couch and legs stretched out holding a bowl, threading beads for hours while watching their favorite show. In the summers, it would be a whole day of gathering where everyone speaks loudly at the same time, talking anything from their daily struggles at the neighborhood to latest news from their village in Bingöl. They come together under the pretext of threading beads and form an internal support group. They exchange market and bazaar prices, clothing trends, recent match makings and their health issues. Because they come from poverty background, they form solidarity in their community networks, develop ways to overcome poverty. Solidarity networks based on ethnic relations should be examined in a broad perspective, starting from blood ties and kinship to groups based on community of interest (Ersoy & Şengül, 2000). A group of Zazaki women, migrated from Bingöl to a poor neighborhood in Adana shows great example of such ethnic solidarity networks through a unique work of beads. Their ethnic background carries great importance as being migrants from the same village led solidarity between these groups when they first moved to urban cities. They ran away from blood vengeances and lack of financial income in the rural, helped each other to migrate to the urban, find jobs and settle down. The first settlers had to enter the informal sector due to educational and language barriers, similar to other marginalized groups. They started doing bead trade and find cheap labor to thread the beads: their wives, daughters, neighbors. Women of their own ethnicity. Owing to hardworking Zazaki women, this ethnic minority group overcome extreme poverty and were able to build their houses and start
formal businesses. However, Zazaki women’s sense of agency and empowerment have been limited due patriarchal norms of the community they live in. Their mobility remained restricted in their neighborhood; they were not allowed to work outside. They got out of poverty but not from the neighborhood, their safe space.

The intersection of poverty, social exclusion, and gender dynamics creates barriers for marginalized groups, especially financial hardships. Poverty shows itself in temporary and chronic forms, mostly concentrated in urban ghettos where minority communities usually live. Migrating from rural to urban, their first goal is to “settle down”. They have to constantly work, save money to build houses in the goal of overcoming poverty. Being away from the city center and stuck in their neighborhood, marginalized groups get more exposed to social exclusion because they had just migrated with almost nothing. Furthermore, social exclusion pushes these groups into the informal sector as a survival mechanism due to their limited education and lack of opportunities in their background. According to ILO statistics, the correlation between lower education levels and participation in the informal sector is indisputable at the global level however, there is significant number of workers with tertiary level education (2023). When rural women with different ethnic backgrounds migrate to more urbanized city centers, they have difficulties in inclusion to society and they face a form of social exclusion. Because of illiteracy and restricted knowledge of the dominant language, they tend to stay within their own community, hence their access to outside world and societal connections often remains restricted. In the labor market, being able to read Turkish and to communicate in Turkish with colleagues and clients is a necessity, especially in formal economy jobs. As a result, they cannot apply to official jobs, are restricted in their relationships to their own social group and they face an actual barrier to accessing resources (Smits & Gündüz-Hoşgör, 2003). This case study has shown similar patterns of involvement in the informal sector. The informal beadwork business offered a source of income to the Zazaki community in the Neighborhood. The beadwork is not related to any Zazaki cultural heritage, but it has emerged out of merely
seeking a practical economic benefit. Coming from an extreme poverty background, beadwork provided this community various lines of work. Men have become middlemen and gave women of their own ethnic background jobs that they could do at home, without overstepping any cultural norms or disrupting their caregiver roles. However, the importance of the beads goes beyond economic interests. While beadwork has provided a way out of extreme poverty, its impact has expanded over time, creating a new socio-economic layer within the community. With the help of many hardworking daughters, beadwork paid most of the Zazaki families’ houses and helping them rise into the lower-middle class in time.

Zazaki women carried their communities from extreme poverty in a village to a successful permanent settlement in another city and the balance of female-male relations within their society helped through the process. There is culturally rooted division of labor within Zazaki communities. Women are only expected to perform their caregiver role at home, while men go to work. Agency of choosing to do beadwork or not is solely up to them, men’s intervention is almost non-existent, and they do not ask women for bead money. Women are empowered by the solidarity they have built around beadwork, and they carry the pride of having once provided homes for their families to this day. Nevertheless, regardless of the economic contribution of the beadwork, it maintains the cycle of social exclusion and gender inequality. Women face cultural patriarchy; they are more vulnerable to financial restrictions. They are not allowed to go out to work, their caregiver role comes first, and they almost have invisible borders around the Neighborhood. On top of these, limited formal work opportunities due to their education level and migration history, women are also limited in their ability to change their circumstances. Whereas the beads give them opportunity to cope short term economic hardships, it does not provide empowerment to change and agency to challenge systematic barriers. Even though women work and still perform their traditional household responsibilities, their position in the household is not strengthened. This is because they see this beadwork as a "contribution to the household" and do not see it as a real income, devaluing their
labor. Therefore, the story of beadwork among these Zazaki women captures both the resilience in the face of challenges and the persistent limitations imposed by the intersection of poverty, social exclusion, and gender.


APPENDICES

A. PHOTOGRAPHS OF BEADWORK PROCESS

1. A Zazaki woman threading the beads

2. A Zazaki woman making bulks of threaded beads
3. A Zazaki woman weighing the bulks of beads

4. Examples of bead ornaments made by prisoners
B. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

Konusu: Değerlendirme Sonuçu
Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurula (IAEK)
İgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurula Başvurusu

Sayan: Ayşe Gündüz Hacıoğul

Bilgilerinizle saygıla sunurum,

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan

Prof. Dr. L. Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Doç. Dr. Şevval İYİVİNÇ
Üye

Doç. Dr. Murat Pertti ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Uyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KARASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Uyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye
### C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Tablo 1. Demografik Veriler**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Yaş</th>
<th>Eğitim</th>
<th>Meslek</th>
<th>Etnik Köken</th>
<th>Medeni Durum</th>
<th>Çocuk Sayısı</th>
<th>Aile Tipi</th>
<th>Evin Geçim Kaynağı</th>
<th>Evde yaşadığı kişi sayısı</th>
<th>Evde çalışan kişi sayısı</th>
<th>Mülkiyet Durumu</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Tablo 2. Göç Geçmişi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Doğum Yeri</th>
<th>Daha Önce Yaşanılan Yerler</th>
<th>Adana’ya Geliş</th>
<th>Mahalleye Geliş</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>K1</td>
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</table>

**Tablo 3. Görüşme listesi ve kayıt tipi**

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<th>Kişiye ulaşma şekli</th>
<th>Kayıt tipi</th>
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<td>K3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aracı Kişi</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Sorular

Operasyonel

1. Boncuk işinden önce hangi işleri yapıyordunuz?
2. Boncuk işine ne zaman ve nasıl başladınız?
3. Boncuğu nereden aliyorsunuz?
4. Aracı kişi kim oluyor?
5. Aracı kişi olmadan imalatçı ile doğrudan bir iletişiminiz var mı?
6. Aracı ile aranızda nasıl iletişim kuruyorsunuz?
7. Mahallenize ne sıklıkla geliyor?
8. Kg veya çuval başına ne kadar miktarda ödeme yapıyor?
9. 1 kg veya çuvalı bitirmek genellikle ne kadar sürüyor?
10. İğneleri ve iplikleri kim temin ediyor?
11. Kırılan bonculara/iğnelere veya eksik ipliklere ne oluyor? Aracı kişi kullanlamayan ürünler için yine de ödeme yapıyor mu?
12. Boncuk işine bağlı olarak ne tür sağlık sorunları yaşıyorsunuz? bel ağrısı, bilek ağrısı, görme bozuklukları gibi
13. Boncukların nerede kullanildığını biliyor musunuz? Bitmiş ürünler hakkında fikriniz var mı?

Empowerment (Güçlendirme)

14. Neden boncuk işini yapıyor musunuz?
15. Kazandığınız para size ekonomik özgürlük sağlıyor mu?
16. Aile reisinizden para istiyor musunuz?
17. Boncuk işinden kazandığınız para ile ne yapıyorsunuz?
    - Aile reisine mi veriyorsunuz
    - Neye harciyorsunuz
18. Aile reisiniz sizi bu iş yapmaya teşvik ediyor mu yoksa tamamen kendi kararınıza ile mi yapıyorsunuz?
19. Boncuk işini gerçek bir iş olarak mı yoksa ev işlerinin bir devamı olarak mı görüyor musunuz?
20. Bu evde yapılan iş evdeki rutin işlerinizi aksatıyor mu?
22. Evde mi yoksa sokakta mı yapmayı tercih edersiniz? Ev işlerinden ayrı tutmayı mı tercih edersiniz?
23. Pandemi döneminde daha çok çalıştım mı?

Aracı kişi

1. Kimdir? Yaş/Eğitim/Medeni Durum/Etnik köken
2. Aracı kişi her zaman aynı mıydı ya da boncuk işinde kaç tane aracı kişi var?
3. Nasıl ve ne zaman bu işe başladınız?
4. Bu iş sizin temel geçim kaynağıınız mı?
5. Ticaret Odasına kayıtlı musınız? Vergi levhanız var mı?
6. Hangi mahalleye dağıtım yapıyorüz? Sadece bu mahalleye mi dağıtıyoruz?
7. Zaza musınız? Bu kadınlarla akrabalık ilişkileriniz var mı? Sizi bu toplulukla kim tanıtırdı?
8. Boncukun kaynağı neresidir? Boncuklu/iğneyi/ipliği kimden alıyorsunuz?
9. Toptancı/Imalatçı ile nasıl tanıştıınız?
10. Kg veya çuval başına ne kadar kazanıyorsunuz?
11. Boncuk fiyatını etkileyen faktörler nelerdir?
12. Boncuların nerede kullanıldığı biliyor musunuz? Bitmiş ürünler hakkında fikriniz var mı?
13. Pandemi döneminde daha çok çalıştım mı?
D. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

YOKSULLUK VE SOSYAL DIŞLANMANIN HANEYE GETİRDİKLERİ:
ADANA’DAKİ ZAZA EV KADINLARININ BONCUK İŞİ ÖRNEĞİ

Giriş


Kayıt dışı ekonomi, çalışmak için çok az engel içerdikinden kadınlara bir gelir kaynağına hızlı erişim imkanı sunmaktadır. Ayrıca, ev işlerini ve evdeki bakım görevlerini de devam etirebilmeleri için esneklik sağlamaktadır. Bu tip istihdam modeli, kadın emeğinin en sömürüğü biçimlerini ve güvensiz çalışma koşullarına rağmen en düşük ücretli işleri içermektedir. Neredeyse her iş alanında enformel bir


Türkiye'de kayıt dışı çalışanların büyük çoğunluğunu kayıt gettolarındaki yoksul kadınlar oluşturur. Kırdan kente göç, kentsel gettolarda marjinalleştirilmiş nüfus için bir merkez oluşturur ve bu marjinalleştirilmiş grupların sosyal dışlanması, bu kadınları kendi küçük toplulukları içinde hapsetmektedir. Kadınlar, kentsel yaşam biçimine uyum sağlanmanın zorlu sürecinde eğitim ve istihdam
olanaklarına sınırlı erişimin bir sonucu olarak kayıt dışı çalışmaya yönelme eğilimindedir. Kent gettolarındaki pek çok kadın için kayıt dışı çalışma, bu işlere erişim ve işten ayrılmada daha kolay olduğunu için esnek bir seçenek olarak işlev görmektedir. Evdeki bakım sorumluklarını ihmal etmemeleri için onlara küçük bir özgürlük alanı yaratmaktadır. Enformel ev eksenli çalışmanın çok çeşitli türleri vardır ve bu tezde incelenen vaka çalışması, özel bir boncuk işinin çok boyutlu yönlerini ve bir grup Zaza göçmenin ortak etnik kimliğine nasıl dahil olduğunu göstererek literatüre katkıda bulunmayı planlamaktadır.

**Vaka Çalışması: Boncuk**


Türkiye'de Adalet Bakanlığı'na bağlı olarak Ceza İnfaz Kurumları ile Tutukevleri İsyurtları Kurumu adı altında hükümli ve tutuklular tarafından yapılan ürünlerin satıldığı mağazalar bulunmaktadır. Bu mağazalar, mahkumların işe ilgili faaliyetlerde yer almalarını sağlayarak kariyer yapmalarına yardımcı olmak suretiyle topluma yeniden entegre olmalarına yardımcı olmayı amaçlamaktadır. Adana'da bu şekilde iki mağaza bulunmaktadır, Şubat 2024'te her ikisini de boncuk işi ürünler bulmak ve bilgi almak umuduyla ziyaret ettim. Ne yazık ki, her iki mağazada da boncuk işi ürünler yoktu ve infaz ve koruma memurları bana bunların orada satılmadığını açıkladılar.

Zaza Kadınları

İlk kadın göçmenlerin çoğu okuma yazma bilmiyordu ve sadece Zazaca konuşuyordu, dolayısıyla şehirde formel bir iş bulmaları söz konusu değildi. İkinci nesil göçmenler okula gitmiş ve Türkçeyle hızlı uyum sağlamışlardır ancak çok az sayıda kız


İşe yeni başladıklarında, boncukların bu kadar kısa sürede hayatlarının ve kimliklerinin bir parça haline geleceğini fark etmemişlerdi. Çalışmak için sınırlı seçenekleri olduğundan, bu renkli küçük boncuklar onlara hiçbir eğitim gerektirmeden evlerinden para kazanma fırsatı sundu. Çoğu genç kızdı ve boncuk işi onlara...
mahalleden ayrılmadan bir araya gelip sosyalleşebilecekleri ve aynı zamanda para kazanabilecekleri bir ortam sağlıyordu. Bu kadınlarla yaptığım görüşmelerde en sık duyduğum cümle 'eskiden' oldu. Hemen hepsi boncuk işiyle ilk etkileşimlerini ve deneyimlerini biraz romantikleştirdi, hala o yıllarda özlem duyuyorlar. Bunun kendileri için ne kadar keyifli ve tatmin edici olduğunu hatırlıyorlar. Ailelerinin ev inşa etmesini mümkün kılan kadın onlardı, kendilerini bu yönden başarılı ve gururlu hissediyorlar.


**Dayanışma, Güçlendirme ve Sömürü**

Kadınlar bir aradayken bir bilgi alışverişi ağı oluşturuyor, market gıda fiyat karşılaştırmalarından hastalıklara ve doktor randevularına, mahalledeki son haberlerden düğünlere veya etkinliklere kadar her konuda sohbet ediyorlar. Alışverişleri, kıyafetleri ve mağazaları hakkında konuşuyorlar, örneğin neyin neyin nerede daha ucuz olduğu gibi. Bu konuşmalar arasında, yeni boncukların kalitesini de tartışıyor, daha iyi iplik takmak için belirli bir tür veya renk öneriyorlar. Kadınlarla yaptığım görüşmelerde birinde W30'un telefonu çaldı ve telefondaki kadın mahalledeki lisede kantin işletmeci olarak bir iş fırsatından bahsediyo. Ücretler, saatler ve işin esnekliği hakkında tüm bilgiler verildi ve K30'dan bu fırsatı etrafına...


Şubat 2024 itibariyle kadınların kazandığı her 50 lira için dükkan sahibi 700 lira, çevrimiçi satış ise 1000 lira kazanıyor. Aracılara ne kadar kazandığı ise bir muamma olarak kalmaya devam ediyor çünkü her sorduğumda çelişkili ve kafa karıştırıcı cevaplar aldım. Şu anki aracı bana boncukları satın almadıklarını, kadınlara burada dindirdiklerini ve toptanciya geri gönderdiklerini söyledi. Toptancı için işçilik yapıyorlar ve bu işlem için kilogram başına 2 Euro kazandıklarını iddia ettiler. Bu işlem için maliyetlerinin işe, iplik ve İstanbul'daki toptancıya geri gönderme dahil kilogram başına 200 lira ve buna ek olarak kadınların değişen payları olduğunu söyledi.

Sonuç

Bu tez, doğduğum günden beri bana çok aşina olan bir olaya dayanmaktadır. Halami, kuzenlerimi ve ailemin diğer kadın üyelerini bitmek bilmeyen boncuk leğenleriyle saatler geçirirken izleyerek büyüdüm. Bazen sadece biri akşamları tek başına televizyona karışışma oturur, sırtını kanepeye dayar ve bacaklarını uzatarak bir leği

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tutar, en sevdiği programı izlerken saatlerce boncuk takardı. Yazları ise herkesin aynı Anda yüksek sesle konuştuğu, mahalledeki günlük mücadelelerinden, Bingöl'deki köylerinden gelen son haberlere kadar her şeyi konuştukları kalabalık buluşmalar haline gelirdi. Zaza kadınları boncuk takma bahanesiyle bir araya gelip kendi içlerinde bir destek grubu oluşturduklarının farkına bile varmadan pazar ve çarşı fiyatlarını, giyim trendlerini, son olayları ve sağlık sorunlarını paylaşıyorlar. Yoksulluk geçmişinden geldikleri için boncuk üzerinden kurtukları bir top$luk aşklarında bir dayanışma oluşturmuyor, yoksulluğun üstesinden gelmenin yollarını keşfediyorlar.


Yoksulluk, sosyal dışlanma ve toplumsal cinsiyet dinamiklerinin kesişimi, marjinalleştirmiş gruplar için başta ekonomik zorluklar olmak üzere engeller yaratmaktadır. Yoksulluk geçici ve kronik biçimlerde kendini göstermekte, çoğunlukla azınlık topluluğunun yaşadığı kentsel gettolarda yoğunlaşmaktadır. Kıırdan kente geç edenlerin ilk hedefi "yerleşmek"tir. Yoksullu$u aşmak için sürekli çalışmak, para biriktirme|k ve ev inşa etmek zorundadırlar. Şehir merkezinden uzakta ve kendi mahallelerinde sıkışip kalan marjinal gruplar, neredeyse hiçbir şeyleri olmadan geç etti$leri için sosyal dışlanmaya daha fazla maruz kalmaktadır. Dahası,
sosyal dışlanma bu grupları sınırlı eğitimleri ve geçmişlerindeki fırsat eksikliği nedeniyle bir hayatta kalma mekanizması olarak kayıt dışı sektörde itmektedir.

Farklı etnik kökenlere sahip kırsal kesim kadınları kentleşmiş bir şehir merkezine göç ettiklerinde, topluma dahil olmamak güçlük çekmekte ve bir tür sosyal dışlanma ile karşı karşıya kalmaktadırlar. Okuma yazma bilmemeleri ve baskın dili sınırlı düzeyde bilmeleri nedeniyle kendi toplulukları içinde kalma eğilimi gösterirler, dolayısıyla dış dünyaya ve toplumsal bağlanıtlara erişimleri genellikle kısıltık kalmaktadır. İşgücü piyasasında, Türkçe okuyabilme ve iş arkadaşları ve müşterilerle Türkçe iletişim kuramamak, özellikle katılımlı ekonomideki işlerde bir gerekliktir. Sonuç olarak, resmi işlere başvuramamakta, kendi sosyal gruplarıyla ilişkiler kısıtlanmaktadır ve kaynaklara erişimde zor bir engel手機nləşməklə rast gelməklər (Smits & Gündüz-Hoşgör, 2003).

içindeki konumları güçlenmiyor. Çünkü boncuk işini "haneye katkı" olarak görüyorlar ve gerçek bir gelir olarak görmeyerek emeklerini değersizleştirenler. Dolayısıyla, Zaza kadınların boncuk işi hikayesi hem zorluklar karşısında dayanıklılığı hem de yoksulluk, sosyal dışlanma ve toplumsal cinsiyetin kesişimin getirdiği kahramanların sınırlamaları yansıtır.
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What Poverty And Social Exclusion Brings To The Household: A Case Study Of Zazaki Housewives’ Beadwork In Adana

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: Yükseks Lisans / Master ☒ Doktora / PhD ☐

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