

A COMPARISON OF MIDDLE AND LOWER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSEWIVES

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

BY

NEŞE ÜNAL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

FEBRUARY 2012

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof.Dr. Ayşe Saktanber
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assist.Prof.Dr. Fatma Umut Beşpınar
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit (METU,SOC) _____

Prof. Dr. Simten Coşar (Başkent Uni., PS&IR) _____

Assist.Prof.Dr. Fatma Umut Beşpınar (METU,SOC) _____

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

Name, Last name: Neşe Ünal

Signature :

ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF MIDDLE AND LOWER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSEWIVES

Ünal, Neşe

M.S. Department of Sociology

Supervisor: Assist.Prof.Dr. Fatma Umut Beşpınar

February 2012, 109 pages

This study is about daily experiences of housewives. It aims to reveal to what extent middle and lower middle class women are different as well as similar to each other. This class comparative analysis is based on their attitudes and feelings about being a housewife, employment, housework, child care, daily routine, housekeeping, and division of labour at home. The study also discusses the factors affecting women's attitudes towards housework such as technology and use of paid domestic service. In order to shed light upon the experiences of housewives, qualitative method is used by in-depth interviews with 14 middle class and 14 lower middle class housewives living in Ankara. In this study class is determined by taking into consideration the place of residence, monthly income and occupation of the husband.

Keywords: Housewife, housework, middle class, lower middle class

ÖZ

ORTA SINIF VE ALT ORTA SINIF EV KADINLARININ KARŞILAŞTIRMASI

Ünal, Neşe

Yüksek Lisans, Sosyoloji Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Fatma Umut Beşpınar

Şubat 2012, 109 sayfa

Bu çalışma, ev kadınlarının günlük deneyimleri hakkındadır. Çalışma, orta sınıf ve alt orta sınıf ev kadınlarının ne derece birbirlerinden farklı, aynı zamanda ne derece benzer olduklarını tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu sınıfa dayalı karşılaştırma, onların ev kadınlığı, ücretli çalışma, ev işleri, çocuk bakımı, günlük rutin, temizlik ve ev içi iş bölümüyle ilgili tutum ve duygularını temel almaktadır. Çalışmada ayrıca, kadınların ev işleriyle ilgili tutumlarını etkileyen teknoloji ve ücretli ev işi hizmeti gibi faktörler de ele alınmaktadır. Ev kadınlarının deneyimlerine ışık tutmak amacıyla Ankara'da yaşayan 14 orta sınıf, 14 alt orta sınıf ev kadınının değerlendirilmesinde niteliksel metot uygulanarak, derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmada sınıf belirlenirken oturulan yer, aylık gelir ve eşin mesleği dikkate alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ev kadını, ev işi, orta sınıf, alt orta sınıf

To My Family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to Assist. Prof. Dr. Umut Beşpınar, who accepted to be my supervisor, for her intellectual guidance, encouragements and patient from the very beginning to the end of this research. Without her comments and critiques, I could not finish this study. I am deeply thankful for Prof. Dr. Yıldız Ecevit for not only being my examining committee member, but also for her guidance throughout my master study. I will always feel lucky for being one of her students. I am also grateful to Prof. Dr. Simten Çoşar, my other examining committee member, for her suggestions and invaluable comments.

This study could not be written without the support of Dilek, Aysel, Hatice, Hülya and Naile who helped me for arranging my interviews. I appreciate their enthusiasm for my research subject.

I want to thank to my directors and colleagues for their tolerance and support. Without their understanding, I could not find time to finish this study.

I owe to Çağlar for his technical assistance throughout the formatting phase of this thesis. I also thank him for always being there for me. My dearest friend İrem also deserves my deepest gratitude. She always cheers me up whenever I feel depressed. I also owe to Merve and Bestem for their comments on early draft of the study.

I am thankful to my family for motivating me whenever I feel hopeless. I also owe them for their tolerance and patience in this process.

Lastly, I would like to thank all women who contributed to this study by generously sharing their experiences and thoughts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Significance of the Study.....	3
1.2. Description of the Study.....	4
1.3. How class is defined.....	6
1.4. How housewife and housework are defined.....	9
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
2.1. Housewife Studies in USA and England in terms of socio-economic class ...	12
2.2. Domestic Labour Debate.....	15
2.3. Housewife Studies in Turkey.....	19
3. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT BEING A HOUSEWIFE.....	26
3.1. Ideal Housewife: Mother-Wife-Housewife Triangle.....	26
3.2. Feelings about being a Housewife.....	31
3.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Being a Housewife.....	35
3.3.1. Possibility of Looking After Children.....	35
3.3.2. Being Your Own Boss.....	38
3.3.3. Disadvantages of Being a Housewife.....	40
3.4. Being Employed versus Being a Housewife.....	43
3.4.1. Employed Women through the Eyes of Housewives.....	46
4. ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOUSEWORK.....	50
4.1. Daily Routine.....	51
4.2. Housework: Like it or Hate it?.....	57

4.3. Technology's effect on the attitude towards housework.....	60
4.4. Perception of Cleanness and Hygiene	64
4.5. Use of Domestic Service	66
4.6. Division of Labour at Home.....	69
4.7. Shopping.....	78
4.8. Rules and Their Judgments	81
5. CONCLUSION	86
REFERENCES.....	91
APPENDICES	97
APPENDIX-A: Table.....	97
APPENDIX-B: Short Biographies of the Respondents	99
APPENDIX- C: Questionnaire.....	105

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“‘I think therefore I am’ has been spoken by men;
‘I do sex, I give birth, I care for children,
I clean house, I cook, therefore I am not’
has been the unspoken of women...”¹

One is not born, but rather becomes, a housewife. However, the housewife role of women sticks on them in a way that every woman is seen as a housewife. In the literature, it is stated that women, regardless of their occupational status, are seen as housewife and they are expected to perform housewife roles (Oakley, 1976; Comer, 1984; Ayata, 1988; Özbay, 1982; DeVault 1991). Even if more and more women become wage labourers, they are still the main providers of care at home. When they leave their cleaning duties to a domestic worker, they are still in charge of finding, hiring, monitoring, and managing of those workers (Özyeğin, 2002, p.60). Therefore, women’s housewife role constitutes an important part of their daily experiences.

The research problem of this study is that *to what extent middle and lower middle class women are different as well as similar to each other in their experiences as a housewife.* A comparison of different (but not far distant) classes gives us a ground to understand the role of the class position in women’s experiences better. Because of that, middle and lower middle classes are chosen to compare. It is assumed that housewives from different classes have different lifestyles, different expectations, different approaches to housework and being a housewife. However, there would be common experiences which exceed class differences and shared by women from all classes. Therefore, both similarities and differences of middle and lower middle class housewives are analyzed in this study bearing in mind that these two classes are close to each other.

¹ (Smith, 2005, pp.22-23)

In 1970s, when the housewife studies were very popular, Smith asserted that “a sociology for women may begin with an understanding of women’s position in the home as housewives” (as cited in Glazer-Malbin, 1976, p.920). Therefore, to Smith a sociology for women starts with the “actualities of women’s experience” (Smith, 1992, p.88). What she means by “a sociology for women” is researching everyday experience of women which is told by them instead of starting with pre-given sociological categories (as cited in DeVault, 1991, p.11). Here the everyday experience of women refers to the ordinary activities and problems of everyday life, in addition to the processes of interpretation that give meaning to daily life (p.11). Therefore, it is important to understand what is happening in women’s lives, and how they perceive it. Following this approach, this study is about the “problematic of the everyday worlds” of housewives (Smith, 1987, p.91). Thus, in this research, fulltime housewives daily life is analyzed in different contexts: their daily lives, their feelings about being housewives, their attitude towards housework, their opinions about the division of labour at home, and social lives. However, starting from women’s experiences is not enough, what is more important is “connecting the everyday world, as seen by women, to the larger social context” (Glazer-Malbin, 1976, p.922). Therefore, my aim is to analyze women’s experiences while connecting them with the larger relations that affect these experiences.

Personally, my curiosity of the lives of housewives comes from my mother who is a full-time housewife for thirty six years. Every time I leave the house, my mother accompanies me to the door, kisses me and wishes me good luck for my school or work. I do not know why but leaving her alone in the house always makes me feel sad. Yet, I feel happy selfishly every time when she opens the door of our house for me. In my mind, home equals to my mother. If she is not there, something, a big thing is missing. If she is not there for a few days, there will be chaos in the house. We become desperate, without home cooked meal, with dirty dishes everywhere; we do not have any idea where our white t-shirts are, and so on.

Thus, I began to wonder what my mother is doing after we leave the house; how she runs the house, puts everything together, and knows the place of every single item. Of course my curiosity is related with my study of sociology as an undergraduate degree since it teaches us to question the things that come to us as “normal”.

Studying housewives “is an act of resistance to partial, taken-for-granted, ideological understanding of social life” so it is also important sociologically (DeVault, 1991, p.227).

1.1. Significance of the Study

Among the studies analysing housewives and their attitudes towards housework, there are few studies which take into account their classes. While Friedan (1965) evaluates only middle class housewives, Oakley (1974) makes a comparison of working class and middle class housewives. Lopata (1971), on the other hand, has a wider aspect including different classes and ethnic groups.

When discussing women’s unpaid domestic labour, especially feminist scholars tended to focus on more the difference of men from women and less on the differences among women. Although after 1980s this trend changed and academicians talked more about the differences of women, they still see the house as a place where every women share similar experiences (Bora, 2005, p.63). However, depending on their socio-economic class, women may have different lives from each other. For example, the style and taste in the decoration of house, or the division of labour, i.e. who does what at house, may show us different class characteristics of women (p.66). Therefore, studying these different experiences of housewives becomes important.

In Turkey, on the other hand, housewives barely took attention as a research subject on their own²; but usually they are studied in terms of different contexts like modernity (Özbay, 1999), urbanization (Ayata, 1988; Ayata & Ayata, 1996; Özyeğin, 2002), suburbanization (Ayata, 2002), poverty (Bora, 2007; Ocak, 2007), and paid domestic labour (Bora, 2005). However, there is no study which compares full time housewives from different classes. Therefore, the contribution of this study would be to answer the question how class position effect on the experience of being a housewife.

² For one of the exceptions see: Özbay, Ferhunde. (1982). Evkadınları, *Ekonomik Yaklaşım*, 3 (1) Ankara

1.2. Description of the Study

The study is based on the semi structured interviews that I conducted with 14 middle class and 14 lower middle class housewives at the end of 2010 and at the beginning of 2011. Before the interviews I decided to speak with women who are older than 29 and younger than 46. This age interval (30-45) is chosen in order to omit the age factor. It is also necessary that those women should be married and have at least one child living together with them. The purpose of this selection is that the responsibilities towards a husband and children are important parts of housework and being a housewife. The retired women are also excluded since they had different experiences from full time housewives.

The interviewees were selected by snowball technique from Ankara since it is my hometown and I can use my network. I tried not to interview with women that I know personally. Instead, I got help from my circle in arranging my appointments with women who fit to my selection criteria. I had thought that I could reach many housewives in this way. However, some women were older or younger than my age quota, some of them were divorced, and some of them had children who were not living with them. In addition to these, some middle class women refused to talk with me. Sometimes they refused at the beginning, sometimes they gave me an appointment and then changed their minds. I do not exactly know their reasons for refusing me, but I guess they had some concerns. Even some of the women that I interviewed with asked me at the beginning whether I have personal questions (like their sexual life) or not. When I told them that I would only ask about their daily life, they looked relieved.

In order to shed light upon the experiences of housewives, I used qualitative research. Since the research question is about the experiences of housewives, the best way to grasp this is doing in-depth interviews with them. In addition to my interviews with housewives, I also attended two middle class and two lower middle class *gold days*³. I see those *days* as a good way to observe women's interaction with

³ Gold day (*altın günü*) or simply day (*gün*) is a women's gathering generally once in a month "in one of the women's houses until each woman becomes a host once" (Ekal, 2006). It is different from reception day (*kabul günü*) which disappeared after 1980s (Ekal, 2006). In reception days, the host opens her house to 20-80 women in a specific day (Aswad, 1974, p.16). The guests usually stayed

each other. Therefore, they have functioned as a participant observation in a sense. They also helped me to observe different and similar patterns in women's gatherings. For example, in both classes, *days* act like a forum for discussion of styles and techniques in housework; relations with husbands, children and relatives; tactics for losing weight and general health problems. However, I can say that in lower middle class meetings I feel as if I do not exist; in other words, women talk about very private things in their lives, as well as other people's, without feeling uncomfortable by my existence. In middle class housewives meetings, on the other hand, there was no such kind of conversations. In that case, I think my presence played a role.

During my preparations for my qualitative research, I conducted a pilot study with ten women in the beginning of 2010. By this way, I had chance to test my questions and add new ones. I also made use of Oakley's questionnaire which she used in her book which titled as "The Sociology of Housework" because her purpose was also to compare two different classes of women (Oakley, 1974). In addition, I used her housework typology (cleaning, cooking, shopping, washing, washing up and ironing) when analyzing women's attitudes towards housework. The questions⁴ are aimed to reveal the social class of women, how they perceive themselves, how they experience housework, how they spend their time inside and outside of the house, the division of labour at home, childcare, the roles and duties of the family members, and the decision making process at home. With these themes of questions, I tried to reveal the everyday lives of women.

Due to the nature of the research topic; interviews can be more like chitchat but I tried to ask all of the questions in my questionnaire. The interviews took on average 45 minutes. I usually conducted the interviews in the houses of the respondents except the ones that I did during women's gatherings. While most of the time lower middle class housewives hosted me in their kitchens, middle class ones choose their

about an hour and they did not come and leave together, instead there was a circulation of guests. According to Benedict in reception days "it seems that people are always coming and going" While reception days were common in towns, gold days become popular in urban areas after 1980s. The difference of gold days from other women gatherings is that the former's members are predefined and lesser. In addition, all members give a certain amount of money (or gold) to the host of that month (Ekal, 2006).

⁴ Please see appendix for questionnaire.

parlours. This detail is important because it shows also how women perceive me. While lower middle class housewives see me closer to them and they were more sincere in their attitudes, middle class housewives were more formal and reserved. Because of that, the former host me in their kitchen (as they do for their friends). This different attitude also affected the richness of the interview. In some talks, I had difficulties to prevent short answers of middle class housewives. The reason for this may stem from the fact that they feel uneasy when their personal lives are the subject of a research⁵.

1.3. How class is defined

In this study, there are two difficulties related with defining class. The first one is how to define a housewife's class position. Although it has been a challenge for stratification studies to classify class position of economically inactive people like housewives, students, retired or unemployed, conventionally family is considered as the basic unit of class structure. Thus, women's class position is determined by reference to the head of the household who is usually their husband or father. This way is overwhelmingly used since it is assumed that people who live in the same household share same living conditions.

However, when more and more women have started to join economic life, the conventional view has started to be criticized mostly by feminists because the theory does not fit to women who live without a male breadwinner or who earn more than their husbands, or who are the only wage-earners in the family (Walby, 1986/1994, p.25). On the other hand, the conventional approach is still problematic because it does not consider the occupation of being a full-time housewife and the importance of women's unpaid domestic labour. Also it underestimates women's own resources like their education, trainings and skills (Oakley, 1974, p.9). Because of these reasons some feminist writers try to overcome this problem by taking into account women's own place in class relations (Acker, 1973; Oakley, 1974; Delphy 1984). For instance, according to Acker, "one solution to the problem of defining women's

⁵ This was also the case in Kaya's study which was conducted among professional women who belong to upper middle and middle classes. (Kaya, 2008)

social status is to view 'housewife' as an occupation and to give it some sort of ranking in the hierarchy of occupations" (1973, p.941). An alternative approach came from Walby: according to her, housewives and husbands could be conceptualized as classes. By recognizing the significance of housework on producing the labour power of the husband, herself and children, Walby sees housewives and husbands as two classes in a patriarchal system (Walby, 1986/1994, p.34).

However, these attempts, along with others, could not solve the problem of how to bring domestic labour into the analysis of class processes and how to locate the class position of housewives. Therefore, "there is no generally accepted theoretical solution to the criticisms feminist made in the late 1960s and 1970s" (Acker, 2006, p.40) and the problem of deciding "the class position of unpaid housewives remained unsolved" (Acker, 1999, p.44). It seems that feminist agenda turned into more the issues of identity, race, ethnicity, sexualities and body, as well as interweaving of race, class, gender and other dimensions (Acker, 2006, p.39). This is partly because the feminist discussion on class could not reach a conclusion, and because there were analytical problems in class theory due to changing economic-political structure (Acker, 2000, p.195).

Because of abovementioned reasons, in this study the conventional approach is used, i.e. the household is taken as an indicator of class status since my research area are families who compose of a breadwinner male, a housewife and children. In this case, the occupation and income of the husband is taken as determining the class position of other family members. However, while doing this, I am also aware of the fact that women who are housewives have also educational and cultural resources. Because of this reason, I asked my respondents their educational levels, whether they worked before or after marriage, and whether they have any monetary resource like rental income.

Second issue, regarding the definition of class, is related with how to differentiate lower middle class and middle class families. Actually there is a broad literature on class and stratification studies and there are attempts for developing index for

defining people's class⁶. However, I did not prefer to follow such a detailed method because I have predefined selection criteria (like age, having at least one child and marital status). Instead, I determine districts (with the assumption that people who live in the same neighbourhood have similar life conditions) that thought to be composed of mostly middle class or lower middle class families. These districts are Ümitköy, Çayyolu, and Ayrancı (as middle class) in addition to Batıkent, Keçiören, and Eryaman (as lower middle class) (Ayata & Ayata, 1996b; Beşpınar-Ekici, 2001; Ekici, 2004; Karademir, 2009). After determining neighbourhoods, I also took into account the occupation of the husband and his monthly income bearing in mind that not everyone possesses the expected class position in these neighbourhoods.

Overall, the monthly income of lower middle class men varies from 1.500 to 3.000 TL while the income of middle class men ranges from 4.000 to 6.500 TL⁷. It should be noted that this numbers are told by housewives, I did not talk with any of their husbands. So this information depends on their knowledge. In addition, no housewife contributed to this research stated that they have a special income other than their husband earnings. When we look at the educational levels of the respondents, among middle class, two of them are university graduate, nine of them are high school graduate, one of them is secondary school graduate, and two of them are primary school graduate. Among lower middle class housewives, three of them are university graduate, four of them are high school graduate, one of them is secondary school graduate, and six of them are primary school graduate. When looked at the education of the husbands, middle class ones graduated from either high school or university. Lower middle ones; on the other hand have a mixed profile, ranging from primary school to university. Because of these different profiles, I did not take educational level as an indicator for determining class.

It should be also noted that these two groups in themselves are not homogenous in terms of the number of year spent in the city, and cultural background. Among middle class and among lower middle class, there are "multiple stage status

⁶For example: Kalaycıoğlu, S., Çelik, K., Çelen, Ü., Türkyılmaz, S. (2010). Temsili bir örneklemede sosyo-ekonomik statü(ses) ölçüm aracı geliştirilmesi: Ankara kent merkezi örneği. *Sosyoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi* *Voll.* pp.185-215

⁷ See appendix for short biographies of the respondents, and the table which shows indicators for class determination

hierarchies” (Ayata, 1988, p.20). However, I take into account these differences and hierarchies when analyzing my data.

Lastly, what is meant from class in this study is not static pre-given category. Following Acker’s re-conceptualization of class, it is understood as a process “in which people engage as they earn their livings, organize and coordinate their work, and struggle for survival” (1999, p.57). It is not that people are inserted to those categories, instead, they “accomplish through active practices that constitute social relations and structures” (p.53). Also in this process racial and gender formations are created and re-created (p.53).

1.4. How housewife and housework are defined

A housewife means a woman who does not work outside the home. But this definition only tells us what a housewife does not do. Actually, what a housewife does, in other words what are her duties and responsibilities are defined by society and this definition changes from different time periods and different social groups (Özbay, 1982, p.209).

According to Robertson, a housewife means “the mistress and manager of a house” (1997, p.2). However, this definition can also be used for a housekeeper (who is actually considered as a “female paid employee”). Therefore, the difference of housewife from a housekeeper is that the former does the same job *within a marriage* (Robertson, 1997, p.2). Because of that reason, Lopata defines a housewife as follows: “a woman responsible for running her home, whether she performs the tasks herself or hires people to do them” (Lopata, 1971, p.3). Another difference between these two terms is that while a housekeeper is being paid for his/her labour, a housewife does the same job “for her family without being paid” (Özkan, 1999, p.54).

Cowan on the other hand makes a differentiation between paid workers and housewives (1983, p.5). According to her, housewives do not have worker rights such as sickness pay, unemployment benefit or pension (as cited in Özkan, 1999, p.56). Secondly, there is no clear job description, definite working hours, work

contract or employer. Thirdly, they work alone unlike other workers who work with their colleagues. Thus, housewives spend most of their day in isolation.

In this study, on the other hand, it is preferred to define housewife as follows: A married woman, who sees herself as a housewife, who is in charge of running her house, who is not employed, and does not attempt to find a job.

What a housewife does also changes from society to society and it is affected from cultural values, gender division of work, participation of women and men in waged work, social sphere and technological developments (Pfau-Effinger, 2010, p.125). According to Oakley, housework “is not a single activity” but it is “a collection of heterogeneous tasks that demand a variety of skills and kinds of action” (1974, p.48). In addition, giving one name to cleaning, washing, washing up, cooking, ironing, and shopping makes the differences between them invisible (p.48). If we think about cleaning, for example, we will notice how many different tasks it necessitates: removing dust, hovering, sweeping the floors, cleaning windows, cleaning toilets and bathroom.

In addition housework differs from industrial labour. According to Cowan, the former has become specialized with increased division of labour; but housework still remains the same with menial physical labour (like cleaning) and mental efforts (like deciding what to cook or arranging family meetings) (Cowan, 1983, p.5; Özkan, 1999, p.56). Because of these reasons, according to Cowan housework is considered as the “last dying gasp of feudalism,... the last surviving indicator of what the Western world was like before the market economy reared its ugly head” (1983, p.5).

As mentioned above, housewife is a woman who is in charge of running a house. The requirements of running a house can change from family to family, but it generally includes housecleaning, dishwashing, laundry work, cooking and shopping; in addition to child care and elderly care. In other words, housework is meant “everything that is done to organize and care for a family and a home” (Mackie & Pattulo, 1977, p.19). In this study the care for children and support for husband are also included in housewife because “children add to cleaning, laundry, and meal preparation demands, and child care activities themselves may reduce time available for housework” (Sayer, 2010, p.21). Also younger children increase the amount of

domestic duties (Van der Lippe, 2010, p.54). However, child care is only analyzed with respect to housewifery without going into details of motherhood. Unfortunately, no woman that I interviewed with is responsible for elderly care. Therefore, this side of housework is not included in the analysis.

In the following chapter, I mention three major studies about housewives in Europe and USA literature. These studies compare housewives by taking class as a dimension. The chapter continues with domestic labour debate which has dominated literature especially in 1970s and 1980s. Feminist contribution of women's unpaid labour in house is invaluable in order to make it visible. Chapter lasts with Turkish studies that analyze housewives and their activities inside and outside of the house.

In the third chapter, based on the interviews that I conducted, I examine what does it mean to be a housewife for respondents in general and how they perceive themselves as being housewives by showing differences and similarities of women from two classes. I mention the roles of housewives, their responsibilities, and characteristics of a good housewife. The good sides and bad sides of being a housewife, i.e. what women think about the advantages and disadvantages of being a housewife are also analyzed in this part. In addition, I discuss how they compare being a housewife and being employed, as well as their reasons for not working.

In the fourth chapter I mention daily routine of housewives by focusing on housework and its dimensions. This part brings different aspects of domestic tasks with mentioning the conditions that affect women's attitudes towards housework. It starts with looking at how housewives arrange their week days and weekends. Then I analyze women's feelings and perceptions about different house tasks: which tasks they like most and which tasks they hate. Chapter continues with how technology and using domestic worker affects the attitude towards housework with looking at the perception of cleanness and hygiene. Further, women's attitude towards men's and children's sharing of housework is discussed. In addition, shopping as housework activity also examined in detail because it is a good indicator for showing differences among two classes. This chapter finishes with women's evaluation of their routines and the rules they set in order to reach their standards in housework.

Lastly I discuss all of the arguments and conclude in fifth chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women as fulltime housewives had not been paid so much attention until 1960s in England and USA. Women's domestic labour, on the other hand, has been studied in terms of its economic value for family, its social value and its value under capitalism after 1970s (Hartmann, 1981; Davidoff, 2002; Hall, 1974; Malos, 1982; Oakley, 1974; Strasser, 2000). This chapter is about major studies on housewives and their domestic labour in the literature. It begins with three important works about housewives in USA and England. Then it continues with domestic labour debate, and lastly, studies related with housewives in Turkey.

2.1. Housewife Studies in USA and England in terms of socio-economic class

One of the first detailed studies about housewives came in 1974 from Ann Oakley. In her book "Housewife" she intends to understand women's attitudes towards housework and their housewife role. Her work actually depends on interviews that she conducted with 20 working class and 20 middle class women who have at least one child in London. She defines "housewife" (in the author's view which everyone knows in a sense what does it mean, but in another sense, no one knows) in a historical context including today's condition (Oakley, 1976, p.91). Unlike other scholars, Oakley conceptualizes housework "as a job", while seeing it as "work". Therefore, she looks at housewifery like an industrial labour, and she analyzes the level of satisfaction of housewives. According to her, women are satisfied with being housewife yet dissatisfied with doing housework (Glazer-Malbin, 1976, p.914) With a more radical feminist view, she is definitely against division of labour by sex and three myths about motherhood which are "all women need to be mothers, all mothers need their children, and all children need their mothers" (Oakley, 1976, p.186).

Therefore, she was more interested in cultural construction of housewife and mother roles.

An earlier study had been conducted by Betty Friedan who was interested in collage graduated housewives' experiences living in American suburbs. Friedan conducted interviews with 200 women who were graduated from Smith Collage, like she did, fifteen years ago. Her aim was to reveal "the problem that has no name" among middle class housewife-mothers (Friedan, 1963, p.19). According to author, American women started to marry at early ages and the number of birth they give increased after 1950. Moreover, fewer women were entering into labour force (p.18). After talking with her college classmates and taking stock of herself, she discovered that American housewives were unsatisfied with their lives, although they were living a dream (that was reinforced also by magazines and advertisements): being a perfect wife and mother, getting and keeping their husband, having five children and a wealthy life (Friedan, 1963, pp.15-18). According to Friedan, what women felt was emptiness, rather than happiness. As one of her interviewees said "I feel as if I don't exist." (p.20). Since housewives had to fulfil their different roles ("wife, mistress, mother, nurse, consumer, cook, chauffeur, expert on interior decoration, child care, appliance repair, furniture refinishing, nutrition, and education") their daily domestic routines becomes the reason for their unsatisfaction (p.30). They cannot be satisfied with what they do because they had to perform same tasks everyday again and again.

The core point that Friedan criticized was the "feminine mystique", i.e., the idea that women can find satisfaction exclusively in the traditional role of wife and mother (Tong, 1998, p.22). Like Oakley, she criticized functional and Freudian theories which see women's housewife and mother role as a necessity for the balance of the society (Friedan, 1963, p.127). She believed that a woman cannot have fulfilment by serving a husband and children. Instead, she suggested that women should not see housewifery as a career, but rather find ways for using their mental capacities. Therefore, following a liberal feminist thought, she recommended women to have a job outside the home.

Although Friedan's book was a best-seller, it was criticized because she underestimated the fact that combining work and family life is difficult for a working

mother unless there are structural changes (Tong, 1998, p.24). Like other liberal feminists, she suggested women to enter into public life without men's joining into tasks related with private life (p.24).

Considering these criticisms, Friedan wrote a book called the *Second Stage* (1981) in which she admitted her neglect on the double burden. Therefore, she proposed "increased nursery and childcare provision, greater involvement by men in child-rearing and a basic restructuring of work patterns to enable both men and women to combine family responsibilities with a career" (Bryson, 1992, p.165).

Unlike Friedan, there are also some researchers who claim that housewives can experience enjoyment and satisfaction in their life styles and not totally exhausted by housework. One of these scholars was Lopata. The idea of studying housewives comes to her mind when she started to live in American suburbs. Her work depends on many different studies that she conducted in late 1950s and at the beginning of 1960s. She interviewed more than 500 women living in suburbs around Chicago. Instead of seeing housewife role as a static one, she identifies different stages in a women's life: becoming a wife, becoming a housewife, and becoming a mother (Lopata, 1971, p.36). As Glazer-Malbin summarizes, "She is interested in how women, fulfilling a variety of expectations with a variety of learning experiences and in a variety of social contexts (race, social class, employment status, age, presence or absence of children), carry out the jobs associated with being housewives" (Glazer-Malbin, 1976, p.913). In other words, she studied women with and no children, women from different ages, and women from different ethnic and race groups. The scope of her work, therefore, is wider than Friedan and Oakley's.

What Lopata criticized is the representation of housewife role in society as well as in academy. According to her, women who do not work outside of home portrayed as passive, uncreative, and apolitical. They are also presented as they are condemned to repetitive house tasks. However, Lopata thinks that housewives in America are highly heterogeneous, and they should not be generalized under one category, as if all of them are experiencing the same thing (p.369). Lopata accepts that some women can feel passive and restricted; but there are also women who enjoy with being a housewife, and become more flexible and mobile. In the same way men become

more sensitive to women's labour, and they involve more to house chores. Therefore Lopata is against the lower status of housewife role in society and she believes that housewives are much more than that (p.376).

Lopata's difference from other scholars is that she saw the life of a housewife as a passage from one stage to another. Based on her research, she determines a typology of women depending on their "orientation at a particular time" (Lopata, 1971, p.66). The first one of these categories is the husband-oriented woman who thinks that her basic responsibility is being a wife. The child-oriented woman, on the other hand sees her main role as being a mother. She builds a world where there is only her child and herself. She kept her husband outside of this relationship. Thirdly, Lopata mentions house-oriented women whose main focus is her house and its maintenance. The life-cycle woman experiences a change in her interest: she begins with a wife, and then she changes her focus when she has a baby, but after her child grows up and leaves the home, she turns to her role of wife. As a fifth category, the family oriented woman concentrate on three roles at the same time: wife, housewife, and mother. She may see herself as a traditional housewife and internalize those roles. Sixthly, self-directed woman does not accept those roles and concentrate on her own needs. Lastly career-oriented or society-oriented woman is very rare in Lopata's sample, but this type of woman cares her relationships and roles outside the family institution (Lopata, 1971, pp.64-66).

Lopata's, Oakley's and Friedan's studies were the major ones which deal with housewife experience considering socio-economic class. Other studies, on the other hand, focused more on women's unpaid labor at home and less on the experience of housewives during 1970s. The next part is about the discussion on housework's function for capital accumulation.

2.2. Domestic Labour Debate

With the rapid growth in industrialization during 18th and 19th centuries, home and work separation resulted in a differentiation of status of men and women in division of labour. While men were associated with work and public life, women were

associated with home and domestic life. Women's domestic labour was excluded from capitalist production process and it could not be commercialized.

Domestic labour debate has started by socialist and Marxist feminist writers in the late 1960s. Their aim was to analyse women's unpaid family work because it was not clear whether it is productive or not in Marxian understanding (Ramazanoğlu, 1998, p.112). According to one view, women's unpaid family work is not productive since housewives do not produce commodities that create surplus value; instead they create goods and services that have use value. Women do not earn income through doing housework; they are paid through their husbands who are supposed to receive enough to support both themselves and their families (Hall, 1982, p.44). Why women's domestic labour is considered as valueless is because it is outside of trade and market relations (Benston, 1982, p.120). Some writers, like Secombe (1974), Vogel (1973), Harrison (1973), also claimed that seeing housework as "productive" is incoherent with Marxist analysis of capitalism. According to Secombe, woman who does family work is not related with the means of production or the means of exchange. While it is true that her labour contributes a value to the consumption, this value does not enter the market because she does not create surplus value (as cited in Glazer-Malbin, 1976, p.919).

On the other hand, according to the other view domestic labour is productive because every task that women do at home can be purchased from market for a certain amount of money (like cleaning or babysitting). Because of that reason, Margaret Benston claims that housework can be conceptualized as productive labour and as a source of capital accumulation (Benston, 1982). Likewise, Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James think that housework is socially productive work because it reproduces labour. They claim that women as mothers not only contribute to the labour force of the future, but also they support their husband's labour by being housewives, by helping them to prepare for the next day of work (Dalla Costa & James, 1972). According to Dalla Costa and James, housewives provide workers emotional and domestic support; not merely food and clothes (as cited in Tong, 1998, p.108). Therefore, capitalism needs women's unpaid labour in order to get surplus value. In their opinion, a housewife is not different from a worker except that she is unpaid (as cited in Freeman, 1982, p.167).

This opinion led to scholars to think about what if housewives were waged. Della Costa proposed that “Wages for Housework” campaign could solve the problem of domestic labour. The proponents of this campaign claimed that by this way women feel independent since they will have their own wages. They suggest that state should pay the wages to housewives since it is the capital which profits from women’s unpaid domestic labour (as cited in Tong, 1998, p.108).

However, this argument caused a much debate. First of all, according to Freeman raising children does not produce surplus value, although it produces labour power. (as cited in Tong, 1982, p.167). Likewise supporting a working husband helps him to produce surplus value, but it does not create it directly (p.167). Thus, for Freeman proponents of wages for housework interpreted wrongly the Marxist concept of surplus value. Secondly, according to Barbara Bergmann, paying wages for housework is not economically possible and it will “encourage women to become and remain housewives” (as cited in Tong, 1998, p.109). To Bergmann, giving wages to housewives will keep them at home since it does not encourage them to enter into labour force. (p.110). In addition, according to Mackie and Pattulo giving wages for housework means accepting that domestic labour is women’s work (1977, p.20). Other feminists also claim that if women paid for housework, they become isolated, and the sexual division of labour will not be solved (Humm, 1989, p.125).

In sum, those who believed that unpaid domestic labour creates value were criticized because they did not consider “gender inequalities in paid work that were also part of women’s class experience” and they failed to give a satisfactory explanation “how unpaid labour contributed to the capitalist’s profits” (Acker, 1999, p.47).

Another approach in domestic labour debate can be grouped under the discussion about who benefits from women’s unpaid domestic labour. Capitalism/patriarchy theories (also called dual systems) claim that it is not only capitalism but also patriarchy which benefits from the domestic labour of women. However, these theories differ in their understanding of the bases of patriarchy and the relationships between patriarchy and capitalism (Acker, 1999, p.47). According to Hartmann (1976), patriarchy is rooted in male domination on women’s labour power. Through heterosexual marriage, men dominate women by controlling their sexuality and by

excluding them from labour market (as cited in Acar-Savran, 2004, p.43). On the other hand, to Delphy the material basis of patriarchy is rooted in the mode of family production, i.e. the exploitation of wives' unpaid labour (Delphy, 1980). She argues that the main enemy of women are men rather than capitalism because men appropriate women's domestic labour through the mode of family production. It can be argued that women are paid through "family wage" that their husbands earn. However, according to Delphy, there is a disparity between the amount of women's domestic labour and the standard of living they have. Compared to them, their husbands are more privileged because they have more free time and higher level of consumption (Delphy, 1980). However, Delphy's thesis does not fit women who work outside the house because their labour is also exploited by capitalism.

The lively debates of women's unpaid family labour are hard to be summarized in a chapter; and it is true that they have served as a means for understanding the importance of domestic labour. With this perspective, it is realized that being a housewife is not a prestigious job since it is unpaid (Acar-Savran, 2004, p.41). However, it seems that this debate did not give an answer to the question why it is woman who does the housework (Molyneux, 1979). In addition, through domestic labour debate only working class was analyzed, the bourgeois family was left out of the scope of analysis (Acar-Savran, 2004, p.17). Most importantly, the debate was abstract and did not connect with the real experiences of women. In addition, it "failed to produce a new grand theory in which women and their work was as central as men and their work" (Acker, 1999, p.48).

On the other hand, there are still some attempts to keep alive the domestic labour debate. For example, Fraad, Resnick, and Wolff (2009) focus on Marxist class analysis on households composed of a male breadwinner and a housewife within the contemporary United States. According to writers, housewives, by transforming raw materials into products, participate in class process. What they produce is considered as surplus value because they produce more than they need; they also produce for their spouses. However, their labour is appropriated by their husbands, which shows us a process of "feudal form" because husbands do not pay for the labour of their spouses. In addition, housewives' surplus labour has no exchange value since it does not enter the market. Therefore, according to Fraad et al. this type of household is not

capitalist but feudal. However, their thesis still cannot overcome the abovementioned criticisms.

Before passing to studies related with housewives in Turkey, it should be noted that the focus of studies has shifted from the experience of housewives and housework to the gendered division of labour at home. In other words, as more and more women started work outside the house, scholars begin to conduct research on who does what at home and the amount of time spent to housework and childcare by couples (Robinson & Milkie, 1998; Lee & Waite, 2005; Baxter et al., 2008; Treas & Drobnic, 2010). The difficulty of balancing work and home life creates the necessity of hiring a domestic worker, and this leads scholars to study paid domestic work (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2004). Indeed, Ehrenreich explains the reason for why “politics of housework” or “wages for housework” lost their interest in the academy by suspecting that fewer sociologists actually doing it (2004, p.90).

2.3. Housewife Studies in Turkey

As it was mentioned in the introduction part, in Turkey housewives has been studied in different contexts like class, poverty, and modernization. The only exception is Ferhunde Özbay’s study called as “Housewives”⁸ because her focal point is categorization of housewife activities. In her article, she starts with saying that what we know about housewives is inadequate (Özbay, 1982, p.209). Secondly she mentions that housewives’ experience, their role and society’s expectations from them may change from society to society (p.211). For instance in Western countries, housewives’ responsibilities are limited and getting easy with technology. Therefore, women in these countries want more to join economic activities than being housewives (p.210).

On the other hand, the situation is different in Turkey. Whether they work outside the house or not, women are considered first as housewives (Özbay, 1982, p.211). According to Özbay, during the rapid social change, there were no economic developments which ensure that patriarchal values are replaced by new ones.

⁸ Özbay, F. (1982). Evkadınları, *Ekonomik Yaklaşım*, 3 (1) Ankara

Therefore, there were no encouraging mechanisms for women to join work life; instead elevator mechanisms worked for women to become housewife. For example in rural and *gecekondul*⁹ areas, housework constitutes only some of the daily work of the women (Ayata, 1988, p.9) For most of the rural women, land cropping, animal husbandry, basic food producing (like bread or tomato paste) are more difficult than housework (p.9). Therefore, they want to migrate to urban areas. For those women changing their status from working to housewife does not mean a downward mobility (Özbay, 1982, p.214). Indeed, they demand to be responsible only by house tasks and child rearing (p.215).

Another reason of why women want to be housewives in Turkey is related with its social status. According to Özbay, women's social standing is determined through their husbands or fathers. If a man's economic condition is well enough, his wife does not need to work outside the house. Therefore, being a housewife signifies that you have a prosperous life (Özbay, 1982, p.215). In the same way, if a woman is working, she has to legitimize her reason for working because this could also mean that her husband is incapable of realizing his duties (p.216). Of course it should be remembered that Özbay wrote this article in the beginning of 1980s, and within thirty years, it can be said that the image of being a housewife has "challenged by the economic pressures of urban living, making women's employment crucial to the maintenance of economic status quo" (Bolak, 1997, p.412) Therefore, for some section of the society, being a housewife is not appealing as it before because of the economic pressure.

In her other article which came 14 years later, Özbay underlines the association of women and house. According to her, it is difficult to imagine women without house, and vice versa In fact this relationship is perpetuated whenever we use the term "house-wife" (Özbay, 1996, p.52). In this article and the one that came later¹⁰, she analyzes the lives of women inside the house through Turkish modernisation and spatial change. Özbay shows this relation by dividing this transition into different

⁹ Turkish usage of squatter settlement; literally means *built overnight*.

¹⁰ Özbay, F. (1999) Gendered Space: A New Outlook at Turkish Modernization. *Gender & History*, Vol.11 No:3 pp.555-568

time periods: late 19th century, after the establishment of the Republic (1920s-1960s), 1970s-1980s and after 1990s.

First of all, in late Ottoman urban elite houses there was a structured and defined use of space. The rooms were separated according to gender segregation. While *harem* was used by women and male members of the family (unless there were women other than family members present), *selamlık* was used by only men. While female visitors were entertained at harem, male visitors were entertained at *selamlık*. Moreover, women and children were not allowed to enter *selamlık* except for the domestic services.

It was also the time when women's contact with the outside world was strictly limited. Therefore, they spend their time mostly in their houses. However, thanks to the domestic servants, women's responsibility in the house was limited to organizing and directing the daily routine.

After the establishment of the Republic, on the other hand, women (especially upper middle class ones) were aimed to become visible in public space in order to show the westernization of the state. In newspapers and magazines, women portrayed with new dressing styles which symbolized a new social life. Even in primary and secondary textbooks before 1945, we could see women shoulder important responsibilities for the development of newly established country (Gümüšoğlu, 1998, p.102). However, Kemalist female identity shows a combination of conflicting women images: on the one hand, we see educational professional women at work, socially active organizing women as members of social clubs; on the other hand, we see biological functioning women in the fulfilling reproductive responsibilities as mothers and wives (Koçer, 1999, p.52). In addition to this, most magazines like "Ana" emphasized the role of the traditional women. For instance, the magazine Ana wrote in each volume that "every woman is partly a mother" or "every woman always and everywhere is a mother" (Koçer, 1999, p. 68). Moreover, women were seen in course books while doing housework or cooking with their elegant clothes, high heels and stylish hairs (Gümüšoğlu, 1998, p.102). Despite the laws on education and participation in economic and political life, there were limited amount of women

who were in streets (Özbay, 1999, p.561). Therefore, women play their new role in by being a “modern” housewife and mother, and by redecorating their new houses.

In this new decoration process, the old *harem* was turned into living room; and *selamlık* was turned into reception room. Now *selamlık* opened its doors to women also, but its use for entertaining guests did not disappear. At nights, husband and wife hosted their guests in reception room, and in the mornings women received female guests in this room (Özbay, 1999, p.561). Since women’s contact with the outside world was very limited, entertaining guests, especially *kabul günü* (literally reception day) was very significant. According to Özbay, those reception days act like a modernisation school for housewives. “Manners, fashion, child rearing practises and relation among spouse were discussed at these occasions” (1999, p.561).

While women visited their friends, they observed their houses and learnt new styles. As in Ottoman times *selamlık* was open to outside world, now the reception room function in that way. Furthermore, it showed socio-economic status of the family. Therefore the decoration of this room was very important than the other parts of the house. Armchairs, table sets, a formica buffet filled with glasses, porcelain plates and souvenirs which are never used were the standard furniture (Benedict, 1974, p.38). The problem with this new style of furniture was that individuals could not get used to them, since previously they had been eating and sitting on the floor. In addition, the furniture was new and expensive and they were not for daily use. Therefore, while women and men entertained their guests, everyone felt uneasy like being in a public space. This kind of feeling could also be seen during reception days. Women wore their best dress, often they went to a hairdresser, they sat on the armchairs even they were uncomfortable, and they behave politer than their actual selves. So, there was an official atmosphere created (Özbay, 1999, p.561).

When we come to 1970s and 1980s, we saw that a status competition was common among families living in urban areas. They experienced an upward mobility, and in order to show this, they felt the need for spending their money on their guest rooms. This fact also gives us an idea about what was understood from modernity: a change in outlook without a change in essence.

This new lifestyle also created a new housewife culture in which women had to compete with each other in order to become the perfect woman by their ability to knit, the taste of cake that they cook or their sense of aesthetic in decoration of the guest room (Ayata, 1988, p.12). The tidiness of the guest room was also important because it showed how the woman is a proper housewife. Since it is the men's social status which also defines women's, housewives tried to show this by updating their furniture in the guest room. The amount of money that is spent to furniture, carpets, and curtains - including their quality, brand, and beauty - showed the success of the husband. Because of that reason, according to Ayata, guest rooms functioned as an indicator of the status of the families (Ayata, 1988, p.19).

Another evaluation criterion for a woman is her ability to entertain her guests. She should not serve the same foods all the time; she has to learn new recipes. She also has to keep attention to the empty plates and glasses and fill up them immediately (Ayata, 1988, p.11). Today, no matter a woman works outside the home or not, it is her one of the main duties to host her companies in a perfect way (Ayata & Ayata, 1996a, p.68). The striking point here is that this expectations and standards are all created by the women themselves (Ayata, 1988, p.10).

After 1990s, we see that the inner house – guest room distinction lost its significance. We do not see closed door guest rooms anymore (Özbay, 1999, p.563). Women feel more pressure on themselves because now the whole house is become a showroom. Earlier, it was enough to keep clean the guest room, but now the whole house should be kept clean. In fact, it becomes a tradition to show all parts of the house if visitors come to the house for the first time (p.565). Therefore hiring domestic worker becomes essential regardless of the employment status of woman i.e. whether she is working outside of the house or not.

Since the number of women hiring domestic workers increases, scholars research about the tensions between middle class women and their cleaning workers (Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç-Rittersberger, 2001; Özyeğin, 2005; Bora, 2005). In one of these studies, Bora conducted in depth interviews with thirteen middle class women (both employed and housewives) and fourteen domestic workers. She found that thanks to paid domestic work, middle class women built their identity as modern and

equal subjects with men (2005, p.185). Their relationship with their domestic workers is not only an employer-employee relationship; it also perpetuates both class based and gender differences between those women (p.186). The class hierarchy for Bora is not a static one, but it is based on interaction, discussion and struggle between women and their domestic workers.

If we look at the studies after 1990s, we would notice that consumption pattern is underlined in a lot of studies. According to Durakbaşa and Cindoğlu (2002) there is a relationship between changes in new middle class women's house running activities and increase in the number of shopping centres. Ayata also underlines the key of consuming pattern among middle class (Ayata, 2002, p.26). According to him, women use consumption as a key to showing family status (p.26). His study was based on two sources, one was conducted in 1993 with 116 interviews, and the other was conducted with 26 families in Ankara's suburban districts. Ayata says that women are seen as responsible for home and domestic work although there is no strict gendered division of labour in suburban society (p.30). He also underlines the importance of friendship networks among suburban housewives. Thanks to the similar cultural background and taste, women find ways of socialization in their neighbourhood. They can play sport together, go to cinema, or visit each other. Women also find a chance to meet other mothers by sitting in a park for their children. Or they can drive their children together to the sport courses. "In addition to being wives and mothers, women are seen as homemakers and managers of the house, in charge of provisioning, decoration and the managements of family 'appearances'"(Ayata, 2002, p.34).

As seen in this chapter, housewives were took attention during late 1960s and 1970s in Europe and USA simply because they constituted a large section of the society. However, their activity in the house, i.e. housework, has been more interesting for scholars; although the debate came to a dead end. The domestic labour debate often criticized because scholars used a structuralist analysis (Pollert, 1996, p.641). On the one hand, using Marxist concepts resulted in reducing women's oppression or exploitation to the needs of capitalism without showing the experiences of male and

females. On the other hand, the system of patriarchy is used in order to explain women's exploitation by men within housework. Other attempts to develop a dual system in which capitalism articulating with patriarchy also criticized because it is unable to explain patriarchy; rather it is a description (Pollert, 1996, p.642). What Pollert suggests is a "historical materialist approach" which enables actors to act, and makes visible both men and women as agencies (p.648). Therefore, as used in this study also, gender should be examined in lived experience by incorporating agency "with the constraints of social structures" (Pollert, 1996, p.649).

CHAPTER 3

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT BEING A HOUSEWIFE

I'm a teacher and a doctor and a therapist and a laundrymat. I'm a playgroup leader and a chef and a nutritionist. I'm a personal shopper and a cleaning lady and a librarian. I'm a taxi driver and a soccer coach and the occasional jailer. I'm the CEO of this operation, and I'm pretty good at it¹¹

Although the level of women's employment rate in Turkey is decreasing, the appealing of being a housewife is shaken; and it becomes more important to have a profession and career among new generation than being a housewife (Sancar, 2004). However, among the women who are out of labour force, 60% of them stated being a housewife for their employment status (TURKSTAT, 2010). Therefore, it is very important to understand how full-time housewives themselves consider their stand in life. This chapter is about how women perceive being a housewife from different aspects. In other words, it discusses what are their attitudes towards being a housewife in general, what characteristics they think that a good housewife should have, what are the best and worst sides of it; how they feel about being a housewife, and how they consider employment. In this context, my aim is to analyze women's perceptions while touching upon the differences and similarities related with their class positions.

3.1. Ideal Housewife: Mother-Wife-Housewife Triangle

The social image of housewife in society is a combination of mother, wife and housewife roles. Oakley is one of the scholars who points out this and she tells that

¹¹ Anonymous stay-at-home mother

'housewife' is used as "an umbrella term for 'wife' and 'mother'" (Oakley, 1976, p.9). Women are not only wives and mothers, but they are also seen as "homemakers and managers of the house" (Ayata, 2002, p.34). In addition, Oakley thinks that media is also effective in constructing the image of mother-wife-housewife triangle. Women's magazines, she says, show women how to "dress, eat, housekeep, have their babies and even make love all at the same time" (1976, p.9). In television advertisements, for example, women portrayed while they are serving to their children and husbands.

This social image of housewife is also shared by middle and lower middle class housewives who contributed to this study. They perceive housewifery including wife and mother responsibilities. It does actually make sense because in their daily lives, housewives cannot draw the lines between these three roles. For example, after a woman gets up, she prepares breakfast for her child and for her husband. While she is cooking for dinner, she is also looking after her child. Therefore it is difficult to say where her mother and wife roles finish and where her housewife role starts. During the day, housewives with children perform these three roles which constitute this mother-wife-housewife triangle.

As society expects women to be perfect on mother-wife-housewife roles, for my respondents, an ideal housewife also means an ideal wife and mother. First of all, some women think that an ideal housewife is also an ideal wife. For example when Esma¹² (middle class/high school) mentioned the characteristics of a proper housewife, she said that "*First of all, a good housewife will be devoted to her home. I mean, there will never ever be any nagging at all when her husband is back home. She will not reflect her problems to him right away. I think these stuff are very important for marriage.*"¹³ As we can see, actually, what she was talking about are the characteristics of an ideal wife. Likewise, when İnci (middle class/university) was explaining traits that every housewife should have, she said that "*Thinking as a Turkish woman, she must be very self-sacrificing. You do not marry only your*

¹² All of the names of the interviewees are made up for confidentiality.

¹³ İyi bir ev hanımı bir kere evine bağlı olacak. Yani evinde dışarıdan eşi geldiğinde asla ve asla dırdırmış şuymuş buymuş bunlar olmayacak. Eğer sıkıntısı dahi olsa bunu erkeğe o anda yansıtmayacak. Evlilikte bunların çok önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum.

*husband, but also his family.*¹⁴” Therefore, she means that a housewife should be careful about her relations with her husband’s family, which is again about being a good wife.

In the same way, women can also add being a mother to the responsibilities of an ideal housewife. The fact that an ideal housewife should be a good mother as well is common for both classes for my informants. According to Bengü (middle class/high school) a good housewife is “*a woman who raises her children well, who takes care every needs of them*¹⁵”. According to Hale (lower middle class/university) “*A good housewife should be careful about her kids’ physical development*¹⁶”. Yeter (lower middle class/ primary school) reported that: “*When you say an ideal housewife, you mean housework, cleaning, kids...A woman who perfectly takes care of her children and husband*¹⁷”.

What Sema (lower middle class/university) was told is actually a combination of mother-wife-housewife roles: “*An ideal housewife makes me think of a person carrying out daily chores, taking good care of the kids and husband, I mean somebody kind of ignoring herself*¹⁸”. According to Irmak (lower middle class/ primary school), the features of a good housewife are as follows: “*I think a good housewife must take care of her kid first of all. She should wake up early and hold the home and the family together. A good housewife should be like that, she should not set the food or the laundry back*¹⁹.” Canan (middle class/high school) describes

¹⁴ Türk kadını olarak düşünürsen bir kere çok özverili olmalı. Sadece eşinle evlenmiyorsun, ailesiyle de evleniyorsun.

¹⁵ Çocuklarına iyi bakan, onların her türlü ihtiyacını karşılayan biri

¹⁶ İyi bi ev kadını çocuklarının bakımıyla, fiziksel gelişimiyle ilgili olmalı.

¹⁷ İdeal ev kadını dediğin işte ev işi, temizlik, çocuklar..eşiyle çocuğuyla dört dörtlük ilgilenen biri

¹⁸ İdeal ev kadını deyince aklıma evinin işini yapan, çocuğuna iyi bakan, eşiyile ilgilenen, işte ne biliyim kendini biraz daha arka plana atmış biri geliyor.

¹⁹ Bence iyi bir ev hanımı önce çocuğuyla ilgilenmeli. Erken kalkıp evini ve ailesini bir arada tutmalı. İyi bir ev kadını böyle olmalı, yemeği çamaşırını aksatmadan yapmalı.

an ideal housewife as: “*She should be clean, she should look after her kids well, and she should be loyal to her husband*²⁰”.

Why women include wife and mother roles when they talk about housewife responsibilities is about the lower status of being a housewife. In society, being a mother and a wife are more valued than being a housewife. Also, since they are unpaid, their work is not recognized by their family, relatives and society, so their status is undermined (Mackie & Pattullo, 1977, p.20). While by working outside of home women gain salary and social status, by doing housework they cannot (Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç, 2001, p.154). Therefore, being “just a housewife” may not be enough for them in terms of its status. However, when mother and wife roles included, the responsibilities become bigger. Thus, they can be proud of being a mother, a wife and a housewife.

On the other hand, there are some differences among middle and lower middle class respondents’ image of ideal housewife. According to middle class housewives, an ideal housewife is a woman who can manage both her responsibilities at home and her social life. Güler (middle class/high school) put it like this: “*She must be tidy, caring to the kids, she should wake up at regular hours, I mean she must be tidy, she must have rules, details. She should not let herself go only because she is a housewife, she must have a social life, she must take care of herself*²¹.” According to Leman (middle class/primary school): “*I think that a good housewife is a woman that of course takes care of the house, kids and husband but also has a social life out of the house*²².”

If we look at the description of an ideal housewife by lower middle class respondents, we would notice that what they value is being sparing, unselfish, and altruistic. Hale (lower middle class/university) stated that: “*A good housewife must be saving, not extravagant; she must think of her family not her own luxury, her own*

²⁰ Temiz olmalı, çocuğuna iyi bakmalı, eşine sadık olmalı

²¹ Düzenli, çocuklarıyla düzenli bir şekilde ilgilenen, yatması kalkması, yemeği, yani düzenli olmalı, kurallı olmalı, detaylı olmalı, sırf ev hanımıyım diye kendini bırakmamalı, sosyal hayatı da olmalı, kendine de bakmalı.

²² Tabi ki eviyle ilgilenen çocuğuyla ilgilenen eşiyile ilgilenen ama bunları yaparken de dışarıda da sosyal hayatını sürdürebilen kadın bence iyi bir ev kadınıdır.

*ease. I mean she should not be selfish*²³” Itır (lower middle class/high school) also thinks like this: “*She should be self-sacrificing because the pay for what she does is not money but it is immaterial*²⁴.”

According to Bora, middle class housewives’ experience related with house is significant because women from different classes use this as a reference point when they define themselves. Since middle class experience is the “norm”, other women underline how they resemble to middle class or how they differ from them while explaining themselves (2005, p.23).

For my respondents, on the other hand, it seems that both classes define the ideal housewife while taking other class as a reference point. In other words, women from both classes differentiate themselves from other class. For example, middle class housewives pointed out that they are different from lower middle class housewives. In order to do that, they define two types of housewives. Esmâ’s and Arzu’s quotations show these two types:

Now there is this housewife that closes herself socially to her home, all devotes herself to home. I am active in and out... Some housewives are really very hard on themselves. They collapse. I don’t think that this is right. I do not want to feel myself like that. It depends on the person. I mean if it is fashion, non-working might also follow as the working. The working one might wear and go out every day, and I would get well-dressed whenever I wish.²⁵ (Esmâ, high school)

There are those housewives that only do cleaning, laundry, ironing; I mean like exerting themselves, there are those women. But there are also more active, social, out-going ones. I think that is the ideal... I am not one of those former ones. Even everybody thinks that I’m working; they all ask where I am working... There are housewives that do not know how to get on to a bus

²³ İyi bir ev kadını tutumlu olmalı, savurgan olmamalı, ailesini düşünmeli kendi lüksünü düşünmemeli kendi rahatını düşünmemeli. Bencil olmamalı yani.

²⁴ Fedakar olmalı çünkü yaptığı işin karşılığı maddi değil manevidir, bunun farkında olmalı.

²⁵ Şimdi ev kadını var tamamen kendini sosyal yönden eve kapatmıştır hep kendini eve bağlamıştır, ben dışarıda da aktifim içerde de aktifim... Bazı ev kadını gerçekten kendini yiyip bitiriyor. Çöküyor. Bence böyle olmamalı. Ben kendimi böyle hissetmek istemiyorum. Bu kişinin elinde. Ya modaysa çalışan da takip ediyor çalışmayan da takip etsin. Ha o her gün giyinip çıkar, ben de evimin hanımı olurum şıkır şıkır giyinir otururum yeri gelir eşofmanımı giyer otururum.

or so and that do not know how to pay a bill at the bank²⁶ (Arzu, high school)

Both women underline the fact that they are not like those housewives who devoted themselves to their homes and do not mind personal care. When they describe the characteristics of a good housewife, they are actually highlighting their features with distancing themselves from lower middle class housewives. On the contrary, as mentioned above, lower middle class housewives valued being sparing, and prioritising their families. Therefore, they emphasize the qualities which they think that middle class women do not have. It appears that both classes use the strategy of separating themselves from others in order to explain their image of ideal housewife.

3.2. Feelings about being a Housewife

How women perceive themselves in the context of being a housewife is significant in class comparison. Whether they are happy or not for being a housewife may differ among women from different classes.

When all the interviews are analyzed, it comes out that while middle class housewives have a more positive attitude towards being a housewife; lower middle class ones have a negative tone when they talked about their housewife roles. This finding is interesting because scholars observed that lower middle class women consider being a housewife more positively than middle class housewives. For instance, according to Oakley's study on 20 middle class and 20 working class women, the latter's identification with the housewife role is higher which leading a higher satisfaction. On the other hand, middle class women's identification with this role is lower and they are more dissatisfied with housework (Oakley, 1974, p.188). According to Oakley, middle class housewives in her sample perceive the low status of the housewife role, so they are dissatisfied with being a housewife compared to lower middle ones (p.71).

²⁶ Öyle ev kadınları var ki bütün gün evde oturup sadece ev silip süpürüp çamaşır yıkayıp ütü yapıp hani saçını süpürge etmek mahiyetinde böyle ev kadınları da var. Ama çok faal çok sosyal çok dışarıda olan ev kadınları da var. İdeali de o bence... Ben birinci anlattığım kadın tiptemesinden değilim. Hatta herkes beni çalışan bir kadın zanneder nerede çalıştığımı sorar... Otobüse dolmuş binmeyi bilmeyen evindeki faturayı götürüp bir bankaya yatırmayı bile bilmeyen ev kadınları var.

When returned to my respondents, it can be said that lower middle class housewives evaluated housewifery as a role negatively since it is monotonous and they are tied down to house. The first reason for this is that lower middle class housewives think that their work is monotonous and the repetitive. They think in this way due to the nature of the housework: it is almost uncreative and many tasks are done without thinking. In addition, same chores have to be repeated over and over again, yet they are needed to be done the next day. Semiha's (lower middle class/primary school) quotation shows how she gets bored with her daily routine: *"You wake up in the morning, cleaning and all, always the same stuff... I mean you are a slave. Cooking, dish washing till dark at home; as if on autopilot. Sleep and wake up again, the same stuff. You are bored, fed up with all these same things"*²⁷. In addition, lower middle housewives find housework boring because they cannot receive a material reward for it. Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school) named this situation with an idiom: *"a bee who is not making any honey"*²⁸. She continued with saying that: *"I feel I run in circles... When I take a look at myself, I feel as an organized machine working in vain... Like doing something for nothing"*²⁹.

The second reason for this negative tone is being tied town to home because they are full-time-mothers and they cannot leave their children to someone else. For instance Itr (lower middle class/high school) said that: *"If you are a housewife and if you don't push yourself to some social environment, you are all closed in the house like me"*³⁰. Since Itr is high school graduated, it may be expected from her to engage in public life more. However, she explained why she chooses to stay at home as in the following way: *"I adopted the home very much because I wanted to at least open the door to the kids when they are back and that they do not get into an empty house"*³¹.

²⁷ Sabahtan kalkıyorsun temizlik iş güç işte aynı şeylerle uğraşıyorsun... Aynı bir kölesiniz yani, akşama kadar evde yemek yap bulaşık yıka; otomatige bağlanmış gibi sürekli aynı işler. Yat kalk aynı işler. Sıkılıyorsun, bunalıyor insan aynı şeylerden.

²⁸ Bal etmez arı

²⁹ Kendimi boşa çalışmış gibi hissediyorum... Normalde, kaba tabirle kendime baktığım zaman, boşa çalışan, kurulmuş bir makine gibi hissediyorum kendimi.... Böyle bir boş durma boşa çalış hali.

³⁰ Ev kadınıysan kendini zorlayıp farklı sosyal ortamlara girmediğin sürece evin içinde kapanıp kalıyorsun böyle benim gibi.

³¹ Çocuklar geldiği zaman en azından kapıyı ben açayım, geldikleri zaman ev boş olmasın diye evi çok benimsedim.

So the reason why she is being “captive” at home is that she devotes herself to her children.

Nesrin (lower middle class/ university) has similar reasons for her dissatisfaction. She is a university graduate from economics department. She also went to a computer course in order to have better chances in finding employment. However, she quit her job when she had her first child (who is eight years old now) and has not been employed since then. Since she does not have anyone to look after her second daughter (who is four years old) she still cannot think about being employed. Because of this reason, she answers the question “Do you see yourself as a housewife?” as “unfortunately I do”. To quote from her: *“I am a housewife compulsorily... Housewives’ life has always the same pace, you wake up, work, prepare the kids, tidy the house, a never-ending boring working pace... You are a prisoner at home.”*³²

Middle class women, on the other hand, differ from lower middle class ones. Although they accept that housework can be monotonous, since many of them have a domestic worker, they do not complain about this as lower middle class housewives do. They can also be more active in public life compared to the lower middle class ones since they are relatively more free economically. Moreover, they can be more mobile because most of them have their own automobiles.

Another reason why middle class housewives have more positive attitude towards being a housewife is that they find housewives lucky since they do not need to work. As Güler (middle class/high school) said that *“If your financial situation is well, I mean if your husband earns well, being a housewife is a wonderful thing.”*³³ İnci (middle class/university) also thinks in this way: *“Housewives are really lucky. As a person who was employed before, I can say that housewives are lucky. If you find the right person, if you marry the right guy, it is very comfortable”*³⁴. As seen in these

³² Mecburiyetten ev kadınıyım... Ev hanımlığı aslında hep aynı tempoyla, sabah kalkıyorsun iş yapıyorsun, çocukları hazırla eşyaları topla hiç bitmeyen sıkıcı iş temposu...Evin içinde hapissin yani.

³³ Eğer ekonomik durumun iyiye, yani eşin iyi kazanıyorsa ev kadını olmak harika bir şey

³⁴ Ev kadınları gerçekten şanslı. Önceden çalışan biri olarak ev kadınlarının şanslı olduğunu söyleyebilirim. Eğer doğru insanı bulursanız, doğru adamla evlenirseniz ev kadını olmak çok rahat

quotations, middle class housewives think that being a housewife saves them from being employed. They also believe that they can get up whenever they want and they can make their arrangements however they like. Just as Cansu (middle class/high school) said: *“You are not worried about waking up early for the work, preparing the food in time and stuff like that since you are a housewife³⁵”*

The difference of middle class and lower middle class housewives’ feelings about being a housewife can also be seen in their opinions about whether they want their daughters to become a housewife or not. All of the lower middle class women prefer their daughters to be employed and not become a housewife because they think that a woman should earn her own money. For instance Yeter (lower middle class/ primary school) said that *“Personally I do not want my daughter to become a housewife. She should work and stand on her own feet. I did not work but she should work together with her husband and do things together³⁶.”* Emine (lower middle class/primary school) reported that: *“I think that she should study and save herself.³⁷”* Therefore, lower middle class women are not pleased to be a housewife; they value having a job and earning money.

Middle class women, on the other hand, accept the idea that woman should be university graduated and acquire a profession, but it is not necessary for her to be employed. Güler (middle class/high school) explained why she wants her daughters to work in the following way:

When somebody had high school diploma, in our days, they said “that’s good”, it was something like a university graduate. But now mothers want that their daughter-in-laws to have a university diploma, as well as career and work. Now this is the case in our society...It is not my business to decide whether my daughters work or not. But I definitely want them to be a university graduate³⁸.

³⁵ Sabah iş için erken kalkacam derdi yok, yemeği zamanında hazırlayacam derdi yok ev kadını olduğun için

³⁶ Şahsen kızımın ev kadını olmasını istemem. Çalışsın, kendi ayakları üzerinde dursun. Kendim çalışmadım ama eşiyile beraber çalışsın beraber yapınlar her şeyi.

³⁷ Okusun kendini kurtarsın.

³⁸ Önceden lise mezunu dediğinde bizim dönemimizde a iyi falan derlerdi, bir üniversite mezunu değerinde gibi bir şeydi. Şu anda ama oğluma alacağım gelin üniversite mezunu olsun kariyeri olsun

Yıldız's (middle class/high school) daughter is actually working but she wants her to quit her job: *"I feel that she is so tired, consumed. She is kind of weak also. I wish that she did not work. I wish she were a housewife³⁹"*. Therefore, middle class respondents want their daughters to study university, but they will leave the decision of working to them. If their son-in-law's financial situation is well, they approve that their daughters can be housewives. Since middle class women see themselves as lucky unlike lower middle class women, they also consider their daughters to become a housewife as desirable.

3.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Being a Housewife

The good and bad sides of being a housewife for the respondents is rather complex because they usually intertwined with each other. For example, being a full-time-mother gives housewives from two classes the possibility of raising their children by themselves and spending more time with them. On the other hand, it turns out a disadvantage for lower middle class women because they are tied down to house due to their children. "Being your own boss" was also uttered by both classes as an advantage because they can arrange their time as they wish since they do not have a supervisor or strict working hours. However, we cannot say that they are totally independent, since their activities are limited by their children, their husbands, and by the rules that they set up for themselves. Other than these mixed advantages, being economically dependent on someone else and not being appreciated can be listed as disadvantages of being a housewife. In the following part this conflicting picture is analyzed.

3.3.1. Possibility of Looking After Children

The best and worst sides of being a housewife may change from different classes. However, one common advantage of being a housewife for both middle and lower

işi olsun bu gözle bakıyorlar. Toplumumuzda böyle bir şey var...Çalışıp çalışmayacaklarına ben karar veremem. Ama bir üniversite bitirmelerini isterim tabii.

³⁹ Çok yorulduğumu hissediyorum, çok yıprandığımı. Bünyesi de biraz zayıf. Çalışmamasını isterdim. Ev kadını olmasını isterdim.

middle class women is the possibility of looking after their children by themselves. As it was mentioned above, women's domestic role is a combination of mother-wife-housewife responsibilities. Being a good mother is a merit in the society which is shared by all classes. It is also the basic justification of being a housewife for middle and lower middle class housewives.

Why women from both classes see looking after their children by themselves and allocating enough time for them as an advantage is because they believe that children need their mothers. As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, this is actually a component of what Oakley calls as "three myths of motherhood". These are according to her: "children need their mothers, mothers need their children and women need to be mothers" (Oakley, 1976, p.186). By mother Oakley means biological mothers; and according to this myth children need to be raised by their own mothers, not by any other person (p.203). For example according to Esma: "*Somebody else, even the grandmothers, can never give that feeling to child like a mother. So children need to be taken care of by their mothers... After a certain age, school begins, there is again a need for the mum, there is always need for her.*"⁴⁰ Sema also thinks that children need their mothers, and it may be dangerous to leave the child to a babysitter: "*Babies grow up with mother. When I think about it, I am happy for being a full-time-mum. And also you watch what the baby-sitters do on TV. It is like the kid grows up in the bosom of its mum.*"⁴¹ Halide (middle class/high school) on the other hand, mentioned the psychological need of children to their mothers, and considered being a housewife as an advantage because of that: "*You have time for the kids when they are growing up. Sometimes I am sorry for the kids whose mothers are working. Communication is necessary when the kids are growing. I think their mother should be around when the kids are growing. I think this is the biggest benefit of being a*

⁴⁰ Asla bir başkası o duyguyu veremez, anneanne de olsa babaanne de olsa. Bu yüzden çocuğa anne bakmalı...Belli bir yaştan sonra okul başlıyor bu sefer yine anneye ihtiyaç var yani anneye her zaman ihtiyaç vardır.

⁴¹ Bebekler anne ile büyür. Ben böyle düşündüğüm zaman iyi ki böyle olmuş diyorum. Bir de televizyonda görüyorsun bakıcıların ne yaptığını. Çocuk dediğin anasının koynunda büyür derler ya, öyle.

housewife.⁴²” Therefore, for women being a full time housewife gives them the opportunity of being with their children all the time.

İnci (middle class/university) also thinks that children should be raised by their mothers, but she believes that she is more qualified than other people and she is the best person to look after her children. As she reported that:

The women working outside leave the kid to some stranger; it is not satisfying even if the grandmother is taking care of. It is not like your own self... You would like to raise your kid as you wish, not as your mother wishes. You have such that a chance... Kid will have to study, my mother-in-law does not know the subjects I know⁴³.

Therefore, being a full time housewife saves women from leaving their children to someone else like their mothers or babysitters. According to Gönül (middle class/primary school) “*Since you are a housewife, you raise your kid well, you give a lot of time to him*⁴⁴.” Nesrin (lower middle class/university) also made that point: “*Maybe if I was employed, I would give less time for the girls. That is the only good side of being a housewife that I feel happy for.*⁴⁵” Elif (lower middle class/high school) also valued the experience of seeing every phase of her children: “*Personally the best part is to be together with the kids. Otherwise you would do the cleaning and all on weekend even if you are working. You would do every other day, not everyday. It is to see the growth of the kids and everything*⁴⁶”.

The opportunity of looking after children is an advantage. The other side of the coin for lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, is being tied down to house because of their kids. For example Deniz (lower middle class/high school) said that:

⁴² Çocuklar büyürken onlara zaman ayırıyorsun. Ben hep böyle bakıyorum çalışanlara, çocuklara üzülüyorum bazen. Çocuklar büyürken o iletişimi kurmak lazım. Sanki çocuklar büyürken anneler çocuklarının yanında olmalı. Ev kadını olmanın en büyük faydası bence o.

⁴³ İş yerinde çalışan bir kadın olsa çocuk olsa çocuğunu elin adamına bırakıyor, annesi de baksa bazen içine sinmiyor. Kendin baktığın gibi olmuyor... Çocuğunu senin yetiştirmek istediğin gibi yetiştiriyorsun, annenin istediği gibi değil de. Öyle bir şansın var... Çocuk ders çalışacak, benim bildiğim soruları kayıncıvalidem bilmiyor.

⁴⁴ Ev kadını olduğun için çocuğunu güzel yetiştiriyorsun ona bol bol vakit ayırıyorsun

⁴⁵ Belki çalışsam kızlara daha az vakit ayıracaktım. Bir tek bunun için seviniyorum.

⁴⁶ Benim için en güzel yanı çocuklarımla birlikte olmak. Yoksa temizlik falan her türlü çalışsan bile hafta sonu yapacaksın. Her gün değil de iki günde bir yaparsın. Çocuklarının büyüdüğünü her şeyini gözlerinin önünde yaşamak.

“You do not have an opportunity to get out for some fresh air, because of the kids. The worst part is that you cannot go to somewhere when you want. It is because I am too much adapted to the kids⁴⁷.” Yeter (lower middle class/primary school) also complained about this and told that *“Because of all these kids, mines came one after the other, I cannot go around easily. I would go to market but cannot because of the kids⁴⁸”*. Therefore, while lower middle class women listed having the opportunity of looking after children by themselves, from another point they consider it as a disadvantage since they are dependent on them.

3.3.2. Being Your Own Boss

Another advantage of being a housewife is that women can organize their own schedule during a day. The term “you are your own boss” is repeated by many of the women from both classes when they talked about the good sides of being a housewife. This was also the case in Oakley’s study: half of the women in her sample uttered the same sentence as an advantage of being housewife (Oakley, 1974, p.42). One of my informants, Hülya (middle class/secondary school) said that: *“The best part of being a housewife is that you make your decision, you are not dependent. We are the bosses of our home.⁴⁹”* Irmak (lower middle class/primary school) also made the same point: *“The best part is you are free and at ease. Nobody tells you to do this or that. You do not have a boss. There is nobody telling this is not well-done, why you would do it this way.⁵⁰”* Gamze (lower middle class/primary school) reported that *“You go to bed whenever you want, and get up whenever you want, you are at home, and you are free⁵¹”*. İtir (lower middle class/high school) also

⁴⁷ Bir dışarı çıkayım temiz hava alayım imkanın yok çocuklar olduğu için. En kötü yanı istediğin zaman istediğin yere gidemiyorsun. Hep çocuklara adapte olduğum için öyle.

⁴⁸ Çoluk çocuk bir de peş peşe oldu benimkiler. Gidip bir gezmeyi tozmayı yapamıyorum rahat rahat. Bir markete gidicem gidemiyorum, çocuklar sorun oluyor.

⁴⁹ Ev hanımı olmanın en iyi yanı kendi kararlarımı kendin vermen, başka birine bağımlılığın yok. Kendi evimizin patronuyuz.

⁵⁰ En güzel yanı özgürsün, rahatsın. Sana şunu şunu yap diyen yok. Başında bir patronun yok. Yaptığın iş olmamış niye böyle yaptın diyen yok.

⁵¹ İstediyim zaman yatıyorsun istediğin zaman kalkıyorsun, evdesin, özgürsün.

underlined the independency: “*Best part is you are not dependent. You are not under command, you are free. You can do or stop whenever you want.*”⁵²”

Although women stated that they are their own boss, they are actually not totally independent. According to Oakley, “The housewife is ‘free from’ but not ‘free to’. That is she is exempt from supervision but not wholly free to choose her own activities”⁵³(1974, p.44). Housewives contributed to this study also acknowledge that there are limitations in their activities. To quote from Yıldız (middle class/high school): “*The best part of being a housewife is that you can do anything you want and you can go anywhere you want. But of course it depends. Your husband may not permit you to go out. Or you may have somebody sick at home.*”⁵⁴” Therefore a restrictive husband or a sick/disabled person can affect the arrangements of housewives. In addition, lower middle class housewives activities are limited because of their children, which was already mentioned.

Another limitation (although it will be further discussed in chapter 4) is the rules that a housewife set up by herself. For instances, Esma (middle class/high school) thinks that being a housewife is not different from being employed in terms of rules that should be obeyed. She expresses this in the following way: “*As the working ones obey to the rules of some superior person, housewife should also follow some rules if she shoulders that work.*”⁵⁵” To illustrate the rules that housewives establish, Belkıs’s (lower middle class/secondary school) also stated that: “*For example I was not at home today till the evening, but neither my husband nor the kids felt this when they were back to home. I try not to make them feel this... I mean, I prepare the food beforehand, do the cleaning. I do the last preparations, salad and all before they*

⁵² En rahat yanı kimseye bağı değılsin. Emir altında değılsin özgürsün. İstedięin zaman yapıyorsun istedięin zaman bırakabiliyorsun.

⁵³ When looked at housewives’ daily routine, it comes out that their schedule is determined by the needs of their husbands and children. See chapter 4.1 for more detailed discussion.

⁵⁴ Ev hanımı olmanın iyi yanı istedięin şeyi yapabilmen, gidebilme özgürlüğünün olması. Ama tabi bu da birçok şeye bağı. Eşin müsaade ediyor mu dışarı çıkmaya, veya evde bir hastan olabilir.

⁵⁵ Ev kadının da nasıl dışarıda çalışan amirine uyuyorsa ev kadının da eđer onu üstlenmişse bir takım kurallara uyacak.

*come*⁵⁶.” Therefore, Belkıs feels that she obliged to finish all of her duties at home when she wants to spend a few hours outside. Although she can arrange her schedule as she likes, she is not free to choose not to do them.

Although women claim that they can go wherever and whenever they want, they do this within some boundaries. Even if they stated that they can get up late, their daily experience tells us the opposite: all of my respondents get up earlier from their husbands and children in order to prepare breakfast for them. As this example shows, although they are their own bosses, they are, as well, the employee of their houses.

3.3.3. Disadvantages of Being a Housewife

Being a housewife has not only advantages but also disadvantages. In addition to dependency on children (as mentioned above), being economically dependent to their husbands and not being appreciated are other disadvantages that are stated by respondents.

Firstly, women consider being unpaid as a disadvantage of being a housewife. However, middle and lower middle class housewives look at the issue from different perspectives. For the middle class, it means being economically dependent on the husband. For the lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, it means inability to contribute family budget. This nuance can be inferred from the sayings of the respondents. For example, when Hande (middle class/high school) was talking about the worst side of being a housewife, she stated that: *“Perhaps the worst part of being a housewife is not being financially free. We were not in a big financial need thanks to my husband but I think that a woman must have an income apart from her husband.”*⁵⁷ In the same way Halide (middle class/high school) told that: *“Being dependent financially is the worst side. I mean, you are dependent in some way.*

⁵⁶ Bugün akşama kadar dışarıdayım mesela, geldikleri zaman eşim olsun çocuklarım olsun bugün benim dışarıda olduğumu hissetmediler. Onlara bunu hissettirmemeye çalışırım... Yani yemeğimi önceden pişirir giderim, temizliğimi yaparım. Onlar gelmeden de gelir son hazırlığımı, salatamı falan yaparım.

⁵⁷ Ev kadını olmamın en kötü yanı maddi olarak özgür olamamam belki de. Eşimden dolayı çok büyük maddi bir ihtiyaca girmedik ama bir kadının da bence eşinden hariç geliri olması gerektiğini düşünüyorum.

Thank God, we do not have such a problem, my husband is not that kind of person but certainly it would be different when you work and earn⁵⁸.” İnci (middle class/university), who was employed before her marriage compared her situation with the past and said that: “Of course above all, the lack of economic freedom is the worst side of being a housewife. I knew that feeling when I was working. I do not think that there is another bad part⁵⁹.”

As it can be seen in the statements above, middle class women point out the fact that they are not in need financially; however, it is good for a woman to have her own salary. Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, feel uneasiness due to the fact that they cannot earn money. Irmak (lower middle class/primary school) expressed this in the following way: *“The bad part of being a housewife is that you cannot support financially, you feel inadequate in terms of finance. Always the father shoulders every burden. You think you are useless, you think you should have worked⁶⁰”*. This different tone can be related with the nature of lower middle class. Since the economic situation of their families is not stable, they are more likely to feel anxiety of experiencing downward social mobility (Beşpınar-Ekici, 2001, p.74). Therefore, lower middle class housewives feel more tension about not contributing to family budget.

Another disadvantage of being a housewife, according to my respondents, is not being appreciated. This is felt by some of the respondents regardless of their class. Hale, a lower middle class housewife complained that:

The worst part of being a housewife is being slave Isaura⁶¹, being perceived and seen that way... I do not want these works to stick on me like a label only because I am a housewife. There are obligations of other members of the

⁵⁸ Maddi olarak bağımsız olamamak. Bir şekilde bağımlısın yani. Şükür öyle bir sıkıntımız yok, eşimin öyle takıntıları yok ama yine de insan çalışıp kazandığı zaman muhakkak daha farklıdır.

⁵⁹ Her şeyden önce ekonomik özgürlük en kötü yanı. Çalışırken onu da biliyordum. Başka kötü bir yanı olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

⁶⁰ Ev kadını olmanın kötü yanı maddi açıdan destek olamıyorsan, maddi açıdan kendini biraz eksik hissediyorsun. Hep babanın üstüne yıkılmış oluyor her iş. Senin bir faydanın olmadığını düşünüyorsun, keşke çalışsa mıydım diye düşünüyorsun.

⁶¹ Slave Isaura (Escrava Isaura) is a TV series which was showed in 1970s and 1980s in Turkey. It is about the struggles of a white-skinned black slave named Isaura. (Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escrava_Isaura_\(1976_TV_series\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escrava_Isaura_(1976_TV_series)))

family, they should help, they should not treat you like slave Isaura. It is not that I need, I mean I do those it's ok, but it should not be that way. There should be at least a thank you⁶².

Likewise, a middle class housewife Gönül mentioned that: *"I self-sacrificed a lot for making everything perfect and everybody happy. But it is not like that. The more you do, the more they expect. That you are sick, depressed, having your period, they do not understand your mood⁶³."* Leman (middle class/primary school) also complained about this and added that: *"You never get what you deserve for your efforts. Just a "thank you" will be enough. As they work outside, I work at home as well⁶⁴"* As it can be seen in these quotations, it really depresses women when they feel that their work is not appreciated by other members of the family. On the contrary, when women see that their work is appreciated, their satisfaction from housework increases. For example, Esmâ (middle class/high school), who really enjoys doing housework, told that: *"I love to do housework because my husband appreciates and that I know I am appreciated I work happily without regarding it as a burden⁶⁵."* Cansu (middle class/high school) was also proud of herself when she talked about her husband's comment on her work *"He always appreciates, he says "I never wore unironed shirt, never saw the house in mess". He is always glad. And I am proud of that⁶⁶."*

Since there is no salary for housework, what women gain from doing it is emotional reward. In other words, they do it "in return for love" (Acar-Savran, 2004, p.19). Therefore, when they cannot feel that their work is valuable (as in the example of

⁶² Ev kadını olmanın en kötü yanı köle İzaura olmak, öyle algılanmak, öyle görülmek.... Ben sadece sırf ev hanımıyım diye bu işlerin üstüme etiket gibi yapışmasını istemiyorum. Diğer aile bireylerinin de üstüne düşen görevleri var, yardım etmeliler, köle İzaura muamelesi yapmalılar. İhtiyacımdan değil, yani ben bu işleri yapıyorum sorun değil, ama olmamalı işte. En azından bir eline sağlık denmeli.

⁶³ Ben kendimden çok ödün verdim her şeyim dört dörtlük olsun herkesi memnun edeyim çabasıyla. Ama hiç öyle olmuyor. Sen yaptıkça aynı şeyler bekleniyor senden. Sen hastaymışsın moralin bozukmuş adet olmuşsun, hiç ruh halini anlamıyorlar.

⁶⁴ Emeğinin karşılığını hiçbir zaman alamıyorsun. Sadece bi teşekkür yetecek. Onlar dışarıda çalışıyorsa ben de evde çalışıyorum.

⁶⁵ Severek yapmamın büyük bir nedeni de eşim fedakarlık yapıyor takdir ediyor, ben de takdir edildiğimi bildiğim için hiç yüksünmeden, mutlulukla yapmaya çalışıyorum.

⁶⁶ Her zaman takdir eder, bir gün bile ütüsüz gömlek giymedim der, evi pis görmedim der. Memnun oluyor her zaman. Ben de bundan gurur duyuyorum.

Hale and Gönül) being unappreciated becomes a disadvantage for housewives from both classes.

3.4. Being Employed versus Being a Housewife

Although many women do not have a chance to decide to work or not (due to their lower education and early marriages), still it is important to analyze reasons why they do not employed. It can be said that the main factors for being a housewife for my respondents are marriage and children. Housewives in both classes think that it would be difficult for them to manage both work and home life. In addition, since they believe that children need their mothers, especially educated women choose to raise them by themselves. Esmâ, who is a high school graduate, explained her concern about managing work and family life in the following way:

Being a housewife was not my only wish then. I would work and stand on my own feet, of course something out of youth. I really would like to work... But my ideas of then and today are completely different. I might not have had a happy marriage if I had worked. The reason is that my husband works as a freelancer, I would have come and go at a certain hour, could not spare time for the kids... Perhaps we might get used to but... I never had any regrets. I mean, if there were financial difficulties or if I had an unhappy marriage, I might have said why I did not work... but I never felt that way⁶⁷.

Esmâ found the solution in not being employed in order to “save” her marriage. However, she told later that if the conditions were different, she could work: “*I would have liked to work in Ereğli⁶⁸. Why, because the distances are close. You might take care of your kid, have lunch at home, walk to the work. But this is not the situation at big cities. It would be very difficult. I mean, I would have been consumed...*” Sema, who is a university graduate, also fears the double burden, and wants a job that is not too demanding: “*I would have worked for a job of three-five hours even if the payment was not good. Because I do not want to ignore my home*

⁶⁷ Tek istediğim şey ev kadınlığı değildi o zamanlar. Ben çalışacam ayaklarımın üzerinde duracam, tabi o zaman gençliğin verdiği bir şeydi. Gerçekten çalışmayı çok istedim.. O zamanki düşüncemle şu anki tamamen farklı. Çalışmış olsam belki mutlu bir evliliğim olmayacaktı. Niye olmayacaktı çünkü o serbest çalışıyor ben belli bir saatte gelecektim, gidecektim çocuklara zaman ayırdın ayıramadın... ha belki alışılabilirdi ama... Şu an da hiçbir zaman pişmanlık duymadım. Ha şöyle olabilirdi ekonomik yönden zorlansaydık veya mutsuz bir evliliğim olsaydı ah keşke niye ben bunu yapmadım denirdi.

⁶⁸ A small town in Konya (Central Anatolia)

*and kids. But if there were job of three-five hours, all women would work*⁶⁹.”. Therefore, it is clear that current life conditions do not let women to work outside home because of the tensions produced by the demands of housewife and mother responsibilities.

Another reason for not being employed is the pressure of society. Especially women from lower middle class have to convince their husbands, families, and social circle when they intent to work outside home (Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç, 2001, p.32; Beşpınar-Ekici, 2007). Hale is one of these women who was discouraged by people around her. She was graduated from open university’s economics department and she worked before her marriage. She explained why she did not work after her marriage as:

For example I planned to take the financial advisor exams. I shared this idea with the people around. They said “what would you do ever, what is need for it”. They tried to change my mind. I particularly want to mention this. If a housewife wants to do something in Turkey, she is prevented, it is always said “what is the need, just stay where you are”. I mean there is such an approach of the society. They do not say anything to the working one; they say do whatever you want. But they say what is the need when the housewife is the case⁷⁰.

Çiğdem (lower middle class/high school), also complained about the same situation: *“I thought a lot about working but it was not possible. I had plans but my husband did not want either. When he does not support you are also discouraged*⁷¹.” Therefore, even women want to be employed, because of the society’s perceptions for housewives, they could not have that support.

In one case, the nature of employment is the reason for being a housewife. Güler, a middle class housewife, perceives being employed as boring. She expressed this by

⁶⁹ Ereğli’de çalışmayı isterdim. Niye isterdim, mesafeler çok yakın. Çocuğunla ilgilenebilirsin, öğlen yemeğine gelebilirsin, yürüyerek işine gidip gelebilirsin. Ama büyük kentte bu yok. Bu çok zor olurdu. Yani ben çok yıpranırdım.

⁷⁰ Ben mesela mali müşavirlik sınavına girmeyi düşünüyordum. Etrafımla paylaştım bunu. Aman ne yapacaksın, ne gerek var dediler. Caydırmaya çalıştılar. Bunu özellikle söylemek istiyorum, Türkiye’de bir ev hanımı bir şey yapmak isterse engelleniyor, aman ne gerek var, otur oturduğun yerde deniyor. Toplumda böyle bir yargı var yani. Çalışana bir şey demezler, yap, et derler. Ama ev kadınına gelince ne gerek var derler.

⁷¹ Çok düşündüm çalışmayı ama kısmet olmadı. Düşüncelerim oldu ama eşim de istemedi. Çok destek olmadığı zaman senin de ümitlerin kırılıyor.

saying that: *“I guess I could not work even if I were employed. Because I am not that kind of a person who wakes up, comes and goes at certain hours, has a monotonous life. I guess it is not my thing to be for example a civil servant and sit at your table till the evening and come back⁷².”* She thinks that being a housewife is best for her and she cannot think about any other job which is suitable for her.

Before passing how housewives perceive employed women, it is important to mention the difference among middle and lower middle class housewives attitudes towards the necessity of employment. For middle class women working is not a must, but it is good for self development. According to Eda (middle class/university): *“It is good for a woman to stand on her own feet, in terms of her self-confidence I mean⁷³”*. Hülya (middle class/ secondary school) put this in the following way:

Actually I do not think that there would be a big change if I worked. I do not think that I have a quite different life than a working woman. I am only sorry because I do not work, not because of economic issues. Why I would not work and do something for me, I would like to work only for this. Otherwise I do not think that it would provide me more economic freedom or so⁷⁴.

As it can be seen in these quotations, middle class women do not focus on the economic advantage of employment, rather on the social status of employment. They emphasise here also that they are not in need financially. Whereas, for a lower middle class housewife, being unemployed is a more serious problem because they cannot earn money. For instance Nesrin (lower middle class/university) told that: *“My life is so monotonous since I do not work, I’m bored. You do not have a standing in life, I may feel useless⁷⁵.”* It can be argued that why Nesrin feels like that is because she was employed before. However, as it was mentioned before, İnci

⁷² Ben herhalde çalışsam çalışmazdım. Çünkü ben öyle belirli saatlerde kalk git belirli saatte gel ya da gittiğin bir yerde devamlı monoton bir hayatı seven bir insan değilim. Hani bir memur olursun masa başında oturursun akşama kadar çıkar gelirsin o bana göre değil herhalde.

⁷³ Bir kadın için kendi ayakları üzerinde durması güzel bir şey, kendine güveni açısından yani.

⁷⁴ Aslında çalışsam çok büyük bir değişimin olacağını sanmıyorum. Şu anda çalışan kadından çok da farklı yaşadığımı düşünmüyorum. Bunun üzüntüsünü sadece çalışmadığım için yaşıyorum, ekonomik gelir açısından yaşamıyorum ama. Niye çalışmamayım, niye kendim için bir şeyler yapmayayım, çalışmayı sadece o konuda isterdim. Onun dışında ekonomik özgürlük olarak çok da bana bir şey getireceğini düşünmüyorum.

⁷⁵ Çalışmadığım için hayat çok monoton geçiyor, sıkılıyorum. Hayatta bir duruşun yok, bir işe yaramıyorsun duygusu olabiliyor bende.

(middle class/university) has also quitted her job after she got pregnant, and she finds housewives lucky because they do not need to work. Lastly, it can be said that women's attitude towards employment is similar to their feelings about their daughter's employment.

3.4.1. Employed Women through the Eyes of Housewives

The part of understanding housewife's opinions about employment is mentioning their image of employed women. Women from both classes in my study accept that professional women's life is difficult since they have more responsibilities. The only exception is Güler (middle class/high school) who opposed to this idea and said that: *“Do you know that it is harder to work as a housewife. People get rest at work place. They are more relaxed where they all sit. They come back from work as missing home and kids but if you are a housewife you are at home for 24 hours, always too close with kids⁷⁶.”*

Other women except Güler, on the other hand, feel pity for employed women and especially for their children. For example Sevgi (lower middle class/ primary school) told that: *“If you are a working woman, when you come back home your kid is in a miserable state, house is not properly clean, neither a food nor a tea. I think that it might be a very hard life⁷⁷.”* Gönül (middle class/primary school) also thinks in the same way with Sevgi and stated that: *“I feel sorry for them, what a pity! At the crack of the dawn, trying to get the kid to the school bus and all. It is a pity for the kid.⁷⁸”*

Leman (middle class/primary school) tried to look at the situation from employed women's aspect and said that:

⁷⁶ Ev kadını olarak çalışmak daha zor biliyor musun. İnsan iş yerinde daha dinleniyor. Daha rahat oturduğu yerde. İş yerinden eve geliyorsun çocuğunu özlemiş evini özlemiş bir vaziyette ama ev kadını olunca yirmi dört saat evdesin çocuklarınla yüz gözsün.

⁷⁷ Çalışan bir kadınsan evine geliyorsun çocuğun per perişan oluyor, evin doğru düzgün temiz olmuyor, ne bir yemeğin olabiliyor ne çayın olabiliyor. Çok zor bir hayat olabilir diye düşünüyorum.

⁷⁸ Ben çok acıyorum onlara yazık. Sabahın köründe kucağında çocukla servise binme olayı falan. Çocuğa çok yazık.

When I think that I am in the shoes of those working women, I think that their work is much harder. If I was working, I would work, come home, care the kids, do housework and all, I mean even if you have a domestic worker, the big part of the burden will be on your own shoulders. Even the child care is mum's responsibility, not the dad's. Then, which one will you keep up with?⁷⁹

Irmak (lower middle class/primary school) expressed her admiration to employed women by saying that: *"In my eyes working women are heroes. Managing not only outside work but also housework, taking care of children as well, in my opinion they are super-women"*⁸⁰. On the other hand, what Hülya (middle class/secondary school) admires is different from Irmak:

The only thing that I envy is that working women can leave their house without tidying up. We do not have that luxury. If I leave it untidy, and let's say a guest shows up that day and see the house like that, she will blame me because I'm a housewife and I'm untidy. I never had that freedom⁸¹.

However, during the interviews sometimes it came out that middle class housewives can criticise employed women. The examples below are important because they show that middle class housewives compare themselves with employed women. For example Esmâ (middle class/high school) criticised professional women who neglect their personal care:

There are those working that go in the morning come back in the evening, when you look at her clothes, I mean you are going into the society, just care for yourself. I mean, I do not say that she must wear makeup, but she should have it too when necessary. It is not that to have expensive clothes but you must wear on what fits to you⁸².

⁷⁹ Kendimi çalışanın yerine koyduğum zaman onların işleri daha ağır olacaktı diyorum. Kendimi çalışıyor olarak görseydim, hem çalışacam, eve geleceğim, çocuk bakımı, evin işi, yani ne kadar dışarıdan bir yardımcı dahi de alsanız yani sonuçta büyük yük kadına düşüyor. Bir çocuk bakımı bile babaya değil anneye düşüyor. E hangi birine yetişeceksiniz.

⁸⁰ Benim gözümde çalışan kadınlar kahramanlar. Hem dışarı işi hem evişi, hem çocuklar, bana göre onlar kahraman kadınlar.

⁸¹ Tek kıskandığım çalışan kadınlar evlerini dağınık bırakıp gidebiliyorlar. Bizim öyle bir lüksümüz yok. Diyelim dağınık bıraktım, bir misafir çıkageldi ve evi öyle gördü, beni kınar sen nasıl evkadınısın diye. Hiç öyle bir özgürlüğüm olmadı.

⁸² Nice çalışanlar var sabah gidiyor akşam geliyor ama kılığına kıyafetine bakıyorsunuz, ya sen topluma çıkıyorsun insan biraz daha kendine özen gösterir. Ha makyaj yapısın demiyorum, ama yeri geldiğinde onu da yapacaksın. İlla ki çok pahalı kıyafet giymek de önemli değil. Sana uyanı giymelisin.

Canan (middle class/high school) on the other hand felt offended when her friend talked about her job:

For example, recently this woman visited me, a friend from high school. I mean, we have been friends for years but then lost the touch because of some reasons. We meet because of condolences and all. She just emphasizes that she is working, she mentions working women of her building and their jobs and all. I mean, I do not take her seriously. “We are working and this and that”. I give the right answer and make her shut up, I will never stay behind⁸³.

Halide (middle class/high school) pointed out another fact that an employed woman can experience economic violence by her husband:

For example some of those working, for example a friend of mine, does not see their wages. Believe me, she cannot spend as I do. She cannot buy any dress and all without permission. I mean I can buy three or five, as much as I like. She buys hardly one. Because she does not see her wage. I prefer not to work, if working will be like that. I think my situation is much more better. I mean, I have an economic freedom even if I do not work⁸⁴.

According to Özbay, after 1990s, the status and appeal of being a housewife is decreased and “participating in production to earn money has become compulsory for many women” (Özbay, 1995, p.105). Therefore, middle class housewives compare themselves with working women, because of the change in society’s perception towards housewives. Since employed women manage to both work and family life, middle class housewives feel a pressure on them because they are only responsible for running house. Sometimes they overcome this by feeling pity for double burden that employed women experience, and also for their children. Another strategy used by middle class housewives is telling the undesirable experiences of working women. At the end, they reach the conclusion that they are lucky to be a housewife.

⁸³ Örneğin geçen şey geldi, liseden arkadaşım. Ve şey yıllardır arkadaşlığımız oldu sonra koptuk. Bazı nedenlerden dolayı. Bu taziye gibi özel şeylerde görüşüyoruz. Üstüne basa basa kendinin çalıştığını vurguluyor, apartmanda kimlerin çalıştıklarını işte şu meslekte bu meslekte olduklarını vurguluyor yani ciddiye almıyorum. “biz çalışıyoruz da işte şudur budur”. Cevabını verip oturtturuyorum o ayrı mesele de asla da alta kalmam.

⁸⁴ Bazısı mesela çalışıyor, mesela bir arkadaşım var maaşını hiç görmüyor. İnan benim harcadığım kadar harcayamıyor. Üstüne bir şey alamıyor izinsiz. Mesela ben istesem üç tane de alabiliyorum beş tane de. O bi taneyi zor alıyor. Çünkü maaşını görmüyor ki. Böyle çalışmaktansa çalışmamayı tercih ederim. Benim halim çok daha iyi diyorum. Çünkü benim bir ekonomik özgürlüğüm var çalışmasam da.

In summary this chapter was about self-perception of housewives which affected by society, media, family and social circle. According to this perception, housewives should be successful in fulfilling their mother, wife and housewives responsibilities. While performing housewife roles, middle class women seem to be more pleased than lower middle class housewives. However, they are uncomfortable with the lower status of being a housewife in the society. Because of that, they try to increase its status by showing how difficult their job is. Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, know that if they worked, they would live more comfortable by contributing the family budget. Therefore, their perception about being a housewife is more negative.

CHAPTER 4

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOUSEWORK

*I've got the children to tend, the clothes to mend
The floor to mop, the food to shop
Then the chicken to fry, the baby to dry
I got company to feed, the garden to weed
I've got shirts to press, the tots to dress
The can to be cut, I gotta clean up this hut
then see about the sick, and the cotton to pick...*⁸⁵

According to Bourdieu “likes” and “preferences” should not be understood as personal taste; they are actually results of class positions (Bourdieu, 1984). In the same way, experiences related with home and family are the source of class positions. For instance, the decoration of house, the kind of furniture that is used or housework practises are all related with class identities (Bora, 2005, p.65). Thus, the aim of this chapter is showing differences and similarities in lower and middle class women’s attitudes towards housework.

As mentioned in the introduction part, what is meant in this study from housework is simply cleaning, washing, washing up, cooking, ironing, and shopping, and child rearing, although housework is not limited with these activities. Housewives spend most of their time with doing housework. Therefore, analyzing women’s attitudes towards housework (i.e. how/when they prefer to do it and what they feel about it) is necessary for understanding women’s daily experience. In addition, it is also necessary to discuss the conditions that affect women’s way of doing housework.

The chapter begins with a review of how a housewife spends her weekdays and weekends. It also discusses the feelings about housework, i.e. which tasks are liked most and which tasks are disliked. Then it continues with effects of technology on

⁸⁵ Maya Angelou - Woman Work

the attitude towards housework. Later, the effect of using domestic service on housework and the meaning of cleanness/hygiene is discussed. In addition, how women perceive the gendered division of labour is analyzed. Then it focuses on shopping as a housework activity that deserves special attention because its ability to show class difference. It finishes with rules of housework that housewives develop by themselves and their judgments by family, relatives and social circle.

4.1. Daily Routine

When we look at the daily routine of housewives, we see that their schedules' are arranged according to the needs of their husbands and children. As it was discussed in chapter three, although women claim that they are their own bosses, they are not so independent when they plan their day.

The day of most housewives starts with getting up before their husbands and children, in order to wake them up and prepare breakfast. Some women prefer to sleep a couple hours more, if they do not have so many things to do that day. The reason for this is because most of the time it is housewife who goes to bed lastly, since she has to tidy up kitchen and living room. Therefore, housewives compensate this by sleeping a few hours more in the mornings. For Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school), it is a necessity for her health: *“I sleep late, I mean earliest at 12. In the mornings I sleep again after sending the kids and my husband till pull myself together. I have migraine, it is not good if I do not have my sleep, I do not break this rule⁸⁶.”*

The ones who prefer to start early the day enjoy their time by having breakfast, watching television, or speaking with their friends on telephone. Arzu, a middle class woman, told how she spends her mornings as follows:

I wake up at seven thirty, prepare breakfast for my husband. Then wake my son up, prepare his breakfast; get him into the school bus. Then prepare tea and breakfast for myself. Every morning I have this delighted breakfast *with*

⁸⁶ Akşamları çok geç saatlerde yatarım en erken 12’de yatarım yani. Sabahları da eşimle çocukları gönderdikten sonra yatarım ta ki kafam kendini toparlayana kadar. Migrenim var, uykuyu almadan olmuyor, o düzeni bozmam

my own self. Then I have my cigarette and morning talk on telephone with a few friends through two or three glasses of tea⁸⁷.

According to Özyeğin, middle class women become more ‘individualized’ and “set apart from other family members”. For example they begin to consume for their own needs (cosmetics or gyms), not just for their family (2002, p.56). Arzu’s emphasis on her private breakfast also shows us that she enjoys with being with her own self.

After breakfast, how women spend the rest of the day is determined by the needs of their children, the work they have outside (like shopping or paying bills) and their social meetings. The difference of middle and lower middle class housewives about the emphasis on “allocating time for oneself” can be noticed here also. For example Esma, a middle class housewife, said that: *"If I have lots of work, I arrange it that way. Otherwise, I have my time. If I have something to do outside, I go around or I meet my friends"*⁸⁸. Hande (middle class/high school), like Esma spends her afternoons with her friends: *"After the breakfast I tidy the house till about nine thirty to ten. Then, my coffee chats and meetings start. We are usually together with friends till four thirty, either outside or at homes"*⁸⁹. These meetings last when children’s school finishes, because they come home hungry and need dinner.

Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, stated that they cannot find time for themselves during the day. For instance, Yeter’s (lower middle class/primary school) day passes with doing housework and looking after children:

I send my husband at seven thirty. Kids wake up at eight after their dad. I prepare their breakfast. We have breakfast at about nine, nine-thirty. Washing the dishes, tidying the house, putting the kids to the sleep, then doing the other

⁸⁷ Sabah yedi buçukta kalkıyorum. Eşime kahvaltı hazırlıyorum. Eşimi yoluyorum. Sonra oğlumu kaldırıyorum. Oğlumun kahvaltısını hazırlıyorum. Oğlumu servise bindiriyorum. Ondan sonra kendime çay demlerim ve kahvaltı hazırlarım. Her sabah kendim, kendimle keyfili bir kahvaltı yaparım. Sonra sigaramı yakarım, iki-üç bardak çayıyla bir iki arkadaşımınla sabah telefonu konuşmasını yaparım

⁸⁸ Eğer işim çoksa ona göre ayarlıyorum. Yoksa kendime zaman ayırıyorum. Dışarıda işim varsa dışarı gidiyorum, gezmeye çıkıyorum. Arkadaşlarımla buluşuyorum.

⁸⁹ Kahvaltıdan sonra şöyle genel bir toparlamamı yapıyorum evle ilgili, dokuz buçuk-ona kadar o sürüyor. Ondan sonra kahve muhabbetleri ve gezmelerim başlıyor. Saat dört buçuğa kadar genelde arkadaşlarla beraberiz. Ya dışarıda vakit geçiriyoruz ya evlerde vakit geçiriyoruz.

work while they were sleeping, cooking the meal, the evening comes right away⁹⁰.

Like Yeter, Itr (lower middle class/high school) did not mention an activity for herself: *“I get up at seven. I send my daughter to school, my husband to work. If I do not have so many things to do, I sleep till ten. You know, daily work... and two days a week I go to shopping. There is no social activity that I do other than that”⁹¹*

After husbands come from work, housewives try to bring family together at dinner time. However, children come from school earlier than their fathers, so most of the time this could not be the case. Like Güler said (middle class/high school) *“All of them come at different hours. Girls might be late because of their courses. My husband might be late if he has work. I do not let them stay hungry since they all come separately. I mean, I prepare their food. I do that self-sacrifice”⁹²*. In those cases, tea time in front of television after dinner is an opportunity for family to spend time together. As Gönül (middle class/primary school) reported: *“After dinner we spend our time with drinking tea and family chit chat. I tell what I did during the day, my son and my husband tell what they did. Our evenings pass very nicely.”⁹³*

Although lower middle class housewives stated that during the day they cannot find time for themselves, they actually find that time at nights because they finish all of their duties. Hale, (lower middle class/university) for example, told that she spends her nights by reading a book or surfing on the Internet. Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school) explained how she spends the nights as follows:

After everybody is asleep and the home is deserted, I tidy the kitchen and all, after eleven usually everyone is asleep. Then, I feel as if I’m free at those

⁹⁰ Sabahleyin yedi buçukta eşimi gönderiyorum. Saat sekizde babalarının arkasından çocuklar da kalkıyor. Onlara kahvaltı hazırlıyorum. Dokuz - dokuz buçuk gibi kahvaltı ediyoruz, bulaşık yıka, öğlene kadar evleri topla, öğlen ufaklıkları uyut. Sonra onlar uyurken kalan işleri yap, yemek yap, akşam oluyor zaten.

⁹¹ Sabah yedide kalkarım. Kızımı okula yollarım, eşimi işe yollarım. Eğer çok işim yoksa ona kadar biraz daha uyurum. Ev işi işte...haftada iki alışverişe giderim. Başka da bir sosyal aktivite yok yaptığım.

⁹² Herkes farklı saatte geliyor. Kızlar dershaneden dolayı geç de gelebiliyorlar. Eşimin işi uzarsa geç geliyor. Ayır ayrı geldiklerinden asla da aç bırakmam. Yani herkese ayrı yemek hazırlarım. O fedakarlığı da yaparım.

⁹³ Yemekten sonra çay içeriz, sohbet ederiz. O gün ne yaptığımı anlatırım, eşim, oğlum anlatırlar. Akşamlarımız çok güzel geçer.

hours. I sit before the TV and watch serials and all I like. Or else I do my fancywork if any. At those hours, everybody is within easy reach; nobody needs me, sleeping all. Thus, I feel kind of free. As if that time belongs to me, I spare it to myself. Therefore, I sleep late, at 12 o'clock or one⁹⁴.

Since Belkıs is dependent on her husband and her children's needs, what she understands from "freedom" is a couple of hours at nights that she spends only for herself.

The weekend-weekday separation for women is related with whether their husbands work or not. For example if their husbands work at Saturdays, this day passes like a weekday for housewives. That means, they continue to do housework. For instance Yeter (lower middle class/primary school) said that: "*It is the same for me whether it is weekend or week day. My kids are small, whether or not that house becomes untidy. You need to tidy up. Also my husband works on weekends*⁹⁵". But when their husbands have a day off, they spend the day different from weekdays which was mentioned above. For instance, when husbands are at home, they never do cleaning, in order not to "disturb" them with the sound of vacuum cleaner⁹⁶.

In addition, housewives can be more outside at weekends. Gönül, a middle class woman told how she spends her weekends: "*We usually go to the malls with my husband on weekends. We buy the needs, etc. We participate to events of the friends if any. Weekends are quite constructive*⁹⁷." A lower middle class woman İtir reported that: "*Weekends are different. Housework is not done on weekend. We try to go somewhere as a family especially in the summers. We used to go to cinemas more*

⁹⁴ Bütün herkes yatıp da el ayak çekildikten sonra, mutfağı falan toplarım, saat on birden sonra genelde herkes yatmış olur. O zaman sanki kendim için bir özgürlüğüm varmış gibi hissediyorum o saatleri. Otururum televizyonun karşısında hangi dizi varsa bakmak istediğim bir şey varsa ona bakarım. Yoksa kafama göre bir eliğim varsa onu yaparım. O saatlerde herkes elimin altında, bana kimsenin ihtiyacı yok, uykudalar ya, o ara ben kendimi baya bir özgür hissediyorum. Kendime ait gibi, o zamanı kendime ayırıyorum. O yüzden çok geç yatıyorum, bir iki üç. Kaçta yatarsam.

⁹⁵ Hafta sonu hafta içi fark etmiyor. Çocuklar küçük, öyle ya da böyle o ev dağılıyor, toplamak gerekiyor. Bir de eşim haftasonları da çalışır.

⁹⁶ Because of that, for most women Mondays are the "big cleaning" days since the house is not cleaned at weekends.

⁹⁷ Hafta sonları genelde alışveriş merkezlerine gidiyoruz eşimle. Pazar ihtiyacı olursa onu yapıyoruz. Evin ihtiyaçları olursa onları hallediyoruz. Arkadaş grubuyla falan bir şey varsa onlara katılıyoruz. Hafta sonları baya yapıcı geçer.

frequently. As you know there are not so many things to do in Ankara. We go to malls⁹⁸.”

The difference of lower middle class and middle class weekend activities is that the former like to spend weekend as a family. They like to go shopping malls, picnics, and relative visiting. Middle class families, on the other hand, spend their weekends more “individualized”. Their children prefer to hang out with their friends while spouses go for a brunch or dinner at a restaurant.

When looked at the daily routine of housewives, it is seen that middle class women spend more time for themselves such as doing sport, going to a hair dresser, meeting with friends, surfing on the Internet and knitting. It can be said that there are two reasons for this. Firstly, in my study, middle class women’s children are older than lower middle class ones’. Therefore, when children are at school, housewives can find time for themselves. Secondly, the majority of middle class housewives have a domestic worker. So the time they spend to housework is relatively lesser than lower middle class housewives. It should be also noted that middle class housewives care having a social life more than lower middle class housewives, so even those women who have small child find time for themselves. As Güler (middle class/high school) put it: *“I had my own time anyway before the baby. However, I still have it, I go to the hairdresser, meet friends. I find myself time some way.”⁹⁹* According to Hande (middle class/high school) *“I believe that everyone can make that time if they want to. I can make, because I like to live for myself. But I have many friends who say that they cannot find time due to work. I do not believe that. A person who wants to make time for herself will make it.”¹⁰⁰*

Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, believe that a housewife should spend her time to her husband and children. For example, Belkıs (lower middle

⁹⁸ Hafta sonları farklı olur. Hafta sonu ev işi yapılmaz. Ailecek bir yerlere gitmeye çalışırız. Eskiden sinemaya daha çok giderdik. Ankara’da biliyorsun yapılacak fazla bir şey yok. Alışveriş merkezlerine gideriz.

⁹⁹ Bebekten önce kendime her halükarda zamanım oluyordu. Ama şimdi de ayırıyorum, gidiyorum kuaförüne, gezmelere. Bir şekilde kendime vakit ayırıyorum.

¹⁰⁰ Bence herkes isterse o zamanı yaratabilir. Ben yaratabiliyorum, çünkü kendim için yaşamayı seviyorum. Ama birçok arkadaşım işten dolayı o zamanı yaratamadıklarını söylüyor. Ben buna inanmıyorum. İsteyen yaratabilir.

class/secondary school) said that: *“I do nothing for myself. Actually I do not think that I live for myself.. My priorities are different. I put them in an order. It is not me, but my children, my husband, then myself. Because of that I do not think that I have enough time for myself¹⁰¹”*. Çiğdem (lower middle class/high school) also expressed that she sacrifices from her own time: *“I do not live myself. I always think about what my son wants, what my husband wants. Always sacrificing, postponing. I put myself on the back burner¹⁰²”*. What Semra (lower middle class/university) said is also summarizes how her spare time activities are replaced with housework: *“I do not make free time for myself. When I find myself free, I say to myself let’s empty this closet while children are sleeping. But I do not feel uncomfortable. I get used to it. I feel better this way.¹⁰³”*

Why lower middle class housewives think like that is because for them leisure and housework is not separated. While it is easy for a man to separate his work from family, or entertainment from his job, it is difficult for a woman because in her daily routine, the tasks that she does are very fragmented (DeVault, 1991, p.5). In other words, housewives combine leisure and work together like preparing for a picnic, or shelling bean while talking with a friend. Even they spend the time for resting with doing a work; for example, sewing or folding clothes while sitting (Acar-Savran, 2004, 20). According to Deniz (lower middle class/high school), for example: *“While my daughter is studying, I take a book and read it. She needs attention, otherwise she cannot study¹⁰⁴”*. Therefore, even she is reading her book, she is monitoring her daughter.

In sum, housewives arrange their daily schedules according to the needs of their husbands and children. For middle class housewives, spending time for oneself is

¹⁰¹ Kendim için hiçbir şey yapmıyorum. Aslında kendim için yaşadığımı düşünmüyorum. Önceliklerim farklı sıraya koymuşum. Önce kendim değil, çocuklarım, eşim, sonra kendim. Bu yüzden kendime yeterli zaman kaldığımı düşünmüyorum.

¹⁰² Kendim için yaşamıyorum. Her zaman oğullarım ne ister, eşim ne ister onu düşünüyorum. Sürekli fedakarlık, erteleme. Hep bir kendini geri plana atma.

¹⁰³ Kendim için boş zaman ayırmıyorum. Bir boşluk bulduğumda, hadi diyorum şu dolabı boşaltayım hazır çocuklar uyuyorlarken. Ama kendimi rahatsız hissetmiyorum, alıştım. Böyle daha iyi hissediyorum.

¹⁰⁴ Kızım çalışırken bir kitap alır okurum. İlgiye ihtiyacı var yoksa çalışmıyor.

important. They can create this time thanks to their domestic workers. Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, care more the necessities of their spouses and children. Thus, only a few of them can find time for themselves in the evenings when everybody goes to sleep.

4.2. Housework: Like it or Hate it?

It is seen in the previous part that housewives spend most of their time with doing housework from the very beginning of their day to the evening. As it was mentioned in the third chapter, lower middle class housewives perceive housework as monotonous, repetitive and boring more than middle class housewives. Using domestic service is very much effective in this perception. However, it should be remembered that housework contains different activities; so while some tasks can be boring, others can be very enjoyable. For Bengü (middle class/high school), while cleaning gives her pleasure, ironing and dusting are burden: *“It makes me happy to do deep cleaning by myself, every corner, even moving the huge wardrobe, back of these huge furniture... But I do not like ironing and dusting¹⁰⁵.”* Therefore, all different house tasks should be analyzed separately.

For my respondents, among all the house chores, the most disliked one is ironing, while the most liked one is cooking, regardless of class. This was also the case in other studies (Oakley, 1974; DeVault, 1991).

Ironing is the most disliked task because one has to stand in front of the ironing board and repeat the same activity over and over again. Canan’s (middle class/high school) quotation shows how she hates ironing: *“Oh, ironing is my nightmare. I cannot do one at a time, I have to save clothes to iron. But when I see that pile to iron I feel like, I mean I do not feel to do it but you have to.¹⁰⁶”* It also becomes a burden in summer because of the steam and heat coming from iron. Belkıs (lower

¹⁰⁵ En çok dipli köşeli her tarafı, kendim rahatça dökerek, kenarda köşede ne varsa, hatta koca gardırobumu bile çektirerek, onların arkasını temizlemek bana çok büyük mutluluk veriyor...Ütü yapmayı ve toz almayı ise hiç sevmiyorum.

¹⁰⁶ Ay ütü benim kabusum. Tek tek yapamıyorum mecbur biriktiriyorum. Ama o ütülenecek yığını görünce böyle şey oluyorum, hiç yapasım gelmiyor ama mecbur yapmak zorundasın.

middle class/ secondary school) told that: *“Ironing is more difficult during summer, I prefer especially airy places since I have migraine, the steam affects me. I do it on doorways in summer¹⁰⁷”*

Since the majority of women do not like ironing, they use some strategies for dealing with it. Middle class housewives prefer to give the job to their domestic workers. Another strategy is buying wash-and-wear clothes that do not need ironing. Watching television/listening to radio while ironing is another strategy for making the job more bearable. In addition, using the latest technology in order to make ironing faster is mentioned by one middle class housewife, who is Esmâ: *“Yesterday there was those underwear, coloured ones, I did them in an hour. But it is also about my iron. For example, this much ironing took more time in the past. But since today the technology is more developed and I pay attention to this; my iron is very good, it removes the wrinkles at one move¹⁰⁸”*.

Unlike ironing, cooking is very much liked. There are a number of reasons why cooking is the most liked work. First of all, women can use their creativity while trying new recipes and this makes them feel pleasure from cooking (Oakley, 1974, p.58). As Leman (middle class/primary school) said: *“I like cooking a lot. Pastry, cookies... I loved to deal with those since my childhood. I like to try new recipes. If I encounter with something I like at friend meetings, I usually try it at home immediately.¹⁰⁹”* Hande (middle class/high school) also explained her feelings about cooking and trying new things as:

I love cooking a lot; I cook a number of meals every day. I like to try new recipes too. Since I like to combine things, I also make up new recipes. I do not need to look up to a book or search the Internet since I know which ingredient goes well with the other one and which taste is good for another one. When I taste something somewhere, I do not need to learn its recipe

¹⁰⁷ Yazın daha zor benim için ütü, özellikle havadar bir yere çıkıyorum migrenim olduğu için, ütünün buharı etkiliyor. Kapı ağızlarında yapıyorum yazın özellikle.

¹⁰⁸ Dün iç çamaşırlarım vardı renklilerim vardı, bir saatte yaptım çıktım. Ama bu benim kullandığım ütüyle de alakalı. Mesela eskiden bu kadar bir çamaşırı daha uzun sürede ütüleyebiliyordum. Ama şimdiki teknoloji farklı olduğu için ben de onlara biraz önem veriyorum; ütüm çok güzel bir sürmede halledebiliyorum yani kırıksıklığı açabiliyor.

¹⁰⁹ Yemek yapmayı çok severim. Pasta börekti, çocukluğumdan beri öyle şeylerle uğraşmayı çok severim. Tarif denemeyi çok severim. Genelde günlerde hoşuma giden bir şeye rastlarsam hemen evde denerim.

since I immediately understand what it is and cook it. It becomes almost the same¹¹⁰.

Another reason why women mostly like cooking is that they can receive immediate response for their work. In other words, women can understand their work is liked or not from the comments of their husband and children. As mentioned in the third chapter, when women feel that their work is appreciated, their satisfaction from doing housework increases. Therefore, when they see that their cooking is found delicious, they enjoy doing that. According to Elif (lower middle class/high school): “*Cooking and preparing food makes me happier than the other daily chores. And if it is eaten and liked, I am happier*¹¹¹.” Since creating meals is more visible than other types of housework, women can get recognition and appreciation from others more easily (Özkan, 1999, p.114).

Cooking also liked because it brings family together. According to DeVault, when women prepare meal, they actually produce *home* and *family*¹¹² (1991, p.79). Producing food is transforming materials into meaningful family rituals (Davidoff, 2002, p.148). Cooking has so central meaning for family and home that women do not give this work to their domestic workers¹¹³ (Bora, 2002, p.126). In addition, cooking is used by women as a mean for creating “their own power spaces” (Özkan, 1999, p.101). It is often used as a punishment and reward mechanism. For example my mother, who is a housewife, refuses to cook dinners when she has a fight with my father. Or she awards me with preparing my favourite meals when I come back home from a long vacation. Therefore, producing food means more than feeding the family for women.

¹¹⁰ Yemek yapmayı çok severim, her gün birkaç çeşit pişiririm. Yeni tarif denemeyi de çok severim. Genelde ben birleştirmeyi de çok sevdiğim için kendim de tarif uydururum. Malzemelerin neye ne yakıştığını hangisinin lezzetinin hangisine gideceğini bildiğim için de çok böyle ihtiyaç duymam bir kitap karıştırırım ya da internetten bakayım yapmam. Gittiğim bir yerde yediysem o yemeği tarifini de almaya gerek duymam çünkü onu hemen algılarıım ve yaparım. Aynısı da olur hemen hemen.

¹¹¹ Yemek yedirmek, yemek hazırlamak diğer ev işlerine göre daha mutlu ediyor beni. Hele yenmişse, seviliyorsa beğeniliyorsa daha mutlu oluyorum.

¹¹² Her italics

¹¹³ Of course there are other reasons for not letting domestic worker to do cooking. For example, according to Douglas, due to hygienic concerns, middle class women do not prefer to give this job to women from lower classes (as cited in Bora, 2002, p.126). This will be further explained in “use of domestic service” part.

If we consider the general attitude towards housework, we can say that two factors affect women's enjoyment from housework. The first one is being appreciated which is already mentioned. The other one is related with women's mood. Housewives contributed to this study told that when they feel good, they do housework cheerfully. However, when they are on their periods or when they are tired, housework becomes a burden. According to Güler (middle class/highs school): *"When I am sick, I mean because of the season or so, I am weak and exhausted. It is kind of torture then. I do not want that morning comes, I do not like to do daily chores¹¹⁴."* Belkis (lower middle class/secondary school) also explained her feelings in the following way: *"It might be much more boring especially some particular times of the women. But I guess it is more about the psychological balance. Sometimes I enjoy it, I mean I vacuum singing a song and all. If you can motivate yourself or if you are happy, housework is not that difficult¹¹⁵."* Being in the right mood sometimes means that you have lots of things to figure out. As Çiğdem said: *"If my mind is full, if I need to think something, housework becomes easier because your mind is focused on something. Then you realize that you managed a huge cleaning¹¹⁶"* Thus, when women feel that what they do for their husbands and children is appreciated or they are in the right mood, they enjoy more with doing housework. The next part is about how technology influences the way of doing and the time spent to housework.

4.3. Technology's effect on the attitude towards housework

It is expected that with the advance of new household technologies, the time spent to housework will decrease and house chores will become easier. For example, in television advertisements for small house appliances, it is said that they save from time and "time is left for love" (Özkan, 1999, p.32). However analyses show that

¹¹⁴ Hasta olduğumda, bazen böyle mevsimden dolayı halsiz oluyorum, bitkin oluyorum o zamanlar bana işkence gibi geliyor. Hiç kalkıp da böyle sabah olsun istemiyorum ev işi yapmak istemiyorum.

¹¹⁵ Birazcık da kadınların özellikle belirli dönemlerinde çok daha sıkıcı olabiliyor. Ama o herhalde psikolojik dengeyle alakalı. Zevkli bulduğum da oluyor, mesela bir şarkı türkü söyleyerek de makine tuttuğun oluyor. Kendini motive ettikten sonra, ya da çok mutluysan ev işi de zoruna gitmiyor.

¹¹⁶ Ancak beynim doluysa, bir şeyler düşünmem gerekiyorsa sinirlerim gerilmişse, o zaman iş yapmak çok kolaylaşıyor çünkü beyniniz çok yoğunlaşmış bir noktaya ya. Bir bakıyorsunuz inanılmaz bir temizliğin içinden çıkmışsınız.

technological equipments do not reduce the time spent to housework because tasks are diversified (Hartman, 1982; Cowan, 1983). Therefore, technology creates new tasks. For example using a kitchen robot produces extra work since it has different tools which need to be washed up separately. Another example is given by Vanek. According to her, while washing is considered to be much lightened thanks to technology, the time spend to it has increased. Since people change clothes everyday and they have more clothes compared to past, the frequency of washing them increased in the past years (1974, as cited in Özkan, 1999, p.36) Another point related with the question whether technology decreased the amount of time spent to house tasks is that with the new equipments, “housework is changing continuously both in content and in standards” (Özkan, 1999, p.32). According to Kramarae “...the household ‘labour-saving’ devices have actually not made the household easier to run, or freed women for other activities. As the equipment has been introduced into the homes of families which could afford it, the cleaning standards have been raised; and it’s still women who are doing the repetitive tasks, mostly performed at home and alone” (1988, as cited in Özkan, 1999 p.32). Therefore in order to reach those standards which achieved by only new household equipments, women spend extra effort (p.32).

Women contributed to this study also do not believe that technology reduces the amount of time spent to housework. For instance Gönül (middle class/primary school) said that: “*We used to wipe with broom in the past, there was not vacuum cleaners. Today, you can handle every detail thanks to the technology¹¹⁷.*” Thus, she thinks that with technological advancement, actually she spends more hours to housework. Arzu, (middle class/high school) on the other hand, said that the work is more or less the same, only the equipments that are used has changed: “*Wiping is same, my mother’s time or today. Then, women used to clean the floor by the hand and bending down, today I do it by mops¹¹⁸.*” Irmak (lower middle class/primary school) thinks in the similar way: “*If you ask me, I think it is almost the same as the past. Yeah, the machines make it kind of easy but just kind of. It has almost the same*

¹¹⁷ Eskiden elle süpürme olayı vardı elektrik süpürgesi yoktu. Şimdi teknolojiyle birlikte her türlü detaya inebiliyorsun.

¹¹⁸ Annemlerin zamanında da yer silmek aynıydı şu anda da yer silmek aynı. Eskiden kadınlar dizlerinin üstünde eğilerek yer silerlermiş ben viledayla siliyorum.

pace. Normally, I mean in the past, women used to use brooms, today we have vacuum cleaners. It is not so different actually.¹¹⁹” Nesrin (lower middle class/university) emphasised the increase in furniture: “Sometimes it is said that being a housewife is easier, machines do every stuff. Physical power was used in the past. But, then furniture and all was less than today. There might be a difference about works in this respect¹²⁰.”

Another point related with technology’s effect on housework is that although it serves new opportunities, people are not totally dependent on them. According to Kaufman’s study among French couples, a significant number of both men and women prefer washing up by hand instead of using a dishwasher. Indeed some of them really enjoy washing up (Kaufman 1992, as cited in Cockburn& Fürst-Dilic, 1994, p.16). Except some lower middle class housewives who do not own a dishwasher, a number of middle class women in my study also stated that they usually wash up by hand unless they have companies who come to dinner. According to Halide (middle class/high school): *“I wash the dishes and put to their places right away. But if I have a guest, and the dishes are piled up, then I use the machine. I do not care much about dish washer.¹²¹”* One reason for this preference may be related with the fact that women enjoy cooking and spending time in the kitchen. They may see that washing up is the extension of cooking process, and get a pleasure from washing up.

Another reason for this is related with the everyday habits of housewives and whether new technologies fit to those habits or not (Özkan, 1999, p.131). For example in my study older women usually wash up by hand unlike younger ones¹²². The former get used to wash up by hand and introduced with dishwasher later in their marriages. Therefore it becomes easier for them to wash up by hand. They do not

¹¹⁹ Geçmişe göre aşağı yukarı aynı bana sorarsan. Evet makinalar var biraz kolaylaştı gibi geliyor ama biraz kolaylaştı. Aşağı yukarı gene aynı tempoda. Normalde bir evin içinde eskiden de kadın, şimdi elektrik süpürgesiyle süpürüyor eskiden ot süpürgesiyle. Değişmiyor yani aslında.

¹²⁰ Bazen şöyle denebiliyor ev hanımlığı kolaylaştı her şeyi makine yapıyor gibi düşünülüyor. Eskiden daha çok vücut gücü kullanılıyordu. O zaman da eşyalar daha azdı belki çok eskiden. İş anlamında, o yönden belki bir farklılık olabilir.

¹²¹ Ben anında yıkar bulaşığı yerine yerleştiririm, ama bulaşık toplu bir şekilde yenmiş birikmişse, bir misafir gelmişse mesela, makineyi kullanırım. Bulaşık makinesine çok önem vermiyorum.

¹²² This was also the case in Özkan’s study

want to wait until the dishwasher is filled completely because of hygienic reasons. In addition, they consider brushing dirty dishes before putting them into the machine as an extra work. Younger housewives on the other hand, get used to dishwasher and perceive it more comfortable than washing up by hand.

Another reason may stem from not trusting machine's performance. Among my respondents, some housewives stated that they prefer to wash by hand sometimes. According to Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school): *"I hand wash some underwear and especially the jerseys of my husband. They have privilege, they do not get into the machine, I hand wash them. They are generally woollen; they usually shrink at the machine¹²³."* The feeling of mistrust to machines can be found in different cases also. For example Bengü (middle class/high school) told that: *"I used to follow my mother's habits in the past. Even if I had the machine, to be honest, I used to boil the white clothes, just to make snow-white. Today, I wash those twice as different from other people. I wash them first, then let the water go and start the machine all over again¹²⁴."*

According to Davidoff, domestic tasks are preferred to be done by hand because labour-intensive work is a way for women to show their love (Acar-Savran, 2004, p.21). Therefore, when women use their physical power instead of technological equipments they prove their love. In addition, they make their work more valuable through doing by hand since they underestimate the work that is done by machines. For example, when housewives talked about their washing routines, they told that all the work is done by the machine; although they are the ones who separate clothes according to their colour and texture, put them into machine, hang, fold, and lastly put them into their place. Thus, for housewives from both classes, although technology brings comfort, it causes the devaluation of work.

¹²³ Bazı iç çamaşırlarını elimde yıkarım. Bir de özellikle eşimin kazaklarını elde yıkarım. Onun kazakları ayrıcalıklıdır, makineye girmez, elde yıkarım. Genelde yün oluyor, makineye girince küçücük kalıyor.

¹²⁴ Eskiden hep annemin adetlerini uygulardım. Ne kadar da makinem olsa, açıkça söyleyeyim muhakkak kaynatırdım beyazları, ille beyaz olacak diye. Şimdi de insanlardan farklı şunu yapıyorum, beyazları iki kere yıkıyorum. Önce bir kere yıkayıp, suyunu boşaltıp, makineyi tekrar başa alıyorum.

4.4. Perception of Cleanness and Hygiene

The more houses become larger and the number of furniture and technological equipments increase, the more it becomes difficult to do cleaning. Also, as mentioned in the literature review part, compared to past, visitors are more mobile in the home. Now they are not kept in reception rooms but they can go every part of the house (Özbay, 1999, p.566). While before 1990s reception rooms were the symbol of status, after 1990s the whole house becomes a showroom (Ayata, 2002, p.35). In addition, according to Acar-Savran, not only standards related with health and hygiene, but also social prestige criteria make the cleaning more detailed and complicated (2004, p.21). Hence, now the cleanness of the house is more difficult as well as more important.

With the advertisements and the introduction of diversified cleaning products, women became more sensitive about the hygiene of bathrooms and kitchen because they reinforce the norm that “whiteness or cleanliness is the housewife’s moral obligation to her family” (Oakley, 1974, p.54). All of the women in my study, regardless of their class, stated that kitchen and bathroom cleaning is the most important ones because they are open to bacterial reproduction. According to Elif (lower middle class/ high school) “*Kitchen and bathroom necessitate more detailed work. You need to clean them every day. It does not be a problem if you sometimes do not clean other rooms. In terms of hygiene, kitchen and bathroom needs more detail work.*¹²⁵” Bengü also underlined the difficulty of cleaning these two areas: “*Kitchen and bathroom is on the one side, bedrooms are on the other. Since you cook meal in the kitchen, oil smell, oil marks, kitchen is more difficult more me. Cleaning whole house is equal to cleaning kitchen. Bathroom also needs to be cleaned by detergent*¹²⁶”.

Although for both classes the hygiene of kitchen and bathroom is important, it should be mentioned that the meaning of cleanness differs from middle and lower middle

¹²⁵ Mutfak ve banyo daha detaylı iş gerektiriyor. Her gün oraların temizlenmesi gerekiyor. Diğer odaları bazen temizlemesen bile sorun olmuyor. Hijyen anlamında mutfak banyo daha detay gerektiriyor.

¹²⁶ Mutfak ve banyo başka, diğer odalar başka. Özellikle mutfakta yemek piştiği için yağ kokusu, yağ lekesi, mutfak daha zor. Bir evi temizlemek bir mutfaka bedel. Banyonun da her gün cıfılenmesi gerek.

class housewives. It seems that for middle class, the representation is more important. For Eda (middle class/university) it begins with the cleanness of clothes: “*When I go out, my clothes must be clean and ironed. This is same for the kids and the grown-ups. It is same for my kid too. Even if I take the kid to park or something, I change the clothes. I change them again when we are back home and wash hands and face.*”¹²⁷ For Güler (middle class/high school), every corner of the house should be kept clean: “*I care about the details, I want everywhere is in order. Even if those places that are not seen by the guests. For example, now you’re here, how you would know the inside of the closets, but it is to know and feel that those places are also in order*”¹²⁸. It is clear that she wants to be sure that even her closets should be organized in case someone else could see it.

Middle class housewives are also different in their emphasis on food hygiene. Canan (middle class/high school) explained her sensibility by saying that: “*For example, nowadays foods are seriously pesticided. My husband is also a farmer, we have those gardens, there are peach, berry and all, they are all pesticided. Therefore, it is important to wash them. And since there is the kid, I need to be careful.*”¹²⁹

According to Elias, people do cleaning due to external pressure. With time, people internalize this and feel the need of cleaning because of internal pressure, or their superegos. Elias gives the example that how a man who does not get shave feels uneasy (Elias, 1939/2000, p.340 note 119). In a similar way, women I interviewed with stated that they feel uncomfortable when they cannot do cleaning. Gönül’s (middle class/primary school) quotation is an example for that: “*When I cannot do the cleaning, when I am sick or something, I feel bad, everywhere disturbs me as if all covered with dust. I do not feel at ease.*”¹³⁰ When we look at the Bengü’s

¹²⁷ Dışarıya çıktığında üzerindeki kıyafet temiz ütülü olmalı. Bu küçük ya da büyük olarak değişmemeli. Ben kendi çocuğum için de aynı. Hani onu bir parka bile çıkarsam üzerindeki kıyafeti değiştiririm. Geldiğinde tekrar değiştiririm elini yüzünü yıkatırım mutlaka.

¹²⁸ Detaycıyım, her yerim düzenli olsun isterim. Gelenin görmediği yerler bile, mesela siz geldiniz dolabın içini ne bileceksiniz, oraların bile düzenli olduğunu bilmesidir, hissetmesidir.

¹²⁹ Mesela şimdi gıdalar özellikle çok feci şekilde ilaçlanıyor. Şimdi eşim de çiftçi, kendi bahçelerimiz var şeftali kiraz filan var mesela onları da ilaçlıyorlar. Onun için yıkanması için çok önemli. Çocuk da olunca daha titiz oluyorsun.

¹³⁰ Temizlik yapamadığım zamanlarda, mesela hasta falan olduğumda kötü hissederim her yer batar bana, her yer tozmuş gibi gelir. İçim hiç rahat etmez.

example, we can understand that this perception is rather a strong one and it can only be changed through a life changing experiencing like breast cancer treatment:

Before I got sick, I used to do lots of cleaning. I received psychological treatment along with my sickness. Then the doctor suggested me this. Now as you see (showing the empty glasses), before you could not find anything around. But now I'm really at ease. It really bothers you, but now I'm used to, I let it go, I'll handle it later, it is not a big deal¹³¹.

The perception of cleanness is therefore very subjective and difficult to change. Use of domestic service also plays a significant role in this perception. The following part is about its effect on the attitude towards housework.

4.5. Use of Domestic Service

According to Gavron, there is a difference between *homemaking* and *housework*. While homemaking means creative activities like cooking, sewing, decorating; housework is conceptualized as "wasted time" like scrubbing, washing and polishing (as cited in Giles, 2004, p.96). Young also makes a similar differentiation. She suggests that homemaking is giving meaning to things and saving them with their meanings. She refers to D.J. Van Lennep who compares a hotel room with home. According to Lennep, that although a hotel room is quite comfortable and clean, it does not give the feeling that you are at home because there is nothing similar in it which show one's self and background (Young, 1997, p.149). What make us feel like a home in our houses are the women's homemaking activities (Young, 1997, p.152). When they decorate their houses or use a recipe of their mothers, they actually make objects meaningful and connect family members with past (Bora, 2005, p.72).

According to Bora, it is difficult to determine which activities are homemaking and which are housework (2005, p.126). However, one way of understanding how women separate them is looking at which tasks they give to their domestic worker and which tasks they do not let them to do. In middle class, for example, cleaning is

¹³¹ Hastalanmadan önce çok fazla temizlik yaptım. Hastalığımla birlikte psikolojik tedavi de gördüm hastalığım nedeniyle. O zaman doktorun bana iyi bir tavsiyesi oldu. Şimdi siz de görüyorsunuz [boş çay bardaklarını gösteriyor] önceden hiçbir şey ortalıkta duramazdı. Ama şimdi gayet rahatım. Hakikaten insanı sıkıyor, şimdi alıştım ama, bıraktım bırak dağınık dursun, sonra toplarım, hiç önemli değil.

done by using domestic service¹³². According to Gregon and Lowe, also, cleaning is not considered as suitable for middle class women because it is done by a woman from lower class (as cited in Özyeğin, 2002, p.55).

Among my informants, the majority of middle class housewives hire a domestic worker unlike lower middle class ones. The frequency of using domestic service changes from woman to woman (like twice a week, every two weeks or every month). But it seems that the presence of domestic worker is inconvenient for housewives. According to Güler (middle class/high school), who has a one year old baby (in addition to her 17 and 15 years old daughters): “*In the past I used to have my domestic worker once a week. After my birth, she came three times in a week. Now she comes twice a week because I am bored. I do not like that having a woman around all the time in my house.*”¹³³ The reason for this may stem from the fact that housewives cannot leave their houses to domestic workers. They feel the necessity to monitor the work they do. The presence of domestic worker saves women from doing the uncreative housework, yet they still “have to” supervise those women because middle class housewives do not want their domestic workers to take control of the organization of their houses (Bora, 2005, p.128).

According to Bora, when domestic worker intervenes with tasks related with homemaking, the employer, i.e. housewife, becomes uncomfortable since the difference between homemaking and housework is blurred (2005, p.128). Because of that reason, housewives determine some rules to their workers. For example Güler (middle class/high school) does not want her to organize inside of the closets: “*I do not let the domestic worker clean inside of the closets. Neither the kitchen cabinet, nor the refrigerator or bedroom closets are ever done by her.*”¹³⁴ Yıldız (middle class/high school), on the other hand, is sensitive about her kitchen: “*I never let*

¹³² I use the term domestic service as domestic work which helps the family to reproduce itself and which is done by someone else outside the family for a wage (Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç, 2001, p.55).

¹³³ Eskiden haftada bir alırdım. Doğumdan sonra haftada üç kez gelmeye başladı. Şimdi haftada iki geliyor sıkıldım çünkü. Evde sürekli kadın olmasından hoşlanmıyorum.

¹³⁴ Temizlikçi kadına dolap içlerimi yaptırمام. Mutfak dolabı içlerini buzdolabı içini yatak odasındaki dolap içlerini kesinlikle kadına yaptırمام.

someone else to enter into my kitchen¹³⁵.” Lastly, Esmâ’s (middle class/high school) rule is about ironing: “I do not let somebody else to do ironing because I do not like that a second person touches my underwear.¹³⁶” According to Bora, tasks like the order of the items and furniture, decoration and kitchen work are considered as “subjective and personal”, therefore an intervention in these areas do not allowed by housewives (2005, p.128).

From another aspect, middle class women consider using domestic worker a sign of status. In addition, once they get used to it, it becomes a necessity. According to Güler (middle class/high school): “It is difficult when you get used to, you cannot do it as the domestic worker. I am used to the comfort; I don’t think that I will do it myself from now on¹³⁷”. For lower middle class, on the other hand, not having domestic worker is regarded as a merit (Ayata, 1988, p.10). Although some of them stated that they wish to have a worker, most of them proud of not needing. According to Yeter (lower middle class/primary school) “I can do it. Thank God, I did not need it ever¹³⁸.” Çiğdem (lower middle class/high school) said that “No, I did not think that it is necessary. Rather I purchase a lot of detergent¹³⁹”.

The one exceptional case of this is Arzu. Although she is a middle class woman and used to have a domestic worker, now she prefers to give that money to her own spending. She explained this in the following way:

I don’t think that cleaning women are doing better than me. As I said, I can arrange my life inside and outside accordingly. I give two or three days to the housework, perfect, I mean what the woman does in a day, I do it in three days but it is perfect and sparkling. Then I have my manicure, hairdressing, get into my car, trip around. I spend the money I’d give to the woman to the gas and hairdresser...I don’t know, I don’t consider housework as something too hard. I think that this is my job, I should do it. I think that way about the

¹³⁵ Mutfağıma başka birinin girmesine asla izin vermem.

¹³⁶ Ütüyü başkasına yaptırmayı istemem çünkü asla iç çamaşırlarıma ikinci bir elin değmesini istemem.

¹³⁷ Alışınca zor yani kendin girişemiyorsun bir kadının yaptığı gibi. Rahata alıştım ben, bu saatten sonra bırakıp da kendim yapamam herhalde.

¹³⁸ Kendim halledebiliyorum. Hiç ihtiyaç duymadım çok şükür.

¹³⁹ Yok, gerekli olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Onun yerine bolca deterjan alıyorum.

domestic worker, too. I spare the money I'd give her to myself, and also I'm a housewife, I'm healthy, this is my home. I would love to do these works on my own if I'm not sick. If the woman does these work, and the machine washes the dishes and does the laundry, then as a housewife I'd feel myself so empty without any other work to do. I mean, I feel good by doing at least the work of my home¹⁴⁰.

It seems that middle class housewives cannot live with or without domestic workers. Although they enjoy the service of a woman, they feel uncomfortable when she intervenes in the homemaking area like kitchen or the order of the house. In the one and only example of Arzu, we see that she prefers to do housework by herself and be proud of it because she wants to be the master of her house.

4.6. Division of Labour at Home

According to Berk (1985) due to the cultural expectation that housework is women's job, wives do not demand from their husbands to involve in house chores, and men's lack of contribution to domestic tasks does not generate a tension between couples (as cited in Robinson and Milkie), 1998, p.207). Since women see their work as a "natural expression of caring", men do not feel a necessity to do housework (DeVault, 1991, p.142).

However, it is expected that as women work outside the house, the division of labour in the house become more equal. On the other hand, while in Europe and USA, women's labour force participation has increased compared to past, they still do most of the housework and they are still the major care providers (Fürst, 1997 p.446; Sayer, 2010, p.31). Even in Finland where gender equality is sustained through laws, it is mostly women who do the cleaning (Cockburn & Fürst-Dilic, 1994, p.13).

¹⁴⁰ Gelenlerin benden daha iyi yapmadıklarını düşünüyorum. Ben dediğim gibi hem dışarı hayatını hem evi ona göre ayarlayabiliyorum. İki gün ya da üç gün bölüştürüp işlerimi eve kapıyorum, gıcır gıcır, yani kadının bir günde yaptığını ben üç günde yapıyorum, ama gıcır gıcır, pırıl pırıl evimi temizlerim, ondan sonra da manikürüme giderim kuaförüme giderim arabama atlarım dışarı gezmeye çıkarım. Kadına vereceğim parayı ben benzinimle kuaförüme harcarım. ... Bilmiyorum ev işi yapmak bana çok ağır gelmiyor bu da benim işim bu da benim yapmam gereken bir şey diye bakıyorum. Kadın konusunda da öyle düşünüyorum hem kadına vereceğim paramı kendime ayırıyorum bir de ben ev kadınıyım, sağlıklıyım, bu benim evim. Bu evin işlerini sağlığım elverdikçe ben yapmak isterim. Benim işimi kadına yaptırırsam makinede çamaşırı yıkıyorum bulaşıkları makinede yıkıyorum o zaman ben kendimi, zaten ev kadınıyım, başka bir yaptığım iş olmadığı için kendimi çok boş hissederim. En azından evimin işlerini yapmak bu anlamda kendimi iyi hissettiriyor.

Shelton and John claim that women are still responsible for housework, but men's contribution to house chores increase compared to past (1996, p.300). However, although men do more housework than in the past, they do not devote themselves to it and their contribution stays at the "helping" level (Cockburn Fürst-Dilic, 1994, p.13).

In Turkish society also, women are first expected to be good housewives and good mothers, whereas men are regarded as "breadwinners" (Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç, 2002, p.32). And this traditional roles do not likely to change in short term, as well as men's level of contribution to domestic work (Kıray, 1985, p.83). Even in families where women are the major providers economically, men's involvement in housework is limited (Bolak, 1997). The expectation of wives from their husbands to share their roles at home is also considered as low (Bolak, 1997).

It can be said that one factor in men's involvement in house tasks is women's expectations. Among my respondents, there are three attitudes towards men's share in housework. These are: "men should not do housework", "men should do some of the housework", and lastly "men should do equal amount of work as women in the house".

Women in the first group believe that it is not appropriate for men to involve in house chores. For these women, gender roles and the division of labour at home are strictly defined, and they should not be changed. It seems that these ideas are constructed culturally, but they are thought to be "natural". In other words, women are naturally mothers and caregivers, while men are not. Therefore, women in this group do not associate men with doing housework, and they conceptualize men who do as "deviant". According to İnci (middle class/university): "*Oh, no, they shall not do housework, I do not like that they are in my kitchen. It does not fit to them. They should do their own job, housewife does the other stuff well¹⁴¹*". Sevgi's (lower middle class/primary school) attitude towards her husband's contribution at housework is also negative: "*I never approve that my husband does housework. Men*

¹⁴¹ Yok ya karışmasınlar ben sevmiyorum mutfağıma falan. Ellerine yakışmıyor. Onlara düşeni yapınlar da ev hanımı yetiştirir hepsini.

*will be men, and women will be women*¹⁴²”. In their daily life also, her husband does not “help” her, not even in the kitchen, although he is a cook.

In the second group, housewives find some of the house tasks convenient for men like making a salad, setting the table, and tidying up the house. Hale (lower middle class/university) reported that: *“He should not do housework as a woman but should be able to meet his own needs. I mean, he should not change the diaper but he may prepare the salad for example, he may put his socks to the laundry basket, he may take his glass to the kitchen*¹⁴³.” Like Hale, Canan (middle class/high school) told that: *“I mean, he should not enter into kitchen but he may help for tidying up, actually it is enough if he tidies his dirt and mess. For example, he smokes but does not dump it to the trash but takes another ashtray. Dump it to the trash instead leaving it there*¹⁴⁴.”

Why women see some tasks suitable for men to do and some not is because they believe that men cannot manage some of domestic work. Housewives in this group claim that men are incapable of doing tasks like cooking, hovering, wiping the windows and like. To quote from Hande (middle class/high school): *“Men should not do housework, but they should help, at least they should involve in. I do not let him to wash the carpets or wipe the windows, you know they cannot do that kind of housework; maybe helping in setting up the table or making a salad. I mean that kind of small things. They should not stand aside and wait someone to bring them even a glass of water.*¹⁴⁵”

¹⁴² Ben eşimin ev işinde çalışmasını asla hoş karşılamam. Erkek erkekliğini bilmeli bayan bayanlığını bilmeli.

¹⁴³ Bir kadın gibi ev işi yapmamalı, ama kendi ihtiyaçlarını karşılamalı. Yani çocuğun altını değiştirmemeli, ama bir salata yapabilir mesela, çorabını gidip kirliye atabilir, bardağını mutfağa götürebilir.

¹⁴⁴ Mesela mutfağa girmemeli, ama yine de ufak tefek bir ortalığı toplamada, ya aslında kendi pasağını toplasın yeter. Kendi dağınıklığını toplasın. Sigara içiyor mesela sigara kül tablasını dökmüyor gidiyor onu oraya koyuyor başka bir kül tablası getiriyor. Onu oraya koyana kadar çöpe dök.

¹⁴⁵ Yapmamalılar ama yardım etmeliler yani olaya dahil olmalılar. Tutup da bir halı sildireyim ya da bir cam kapı sildireyim, o tarz değil de belki bir masa toplamada ya da getirmede yardımcı olmalı ya da bir salata yapmada. Ufak tefek şeyler olabilir. Komple kenara çekileyim suyumu bile getirsinler olmamalı yani.

The reason why men are considered as unskilled is related with their socialization process. Before their marriage, they did not felt a necessity to do any of house tasks because their mothers or sisters did for them. Even when they single and living alone, their mother and sisters are expected to service their needs related with the house like cooking, cleaning, laundry, and like (White, 1994, p.46). The only exception is Emine's (lower middle class/primary school) husband who lived alone for three years. To quote from Emine: *"My husband was used to cook and all already. First he came to Ankara, to work, then we followed him. Then, he was used to do that stuff. Laundry and all. I mean, he still does"*¹⁴⁶. As seen in this example, men who have experience with housework tend to do more housework. However, men who are inexperience create extra work when they intent to do a chore, so their spouses prefer not to give them any housework. As Gönül (middle class/primary school) said: *"When he intends to wash up, he messes everywhere up. Because of this I never want him to enter into kitchen."*¹⁴⁷

Housewives in the third group, who have a relative gender equality perspective, believe that men should do as much housework as women do. For example Yıldız (middle class/high school) reported that: *"Men should do. They should do all. If women can do, men can also do. They should be able to do at least But my husband messes around even if he chops a cucumber, so I do not want that he does it; it is some another thing. But if he is talented, he might do"*¹⁴⁸. Similarly Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school) said that: *"A man should do any kind of work. There is not any work that I say he should not do. As they say even women should learn to beat the drums and then leave it aside, it is same for the men"*¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁶ Benim eşim zaten yapıyordu yemek falan. Önce o Ankara'ya geldi, çalıştı sonra biz yanına gittik. O dönemde kendisi alıyordu yapıyordu. Çamaşır falan kendi ihtiyaçlarını görüyordu. Şimdi de yapar yani.

¹⁴⁷ Bulaşık yıkamaya bile kalksa ortalığı darmadağın ediyor. O yüzden mutfağa girmesine asla izin vermem.

¹⁴⁸ Yapmalı. Hepsini yapabilmeli. Hanımlar o işleri yapabiliyorsa erkekler da yapabilmeli. Becerebilmeli en azından. Becerikliyse her işi yapabilir. Ama ben eşimden salatalık bile doğrasa yerlere döker o yüzden yapmasın diyorum. O ayrı. Ama becerikliyse yapsın.

¹⁴⁹ Her işi yapmalı erkek. Yapmasın değdim bir iş yok, gerektiğinde her işi yapmalı. Kadınlara bile tabiri caizse davul bile çalmayı öğren bırak deniyor ya, erkek de aynı şekilde.

Women expect from their husbands to do equal amount of housework because they think that they work more compared to their husbands. Yeter (lower middle class/primary school) compared her labour and her husband's in the following way:

He also gets tired a lot. Persuading other people, working in cold, his job is also difficult. But he thinks hard on one thing. I think hard on fifty things. Child's sleep, his getting up, clothing, bathing, ironing... You are responsible for everything. Men see us as if we do not do anything when they come home but I also do not sit (without doing anything) in this house. If I leave him alone in this house, I wonder what he will do. Believe me; he cannot bear children for two hours in the evenings¹⁵⁰.

Because of this, she demands from her husband to involve in housework as much as she does: *"In my opinion man should do all kinds of work, he can do what women can do. For example my husband never takes this plate and put it on the kitchen top. I ask "what happens if you put it? He will not use anything"¹⁵¹.*

Women who are in this group also advice their sons to do housework in their marriages. According to Leman (middle class/primary school):

I have two sons, I tell them if your wives work, you will come home and work with her because she will care for the kids or the housework or what. We cannot cover it although we do every day, she will come home from work and then cooking and something, perhaps there will be guests. I think it is not right to load all these on her shoulders. I tell my kids that men should also do. But it is a minority of Turkish men right now¹⁵².

Esmâ (middle class/high school) thinks in the similar way with Leman: *"I did my best in order my sons to be tidy. I still do. It is necessary because they will marry in the future, their wives may get sick for example. They should at least make a salad*

¹⁵⁰ Tamam o da çok yoruluyor. Başkasına laf anlatmak, soğukta çalışıyor, onun da zor ama o bir şeye kafa yoruyor. Ben elli şeye kafa yoruyorum. Çocuğun uykusuydu, kalkmasıydı, giydirmesiydi, banyosuydu, ütüsüydü. Her şey sana bakıyor. Bizi erkekler bir şey yapmıyormuş gibi görüyor eve gelince ama, eşimden bazen duyarım o şeyi. Ama bu evde ben de oturmuyorum, sürekli bir şeyler yapıyorum. Onu bir gün bıraksam bu evde ne yapar acaba. İnan akşam kendi iki saat katlanamıyor çocuklara.

¹⁵¹ Bence her işi yapabilir. Kadınların yapabildiği her şeyi erkek de yapabilir. Mesela benim eşim şu tabağı alıp da tezgaha koyan biri değil. Diyorum bazen ne olur koysa diye, ne kaybeder ki.

¹⁵² Benim iki oğlum var ben ikisine de söylüyorum eşleriniz çalışırsa siz de onunla birlikte gelip yapacaksınız çünkü çocuğuyla mı ilgilenecek bu kadın evinin işiyle mi. Biz her gün yaptığımız halde bitiremiyoruz o işten gelecek yemek, belki misafiri gelecek. Bütün bunları ona yüklemek yanlış bence. Çocuklarıma diyorum erkeklerin de yapması gerek. Ama Türk erkeklerinde azınlıktadır şu an.

*when they come from work in order to help their wives*¹⁵³” In parenthesis, it should be noted that actually Esmâ does not want her husband to involve in housework because he is “incapable”. But at the same time she wants her sons to help their future wives. This shows that there could be a change in women’s attitudes towards whether men should do housework or not.

It is mentioned that women in the third group have a more equal perspective and think that men’s housework contribution should be equal with women. However, even these housewives do not approve a marriage in which man is unemployed and does the housework while woman work outside the house. They think that there is a balance in the family, and changing gender roles will ruin this balance. Güler (middle class/high school) put it in the following way:

I think it is a very hard situation, both for man and woman. I never want such thing. If somebody has to work, that should be man. Because both my husband feels a deficiency and woman feel powerful. In that case, there would be a problem. The balance will be broken. I think man should work women should stay at home¹⁵⁴

Likewise Hülya (middle class/secondary school) told that:”*It is wrong. It would depress men. There would be inferiority complex because he asks “she works, why I do not work*¹⁵⁵”. Therefore, even housewives who demand from their husbands to contribute in housework have in their minds definite gender roles. This shows that there is strong “breadwinner” ideology among women from the two classes.

The other dimension of division of labour at home is caring children. It is different from housework in the sense that caring children involves more emotional labour than doing cleaning or shopping. As mentioned in the third chapter, women see being a housewife as an advantage since they can raise their children by themselves. The

¹⁵³ Onlar düzenli olsunlar diye elimden geleni yaptım, hala da yapıyorum. Gerekli yani çünkü ilerde evlenecekler eşleri hastalanabilir mesela. En azından bir salata yapmalılar işten geldiklerinde eşlerine yardımcı olmak için.

¹⁵⁴ Bence o çok ağır bir durum. Hem kadın açısından hem erkek açısından. Öyle bir şey olmasını asla istemezdim. Olacaksa eşin çalışması gerekir. Çünkü hem eşim kendinde bir eksiklik hisseder hem kadın da kendinde bir güç hisseder o zaman problem çıkar dengeler bozulur. Ne kadar eşine (kocana) bir şey dememeye çalışsan da dersin yani. Bence erkek çalışsın kadın otursun.

¹⁵⁵ Yanlış. Erkeğin psikolojisini bozar. Bir de aşağılık kompleksi olur kadın çalışıyor da ben niye çalışmıyorum diye

reason for this belief is because of the myth that “children need their biological mothers”. When looked at the opinions of women from two classes, it is seen that almost all of them believe that mothers should undertake the responsibility of raising children. According to Sevgi (lower middle class/ primary school) “*You ought to care your children by yourself, since you are the one who give birth to*”¹⁵⁶ Therefore, women believe that giving birth makes them responsible for looking after their kids, and this belief saves men from the responsibility of caring. Actually, housewives contributed to this study stated that men can only “help” in raising children. To quote from Nesrin (lower middle class/ university): “*Actually mother is responsible for caring, of course, mothers have this feeling naturally, they do not learn this later. I believe that fathers learn this later. They think one-sided, mothers think more elaborately. Fathers should be supportive though*”¹⁵⁷. Thus, why men can only help in caring children is because they do not know it instinctively. However, women miss the point that they also learn being a mother after they give birth. All of them stated that their relatives helped them at least one month after they gave birth.

It is argued especially by radical feminists that motherhood is an ideology to keep women at home. However, what I observed is that women themselves also use this as strategy for legitimizing their places as a housewife. By complaining about men’s incapability in both doing housework and child care, they reinforce their places at home.

The effect of socioeconomic class on what women think about men’s doing house tasks also need to be clarified. When looked at these three groups, it comes out that class does not have a direct effect on women’s attitudes because in three groups, there are both middle class and lower middle class housewives. When education and age are taken into account, the picture does not change. However, it can be said that cultural background of women are important in their opinions about men’s doing housework. In addition, housewives’ social circle and their reference group are effective. In other words, when women come across with men who do house chores,

¹⁵⁶ Nasıl dünyaya getiriyorsan öyle bakacaksın.

¹⁵⁷ Esasında anne sorumlu tabi, doğuştan bu duygu var annede, annelik sonradan öğrenilmiyor. Babalığın sonradan öğrenildiğine inanıyorum. Babalar tek düze düşünüyor, anneler daha detaylı düşünüyorlar Babalar da ama destek olmalılar.

their demands for help from their spouses increase. For instances, Yeter (lower middle class/primary school) told that:

Now men can help for some tasks when it is necessary. In the past men were seen as breadwinners, women as always serving. Men of new generation are more understanding. My sister also works; she comes with her husband sometimes. I admire them. They both work outside the house, they come from work. If one cooks the dinner, one cooks rice. If one washes up, one rinses. If one wipes, the other hovers. It is a good thing¹⁵⁸.

Hande (middle class/high school) also mentioned change in her demands when she compared her marriage with others:

Maybe my husband does not change about this issue, but I believed that I should do everything in the past. I said to myself “I do not work, so I should do”. About whether my husband should help or not, I don’t know, I did not have an expectation because I did not work. Now I do not think like that. I believe that everything should be shared. Everyone has a responsibility in the house. I think everybody have to do their share. When I look at my circle, I see people who succeeded in this. I think some things should change.¹⁵⁹

As mentioned in above, the attitude towards men’s doing housework is effected from social circle and culture. Mothers who believe that husbands should also contribute to housework may teach this to their children. In fact some of the housewives in my study demand from their children to contribute in house chores. For instance Leman (middle class/primary school) has two sons and she reported that “*I say OK in the week days because they go to work, but at weekends I expect them to tidy up their rooms*¹⁶⁰”. İtir (lower middle class/ high school) explained her experience as follows: “*For example my children can leave their bathrobes in the bedroom. I said to them that if they put it in the bathroom that does not be a problem for them. But if all of*

¹⁵⁸ Şimdi yeri geliyor erkekler yardımcı olabiliyor bazı şeylerde. Önceden erkekler eve ekmek getiren, kadınlar daima hizmet eden gibi görülüyordu. Yeni neslin erkekleri anlayışlı. Kendi ablam da mesela çalışıyor, eşiyile gelirler bazen imrenirim ben. İkisi de çalışıyor geliyorlar biri pilav pişiriyorsa biri yemek yapıyor, biri yıkıyorsa biri duruluyor. Biri siliyorsa biri süpürüyor, güzel bir şey.

¹⁵⁹ Aslında belki eşim bu konuda hiç değişmedi ama benim eski yaşantımda her şeyi yapmam gerektiğine inanıyordum. Ben çalışmıyorum, ben yaparım diyordum. Eşimin yardım etmesi konusunda, ne bileyim hiç beklentim yoktu çünkü çalışmıyordum. Şu anda öyle düşünmüyorum çalışmadığım halde her şeyin ortak olduğunu düşünüyorum. Herkesin bir görevi var evde bence herkes üstüne düşen görevi yapmak zorunda. Çevreme baktığımda, bunu başarabilen insanları görüyorum. Bazı şeylerin değişmesi gerek bence.

¹⁶⁰ Hafta içi neyse diyorum işe gidiyorlar ama hafta sonu odalarını toplamalarını bekliyorum.

them leave it like this, it causes a lot of job for me. I made them to get used to this¹⁶¹” Nesrin (lower middle class/ university) also said that *“I want my children to know how to cook, how to take care of children. I do not want them to avoid housework since they have school. They should learn.¹⁶²”* Since her children are very young, they cannot help her, but she said that she will demand it in the future.

However, not all mothers expect their children to involve in house chores. For those women, the education of their children is more important. Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school) explained her opinions in the following way:

Even if I want them to me help, I could not have the heart to. Children go to school early, they come from school, they are tired and hungry till the evening. I do not demand them anything because I do not want them to be like me, they should study, they should have a job. I do not want to a glass of water from my daughter or my son. When they want from me, I bring with happiness. When I feel sick, I wish they could help but in that case I could not have the heart to.¹⁶³

According to Özbay, the reason for this stems from the fact that housewives can only increase their status by investing in their family. In other words, they “are obliged to concentrate their efforts on the other members of the family” in order to gain higher status (Özbay, 1996, p.106). Because of this reason, they put the education of their children above all other things. They prepare them to their examinations; attend parent-meetings (p.107). In fact I came across in one of the women gatherings that some mothers solve math tests in order to explain them to their children. This attitude is the case for both middle class and lower middle class women in my study.

¹⁶¹ Mesela çocuklarım eskiden bornozlarını yatak odasında bırakabiliyorlardı. Onlara bunları banyoya koymanın onlar için bir problem çıkarmayacağını söyledim. Ama herkesin bırakması bana büyük bir iş çıkarıyor. Ona alıştırdım herkesi.

¹⁶² Yemek yapmayı bilmeyi, çocuğuyla ilgilenebilmelerini isterim. Sadece okuyacağım deyip işlerden uzak durmalarını istemem. Öğrenmeleri gerekiyor.

¹⁶³ Ben yardım etmelerini istesem bile kıyamıyorum, çocuklar erken gidiyorlar okuldan geliyorlar akşama kadar yorgunlar, açlar. Onların da ilerde benim gibi olmamaları için, okusun, ilerde mesleğini eline alsın, ben ondan hiçbir şey istemiyorum. Kızımdan oğlumdan bir bardak su istemiyorum, onlar isteyince mutlulukla getiriyorum. Rahatsız falan olursam keşke yardım etseler diyorum ama onda da kıyamıyorum.

4.7. Shopping

Shopping deserves special attention because of a number of reasons. While in the past women's contact with public space was limited, shopping was one of the duties of men. However, nowadays women can be seen in the streets more. In fact, window shopping became a part of daily routine of housewives after 1960s (Durakbaşa and Cindoğlu, 2002, p.74). According to one study that was conducted in Turkey, the percentage of women who do the grocery shopping is 33.3, while the percentage of men who do the grocery shopping is 37.7 and the percentage of couples doing the grocery shopping together is 22.6 (ASAGEM, 2006, p.64). That means more and more women become responsible for shopping.

Because of its character, "shopping cuts cross both public and private spheres" (Özkan, 1999, p.168). Since it is seen as the extension of domestic work, shopping is a good reason for joining city life for especially housewives who live in conservative neighbourhoods (Yılmaz, 2009, p.215). Therefore it gives housewives the opportunity of socializing.

Shopping is also important because it becomes a way for showing family wealth (Ayata, 2002). Although all family members engage in consumption, the major consumers in the family are women because of their taste in aesthetics and their ability to match different objects in harmony (Ayata, 2002, p.26). Especially middle class women are central in leading dominant style and taste (Giles, 2004, p.103).

It is also worth to mention that shopping is liked by many women compared to other house tasks like ironing or washing (Oakley, 1974). In fact, it is conceptualized as a leisure activity for women. However, the meaning of shopping is different for two classes. For lower middle class women, it means to find the cheapest place to keep their consumption at minimum level (Beşpınar-Ekici, 2001, p.46).

What middle class housewives understand from shopping is not limited to purchasing food, beverage or detergent. It also means shopping for clothes and decoration of the house. In fact, when I asked about their shopping habits, most of the middle class housewives wanted me to clarify what I mean by shopping, since for them there are different kinds of shopping. For example Cansu (middle class/high school) differentiated shopping when she talked about whether she likes it or not: "*I do not*

*like food shopping a lot. Some people goes around and all, I don't like it. I want to get it over. I like home shopping, buying new furniture, dressing. I don't like clothes shopping either, going around at malls and all.*¹⁶⁴”

The shopping habits of women change according to their neighbourhoods (the number of stores nearby, transportation facilities) and their resources (home storage capacity, being paid weekly or monthly, having a car) and individual preferences. Therefore, women can shop monthly, weekly, or even daily; they can shop from a small market or a gross market in shopping mall; they can visit different stores or shop from just one store. These differences mean that some women have more autonomy than others in their shopping routines (DeVault, 1991, p.59). In most cases, the autonomy depends on economic resources. To give an example, İnci, a middle class housewife told that: *“I shop everywhere. It might be a very luxury shop or district market. Sometimes, I buy something very expensive without a second thought and sometimes I do not buy a very cheap thing after a long thinking. I try not to shop when I am nervous. Then, I full the basket.*¹⁶⁵” While she stated that she shops from different stores, Cansu (middle class/high school) prefers to purchase from one market: *“Going around is a waste of time, it is better to shop from the market I am used to. I find anything I look for where I look for.*¹⁶⁶” The fact that she does not like grocery shopping is also effective in her shopping habit.

In women's shopping rituals automobile has an important role because it makes it a lot easier in terms of access and carrying. For example according to Leman (middle class/primary school): *“I used to go to shopping with my husband. Now I also have car, so I can go myself*¹⁶⁷”. For lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, it is really a burden to carry shopping bags. In these cases regular free bus services are

¹⁶⁴ Yiyecek alışverişini yapmayı çok sevmem. Kimisi hani dolaşır bakar eder, ben sevmem. İşimi yapayım çıkayım derim. Ev için yapılıcı severim. Eve yeni eşyalar, örtüler almayı severim. Giysi alışverişini de sevmem öyle alışveriş merkezlerini dolaşmayı.

¹⁶⁵ Her yerden alışveriş yaparım. Çok lüks bir yerden de yaparım, pazardan da yaparım. Bazen hiç düşünmeden çok pahalı bir şey alabiliyorum, bazen de çok düşünüp çok ucuz bir şeyi bile alıp gelmiyorum. Sinirliiyken alışveriş yapmamaya gayret ediyorum. Yoksa sepeti dolduruyorum.

¹⁶⁶ Dolaşmak bana zaman kaybı oluyor, her zaman alıştıđım market iyi oluyor. Her şeyi aradıđım yerde buluyorum.

¹⁶⁷ Eskiden eşimle birlikte giderdim alışverişe. Şimdi benim de arabam var, o yüzden kendim de gidebiliyorum.

vital especially women live in Batıkent or Eryaman where the markets are not close by.

Another aspect of shopping is about individual health and beauty. According to Özyeğin, shopping for cosmetics becomes very widespread among women (2002, p.56). Although it was mentioned that lower middle class housewives limit their own consumptions, they are influenced by this trend as well. Therefore, they break this rule for cosmetics and this leads them to search for better prices. What I come across in *meetings* of women is that it is a common practise to sell cheaper but good quality beauty products (like Avon or Oriflame).

Lastly, shopping is “a symbol of power in the house” (Özkan, 1999, p.168). It is related with simple decisions like choosing from different brands of a detergent, or more significant ones like deciding where to live (p.173). When all the interviews are analyzed, it comes out that in lower middle class families, men are more effective in decision making process like buying a new refrigerator or furniture. For example, according to Sevgi (lower middle class/primary school) “*My husband decides himself on that kind of issues. For instance when he bought the armchairs, he decided himself, he made a surprise to me. We seldom decide together. Usually he buys and brings, and I like it*¹⁶⁸.” Likewise Belkıs (lower middle class/ secondary school) told that: “*It is about our financial situation. If it is OK, we go and buy it. I cannot go by myself and buy something to my house.*¹⁶⁹” In other cases, in which spouses decide together, women’s educational level plays a role. In other words, in lower middle class marriages, when a housewife’s educational level increases, her effect on decisions increases also. In middle class families, on the other hand, housewives do not leave the decision to their husbands, they either decide by themselves or together with their spouses.

However, it is important to note that while nearly in both classes men left their responsibility of grocery shopping to their wives, it is not the case for more expensive buying. Women think that men are not so skilful in grocery shopping. To

¹⁶⁸ O konularda eşim kendi karar veriyor. Mesela koltukları aldığımda kendi karar verdi bana sürpriz yaptı. Çok nadir karar veririz birlikte. Genelde hep kendi alır getirir ben de beğenirim.

¹⁶⁹ Maddi şeyimizi bağlı, eğer uygunsa gidelim alalım deriz. Beğenirken de birlikte karar veririz, ben kendi başıma gidip de evime öyle bir eşya alıp koyamam.

quote from Halide (middle class/high school) “*I give my husband a shopping list, then he goes and buys all the rotten things. I tell him to buy one kilogram of something, he buys four kilogram. He does not know lots of things. I prefer to shop by myself because of that*¹⁷⁰”. Nonetheless, when it comes to buying more expensive things, men are more effective in decision process. The first reason for this is that they provide the money for expensive household durables (Özkan, 1999, p.174). Thus, housewives contributed to this study feel the need for asking their husbands when they want to buy their houses something. Second reason is that men are thought to be successful naturally on understanding good quality in technical equipments (Özkan, 1999, p.174). Hande (middle class/high school), for example reported that “*I mean, television, Internet, computer, about that stuff, my husband decides more because I cannot understand that kind of things*¹⁷¹”.

In summary, grocery shopping is done by women from both classes. On the other hand, men are more effective in purchasing more expensive objects like furniture, television, or washing machine because they bring the money and they are thought to be expert on deciding good quality products.

4.8. Rules and Their Judgments

Women have some standards in doing housework, and rules for achieving this end. While housewives develop these rules by themselves, society’s expectations about good housekeeping (like preparing “good and qualified food”, maintaining “cleaner and hygienic house”, and having “latest model in furniture”) are effective in development of their standards (Kalaycıoğlu and Tılıç, 2001, p.40). Therefore, these expectations are important in understanding women’s attitudes towards housework. Housewives contributed to this study firstly mentioned their rules about cleaning. Bengü, one of the middle class housewives, told her routine in cleaning in the following way:

¹⁷⁰ Benim eşime bir liste verirsin, gider çürükleri doldurur, ne bileyim, bir kilo dersin gider dört kilo alır. Çoğu şeyin ne olduğunu bilmez, ben kendim almayı tercih ederim o yüzden

¹⁷¹ Yani öyle televizyonmuş, internetmiş, bilgisayarımış, öyle şeylerde eşim daha çok karar veriyor çünkü ben pek anlamıyorum o tarz şeylerden.

I have my system; I wake up in the morning. First tidy up, then the kitchen, then wash the toilets, vacuum the house. Not every day, everyday only the kitchen and corridor. Other places will be vacuumed if they are not clean. This is my daily routine¹⁷².

As it can be seen in this example, Bengü is very organized and definite about her cleaning cycle. Other women have also rules about cleaning. According to Cansu (middle class/high school): *“First of all, cleaning cloth of each space will be different. Kitchen’s cloth will not touch anywhere else. And anywhere else’s does not touch to the kitchen. Detergent is also different of course. The buckets are different¹⁷³.”* Vacuum cleaning everyday is also told by many women like Halide (middle class/high school): *“I had this obsession. I need to vacuum clean the house every day. If I don’t do it, I feel uncomfortable. Today there was a power cut and I could not run the hover. I felt very bad¹⁷⁴.”* Belkıs (lower middle class/secondary school) also pointed out the same attitude as an “obsession”: *“It is like a obsession, if I do not run the hover during the day, I must run it definitely before going to bed¹⁷⁵.”*

There are also some rules about general house maintenance used by housewives. To give an example, Gönül (middle class/primary school) said that *“I’m obsessed about symmetry. I pay attention that everything is at the right place... I tidy up every evening. Wash the dishes and place them to cabinet. I have these obsessions¹⁷⁶.”* Eda (middle class/university) also mentioned that: *“Every morning I air the house, make the beds. First I tidy up my house before other works to have my mind at ease¹⁷⁷.”*

¹⁷² Düzene koymuşum, gündüzleri kalkıyorum. Önce etraflar toplanacak, sonra mutfak toplanacak, sonra lavabolar yıkanacak, sonra ev süpürülecek. Her gün değil, sadece her gün olan mutfak ve koridor silinecek. Diğer yerler süpürülmeyecek, temizse süpürülecek. Günlük rutin işlerim bunlar.

¹⁷³ Öncelikle her yerin bezi ayrı olacak. Mutfaktaki bez başka yere değmez. Başka yerdeki de mutfağa değmez. Deterjanı farklı tabi ki. Kovası, farklı.

¹⁷⁴ Ben de şu takıntı vardır. Her gün evi süpürmem gerekir. Yapmazsam rahatsız olurum. Bugün elektrikler gitti çalıştıramadım süpürgeyi, çok kötü hissettim.

¹⁷⁵ Takıntı haline gelmiş, gün içinde süpürmezsem gece yatmadan önce mutlaka çalıştırcam o makineyi.

¹⁷⁶ Düzgün durma, simetri hastalığı vardır bende. Her şeyin yerli yerinde olmasına dikkat ederim... Akşam yatmadan her şey toplanacak. Bulaşık varsa kaldırılacak. Öyle takıntılarım vardır.

¹⁷⁷ Sabahları mutlaka evimi havalandırırım. Yatakları toplarım. Diğer işlere başlamadan önce evi toparlarım ki kafam rahat olsun.

Secondly, housewives have some rules in cooking. For instance Elif sets a rule as a strategy for balancing her domestic routine and the demands of her husband and children. According to her (lower middle class/high school): “*If I prepare an easy meal for the dinner, I am prepared for a more time-killing one for the other day. For example, if I had cooked a very easy meal today, I prepare ravioli for tomorrow or I roll meatball stew. I balance an easy meal with a hard one. I need to arrange them all*¹⁷⁸.”

Deniz’s (lower middle class/high school) rule is also a strategy for finding what to cook “*I usually decide on my meal from the night, thus, my mind is at ease in the morning*¹⁷⁹” Since thinking “what to eat” is usually more difficult than preparing meals, women try to overcome this by planning dinner a day before.

According to DeVault, housewives determine their own standards and organize their own activities unlike paid workers whose responsibilities set by their employers (1991, p.128). Like she, Oakley states that housewives are their own supervisors and they evaluate their own work by themselves (1974, p.100).

However, in Turkey housewives are evaluated by others as well. In one of his article which came in 1988, Ayata asserts that the parlour is the place where housewives are judged according to some standards (p.9). Guests evaluate to what extent the host reach these standards and they come a negative or positive conclusion about her. Women judge them according to the cleanness of the parlour, the order of the furniture, the quality of the service and the taste of food (Ayata, 1988, p.9). In the end this turns out a competition where women try to find the most original food to serve or hire special cleaning companies before their *meetings*. In one of the *friend meetings* that I attend, for example, one of the guests talked about a woman who exaggerated this competition by preparing seventeen kinds of dishes¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁸ Hafif bir yemek yapmışsam bugün, ertesi gün oyalayıcı bir yemeğin hazırlığını yapmışımdır. Mesela bugün çok kolay bir şey pişirdiysem, ertesi gün için mantı bükmüşümdür. Ya da sulu köfte yuvarlamışımdır. Bir zor bir kolay yemeği dengelerim. Hepsini ayarlamam gerekir.

¹⁷⁹ Ben yemeğimin adını genelde akşamdan koyarım ki sabahtan yapmam kolay olsun.

¹⁸⁰ Because of this, it becomes a trend among women to limit only 3 dishes to serve in order to have both “fair play” and not to gain too much weight.

Likewise, in my study, although housewives define their own rules, they are judged by other people like their husbands, relatives, neighbours and companies. When they do housework, they keep in mind that they will be tested. As Eda (middle class/university) said: *“I feel that I am tested when there is a guest. Actually, I do my work keeping in mind the possibility of someone coming suddenly, even if there is not anyone. I try to do my work carefully¹⁸¹”*.

Women understand that they are tested either by direct comments of their guests or by their gaze. Cansu (middle class/high school) explained this as follows: *“Some of them tell right away, for others you understand it from their impression, you see it from their eyes. You feel followed. Some of them tell right away that you are this talented, you finish that in an hour and all¹⁸².”* Canan (middle class/ high school) also reported that: *“Of course they check if the deep corners are clean or not. They are all gossiping around and we all hear about them¹⁸³.”*

Although women from both classes feel that they are judged by others, it seems that middle class housewives mind this issue more than lower middle class ones. When the interviews are analyzed, it appears that the former care this more, and act accordingly. In other words, they are more sensitive about the cleanness of their houses, or the quality of food they serve. As it was mentioned in the literature review chapter, houses become an indicator of wealth and status. Therefore “domestic aesthetic” and showing it becomes significant among middle class (Ayata, 2002, p.35) in addition to the order of furniture and the cleanness of the house. At that point, domestic help becomes vital for especially middle class housewives. The next part is about use of domestic workers which shapes middle class housewifery (Bora, 2005, p.128).

¹⁸¹ Bir misafir geldiğinde hissederim sınındığımı. Ben aslında biri gelmese bile o işi yaparken sanki birisi aniden gelse nasıl olur diye, öyle düşünerekten yaparım. Dikkatli yapmaya çalışırım yaptığım işleri.

¹⁸² Kimisi söylüyor açıkça, kimisinde de izlenimlerini görüyorsun, bakışlarından anlıyorsun. Takip edildiğini hissediyorsun. Kimisi de sonradan söylüyor, şöyle hamaratsın, bir saatin içinde şunları yapabiliyorsun diye.

¹⁸³ Tabi canım bakıyorlar dibe köşeye temiz mi değil mi diye. Arkamızdan da bir sürü dedikodu yapıyorlar ondan sonra, biz de duyuyoruz.

In summary, this chapter aims to bring different and fragmented pieces which constitute or affect housewives attitudes towards housework. Therefore, the picture could be seen as rather complicated. However, it can be said that there are a number of things come out from this chapter. First of all, housework can be conceptualized as unpaid, unappreciated, oppressive, and emotional (since it is done for husband and children). It has different dimensions and it is difficult to separate it from leisure activities.

Housework takes most of the time of housewives. However, middle class housewives have relatively more autonomy in arranging their daily lives than lower middle class housewives thanks to their domestic workers and their facilities like automobile. In addition, the former underlines the importance of having a social life more than the latter. However, this does not mean that they are careless about their work at their house. On the contrary, they care more than lower middle class housewives the cleanness and order of their houses because houses become a way of showing your social status.

In addition, housework is done according to standards that are determined by family, social circle, society, and media. Technology also reshapes these standards. For instance the invention of vacuum cleaners forces women to clean every corner of their rooms. Therefore, since it increases the standards of housework, it does not decrease the amount of time spent to it. Moreover, it results in the devaluation of housework because technology makes it seem like domestic tasks are easier compared to past.

Generally speaking, housewives like cooking and shopping a lot, and dislike ironing. However, their enjoyment from housework depends on whether they are appreciated or they are in the right mood or not. Although their workload is heavy, their husbands and children barely help them because either housewives do not expect them to do, or they think that their husbands are incapable of doing domestic tasks.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study is about the everyday experience of housewives. I examined housewives' perceptions on their activities inside and outside in a class comparative analysis. My aim has been to compare middle and lower middle class housewives' self-perceptions and feelings about their daily routines and their way of doing domestic work. To reach this object, I conducted in depth interviews with fourteen middle class and fourteen lower middle class women who define themselves as housewives, who are aged between 30 and 45, and who have at least one child. Their common and different experiences constitute the basis of this study.

Housewife, as a category on its own, has not been very much appealing for sociologists; instead they tend to research more the division of labour at home, the effect of women's employment on marriage and children, and socially isolated situation of housewives with young children. In Turkey, there is very limited number of study on housewives as well. The contribution of this study to the literature is that it takes a picture of housewife experience from two classes regarding different dimensions like daily life, housework, spare time, and division of labour.

As it was mentioned in the literature review part, about 20-30 years ago in Turkey, being an "urban housewife" was the dream of all girls in rural areas. However, this desirable status of being a housewife has affected from the economic pressures of urban life; so women's employment become crucial for household budget. In addition, the value of homemaking is low in society because it is considered as easy, it is not required any training, and anybody can do it. Because of this perception, it is expected that housewives feel depressed and unsatisfied with their place in life. It is true that especially lower middle class housewives contributed to my research complain more about monotony and boredom. However, what I observe that if it is appreciated by others, housework can be a source of satisfaction. Women gain

pleasure when they see their houses clean, or when the meal they cook is liked. But it is not possible to feel like that all the time. In that case, women use some strategies to overcome that.

When we look at the experiences of these two classes, it can be said that middle class housewives have more positive expressions towards being a housewife. They think in this way because they find themselves as lucky since they do not need to work outside the house thanks to income of their husbands. For them, working women have a very difficult and demanding life. They tell stories about working women; how it is difficult for them to combine work and family life, how their children suffer because of that, and how their work conditions are heavy. They compare their life with working women, and they come to conclusion that it is not reasonable for them to be employed. By this way, they put being a housewife in a higher place than working outside the house.

Secondly, women from both classes use motherhood as a strategy for increasing the status of being a housewife. They are pleased to be housewives since they can raise their children by themselves and spend enough time with them. In their opinion, children need their mothers because they are the most qualified person to take care of them. Even fathers cannot give the feeling children need; because fatherhood is something that is learnt after, it does not come naturally unlike motherhood. Therefore, being a stay-at-home mother is used as a justification for being a housewife, and it gives meaning for sacrificing your life with being a housewife.

Another way of increasing the status of being a housewife is showing how difficult that job is, how it is physically as well as mentally demanding and time consuming. The attitudes of women from both classes in my study towards housework show that their aim is not getting housework done in the most efficient way and shortest time possible; instead they create new jobs, and make themselves tired. For example, women who use domestic service also stated that they use vacuum cleaner every day. Therefore, women try to overcome the perception in society that being housework is like being in a holiday by emphasising their intensive schedule.

Another strategy used by women is understood through their self expression. If we look at the self-descriptions of women from two classes in my study, we notice that

both classes make use of their images of other class in order to show their “difference”. When middle class women describe themselves, they underline how they are both active inside and outside of the house. They are proud of managing the demands of their family without sacrificing their personal care and social life. They also criticize women who keep staying at home without developing themselves and who are ignorant. Lower middle class housewives, on the other hand, are proud of devoting themselves to their spouses and children. They do not find it right to spend their time outside because their work at home never finishes. Therefore, they are always on call for managing the demands of their family. They think about what is best for their children, so they keep their consumption at minimum. They do not care for their luxury and remain in the background. However, they also try to show their difference from their image of middle class woman who is “extravagant, neglectful, selfish, and belonging to high society (*sosyetik*)”. Thus, middle class housewives try to emphasise their resemblance with career women in order to raise their status. On the other hand, lower middle class ones present themselves as higher than middle class women in terms of their womanhood and housewifery skills. This shows us that class is not just a category but is an active process because women, by using strategies for fighting to raise their status, are actually active agencies, and they produce their class positions.

The image of being a housewife is also related with what women do, in other words housework. How women experience housework and which conditions affect this experience are also important. In the literature, housework is conceptualized as either making women constrained or autonomous because it is compared with other jobs. However, housework is more complex than paid work. First of all, housework is unappreciated and unnoticed even by housewives. Especially washing and washing up are done by machines and because of that women undermine this kind of tasks. In addition, contrary to saying “you’re your own boss”, housewives are not free in their decisions, and they act like a worker of their houses. Their daily schedule is determined by the needs of their husbands and children. They avoid doing cleaning when their husbands at home or when their children have examination. Even the meal they cook is mostly decided according to their husband’s choices. Another point related with housework is that it is difficult to separate it from leisure activities

especially for lower middle class housewives. They can cook while they talk with a friend or watch television while ironing. For middle class housewives, on the other hand, it is easier to separate them from each other because their perception of leisure is commodified. In other words, their entertainment activities are purchasable like going to a hairdresser, having a sport club membership, having a dinner outside; in that sense they are very different from housework.

It is also important to show the difference of housework from homemaking. Homemaking simply means making meaningful arrangements from materials and activities in order to organize and sustain household. It serves as a means for connecting with other. For example cooking meal means more than satisfying hunger; it brings family together. Because of that reason, it is very much liked by women from both middle and lower middle classes. House tasks, on the other hand, are activities that are done without using one's creativity. They are considered as monotonous and repetitive; like ironing, removing dust, or wiping the window. These activities are done mostly by domestic workers in middle class families. Also, the intervention of domestic workers to areas that are considered as homemaking (like changing the places of furniture) is not allowed by middle class housewives. Housework (e.g. washing, washing up, hovering) does not raise the status of being a housewife; so housewives try to raise it by homemaking activities (e.g. knitting work, baking a cake, use of ornament). With homemaking activities, housewives can show their own identities and tastes to other people.

The homemaking-housework separation also shows that there is a hierarchy in different house tasks. While cooking is highly valued, cleaning toilets is not. Because of the values attached to each house chore, some tasks are considered suitable for men and some are not. Of course it changes from family to family, but making a barbecue is one of the tasks that "fit" to men because it requires skill and not everyone can do it. Another reason for women's unwillingness to let men do housework is men's level of experience in doing housework. They are considered as "incapable" by their wives. However it seems that women see house as their arena, and they are reluctant to share this with their husbands. Because of that, they may use so much possessive pronoun when they talk about their daily routines like "my kitchen", "my cleaning", "my meal", or "my ironing".

Another point related with housework is its role in showing the status of family. As houses become the sign of wealth, cleanness, order and decoration become important. For middle class, the representation of family is more important. For example housewives from middle class in my study care more the cleanness of clothes because it represents the success of mother. It was also told by a middle class housewife that she pays attention even the inside of the closets in case someone sees them.

One type of housework, that is shopping is also worth to mention because it is considered as the sign of status in the house. For both classes in my study, grocery shopping is left to the responsibility of women. However, when it comes to buying more expensive things like furniture or home appliance, lower middle class housewives leave the decision to their husbands. Middle class housewives, on the other hand, either decide by themselves or they choose together with their spouses.

To conclude, whether they belong to middle class or lower middle class, housewives are still the major care providers and they manage alone the order of their houses and arrange the lives of their families. It seems that they have to handle both the work inside the home and the pressure created by their families, social circle, and society. Although this study is based on just 28 interviews, it shows that especially lower middle class housewives desire to be employed, but discouraged by the lack of training or the inability of harmonizing work and family life. It also shows that middle class housewives' image of employment is rather negative. Therefore, it seems that we need a large scale study to reveal the profile of housewives in Turkey, and understand the obstacles preventing them from joining work life. In addition, the conditions of employment should also be analyzed in order to understand why for some women the image of working is negative. That would be necessary for implementing policies in order to increase the rate of women's employment.

REFERENCES

- Acar-Savran, G. (2004) *Beden emek tarih – Diyalektik bir feminizm için*. İstanbul: Kanat
- Acker, J. (1973). Women and stratification: A case of intellectual sexism. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78, 936-945
- Acker, J. (1999) Rewriting class, race, and gender: Problems in feminist rethinking In M.M.Ferree, J. Lorber and B.B. Hess (eds.) *Revisioning Gender*, Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Acker, J. (2000) Revisiting class: Thinking from gender, race, and organizations. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 7 (2), pp.192-214
- Acker, J. (2006) *Class Questions: Feminist Answers*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers
- ASAGEM (Aile ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Genel Müdürlüğü) (2006). *Aile Yapısı Araştırması*. Ankara
- Aswad, B. (1974). Visiting patterns among women of the elite in a small Turkish city. *Anthropological Quarterly Vol.47 No:1*
- Ayata, A. & Ayata, S. (1996a). Konut alanları, cemaat ilişkileri ve kent kültüründe kadınlar: Ankara araştırmasının sonuçları. In E. Komut(ed.), *Başkalarının Konut Sorunları*. Ankara: Türkiye Mimarlar Odası
- Ayata, A. & Ayata, S. (1996b). *Konut, komşuluk ve kent kültürü*. T.C.Başbakanlık Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı Dizisi, ODTÜ, Ankara
- Ayata, S. (1988). Kentsel orta sınıf ailelerde statü yarışması ve salon kullanımı. *Toplum ve Bilim*, 42 5-25.
- Ayata, S. (2002). The new middle class and the joys of suburbia. In D.Kandiyoti & A. Saktanber (Ed.), *Fragments of Culture – The Everyday of Modern Turkey*. London: IB Tauris
- Baxter J., Hewitt, B. and Haynes, M. (2008) Life course transitions and housework: Marriage, parenthood, and time on housework. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70:2 pp. 259-272
- Benedict, P. (1974). The kabul günü: Structured visiting in an anatolian provincial town. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 47(1)
- Benston, M. (1982). The political economy of women's liberation. In E. Malos (Ed.) *The Politics of Housework*. New York: Allison and Busby

- Beşpınar-Ekici, F.U. (2001). *The lower middle class neighborhood in the metropolitan context: The case of Batıkent (Ankara)* Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara
- Beşpınar-Ekici, F.U. (2007). *To work or not to work: Women's experiences in Mexico and Turkey*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, Texas
- Bolak, C.H. (1997). When wives are major providers: Culture, gender, and family. *Gender and Society*, 11 409-433
- Bora, A. (2005). *Kadınların sınıfı-Ücretli ev emeği ve kadın öznelliğinin inşası*, İstanbul: İletişim
- Bora, A. (2007) Olmayanın nesini idare edeceksin?: Yoksulluk, kadınlar ve hane In N. Erdoğan (Ed.) *Yoksulluk Halleri: Türkiye'de Keny Yoksulluğunun Toplumsal Görünümleri*. İstanbul: İletişim
- Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Bryson, V. (1992) Modern liberal feminism and it's critique, in *Feminist Political Theory: an Introduction*. Hong Kong: Macmillan
- Cockburn, C. & Fürst-Dilic, R. (1994). Introduction: Looking for the gender/technology relation. In C.Cockburn, & R. Fürst-Dilic, (eds). *Bringing Technology Home – Gender and Technology in a Changing Europe*, Buckingham: Open University Press
- Comer, L. (1984) *Evlilik mahkumları* İstanbul: Kadın Çevresi Yayınları
- Cowan, R.S. (1983). *More work for mother: The ironies of household technology from the open hearth to the microwave*. New York: Basic Books
- Dalla Costa, M. & James, S. (1972) *The power of women and the subordination of the community*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press
- Davidoff, L. (2002). Ev işinin rasyonelleşmesi. In A. Durakbaşa (Ed.) *Feminist Tarihyazımında Sınıf ve Cinsiyet*. İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları
- Delphy, C. (1980) The main enemy. *Gender Issues*, 1, pp.23-40
- Delphy C. (1984). *Close to home: A materialist analysis of women's oppression*. London: Hutchinson
- DeVault, M. (1991). *Feeding the family – The social organization of caring as gendered work* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
- Durakbaşa, A. & Cindoğlu, D. (2002). Encounters at the counter: Gender and the shopping experience. In Kandiyoti,D. & Saktanber, A. (Ed.). *Fragments of Culture – The Everyday of Modern Turkey*. London: IB Tauris

- Ehrenreich, B. (2004). Maid to order. inside B.Ehrenreich and A.R. Hochschild (ed) *Global women-Nannies, maids, and sex workers in the new economy*. New York: A Metropolitan/Owl Book
- Ehrenreich, B. and Hochschild, A.R. (ed) (2004). *Global women-Nannies, maids, and sex workers in the new economy*. New York: A Metropolitan/Owl Book
- Ekal, B. (2006). How a kaynana should behave? Discussions on the role of mothers-in-law in two gün groups. *European Journal of Turkish Studies, Thematic Issue No:4*
- Ekici, B. (2004) *Perceptions of different socio-economic status groups living in Ankara* Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Elias, N. (2000). *Uygarlık süreci İstanbul:İletişim*
- Fraad, H., Resnick, S., and Wolff, R. (2009) For every knight in shining armour, there's a castle waiting to be cleaned: A Marxist-feminist analysis of the household In G.Cassano (ed.) *Class Struggle on the Home Front*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Freeman, C. (1982). "When is a wage not a wage?" In E. Malos (Ed.) *The Politics of Housework*. New York : Allison and Busby
- Friedan, B. (1963). *The feminine mystique*. New York: Norton
- Friedan, B. (1981). *The second stage*. New York: Summit Books
- Fürst, E.L. (1997) Cooking and femininity. *Women's Studies International Forum Vol 20 No:3* pp. 441- 449
- Giles, J. (2004). *The parlour and the suburb- Domestic identities, class, femininity and modernity*, Oxford:Berg
- Glazer-Malbin, N. (1976). Housework. *Signs, 1(4)* 905-922
- Gümüşoğlu, F.(1998) Cumhuriyet dönemi ders kitaplarınsa cinsiyet rolleri (1928-1998) In A. B. Hacımirzaoğlu(Ed.) *75 yılda kadınlar ve erkekler* İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları
- Hall, C. (1974). The history of housewife. In E. Malos (Ed.) *The Politics of Housework*. New York : Allison and Busby
- Harrison, J. (1973) The political economy of housework. *Bulletin of the Conference of Socialist Economists*, pp.35-51
- Hartmann, H. (1976). Capitalism, patriarchy, and job segregation by sex. *Signs 1* pp.137-69
- Hartmann, H. (1981). The family as the locus of gender, class and political struggle: The example of housework. *Signs 6(3)* 366-394
- Humm, Maggie, (1989; 1995) *The dictionary of feminist theory* New York: Harvester/Wheatsheaf

- Kalaycıoğlu, S., Çelik, K., Çelen, Ü., Türkyılmaz, S. (2010). Temsili bir örneklemede sosyo-ekonomik statü(ses) ölçüm aracı geliştirilmesi: Ankara kent merkezi örneği. *Sosyoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi* *Voll.* pp.185-215
- Kalaycıoğlu, S. & Tılıç-Rittersberger, H. (2001). *Cömert ablaların sadık hanımları – Evlerimizdeki gündelikçi kadınlar*. İstanbul: Su Yayınları
- Karademir, I. (2009) *Different facets of new middle classness: A case study in the city of Ankara*. Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Kaya, Ö. (2008) *Mothering experiences of professional women in Turkey: Child bearing, child caring and child rearing*. Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara
- Koçer, D. (1999). *A study on the representation of Turkish women in the media in an early republican era: the magazine Ana (1938-1942)* Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara
- Lee, Y.S. and Waite, L.C. (2005) Husbands' and Wives' Time Spent on Housework: A Comparison of Measures. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, pp. 328-336
- Lopata, H. Z. (1971). *Occupation: Housewife*. London: Oxford University Press
- Mackie, L. & Pattulo, P. (1977). *Women at work*. London: Tavistock Publications
- Malos, E. (Ed.) (1982). *The politics of housework*, New York: Allison and Busby
- Matthews, G. (1987). *Just a housewife: the rise and fall of domesticity in America* New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Molyneux, M. (1979). Beyond the domestic labour debate. *New Left Review*, 116
- Oakley, A. (1974). *The Sociology of housework*. Oxford: Martin Robertson
- Oakley, A. (1976). *Housewife: High value- low cost*. Middlesex: Pelican Books
- Ocak, E. (2007) Yoksulun evi In N. Erdoğan (Ed.) *Yoksulluk Halleri: Türkiye’de Keny Yoksulluğunun Toplumsal Görünümleri*. İstanbul: İletişim
- Özbay, F. (1982). Evkadınları, *Ekonomik Yaklaşım*, 3 (1)
- Özbay, F. (1995). Changes in women’s activities both inside and outside the home, In Ş.Tekeli (Ed.) *Women in Modern Turkish Society:A Reader*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books
- Özbay, F. (1996). Evler, kadınlar ve evkadınları. In E.Komut (Ed.), *Başkalarının Konut Sorunları*.Ankara: Türkiye Mimarlar Odası
- Özbay, F. (1999). Gendered space: A new look at turkish modernisation. *Gender & History* ,11(3) 555-568.

- Özkan, E. (1999) *Technology and housework: Changing patterns of homemaking in middle class urban women*. Unpublished master thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
- Özyeğin, G. (2002). The doorkeeper, the maid and the tenant: Troubling encounters in the Turkish urban landscape, In Kandiyoti, D. & Saktanber, A. (Ed.) *Fragments of Culture – The Everyday of Modern Turkey*. London: IB Tauris
- Özyeğin, G. (2005) *Başkalarının Kiri*, İstanbul: İletişim
- Pfau-Effinger, B. (2010) Cultural and institutional contexts In J. Treas and S. Drobnic *Studies in social inequality: Dividing the domestic: Men, women, and household work in cross-national perspective*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press
- Pollert, A. (1996) Gender and class revisited; or, the poverty of ‘patriarchy’ *Sociology Vol:30, No:4 pp.639-659*
- Ramazanoğlu, C. (1998). *Feminizm ve Ezilmenin Çelişkileri* İstanbul: Pencere Yayınları
- Robertson, U.A. (1997) *The illustrated history of the housewife, 1650-1950*. London: Sutton Publishing.
- Robinson, J.P. & Milkie, M.M. (1998). Back to basics: Trends in and role determinants of women’s attitudes towards housework. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 60(1)* 205-218
- Sancar, S. (2004) Otoriter Türk modernleşmesinin cinsiyet rejimi, *Doğu-Batı: İdeolojiler 2 Vol:29*
- Sayer, L.C. (2010) Trends in Housework In J. Treas and S. Drobnic *Studies in social inequality: Dividing the domestic: Men, women, and household work in cross-national perspective*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press
- Secombe, W. (1974) The housewife and her labour under capitalism. *New Left Review 83*, pp.3-24
- Shelton, B. A. & John, D. (1996). The division of household labor, *Annual Review of Sociology, 22* 299-322
- Smith, D. E. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Boston: Northeastern University Press
- Smith, D.E. (1992) Sociology from women’s experience: A reaffirmation. *Sociological Theory, Vol: 10 No:1 pp.88-98*
- Smith, D. E. (2005). *Institutional ethnography –A sociology for people*. Lanham: Alta Mira Press
- Strasser, S. (2000). *Never done: A history of American housework*. New York: Henry Hold and Company

- Tong, R. P. (1998). *Feminist thought – A more comprehensive introduction*, Oxford: Westview Press
- Treas J. and Drobnic S. (2010). *Studies in social inequality: Dividing the domestic: Men, women, and household work in cross-national perspective*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press
- TURKSTAT (Turkish Statistical Institute) (2011) *Turkey's Statistical Yearbook 2010*. Ankara
- Van der Lippe, T. (2010). Women's employment and housework In J. Treas and S. Drobnic *Studies in social inequality: Dividing the domestic: Men, women, and household work in cross-national perspective*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press
- Vogel, L. (1973) The earthly family. *Radical America*, 7, pp.9-50
- Walby, S. (1986/1994) Gender, class and stratification: Towards a new approach In R.Crompton and M.Mann (ed.) *Gender and Stratification*. Oxford: Polity Press
- Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escrava_Isaura_\(1976_TV_series\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Escrava_Isaura_(1976_TV_series)), retrieved at 15 May, 2011
- White, J.B. (1994) *Money makes us relatives: Women's labor in urban Turkey*. Austin: University of Texas Press
- Yılmaz, A. (2009). Benim adım bayram, herkes bu tezgaha hayran: Kadın-kent ilişkisinde sosyete pazarı durağı. In A. Alkan (Ed.) *Cins Cins Mekan*. İstanbul:Varlık Yayınları
- Young, I. M. (1997). *Intersecting voices/dilemmas of gender: Political philosophy and policy* New Jersey: Princeton University Press

APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A

Table 1- Middle Class Housewives

	Age	Education	Occupation of Husband	Education of Husband	Monthly Income	Place of Residence
Arzu	40	High School	Sales Manager	University (continues)	5.000	Ümitköy
Bengü	42	High School	Engineer	University	4.000	Ümitköy
Canan	40	High School	Administrator	High School	6.000	Çayyolu
Cansu	38	High School	Self employed	High School	6.500	Ümitköy
Eda	32	University	Account Manager	University	4.500	Çayyolu
Esmâ	45	High School	Self employed	University	5.500	Ümitköy
Gönül	41	Primary School	Self employed	High school	6.000	Ayrancı
Güler	39	High School	Self employed	High school	6.500	Ümitköy
Halide	44	High School	Self employed	High school	4.300	Ayrancı
Hande	38	High School	Financial advisor	University	6.000	Ümitköy
Hülya	43	Secondary School	Banker	University	4.000	Ümitköy
İnci	38	University	Engineer	University	4.000	Çayyolu
Leman	45	Primary School	Engineer	University	5.000	Ayrancı
Yıldız	45	High School	General Director	University	6.500	Ayrancı

Table 2-Lower Middle Class Families

	Age	Education	Occupation of Husband	Education of Husband	Monthly Income	Place of Residence
Belkis	36	High School drop out	Electrician	Vocational high school	2.000	Eryaman
Çiğdem	40	High School	Lorry driver	High School	1.500	Batıkent
Deniz	32	High School	Sales representative	High School	2.000	Batıkent
Elif	31	High School	Technician	High School drop out	2.000	Eryaman
Emine	43	Primary school	Self employed	Secondary school dropout	1.500	Batıkent
Gamze	32	Primary School	Security	University (continues)	1.500	Keçiören
Hale	38	(open) University	Sales representative	High school	2.000	Keçören
Irmak	37	Primary School	Driver	Secondary school	1.500	Keçiören
İtir	41	High School	Self employed	High school	2.500	Batıkent
Nesrin	34	University	Policeman	University	2.000	Eryaman
Sema	30	University	Electrician	University (2 years)	2.000	Batıkent
Semiha	36	Primary School	Salesperson	Vocational high school	1.500	Batıkent
Sevgi	38	Primary School	Cook	Primary School	3.000	Batıkent
Yeter	37	Primary School	Mechanic	Primary School	3.000	Batıkent

APPENDIX-B

Short Biographies of the Respondents

Middle Class

Arzu: 40 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 45 years old. He is studying in a university right now and he is a sales manager. She married at the age of 22 and they met through a friend. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 13 years old. They live in an apartment in Ümitköy.

Bengü: 42 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 46 years old. He is graduated from university and works at military as a engineer. She married at the age of 21 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara but because of her husband's job, they traveled a lot. She has two sons (19, 13) and one daughter (15). They live in an apartment in Ümitköy.

Canan: 40 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 48 years old. He is graduated from high school and he runs a hotel. She married at the age of 36 and they met through a friend. She is from Ankara but she lived in Bursa before because their hotel was in there. Her husband still there to change his business to Ankara. She has one ne daughter who is 3 years old. They live in an apartment in Çayyolu now near her mother, but they are going to move their three storey house in Çayyolu.

Cansu: 38 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 40 years old. He is high school graduate and he is self employed. She married at the age of 17 and they met at the same neighborhood. She is from Ankara. She has three daughters who are 19 and 15 and 10 years old. She worked in a bank for two years before her marriage. They live in an apartment in Ümitköy.

Eda: 32 years old. University graduated (business administration). Her husband is 32 years old, and graduated from department of economics. He is now account

manager in a tourism company. She got married at the age of 27. They met from the collage. She was living in Mersin before she got married. She has one daughter who is 4 years old. She worked before marriage. They live in a 3 storey house in Çayyolu.

Esma: 45 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 47 years old, university graduated and self employed. She married at the age of 27. They met through a friend. She came to Ankara from Konya/Ereğli when she got married. She has two sons who are 15 and 12 years old. They live in a two storey house with a garden in Ümitköy.

Gönül: 41 years old. Primary school graduated. Her husband is 49 years old. He is graduated from high school and has a engineering company. She married at the age of 16 and it was an arranged marriage. She came to Ankara from Beypazarı when she got married. She has one son who is 24 years old. They live in two storey house with her mother-in-law in Ayrancı

Güler: 39 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 45 years old. He is graduated from high school and he owns a pharmaceutical warehouse. She married at the age of 21 and it was a kin marriage. She is from Trabzon. After she got married they live in Tokat and then moved to Ankara. She has three daughters who are 17, 15 and 1 years old. They live in an apartment in Ümitköy.

Halide: 44 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 46 years old, high school graduated and self employed. She married at the age of 17 and it was an arranged marriage (actually it is a kin marriage). She came to Ankara from Ordu when she got married. She has two sons who are 25 and 21 years old. The former is doing his military service, and the latter is in collage. They live in an apartment in Ayrancı.

Hande: 38 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 49 years old. He is graduated from university and he is a financial advisor. She married at the age of 19 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara. She has two sons who are 16 and 9 years old. They live in an apartment in Ümitköy.

Hülya: 43 years old. Secondary school graduated. Her husband is 43 years old; and university graduated and works in a bank. She married at the age of 19 and it was a kin marriage. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 23 years old and studying in a collage. They live in a three storey house with a garden in Ümitköy.

İnci: 38 years old. University graduated (2 years public relations department). Her husband is 38 years old. He is graduated from university (aerospace engineering) and works at Turkish Airlines. She married at the age of 29 and it was an arranged marriage (and they felt in love afterwards). She is from Adana and moved to Ankara after her marriage. She worked before her marriage. She has one son (4) and one daughter (8). They live in an apartment in Çayyolu.

Leman: 45 years old. Primary school graduated. Her husband is 47 years old. He is graduated from university and works at TELEKOM. She married at the age of 17 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara. She has two sons who are working. They live in an apartment in Ayrancı.

Yıldız: 45 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 47 years old. He is graduated from university and works at Sabah Newspaper distribution department as a general director. She married at the age of 21 and they met in the work place. She is from Ankara but her husband has his job at Istanbul lately, therefore she goes to Istanbul every two weeks. She has one son (22) who is in collage and one daughter (23) who is working. They live in an apartment in Ayrancı.

Lower Middle Class

Belkis: 36 years old. She is high school dropout. Her husband is 41 years old. He is graduated from vocational high school and he is an electrician. She married at the age of 16 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 19 years old and one daughter who is 14 years old. They live in an apartment in Eryaman.

Çiğdem: 40 years old. She was graduated from high school. Her husband is 47 years old. He is graduated from high school and he is a lorry driver. She married at the age of 17 and they met at the work place. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 22 years old. They live in a two storey house.

Deniz: 32 years old. She was graduated from high school. Her husband is 41 years old. He is graduated from high school and he works in sale department of a medical company. She married at the age of 18 and they met through a friend. She is from Kırşehir but came to Ankara at the age of 10. She has two daughters who are 12 and 1 year old. They live in two storey house in Batıkent.

Elif: 31 years old. She was graduated from high school. Her husband is 33 years old. He is high school dropout and he works as technician at OSTİM . She married at the age of 20 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 10 years old and two daughters who are 4 and 2 years old. They live in an apartment in Eryaman. She worked before her marriage.

Emine: 43 years old. She was graduated from primary school. Her husband is 46 years old. He is secondary school dropout and he is self employed. She married at the age of 22 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Konya but came to Ankara after she got married. She has one son who is 20 years old and one daughter who is 18 year old. They live in three storey house in Batıkent.

Gamze: 32 years old. She was graduated from primary school. Her husband is 36 years old. He is studying at open university public administration department. And he works as security at Ankara Metrosu. She married at the age of 18 and it was a kin marriage. She is from Tokat but came to Ankara after she got married. She has two sons who are 13 and 11 years old. They live in an apartment in Keçiören.

Hale: 38 years old. She was graduated from Open University economics department. Her husband is 42 years old. He is graduated from high school and he works at sailing department of a stationary company. She married at the age of 24 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from İstanbul and she came to Ankara when she got married. She has one son who is 13 years old and one

daughter who is 11 years old. They live in an apartment in Keçiören. She worked before her marriage.

Irmak: 37 years old. Primary school graduated. Her husband is 41 years old. He is graduated from secondary school and he is a driver. She married at the age of 23 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Elazığ and she came to Ankara when she got married. She has two sons who are 13 and 5 years old and one daughter who is 1 year old. They live in an apartment in Keçiören.

İtir: 41 years old. High school graduated. Her husband is 47 years old. He is graduated from high school and he is self employed. She married at the age of 19 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Erzincan and came to Ankara when she got married. She has one son who is 21 years old and one daughter who is 11 years old. They live in an apartment in Batıkent.

Nesrin: 34 years old. She was graduated from economics department. Her husband is 37 years old. He is graduated from business administration and he is a policeman. She married at the age of 23 and they met at high school. She is from Yozgat and they traveled a lot because of her husband's job. She has two daughters who are 8 and 4 years old. They live in an apartment in Eryaman. She worked before her marriage.

Sema: 30 years old. She was graduated from public relations. Her husband is 30 years old. He is graduated from university and he is an electrician. She married at the age of 24 and they met at high school. She is from Ankara. She has two sons who are 5 and 4 years old. They live in an apartment in Batıkent.

Semiha: 36 years old. She was graduated from primary school. Her husband is 42 years old. He is graduated from vocational high school and he works at a market. She married at the age of 21 and it was a kin marriage. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 11 years old and one daughter who is 15 years old. They live in three storey house in Batıkent.

Sevgi: 38 years old. Primary school graduated. Her husband is 46 years old. He is graduated from primary school and he is a cook at DSİ. She married at the age of 17 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Erzurum and came to Ankara

when she got married. She has one son who is 16 years old and one daughter who is 17 years old. They live in a two storey house in Batikent.

Yeter: 37 years old. Primary school graduated. Her husband is 42 years old. He is graduated from primary school and he is a mechanic. She married at the age of 21 and it was an arranged marriage. She is from Ankara. She has one son who is 1 year old and three daughters who are 15- 13 and 4 years old. They live in a three storey house in Batikent.

APPENDIX- C
QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographical Information

1. How old are you? What is your level of education?
2. How old is your husband? What is his level of education? What is his occupation?
3. When did you get married? How did you meet?
4. Have you always live in Ankara? [If no: Where had you live before?]
5. How many kids do you have? What are their sexes? How old are they? Do they live with you? What is their level of education? Are they working? What is their occupation?
6. Do you have an income other than your husband's earning? (e.g. rent income, bank account)
7. Does your house belong to you or do you live in rented house?
8. What is your average monthly income?

The Perception of Being a Housewife

9. What comes to your mind when one says housewife? In your opinion, what does it mean to be a housewife? What are the responsibilities of a housewife?
 1. Then based on this, do you see yourself as a housewife?
 2. How do you think a good/ideal housewife should be? What characteristics should she have? What are the things that she must do? What are the things that she should not do?
 3. Can you describe me a house proud housewife? How about a messy housewife? Which one do you prefer?
 4. What is the best/ the most interesting thing about being a housewife?
 5. What is the worst/the most boring side of being a housewife?
 6. Have you ever been employed? Have you ever think about working? (Wish you were working now?)
 7. Have you dream about (let's say when you are 13-14 years old) getting married, being a housewife, having kids?
 8. Do you think that society's expectation from a housewife has changed?

9. When a guest comes to your house, do you feel that you are tested by others?
10. Would you like your daughter to become a housewife?
11. Wish you have an income on your own? What would you do if you have an income? Would your life be different?
12. Throughout your marriage, have you experience any difficulties about being a housewife? How did you manage it? Did you get help from someone?

Housework

13. Can you describe be an ordinary day? (For example, what did you do yesterday? When do you get up? What activities do you do in the afternoon? When your husband leave/come home?)
14. What do you do on weekends?
15. How do you organize housework? Do you have a special routine? How do you keep this routine, if any?
16. Now I'm going to ask you more detailed questions about housework (cooking, cleaning, ironing, etc.). Let's start with cleaning. Do you employ a domestic worker? [if yes a, if no b]
 - a. Since when does she come? (If you changed, what was the reason?) How often does she come? Which tasks does she do? Are there any tasks that you will not let her to do? What are your expectations from her? Are you satisfied with her work? How did you hire her?
 - b. Have you ever employed a domestic worker? [If yes, why do you not employ anymore?] [If no, why?]
17. Do you think that there are differences in doing cleaning (like cleaning kitchen, cleaning bedrooms, cleaning bathroom)? Which is the most enjoyable one for you? How often do you do cleaning? How long does it take to do cleaning?
18. When you think about laundry work, how often do you do it? How long does it take to do it?
19. Who do the ironing? How often do you do it? How long does it take to do ironing? Do you enjoy doing it? Do you have any method special to you while doing ironing? (e.g. listening to music)
20. When you think about washing up, which one do you prefer, hand wash or using machine? How often do you do it? Do you enjoy doing it?
21. Is it you who cooks? Do you get any help? Do you cook every day? How long does it take to cook? Do you enjoy doing it? Do you like to try new recipes? How do you get those recipes?

22. Who goes to shopping? Where do you prefer to go shopping? How do you decide where to buy? Do you go frequently to bazaar? Do you follow discounts? How often do you go to shopping? Do you enjoy going to shopping?
23. How/when did you learn to do housework? When did you start to help your mother with housework? What kind of tasks did you do at that time?
24. Is your mother a housewife, too? How is your mother as a housewife?
25. Do you have techniques in housework different from your mother?
26. In your opinion, has your mother work more than you in terms of time and organization?
27. Do you think that you develop yourself in time? What kind of things affected this?
28. Have you ever feel bored while doing housework? Have you ever feel enjoyed while doing it?
29. In what situations could you not do housework as you wish? What conditions affect this? When you cannot do housework as you wish, how do you feel? What is the reaction of other family members?
30. When you need tips, e.g. removing stain, how do you reach that information?
31. Does your husband ever comment on your work, positively or negatively?

Division of Labour

32. If you compare your work at home with your husband's job, who do you think work more?
33. Whose job is more essential?
34. If you changed places with your husband, could you do his job? Could he do your job?
35. Do you think men should do housework? Which kind of tasks particularly should they do? Which kind of tasks they should not do?
36. How is the division of labour at home? Do you think that everyone do their responsibility? Do you feel pleased with the division of labour at home? How do you think that it should be?
37. What would you think about a marriage in which woman works outside the house, and man stays at home and runs the house?
38. What do you think about a marriage in which man and woman both work outside the house?
39. Who pays the bill?

40. Who does the repair work? Who calls the repairman when let's say your dishwasher is broken?
41. When you want to buy something to your house, let's say you want to buy a new washing machine, how would you decide it?

Child Care

42. How did you decide to have a child?
43. How did your life change after you have a baby?
44. What do you think about looking after children, who do you think has the responsibility to look after kids? In your family, do you have a kind of division of labour about that? If no, would you like to have? How?
45. In your opinion, what are the responsibilities of mothers and fathers when raising a child?
46. What kind of things does your husband do related with child care? Did he ever change a diaper? Did he ever wake up at nights?
47. What are the difficulties in raring children?
48. Did you get any help while you look after your child? If so, whose help did you receive?
49. Have you experience any problems before you give birth, during your pregnancy or after that? About the things that you had problems, whose advice did you listen?
50. Have you ever argue with your husband about your child's education? How did you solve it?
51. Who usually helps your child's homework?
52. Who goes to teacher-parent meetings?
53. How do you feel about a mother who is working? In your opinion, to what age should a mother look after her baby/child before she starts working?

Social Life

54. Do you believe that you have enough time for yourself? If not, wish you have?
55. What do you do in your spare time?
56. What do you do when your husband comes from work? How you spend your time?
57. How do you spend your weekends?

58. How you spend time outside the house? Do you go out by yourself? Do you drive a car? Where do you go when you are outside?
59. Do you do sport? How often do you go to hairdresser?
60. How is your relationship with your neighbours?
61. Do you have any special women meetings (*güns*)?
62. Do you attend any courses? Have you ever attend any course?
63. Do you surf on the Internet? Which web sites do you visit? What other things do you do on the Internet? How long in a day do you use Internet?
64. If you want to change something in your life, what would it be?
65. In general, can you say that you are satisfied with your life?