

A THEMATIC ANALYSIS ON PARENTAL AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORIES OF
TRANS EXPERIENCED WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

A THEMATIC ANALYSIS ON PARENTAL AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORIES OF TRANS EXPERIENCED WOMEN

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The aim of this study was to explore parent related autobiographical memories of trans experienced women retrospectively. The current study has an exploratory and qualitative design. The participants were trans experienced women including trans femme identified people, who lived and/or living in Turkey and older than eighteen years of age. Data was collected via online survey platform Qualtrics. Participants were asked to write down their parent related autobiographical memories in two separate sections. After that, with reference to the reflexive approach, thematic analysis has been performed. After the analysis was completed, six main themes were generated as maltreatment, supportive parental practices, turning points, experiencing gender, emphasis on adolescence and inner experience. Some patterns that were mostly emphasized in the autobiographical memories of participants were threats, parental control, acceptance, coming out, intense memory. The current study

has made a unique contribution to the existing literature by exploring the parental autobiographical memories of trans experienced women by using a qualitative approach.

Keywords: transgender, autobiographical memory, maltreatment, parental acceptance, coming out

ÖZ

TRANS DENEYİMLİ KADINLARIN EBEVEYNLERİNE DAİR OTOBİYOGRAFİK BELLEKLERİNİN TEMATİK ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynleriyle ilgili otobiyografik anılarını geriye dönük olarak incelemektir. Mevcut çalışma, keşfedici ve nitel bir desene sahiptir. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'de yaşayan veya yaşamış on sekiz yaşından büyük trans deneyimli kadınlardır. Kendilerini trans femme olarak tanımlayan kişiler de çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Veriler çevrimiçi anket platformu Qualtrics aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Katılımcılardan ebeveynleri ile ilgili otobiyografik anılarını iki ayrı bölümde yazmaları istenmiştir. Daha sonra refleksif yaklaşımdan hareketle tematik analiz uygulanmıştır. Analiz tamamlandıktan sonra kötü muamele, destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları, dönüm noktaları, cinsiyeti deneyimleme, ergenliğe vurgu ve içsel deneyim olmak üzere altı ana tema oluşturulmuştur. Katılımcıların otobiyografik anılarında en çok vurgulanan bazı örüntüler; tehdit, ebeveyn kontrolü, kabullenme, açılma, yoğun anı olmuştur. Bu çalışma, trans deneyimli kadınların

ebeveynleriyle ilgili otobiyografik anılarını nitel bir yaklaşımla keşfederek mevcut literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: transgender, otobiyografik bellek, kötü muamele, ebeveyn kabulü, açılma

To my new life and my mom...

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OVERVIEW

The current study focuses on parental relationships of trans experienced women. This study, which is an exploratory and a data-driven one, aims to explore parental autobiographical memories of trans experienced women retrospectively. As previous literature demonstrated parents' influence on children is crucial for the healthy development of individuals. Parenting is one of the predictors of satisfied and happy lives for children and their future behaviors and decisions. While the importance of parenting is heavily highlighted in the literature, the same literature lacks in terms of the inclusivity of all children with a wide range of gender experiences, and their parental relationships. There are only a few studies in relation to trans experienced people's parental relationships in the literature (see Pullen Sansfaçon, 2019; Pullen Sansfaçon, 2021; Koken, Bimbi, & Parsons, 2009; Catalpa & McGuire, 2018).

Yılmaz and Göçmen (2016) argued that the dominant cisgender & heterosexual centric characteristics of socio-cultural contexts of Turkey and the government laws result in not recognizing trans experienced people and other sexually marginalized groups as equal citizens. This means for trans individuals that being exposed to overt discriminations in several areas of daily lives such as health care, employment, and housing. The authors suggested that transgender people among LGBT in Turkey experience higher levels of discrimination in these three areas since in the most cases trans experienced people more open to overt discriminations. The reason why trans individuals are more exposed to discriminations is because they are more explicit in terms of their gender identity and expression most of the time. For instance, in the employment process, when information on their legal identity card does not match with their gender identity and/or their gender expressions, this may be found allegedly inappropriate by employers which cause them to be refused in job applications. It should be remembered that it is not easy to make changes in the birth register for trans people as it was also explained in the next lines. Similarly, trans

people may even be refused by doctors by pointing out their transgender existence. Additionally, sometimes health personnel are not much qualified to provide basic health related needs of transgender people in the health care processes, as the authors also mentioned. Engin (2015) argued in her article that in addition to problems in the fields of employment, housing, and healthcare, trans experienced women had physical, sexual and emotional abuse and violence in their lives in Turkey. Among participants, two trans women stated parental violence towards their coming outs as being beaten and chained for three days and being chained to the radiator for eight months, respectively. Participants from the same study also highlighted the fact that there are no particular legal regulations to punish discriminative actions and violence towards trans women in Turkish laws. Additionally, the author emphasized the examples of trans experienced people in Turkey, who committed suicide as a result of micro and macro (institutionalized) levels of transphobia and discriminations.

Talking on governmental protection of trans women, it is important to highlight the legal recognition status of trans women in Turkey which also consisted of some discriminative preconditions such as to be forced to lose reproductive capacity as an individual. Legal regulations about trans women's recognition by the Turkish government first made in 1988 which caused several debates since it did not include any specific parameters about the gender affirming operation and its preconditions. After years, in 2002, a new regulation was made in the new Turkish Civil Code which included the preconditions and procedure related to gender-affirming surgery of transgender people (Atamer, 2005; Turan Başara, 2012). In the Turkish Civil Code of 2002 as Atamer (2005) also quoted in her article, the preconditions of gender-affirming process for transgender people was stated as followed:

A person who wants to change his/her sex has to apply to the court personally and ask for permission for a sex reassignment. For this permission to be given, the applicant must have completed the age of 18 and must be unmarried. Besides they must prove with an official health board report issued by an education and research hospital that he/she is of transsexual nature, that the sex reassignment is compulsory for his/her mental health and that he/she is permanently deprived of the capacity of reproduction. (p.66)

After these preconditions and several steps were provided, it is allowed to transgender people to make changes in their birth register (Turan Başara, 2012).

When the stigmatization and discriminations that trans experienced people on both the governmental and cultural level in Turkey were considered, the current study's potential contributions to the literature should be considerable. In particular, deep analysis of parental relationships of trans experienced women which also have a purpose of making the experiences of trans adult children visible in a scientific manner, will be an important contribution to the literature.

In the current study, thematic analysis was used in order to analyze the collected data. As a result of thematic analysis, six main themes were generated as *maltreatment, supportive parental practices, turning points, experiencing gender, inner experience, and emphasis on adolescence*. In order to explain the related themes and the patterns throughout the paper comprehensively, current literature was reviewed regarding autobiographical memory, gender and women's studies, parenting and childhood maltreatment literature in the introduction section of the current study. After that, methods, findings, and discussion sections were presented respectively.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Autobiographical Memory

Memory is defined as any state or process that comes from the sequential steps of encoding, storage, and retrieval (Klein, 2015). The cognates of memory which is a mental-construct term are remembering, reminiscing, recollecting according to Klein. People's satisfaction with many areas of their lives and their emotions are regulated by memories (Wilson & Ross, 2003). These memories have several categories such as working memory, episodic and semantic memory, short term and long-term memory, and autobiographical memory (Tulving, 1972; Conway, 1996). According to Baddeley and Logie (1999) working memory includes a number of specialized components of cognition that enable people to better understand and make mental representations of their environment at the moment. It also enables people to retain information about recent experiences, to help in the gaining of new knowledge, to solve problems, and to formulate and act on current goals. Barclay and Smith (1993) state that what a person remembers is determined by the current purposes for the remembering as much as in accordance with what happened in the past. Episodic memory is categorized as an experience type of memory which includes unique personal details and episodes that the rememberer has experienced, and semantic memory is categorized as a fact type of memory which includes general, abstract, and timeless knowledge about the world (Tulving, 1986; Tulving, 2001). Episodic memory is also addressed as experience-near records by Conway (2009), and he emphasizes that it is not the exact records of the events. Tulving (2001) argues that episodic memory is a sort of memory that individuals have the awareness of what happened while semantic memory is more like knowing things out there independent from the self. Episodic memory also consists of remembering

past events and happenings with its temporal and spatial information (Squire & Zola, 1998). Squire and Zola (1998) also suggest that episodic memory is a sort of bridge to semantic memory. That is, new information which is obtained by individuals as a part of an event at first which includes spatial and temporal details, but it may be separated from its original context and lose its details and represented as semantic memory by repetition or practice. Similarly, Conway (2009) suggests that only small proportions of episodic memories can be transferred into the long-term memory. Only memories which have long term goals and linked to the future remain in the memory system and many other episodic memories are lost in a few days after they are formed.

In the literature, although there are some speculations about whether autobiographical memory is equivalent to episodic memory or not, Conway (1996) argues that autobiographical memory includes more than one knowledge type. For instance, autobiographical memory may include spatio-temporal knowledge and factual knowledge at the same time which cannot be seen in episodic and semantic memories. That's why, autobiographical memory cannot be reduced into other memory types which are restricted to one knowledge type in the account of Conway. The factual knowledge type which is seen in the autobiographical memory is strongly related with individuals' personal life stories such as primary school experiences. In addition, Hoerl makes a clear differentiation between episodic memory and autobiographical memory. In his article, Hoerl (2007) states that while episodic memory consists of detailed past events and happenings, autobiographical memory consists of memories that include strong references to the self. The difference between these memory types can be understood better with an example. Although remembering having lunch yesterday is a part of individuals' episodic memory, presenting their first article at a conference is a part of individuals' autobiographical memory. This is because what they ate at lunch yesterday can be just meaningful in terms of their lunch schedule, in contrast, proposing their first article have a significance in their academic career which also form an individual's self and have a significant meaning in their later life (Nelson, 1993). In both examples, individuals have an awareness of what happened, and they experienced the situation with spatiotemporal details. However, as several researchers suggested,

strong self-references are needed to be categorized as an autobiographical memory of a past experience. Nelson and Fivush (2004) also define autobiographical memory as an explicit memory in which individuals remember their past experiences with its several details such as the exact time and specific place that the event happened. Pillemar and Kuwabare (2012) further suggest that autobiographical memory is not just one's past, it is also the experienced salient and emotional events that transforms and shapes the current thoughts, behaviors, attitudes and plans of individuals. Autobiographical memories are formed by contents of thoughts of individuals which include cultural references inherently (Barclay & Smith, 1993). It builds a basis for the construction of one's life history (Farrar, Fasig, & Welch-Ross, 1997). According to Barclay and Smith (1993), autobiographical memory has a such process in which they are formed and reformed, interpreted and reinterpreted in order to create the current personal history. This personal history comes up as both internally consistent and externally recognized by social agreement. It is emphasized Barclay and Smith (1993) that individuals cannot fabricate any memories and personal history on their own. Actual experiences and how those experiences are perceived by them determine the contents of memories.

There are some other key characteristics of autobiographical memory such as being goal oriented, emotional and including personal meanings which also connect individuals to other people (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). In their article, Fivush and Nelson (2004) also argue that this memory type has social and cultural functions, and it helps individuals to define themselves in time and in relation to others. Similarly, as Nelson (2013) states autobiographical memory helps individuals to socialize and express themselves since it means that people have stories and experiences to tell the others. Furthermore, Farrar, Fasig and Welch-Ross (1997) suggest that the structure of autobiographical recollections is formed through the process of social conversation between children and adults in childhood years. That's why the memory talk between parent and child is critical for the development of autobiographical memories. Similarly, Fivush, Haden and Reese (1996) argue that talking about the past with other people such as with a family member or a friend or faraway relatives serves certain functions in individuals' life. This joint remembering and storytelling produces bonds between individuals which influence the self-

formulation of people themselves. Such reminiscing practices and processes which began in the very early age, are critical for the organization and the development of autobiographical memory. This also demonstrates the cyclical relationship between individuals' self-formulation and autobiographical memory development. Individuals' recollections of past experiences influence their self-view, as well as their current self-view and identity influences how to remember past events (Wilson and Ross, 2003). The authors added that in addition to the influence of what they remember about past events on current self-view of individuals' themselves, how they remember those events also affects differently the view of current self. Rubin, Bernsten, Deffler, and Brodar (2018) suggest that in autobiographical remembering while some people may think about the role of the experienced events in relation to both their identity and their life story frequently, others may consider less. So, making connections to the current identity may change the content and the process of the remembered past events. According to Conway and Jobson (2012), life scripts and historical events provide a base for autobiographical memory. For instance, life scripts which are achieved from older generations shape the life scripts of new generations. They repeat, develop, and express the life scripts of their parents. Historical events, such as a pandemic or a military cope which became a part of individuals' life story (with their pervasive effects) also re-shape the cultural memory. Autobiographical memories are shapers of a culture as well as shaped by a culture (Conway & Jobson, 2012). Shared past with others' autobiographical memories also helps families, communities and culture to transmit their values, stories, and past to the next generations (Fivush & Nelson, 2004).

Another perspective in terms of the functions of autobiographical memory stated by several researchers. Conway (2005) stated that one function of autobiographical memory is maintaining self-identity overtime against the significant life changes. That is, autobiographical memory reminds individuals to remember who they were in the past, who they are now, and who they will be in the future (Bluck, Alea, Habermas, & Rubin, 2005). Wilson and Ross (2003) also argue that maintaining an affirmative perspective about oneself is one of the main functions of autobiographical memory.

It is questioned by Schulkind and Woldorf (2005) that what is the role of emotion in the organization of autobiographical memory. They suggest that in the organization of autobiographical memory, emotion is an important component since arousing cues facilitate recalling autobiographical memories which also facilitates individuals' self-formulation, socialization, making meaning of processes as I mentioned above. Similarly, Piefke et al. (2003) argue that emotional link is required to one's memories where its influence can be seen on individuals' later life in order to call it an autobiographical memory. So, this memory type requires a continuity in one's life with several emotional references and personal details. In their article Rasmussen and Berntsen (2009) argue that emotional valence of autobiographical memories has their own evolutionary functions such as the function of negatively remembered events is to prevent individuals from future mistakes. So, emotion in autobiographical memory is also important for the survival of individuals. Development of autobiographical memory is essential also for the well-being of individuals. Because in the literature, it is widely accepted that autobiographical memory is constructed. It has been built by individuals' needs, accomplishments, and expectations which will carry them into more enhanced self-position. (Loftus, 2005; Ross & Wilson, 2003; Howe, 2011).

1.2. Gender

Gender is a term which refers to socially structured categories of man, woman, transgender, nonbinary and so forth (American Psychological Association, 2015). It also consists of several social norms and roles related to these gender categories which may vary depending on culture and time (World Health Organization, n.d.). Table 1 in the next page shows the gender related concepts that were mentioned throughout the thesis. Sex refers to the biological constructs which define male, and female based on primary sex characteristics, based on determination of chromosomes and anatomical structures of the baby, and sex assignment is done considering external genitalia of the baby right after the baby was born (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). However, the term sex is should not be used by its own; assigned sex or assigned sex at birth is the right way to handle the subject according to

American Psychological Association. It is argued that sex is not a fixed or stable trait, it is not out there without the sociocultural influences.

Table 1. Explaining Gender Related Concepts

Concepts	Definitions
Assigned Sex at Birth	Assigned sex at birth is a gender assignment to a newborn baby considering generally binarist criteria of being male and female. External genitalia is the key in the process of sex assignment. However, sex is not a fixed or stable trait, it is not out there by itself without its sociocultural background and meanings. In addition, there are intersex people who exceeds the binary understanding of sex categories which shows the inadequacy of binarist categorization of sex.
Trans Experienced Women	Transgender as a gender category includes people whose gender experiences and/or identity does not match with the assigned sex at birth. By trans experienced women, it is meant in the current study that womanhood is not a homogeneous category, it also includes women who have different experiences from each other. So, women whose gender was assigned differently at birth, who have transgender experience, are to be included under the category of trans experienced women.
Cis Experienced Women	Cisgender as a gender category includes people whose gender experiences and/or identity match with the assigned sex at birth. By cis experienced women, it is meant in the current study that womanhood is not a homogeneous category which consists of only women whose gender is same with the assigned gender at birth.
Trans Femme	Transfeminine or transfemme as a gender category means that being a person whose gender experience and/or identity differs from assigned gender at birth and at the same time being partially or fully feminine and identifying oneself with femininity.
Gender Role	Gender role is defined as masculinity or femininity related behavioral patterns and attitudes which addresses most of the time being an appropriate man and woman within a specific culture.
Gender Expression	Gender expression is about having a gendered presentation in daily life in communication to others including choice of clothing, hairstyles, body characteristics and voice.
Gender Identity	Gender identity is defined as individuals' deeply held sense of feeling that being in the category of men, women, nonbinary or something else.
Coming Out	Coming out is a concept which means that people disclose their gender experience and/or identity to their parents and others.

Note. From “Guidelines for psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming people.” by American Psychological Association. (2015). *American Psychologist*, 70(9), 832-864.

Using 'birth sex', or 'natal sex' or 'sex' by itself causes the sociocultural influences the term included, to be covered up. That's why, assigned sex or assigned sex at birth is suggested for the sex assignment of babies at birth (American Psychological Association, 2019). Although sex is defined as two binary categories as female and male in most academic resources, there are also strong arguments how human biology actually exceeds these binary sex categories in addition to the acknowledgment of gender is a socially constructed entity. For instance, Carrera, DePalma, and Lameiras (2012) in their article discuss the issue of how medical science may be also a socially constructed field by referencing intersex individuals and arguing that existing binarist sex categories (i.e., male and female) are insufficient to describe human biology inclusively. Gender identity is defined as a strong sense of feeling that refers to individuals' belongingness of the categories of woman, man or nonbinary gender (e.g., agender) and so forth. Gender identity is not a specified term for people who are marginalized in terms of their gender experiences, it also includes cisgender people and binary gender identities (American Psychological Association, 2019).

Transgender is a term used to describe individuals whose gender identity does not match with the gender to which they were assigned at birth (APA, 2015). On the other hand, cisgender is a term used to describe individuals whose assigned gender at birth match with their own gender identity. Cisgender is also used instead of saying 'non-transgender' (APA, 2015). ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases) and DSM-5 (The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) redefined the category that includes transgender related experiences of individuals. Before the re-definition, transgender was placed in the category of 'gender identity disorder of children' and 'transsexualism' in ICD of WHO; 'gender identity disorder' in DSM of APA. However, with ICD-11 and DSM-5, transgender was eliminated from the category of mental and behavioral disorders (World Health Organization, n.d.; American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). The decision is important for depathologization of gender experiences of transgender people. It is emphasized that the main focus should be the distress among transgender individuals, not their identity (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). Similarly, WHO (n.d.) argue that

transgender and gender diverse identities should not be classified as mentally ill which cause stigmatization of these people.

Considering current political debate of trans movement and my political standing as a trans+ rights defender in Turkey, I choose to conceptualize ‘trans’ as an experience category right now rather than an inseparable part of womanhood. That’s why, I conceptualize the sample in the current study not as ‘trans women’ but as ‘women who have trans experience’ which is a broader category. That is, this approach decentralizes womanhood from its ciscentric origin and creates a broader category which includes both cisgender and transgender and other kinds of womanhood without claiming any one of them as the essence or the central.

1.3. Parenting and Child Outcomes

1.3.1. Supportive Parental Practices

Parental support means parental attitudes and behaviors towards children including affectionate qualities such as involvement and showing warmth and acceptance to the child (Huver et al., 2010). In this section, parenting literature in the aspect of support and acceptance is reviewed and explained since findings in the current study demonstrated that participants had experiences of support and general affection with their parents in their autobiographical memories which is generated as one of the key main themes of the current study: supportive parental practices. According to Dix et al. (2004), it is important to be sensitive and responsive to the child since it increases the developmental benefits of the child in the developmental process. Similarly, McNeely and Barber (2010) stated that parental support which includes several parenting behaviors such as encouraging the child, helping the child with the tasks, verbal and non-verbal affection towards the child is crucial for the development of children. Parental acceptance according to Rohner, Khaleque, and Cournoyer (2005) consists of such characteristics as care, support, love, concern, affection and warmth towards children. According to PARTheory, parental warmth is the quality of affectional bond which is built between the child and their parents. Expression of affectionate feelings towards children is argued to be important and it can be

provided to children both verbally or physically (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005). Rohner and Rohner (1981) mention a number of examples demonstrating parental warmth and acceptance both such as approving child's personality, giving attention to child's well-being and interests, showing love to them and praising them verbally; fondling and hugging the child and playing with them physically. In addition to parental warmth and acceptance, McNeely and Barber (2010) in their article argue that there are many different forms of parental support such as emotional support which is defined as child is felt being loved, cared and praised; instrumental support which means providing practical and financial support and sources to the child and informational support which helps and guides the child in figuring out the problems. Supportive parental behaviors are also defined by Dix et al. (2004) as instant parental actions towards the wants, interests and intentions of children. Khaleque (2015) suggests that children who felt that they are being loved, accepted and appreciated most likely to have better developmental outcomes compared to children who are maltreated. Kim and Rohner (2003) argue that children who are raised by loving and accepting parents are more likely to have better sense of self, more positive points of view, less dependence and have adequate emotional stability and responsiveness compared to children who have unsupportive and rejecting parents. They also reported that university students in Korea who perceived higher parental support in their childhood, developed higher levels of emotional empathy. So, parental support is positively correlated with emotional empathy in this sample. Juang and Silbereisen (1999) found in their study that adolescents who experience supportive parenting in their family environment are healthier and better in terms of both depression and academic achievements.

1.3.2. Parental Maltreatment

Children who have experiences of maltreatment by their parents most of the time cannot reach effective adaptation strategies which is essential for an individual (Cicchetti & Toth, 2005). According to the authors parental maltreatment means that children are exposed to a pathogenic relational environment where their biological and psychological development are interrupted. In this section, childhood maltreatment literature is reviewed and explained since findings in the current study

demonstrated that participants had experiences of parental maltreatment in their autobiographical memories which is generated as another crucial main theme of the current study: maltreatment. There are several types of parental maltreatment considering the literature. For instance, Cicchetti and Toth (2005) in their article mentioned four general type of child maltreatment such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional maltreatment, by referencing Barnett et al.'s article in 1993. Physical abuse is defined as an act committed by a caregiver that causes or is likely to cause physical injury to the child, such as kicking or biting. Physical abuse may even result in death of the child. Sexual abuse is defined as several forms of sexual related actions where children are manipulated and used as sexual objects for pleasure of the perpetrator (English, 1998). According to PARTheory of Rohner, in the absence of parental warmth and acceptance, parental rejection would be the case. Rejection occurs in both ways as hostility and neglect. While parental hostility is explained as aggression towards the child with purpose of hurting the child emotionally and/or physically and making fun of them and insults towards the child, parental neglect appears as not attending to the needs of the child without any physical, psychological, or emotional aggression towards them. Ignoring the child's needs, spending less or any time with the child, not comforting or helping them are the other behavioral examples for neglect (Rohner & Rohner, 1981; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2005). Rohner, Khaleque and Cournoyer (2005) suggested that neglect is not just about the lack of material or physical parental support for children's needs, it is also about the emotional and social needs of children since parents who neglect their children show behaviors of paying little attention or being totally unresponsive to child's comfort and their needs for help. On the other hand, hostility and aggression related behaviors towards children include using harsh punishment and humiliating tone of voice towards the child; thoughtless speech or unkindness and cruelty towards the child (Rohner & Rohner, 1981). The authors also mention parental control which is a situation that demonstrates the parental actions related to what extent they restrict their children. Parental control is defined as restrictive if parental behaviors towards children includes directing and manipulating the behaviors of the children by making pressure on them. Restrictive control is also observed as constant limitation of the child and their autonomy. These parental restrictive attitudes and actions are mostly seen in the issues of sex play, obedience,

toilet training etc. as the authors exemplified. According to Bowlby (1982) adverse childhood experiences have at least two types of consequences. First of all, experiences of childhood maltreatment make the person more vulnerable to future negative events. Secondly, these experiences increase the probability of individuals to have more similar experiences in their future life. That is, although the first consequence is likely to be entirely independent of the individual's agency, the later one which includes experiencing similar actions and decisions in the future is likely to be the result of their own acts; actions that stem from the personality related behavioral problems that the earlier encounters have caused.

Findings from the study conducted by Shields and Cicchetti (2001) demonstrated that parental maltreatment is significantly detrimental for the emotional and behavioral self-regulation of children compared to children who were not maltreated by their parents. Cicchetti and Toth (2005) argued that when seeing their rouge-marked pictures in a mirror, maltreated toddlers are more likely than comparison groups of children to express either neutral or negative affect which is interpreted as probably the indication of an early sign of poor self-esteem. English (1998) emphasized that the majority of research on maltreated children comes from clinical studies of young children who have been referred for treatment, and who are usually the ones with the most significant behavioral problems. Miranda et. al (2016) conducted a study with over 2500 Italian adolescents on parents' roles on child maladjustment. By maladjustment, both symptoms of anxiety and depression and aggressive behavioral actions of children is meant in the study. The authors reported that these symptoms of maladjustment are developed as a result of experiencing parental rejection within the family environment. In addition, the authors argued that even having one rejecting parent had an adverse impact on adolescents in terms of maladjustment.

Gilbert et al. (2009), emphasized the importance of being in recognition of maltreated children and reporting their vulnerable positions and experiences in order to create safe environments which can promote supportive and healthy therapeutic intervention programs to maltreated children.

1.4. Literature Review: Experiences of Trans Experienced and LGB Children with Their Parents

There are several studies emphasized the critical importance of the coming out process of LGBTIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, asexual, and plus) people to their parents. (Fuller & Rutter, 2017; Ryan et al., 2010). It is found that before coming out to parents, youth has experienced anxiety since some of them thought that their parents would give negative reactions to their coming outs (fear is the feeling that those children had been experiencing). On the other hand, some children stated that they want to protect their parents and do not want to break them emotionally or psychologically. Considering these reasons, some children decided to delay their coming outs (Pullen Sansfaçon et al., 2021). Some other situations that were experienced by trans children before coming out were found as predicting violence and rejection from their parents in addition to fear. Accordingly, they stayed lack of parental support for years knowing that they are transgender if they did not come out to their parents as a result of fear of rejection and violence (Medico et al., 2020). It is also argued in the study of Pullen Sansfaçon et al. (2021) that after coming out both groups (children and parents) experience different stages in their lives. For instance, while children experience relief after coming out since they were holding inside their feelings maybe for years, parents experience an adaptation process and/or mourning. Similar results are addressed in the article of Norwood (2012), and they reported that family members experience a mourning after that their children came out as a transgender person since they begin to struggle to accept the new person at home and mourning the old one. The accepting process includes not just the verbal declaration of being a transgender it also includes using the new name and the pronoun of the child; witnessing the process of the change in their appearance.

Pullen Sansfaçon et al. (2019), conducted a study with parents who have trans children in the process of clinical gender-affirming healthcare. One of the purposes of the study is to see the parental reactions after coming out. It is found that parents stated they had reactions such as being angry, denying the situation, feeling of surprises, disbelieving the child, being open and feeling of pride, at the moment

when their children had come out as transgender. There are also parents who experienced a kind of loss and grief phase in the process of accepting their children; and parents who have concerns about the position and safety of their trans children in a cisnormative society. In the study of Catalpa and McGuire (2018), 90 trans identified youth including trans women, trans men and nonbinary youth, reported that they remembered the reactions of their parents as negativity, acceptance, ambiguity, support, advocacy and reconciliation. So, the process of coming out and handling of the situation by both parents and their trans, gender nonconforming or cisgender LGB children cannot be understood by just categorizing those experiences as acceptance or rejection as several studies demonstrated. For instance, Pullen Sansfaçon et al., (2019) also suggested that even parents who accompany their trans child's clinical procedures (such as hormone therapy), may experience struggles with accepting their child's trans identity. So, it is a complex process for both children and parents. In the same study, the authors suggested that while 43% of participants experience family breaks and rejection, 57% of participants experience several forms of parental acceptance. Another study demonstrated that LGBT individuals experience such parental reactions towards their coming outs as anger, disappointment, and ignorance of disclosure which are typically negative (Roe, 2017). There is a study conducted in the US with racially diverse sample of trans female youth. It is found that almost half of the participants stated that their parents did not accept them and their trans experience. That's why, it is also emphasized that the process of coming out is emotionally hard for trans youth since they think about the probability of being rejected by their parents and develop feelings of fear towards the situation they are in as I also stated in the first paragraph (Le et al., 2016). Koken, Bimbi, and Parsons (2009) conducted a qualitative study with twenty trans women of color in the context of familial acceptance and rejection. There are several themes occurred related to parental reactions in this study such as warmth and affection, hostility and aggression, and undifferentiated rejection. According to the findings, half of the participants ($n=10$) mentioned verbal and nonverbal displays of affection, eight participants reported that they experienced hostility and aggression including negative reactions like physical violence, verbal abuse and being forced to leave home within their family. Additionally, the authors found that eleven participants

experienced undifferentiated rejection which is defined as being not supported and loved by their parents although there is no explicit parental violence and abuse.

Toomey et al. (2013) stated in their article that there is a positive correlation between school victimization of adolescents and the level of gender nonconformity. School victimization in relation to gender nonconformity predicts lesser satisfaction in young adults' lives and higher depression. Similarly, Feinstein et al. (2014), suggested that individuals who are sexually marginalized, experience minority stress due to the social stigmatization which may also cause rejection sensitivity. There are several factors which can hinder such a hurtful process for cisgender LGB individuals and one of them is parental support as the authors argued. Pullen Sansfaçon et al., (2019) also claimed that parental support and acceptance is crucial for the well-being of trans youth and trans children of parents. Having a safe family environment and parental acceptance may play a crucial role in the developmental process and well-being of sexually marginalized youth since it is reported by the authors that school victimization has significant adverse impacts on these children. It is reported by Choi et al. (2015) that experiencing family rejection is found greater among transgender youth compared to their cisgender LGB peers. Moreover, running away from home or being forced out of home by parents is addressed to be the main reason of homelessness of LGBT youth, in their article. Reyes et al. (2020) conducted a study with 108 Filipino transgender people. It is found that, there is an association between perceived parental acceptance/rejection and psychological well-being of transgender individuals. That is, the more the parental rejection is perceived by trans children, the lesser the psychological well-being of children. Similarly, high parental acceptance predicts better psychological well-being in the same study. Furthermore, Klein, and Golub (2016) conducted a study which showed the effects of family rejection on the lives of both transgender and gender nonconforming individuals. It is suggested that high level of family rejection is associated with approximately three and half times the odds of suicide attempts of individuals in contrast to individuals who expose less parental rejection. The authors further argued that the more the familial rejection is experienced, the higher the probability of having misusing drugs among transgender and gender nonconforming adults. A study conducted with 73 trans children aged between 3-12 years demonstrated

important results about parental acceptance and support. It is suggested that general family support, or specific decision of allowing their children to make social transition may be associated with better mental health results for transgender children. That is, accepting child's gender experience and allowing them to present themselves in everyday life with their gender identity rather than assigned sex at birth is related with developmentally normal levels of depression and anxiety (Olson et al., 2016).

In addition to the parental experiences of transgender, gender nonconforming and LGBT individuals, there is also a literature on parental relations of cisgender LGB people. I found it important to take a look at the experiences of cisgender lesbian, gay and bisexual people with their parents although being transgender and being cisgender LGB includes definitely distinct experiences. However, it is important to remember that there are several common experiences between cisgender LGB people and transgender people such as they are both in the category of being sexually marginalized and both groups face with coming out process in their lives whether to themselves, their families and parents, or to others. Freedman (2008) conducted a study with religious parents of gay and lesbian children, she reported that initial reactions of parents to the coming outs of their children as being gay, or lesbian varies. While most religious parents had feelings of sadness and grief, some of them began to take medications and one parent was hospitalized according to the findings. There were parents who also make such statements as "I've known since he was a little boy, it never was, and still isn't a problem." In the study conducted with cisgender LGB individuals on their coming out processes, it is found that parental response to the coming outs of children is correlated with health-related behaviors of children in a long-term basis. It is argued that experiencing rejection or being not accepted by parents is related to adverse health outcomes of children such as having depressive symptoms (Rothman et al., 2012). There is another study demonstrating the importance of parental acceptance and familial support. Feinstein et al. (2014) suggested that lesbians and gay men as a sexually marginalized group show less depressive symptoms as a result of having more parental acceptance and familial support. The impact of parental acceptance and familial support is not limited to lower depressive symptoms. The authors also found that parental acceptance is

associated with lower levels of internalized homophobia (self-conflict) and both parental acceptance and familial support is associated with lower levels of rejection sensitivity of lesbians and gay men. Feinstein et al. (2014), in their article, stated that even though almost all cisgender LGB individuals experience minority stress, the one who had sexual identity related parental acceptance and support have less depressive symptoms and have more resistance against over discriminations compared to the ones who do not have. In another study conducted by Ryan et al. (2010) with LGBT individuals who live in the USA, it is reported that high levels of family acceptance predict higher levels of social support, self-esteem and general health status. It is also found that determinants of family acceptance are more related with family characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status, ethnicity, immigration status, religiosity) rather than the gender or sexual orientation experiences of the child. Bebes et al. (2015) reported that even though parental acceptance is present, the psychological symptoms of Israeli LGBT adolescents is found to increase if parents employ psychological control on their children. Parental control is defined with such behaviors as conditional love and withdrawal, invalidation, and guilt induction by the authors.

1.5. Current Study

The current study is conducted to explore parent related autobiographical memories of trans-experienced women. It is asked to participants to share their parent related autobiographical memories before and after the moment that they had the awareness of having a transgender experience in order to see the difference in both perceived parental reactions and change (if there is) in relationship between parents and their trans experienced children. Three research objectives of the current study are formed as:

1. To examine the coming out process of trans-experienced women to their parents.
2. To examine how parents respond to their trans children's gender roles and expression related attitudes and behaviors, and how children were affected by reactions of their parents.

3. To gain understanding of in what directions the parental relationships of trans-experienced women are changed considering both their social transition and gender-affirming processes.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1. Participants

The purposive sampling technique is used in order to reach the participants. There was an age and gender criteria to be a part of the current study. Participants should have been older than 18 years of age and had a trans experience as a woman. There were 143 individuals who conducted the survey initially. 105 participants were eliminated from the analysis since they did not complete the questionnaire. After this elimination, participants who did not meet the criteria were checked out. There were 11 participants who did not meet the gender experience criteria of the study. These participants were either cis or trans experienced men, cis experienced women and nonbinary individuals. They were also excluded from the analysis. The final sample consisted of 27 participants who both completed the survey and met the inclusion criteria ($M_{\text{age}} = 26,51$ years, $SD = 5,68$). Additionally, there were 6 participants who identified themselves as trans femme within the final sample. They were also included in this study since this is not contradictory to the participant criteria of the study. The age range of the participants is from 19 to 42. The education level of the participants varies; one participant has a primary education degree, eleven of them have a high school degree, three participants have an associate degree and twelve of the participants have a Bachelor's degree. The occupation of the participants also varies from one another. There are students, performance artists, lawyers, crane operators, teachers, sex workers, DJs, fashion models, psychologists, barbers. There are nine participants who have chronic diseases as they mentioned in the demographics. And the rest do not have any chronic disease. Four participants are the only child in their family while others have at least one sibling. 17 participants mentioned that they realized that they had a trans experience at/before the age of

seven. While three was reported as the youngest age of being aware of having a transgender experience, twenty was reported to be the oldest age for the awareness of having a transgender experience in this sample. 24 participants had a coming out process to their parents, one participant did not come out to their parents, one participant mentioned that there has been a partial coming out, and one participant was uncovered without her consent to her parents. Coming out age of the participants varies. Nine was reported to be the youngest age of coming out to parents while other coming outs occurred after the age of 14 in this sample. Four participants reported not having communication with their mothers. Three of them mentioned that the disconnection has been related to their transgender experiences while one participant mentioned that the disconnection has been not related with her transgender experience. 13 participants reported not having communication with their fathers at all. While ten of them mentioned that the disconnection has been related to their transgender experience, three participants mentioned that the disconnection has not been related with their gender experience. Furthermore, six participants stated their parents' marriage status as divorced.

2.2. Instruments

2.2.1. Demographics

In this study, the demographics part consists of 16 questions in total. The questions are about the participants' age, gender, education level, occupation, chronic disease, educational level of their parents, number of siblings, the first realization time of their trans experience, and whether they came out to their parents or not, how was the relationship between them and their parents, and whether they still have a connection to their parents, respectively.

2.2.2. Autobiographical Memory Scale

In the second section of the survey, it is asked to participants to remember and write down their memories. This includes two separate questions. The first question is about the general memory of participants related to their parents from the time they

were born. It is asked as follows: *‘Şimdi ebeveynlerinizle birlikte geçirdiğiniz doğumunuzdan bugüne olan süreci düşünmenizi istiyoruz. Lütfen bu süreç içinde ebeveynlerinizle yaşadığınız ve sizin için önemli olan bir anınızı anlatınız.’* The second question is to see the parent-related memory of the participants after the moment when they realize they have been going through a transgender experience. This question is asked as: *‘Cinsiyetinize dair trans bir deneyim yaşadığınızı fark ettiğiniz andan sonraki süreci düşünmenizi istiyoruz. Lütfen bu süreç içinde ebeveynlerinizle yaşadığınız ve sizin için önemli olan bir anınızı anlatınız.’*

2.3. Procedure and Data Collection

The current study required an online survey to be completed. The online survey was prepared using Qualtrics Survey Software. Before collecting the data, permissions from Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University were requested. After having approval from the committee, the survey was distributed online. The survey shared online with several LGBTIA+ community groups on several social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It was also asked to trans women activists to share the survey with their friends. The survey consisted of an informed consent form, a demographics form, and an autobiographical memory questionnaire with two questions.

2.4. Data Analysis

For the data analysis of current study, thematic analysis was applied step by step as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the light of research questions of the current study, the six phases of thematic analysis were finalized by going through the steps with an inductive approach.

After the collection of data, texts of 27 participants were transferred from Qualtrics to a word document which allows the researcher to see autobiographical memory narratives of each participant separately and as a whole data set. As a first phase, narratives were read, and initial notes were taken on the left side of the word document. This process was repeated several times since after reading each

participant's narratives, ideas that were grounded in the texts of previous participants became more visible which led the researcher to turn back to previous narratives and to add new notes about them. Table 2 shows the phases of thematic analysis which was used in the current study.

Table 2. Phases of Thematic Analysis (TA) Used in the Current Study

Phase	Description
1. Familiarizing with the Data	Reading and re-reading the texts, writing down the initial ideas about the texts.
2. Initial Coding	Coding interesting points of each text and trying to find common patterns or categories within the data set.
3. Constructing Themes	Collecting codes into potential themes, first phase of beginning to form themes in relation to common patterns.
4. Reviewing Potential Themes	Checking if the potential themes is consistent with both first coding and the entire data set.
5. Defining and Naming Themes	After checking whether themes work for both initial coding and entire data, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the Report	Final phase, relating analysis with research question and literature and producing report of the analysis.

Note. Adapted From "Using thematic analysis in psychology." by Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2006, *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Secondly, after writing down initial notes, deeper meanings within the narratives were tried to be explored. That is, each narrative was read sentence by sentence again, and also compared with the related participant's whole story which helped the researcher to add new notes about the participants. However, the main purpose of the researchers was finding commonalities and differences within these notes. Several common parental or self-related experiences of participants were noticed and tried to be categorized. In the third phase, it was noticed that these common patterns and not fully formed categories can be a part of a broader category (that is the themes) which allow the researcher to begin to construct themes. As Braun and Clarke (2019) suggested, themes were not embedded in the data by themselves, they are generated by researchers and their point of views. Researchers' active participation in the process analysis should be embraced by themselves and explicitly remarked. Themes were tried to be named and initial groupings were made. As a fourth stage, the newly

formed themes were checked again and again to see if they were consistent with the initial codes, patterns and categories which were constructed in the first stages, and the entire data set. After checking whether themes were consistent with both initial coding and the entire data, clear definitions and names for each theme were generated and several subthemes were formed when it was necessary, as the fifth phase of the process. The last phase of the thematic analysis of the data, was producing the report. In relation to research questions of the current study and generated themes and patterns, clear explanations of what subjects have experienced in their lifetime considering their gender experience and parental relations were given which means ending up the analysis.

Reflexive thematic analysis, that Braun and Clarke (2019) prefer to use in the explanation of their approach, was what the researcher tried to do in the process of TA of the data in the current study. According to Braun and Clarke (2019) reflexivity in thematic analysis is about the reflective and thoughtful engagement of researcher with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process. It is not about just trying to apply the coding steps exactly. They suggest that a constant introspection which means questioning and challenging the assumptions the researcher make is a must in the process of interpretation & coding the data. They argue that theoretical presuppositions and skills of researcher and data themselves generate the themes which consists of creative and interpretative narratives about the data.

CHAPTER 3

FINDINGS

3.1. Findings

After the detailed analysis of the collected data, six main themes were generated. Main themes were formed as *maltreatment*, *supportive parental practices*, *turning points*, *experiencing gender*, *emphasis on adolescence* and *inner experience*. Some of the themes also have their own subthemes. Table 3 shows the explanation of themes and subthemes as well as patterns that existed in the narratives which formed these themes.

According to findings under the main theme of maltreatment: 29,6% participants ($n=8$) stated threat related; 51,8% of participants ($n=14$) stated punishment related; 51,8% of participants ($n=14$) stated parental maltreatment related autobiographical memories. In total maltreatment related autobiographical memories are explored in the 66,6% of participants ($n=18$). Under the main theme of supportive parental practices: 44,4% of participants ($n=12$) mentioned parental acceptance related; 37% of participants ($n=10$) mentioned parental protection and support related; and 37% of participants ($n=10$) mentioned open-mindedness related autobiographical memories. In total supportive parental practices related narratives are explored in the 55,5% of participants ($n=15$). Considering third main theme, turning points, 40,7% of participants ($n=11$) mentioned turning points in their autobiographical memories. Under the main theme of experiencing gender: 29,6% of participants ($n=8$) stated gender-affirming process related; 40,7% of participants ($n=11$) stated coming out related; 18,5% of participants ($n=5$) stated hiding the true self related; 55,5% of

Table 3. The Explanation of Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Definitions
Maltreatment	Maltreatment consists of three subthemes as <i>threat</i> , <i>punishment</i> , and <i>parental maltreatment</i> . Some of the patterns that were observed in the main theme of maltreatment are: death threat, emotional cut-off, parental control etc.
Supportive Parental Practices	Supportive Parental Practices includes three subthemes which are <i>parental acceptance</i> , <i>parental protection and support</i> , and <i>open-mindedness</i> . Some of the patterns that were observed in the main theme of supportive parental practices are: acceptance, parent as a savior, taking care of the child, being together, etc.
Turning Points	Turning Points as a main theme includes autobiographical memories that consist of significant life changes participants experienced. Turning points has no subtheme.
Experiencing Gender	Experiencing gender consists of four subthemes as <i>gender-affirming process</i> , <i>coming out</i> , <i>gender roles and expression</i> , and <i>hiding the true self</i> . Some patterns that were observed in the main theme of experiencing gender are: wearing femininely assigned clothes and accessories, removing bodily hair, hiding trans experience from parents, etc.
Emphasis on Adolescence	Emphasis on adolescence as a main theme consists of narratives in which participants referred to their adolescent years either by using the word 'adolescence' or specific years of age that fall into adolescent years which is between ages 10 and 19. Emphasis on adolescence has no subtheme.
Inner Experience	Inner experience consists of two subthemes as <i>internal state</i> and <i>close & intimate relationships</i> . Some patterns which formed this theme are: feeling of helplessness and loneliness, questioning the self, intense memory, chosen family, etc.

participants ($n=15$) stated gender roles and expression related autobiographical memory narratives. In total experiencing gender related narratives are explored in the 88,8% of participants ($n=24$). Under the main theme of inner experience: 66,6% of participants ($n=18$) mentioned internal stated related; 11,1% of participants ($n=3$) mentioned close and intimate relationship related autobiographical memories. In total inner experience related narratives is explored in the 66,6% of participants ($n=18$). Considering the sixth and last main theme emphasis on adolescence, 22,2% of participants ($n=6$) had emphasis on adolescence and adolescent years in their autobiographical memory narratives.

3.1.1. Maltreatment

The first theme of the current study is maltreatment which consists of three subthemes as *threat*, *punishment*, and *parental maltreatment*. Maltreatment is defined as a kind of ‘familial violence’ by Giovannoni (1971) that includes abusive parental practices and/or neglect which can be physical, emotional, and psychological (Corliss, Cochran, & Mays, 2002). In the process of analysis, narratives that include abusive parental attitudes and behaviors were brought together under the main theme of maltreatment.

Threat ($n=8$) as the first subtheme of maltreatment, was observed in the narratives of subjects as threat of physical violence, death threat, threat of emotional and financial cut-off, and threat of self-harm/suicide by parents. Threat, in the current study is used to define the moments of parental hostile actions that are not actualized but just verbally or nonverbally directed towards the child in order to prevent and restrict the child. There are similarities and differences in participants’ experiences of threat. All the participants were threatened by their parents in the context of gender experience which was called as a *triggering factor* for parents. By triggering factor, it was meant that a situation which leads parents to react aggressively towards their child: the aggressive reactions here appeared as a threat. Triggering factors which lead parents to direct threats towards their children were occurred at the moments as follows; seeing their child had makeup on her face, hearing from their child that she had a plan to undergo gender-affirming process, hearing/finding out that their child is a transgender, seeing their child playing with girls and girl toys.

While some participants were threatened verbally, others experienced nonverbal threats:

Bir gün beni ilk defa makyajlı gördüğünde ben de oğlum var sanıyordum diyerek benim üstüme yürüdü .. (Participant 2)

Here, the experience of the participant includes a nonverbal way of being threatened by her parents. It was coded as a threat of physical violence. On the other hand, the following quote was coded as a verbal threat which signifies the patterns of threat of financial and emotional cut-off:

Annem yanımda saatlerce ağlayıp uyum sürecine başlamamam için yalvarmıştı. Sonrasında beni para vermemekle ve terk etmekle tehdit etmişti, .. (Participant 15)

Punishment (n=14) as opposed to threat, consists of actualized parental actions to punish the child. This subtheme includes such patterns observed in the narratives as rejection, verbal abuse, emotional and financial cut-off, physical violence, denial, isolation, abuse. It was observed that these patterns were used to punish the child by their parents in the narratives. Triggering moments that lead parents to have an urge to punish their child were again the moments where parents were informed verbally or visually or in any other way that their child was showing inconsistent acts and behaviors with their assigned gender.

A participant shared an experience with her father as follows:

Babam seni sildim senin gibi iğrenç bir evladım yok dedi, .. (Participant 20)

The conversation had happened after the moment parents learnt that their child is a trans woman. This specific moment from a participant's autobiographical memory narrative was coded as an emotional cut-off, verbal abuse and rejection which signifies a punishment for the child for being a trans experienced woman.

Another participant was also exposed to a similar treatment, a punishment by her parent:

... trans ve biseksüel deneyimimi öğrendikten sonra benden nefret ettiğini, cehenneme gideceğimi, beni evlatlıktan reddettiğini ve mirasından men ettiğini söyledi .. (Participant 1)

This part of the narrative was coded as a punishment under the main theme of maltreatment since it includes verbal abuse, rejection, emotional cut-off and financial cut-off towards the child by her father right after he learned that his child has transgender and bisexual experiences.

Parental Maltreatment (n=14) was observed in the narratives of participants as; parental control, questioning child's sexuality, lack of parental sensitivity, parental authority, witnessing domestic violence, abuse. In the parental maltreatment

subtheme, there were patterns which are both related and unrelated with the gender experience of the child. For instance, while patterns of parental authority, lack of parental sensitivity, witnessing domestic violence, abuse (abuse in here was not observed in the context of trans experience of the child) were not related with gender experience of the child, some patterns as parental control and questioning child's sexuality were related to the gender experience of participants. A participant mentioned how her father did not realize that his child began to wear make-up, and she stated those moments as:

.. *Babam uzun süre fark etmedi, fark ettiğinde umursamadı bile.. (Participant 6)*

This part of the narrative was coded as lack of parental sensitivity, since my interpretation from words of the participant was that she needed some attention and validation from her parents. Additionally, considering how the same participant stated that she was a lonely child in the past, it became clearer for me to code this part as a parental insensitivity under the main theme of parenting rather than coding differently (i.e., coding as gender identity-based rejection). On the other hand, parental control occurred as gender related in the narratives of all participants. For instance:

.. *satın aldığım kıyafetler için ailem “normal biri bunu giyer mi” “bunu gerçekten giyecek misin” vs sorularını sürekli olarak sormaya başladı. (Participant 16)*

This part of the participant's narrative was coded as parental control under the subtheme of parental maltreatment since It is understood that parents tried to change their child's gender roles related attitudes by directing her to a completely different position. While engaging this kind of an attitude, they used normativity as a precondition to both parental and social approval. Another participant who mentioned her experiences with her parents, which is similar to the previous narrative since it included parental control over the child, stated as:

Neden sadece kızlarla oynadığımı sordular ve daha fazla erkeklerle vakit geçirmemi söylediler. (Participant 11)

Table 4. Demographic characteristics of participants.

Sub.	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	1 st awareness of having a trans experience	Age of coming out to parents
1	Trans femme, non-binary, trans woman	21	Highschool	Student/Performance Artist	19	21
2	Trans experienced femme/non-binary	21	Undergraduate	Sex worker	18	No coming out but learnt at the age of 21
3	Woman	25	Associate degree	Executive assistant	7	15
4	Trans woman	29	Undergraduate	DJ-Artist	4-5	24
5	Woman	29	Highschool	Esthetician	20	24
6	Biological woman	24	Undergraduate	Cryptocurrency trader	7	24
7	Trans femme, non-binary	19	Highschool	Escort	She stated that she was feeling strange like an alien all the time. Using the term began at 19 for her.	19
8	Woman	26	Undergraduate	Translator	11	25
9	Trans+ woman, non-binary	24	Highschool	Student/Queer Performance Artists	She stated that looking back to her 6-7 years of age, those times could be considered as having trans experiences.	23
10	Woman	29	Highschool	Student	5-6	16
11	Trans experienced woman	21	Undergraduate	Student/Queer Performance Artists	Around age of 5	19
12	Woman	28	Undergraduate	English teacher	3-4	No coming out
13	Trans femme	29	Undergraduate	Lawyer	4-5	22
14	Woman	23	Highschool	Model & Sex worker	4	21
15	Woman	27	Highschool	Student	3	20
16	Trans woman	25	Undergraduate	Customer advisor	6	24
17	Trans femme	24	Undergraduate	Psychologist	9	22
18	Woman	24	Associate degree	Sale consultant	4	16
19	Transsexual woman	34	Undergraduate	Art history teacher	6	9
20	Transvestite woman, bottom	37	Primary education	Barber	12	26
21	Trans woman	42	Highschool	Crane operator	20	29
22	Trans femme, Genderless	26	Undergraduate	Sex worker & Performance artist	4-5	No coming out, but she stated that her parents had already knew
23	Woman	38	Highschool	Self-employed person	7	16
24	Woman	27	Undergraduate	Math teacher	around age of 6	14
25	Trans woman	23	Highschool	Student/Model	4	14
26	Woman	21	Associate degree	Student	4	20
27	Woman (Trans)	20	Highschool	Student	18 was the exact time to be aware of.	19

3.1.2. Supportive Parental Practices

The second theme, supportive parental practices as Huver et al. (2010), also suggested include qualities such as acceptance and warmth. It is also important to note that supportive parents try to understand and see things from their children's eyes rather than insisting on their desires and what they want (Dix et al., 2004). Supportive parental practices consist of three subthemes as parental acceptance, parental support and protection, and open-mindedness.

Parental Acceptance (n=12) was observed in the narratives of participants who were accepted by their parents in the context of trans experience. Considering experiences of participants related with parental acceptance, there are seven of them who did not mention any negative experience (participant 5,7,9,12,14,18,25) during the acceptance process. Remaining five participants (participant 1,10,11,19,26) stated several twists in their autobiographical memory narratives during the process of acceptance. A participant who was directly rejected by her dad, was accepted by her mom. However, she was asked to hide her gender identity around relatives by her mother. Another participant stated that she experienced direct acceptance in the first coming out, and then after some changes in the appearance with the influence of gender-affirming process, tiny problems within the family occurred. Later, she was accepted by her parents again. Another participant who was accepted by her parents had experienced parental control for her to play more with boys than girls in childhood years, and she heard parental concerns about social disadvantages of being trans. A participant mentioned that she experienced direct rejection and verbal abuse in the first place and years later accepted by her parents. Similarly, one participant also mentioned that her trans experience was denied and rejected by her parents at first, but later on she was accepted by her parents.

Showing Acceptance to the Child with Symbolic Actions

One of the most surprising acts for me was how parents show their love and acceptance to their children. There were four participants (participant 5,12,14,25)

who were talking about similar actions of their parents showing acceptance and support. This pattern of parents includes buying gifts which are normatively assigned as feminine, sending money for her child to get the medications for the gender-affirming hormone therapy and helping to put nail polish to his daughter's nails as a father:

.. Şuanda babam oje sürdüğümde kurusun diye üflüyor:). (Participant 5)

*Annem bana göbek piercingi aldı. Kadınlığımı kabul ettiği bir andı.
(Participant 12)*

Parental Protection and Support (n=10) as a subtheme of supportive parental practices consists of such patterns as parental support, being together, parent as a savior and taking care of the child. Although most of the narratives that were included in the subtheme of parental acceptance also include patterns of parental protection and support, it is important to differentiate the two in order to show a number of differences. There were narratives in which parental acceptance was not observed although parental protection and support existed:

*Annem çok otoriter bir insandı. Çocukken, babam beni çok gezdirdi ve her dışarı çıktığımızda bana mutlaka beni mutlu edecek hediyeler alırdı.
(Participant 15)*

A participant mentioned that she had experienced happy moments with her father in the past. While the first part of the narrative includes such patterns as being together and taking care of the child, in the second part of the narrative stated by the same participant she talked about how her father rejected her because of gender experience of his child:

Ben bilinçli şekilde makyaj ile çıkmıştım karşılarına. Babam arabadan dahi inmemişti.

....

*Babamı aradım o günün akşamı ve bana küfürler ederek kapamıştı telefonu.
Beni terk ettiklerini söyledi bana. (Participant 15)*

Open-mindedness ($n=10$) consists of such patterns as having an open-minded perspective for gender-related issues, listening to the child without judging her and parental acceptance which includes parental concerns about social disadvantages of being trans. There were parents in the narratives who were developed an open-minded parenting towards their children:

Annemin bana sana kızım diye mi hitap etmeliyim diye sorması. (Participant 26)

3.1.3. Turning Points

Turning points ($n=11$) is the third theme of the current study. Almost half of the participants mentioned a significant turning point in their autobiographical memory narratives which had strong influences on their life scripts. Turning points in one's life defined as an individual having a drastic change in their lives (McAdams & Bowman, 2001). This change in one's life course is generally triggered by new experiences and may even cause individuals to build and feel a new sense of self (Clausen, 1995, p. 371). Considering transgender individuals' experiences on both social and bodily transitions, I thought as an insider, as a trans experienced person, turning points in relation to gender experience must be one of the key elements in transgender people's lives.

All participants' turning points were related to their trans experiences. Turning points which ten participants had experienced was directly related with parental attitudes and behaviors towards their gender experience while one participant's turning point was about finding herself. It was observed that the knowledge of having a trans child influences some parents to react more adversely than the others. There were some parents who made decisions to reject and punish their children after finding out that their child is a trans girl, not a boy whom they thought of as. Four participants stated that after they came out to their parents, they were rejected by them. Parents cut off the connections to their children although they had at least a relationship before, which shows us a significant turning point in the lives of both parents and the child. A statement from a participant which includes a critical turning point in her life scripts:

Ölümle tehdit ettiler. Babam seni sildim senin gibi iğrenç bir evladım yok dedi. Annem sen erkeksin senin şeyin var ben biliyorum. Kalkıyordu o sakin diyerek erkekligimi yüzüme vurdu. Ağrıya gelersen seni alnından vururum dedi. Zaten bende bir daha iletişim kurmadım. (Participant 20)

A participant addressed a point in her life that she began to realize that she had something different in her after she faced physical violence by her parents in the context of gender roles. Another participant also had a similar turning point in her life script. Although her parents did not interfere with her in terms of feminine gender roles, the participant stated that after the age of 11 they began to direct and control her feminine behaviors to be changed into more masculine traits. She added, it is possible that her parents had the realization that something was different in her. These two participants have similarities in experiencing turning points in their life. They were both tried to be restricted by their parents in terms of gender roles which caused them to feel different and question their identities:

Ben hep o benim kocam bende onun karısıyım hayalleri kurardım, kurardım. Bir gün ailem biz öpüşürken yakaladı ve bana şiddet uyguladılar. Bu şiddet aslında 'evet sen farklısın'ı anlamamı sağlayan şey oldu. (Participant 4)

One participant stated that after the moment she was exposed to violent acts towards her girl toys by her father, she had developed a sense of fear for loving and playing with girl toys:

En erken anım; 8 yaşlarında iken annemin bana aldığı, ve de çok sevdiğim, etekli ve şapkalı bir "Bayan Ayı"yı babam saçını,eteğini ve şapkasını parçalayıp önüme atmıştı oynamam için. O günden sonra kız oyuncakları sayılabilecek oyuncaklara sevgi göstermekten korktum. (Participant 17)

Another participant mentioned a point in her life that she became clearer in terms of her understanding of gender which was coded as a turning point in a life script since it changes one's perspective towards herself and womanhood. This turning point of the participant was triggered by the insensitivity of her parent:

Bir gün akraba nikahına makyaj yapıp gitmiştim. Daha açılmamıştım aileden kimseye. Babam uzun süre fark etmedi, fark ettiğinde umursamadı bile. O an kadın olduğumu kanıtlamak için makyaj yaptığımı fark ettim, gerçekten istediğimden değil. Sonrasında sadece içimden geldiği zamanlar makyaj yaptım. (Participant 6)

Only one participant had a turning point in her autobiographical memory which was not triggered by the process of verbal or nonverbal coming out to parents and/or parental actions towards their gender related attitudes and behaviors. All the other participant's turning points ($n=10$) were connected to that pattern of parental reactions. The turning point she had experienced led her to find herself, as she stated:

Istambula iş amaçlı geldim. Travestileri ilk Merter'de tanıdım. Müşterileri oldum. Zaman aslında onlarla ortak yanlarımı keşfettim. Kendimi bulmam zaman oldu. Küçük bir dağ evinde büyüdüm. Nerden bileyim ne olduğumu. İstanbulda aslında herşey başladı. (Participant 21)

One participant although she had rejected by her parents once, after years she had experienced an acceptance with a call from her mother, and she stated this twist in her life course as follows:

Annemin süreç sonrası "sana asla kızım demeyecem " cümlesi hep hafızamda yer etmiştir. Ancak 29 yaşına bastığım gün beni arayıp " güzel kızım nice mutlu yıllara anneciğim " demişti. Dünyalar benim olmuştu. (Participant 19)

3.1.4. Experiencing Gender

Another main theme of the current study is experiencing gender which consists of four subthemes as gender-affirming process, coming out, hiding the true self, and gender roles & expression.

Gender-Affirming Process ($n=8$) was observed in the narratives of participants using gender-affirming hormones and beginning gender affirming processes in general. Eight participants referred to the gender affirming process either by addressing hormone usage or as a general process of change. While stating their

autobiographical memories, all participants had emphases on the responses that they got from their parents in their experience during the gender affirming process. Two participants talked about *positive* experiences with their parents about the gender affirming process, while five participants have *negative* memories. A participant stated her experience with parents about gender-affirming process as follows:

... Zaten anneme trans olduğumu söylediğimde ilk iş olarak beni intiharla tehdit etti. Hormonlara başlamama izin vermedi, böylece sürecime ebeveynlerimden habersiz olarak başladım. (Participant 8)

In this quote, the participant emphasized the responses she got from her parents related to the gender-affirming process which is an unsupportive one. Additionally, a participant stated that her parents had shared their concerns about the gender-affirming process in terms of its social disadvantages which was coded as a protective attitude.

Coming Out ($n=11$) is the second subtheme of experiencing gender, is formed in order to include participants' narratives about their coming out process to their parents about having a transgender experience. In the narratives, there were eleven participants who mentioned their coming out processes. Coming out in the narratives of participants was occurred as both verbal and nonverbal coming outs:

Annem ve babam okuduğum okula gelmişti. Ben bilinçli şekilde makyaj ile çıkmıştım karşılarına. Babam arabadan dahi inmemişti. Annem yanımda saatlerce ağlayıp uyum sürecine başlamamam için yalvarmıştı ... (Participant 15)

This narrative includes a coming out to parents, but this did not occur as a coming out which was verbally shared. Four participants were accepted by their parents after coming out and two participants were rejected by their parents. Two participants who were rejected in the moment of coming out were also exposed to threats and psychological abuse by their parents. Another participant mentioned that she did not come out to her parents and anyone else in the family. She ended her relationship with her family and ran away from them to hide her trans identity. Three participants

have twists in their coming out memories and they were accepted by their parents at the same time. For instance:

ilk açıldığında ikisi de nazik ve kabullenici yaklaşmışlardı daha sonraki süreçte genel olarak görüntümün değişmesi ve hormon sürecine başlamak istemem huzursuz şeylerin yaşanmasına sebep olmuştu ama şuan hepsi aşıldı iyiyiz beraber yaşıyoruz. (Participant 10)

Another participant stated how her parent was insensitive and unresponsive to her coming out.

Hiding the True Self ($n=5$) is another subtheme of experiencing gender which means that individuals decided to disguise or not to tell their trans experience to their parents considering possible parental adverse reactions. There are two participants who hide gender-affirming processes from their parents. Another participant stated that she acted like a heterosexual boy in order to hide her trans experience from her parents. One participant mentioned that she slurred over questions that was coming from her parents about having a girlfriend. Similarly, another participant mentioned that she was hiding feminine assigned accessories from their parents and wore them outside the home.

Gender Roles & Expression ($n=15$) is the fourth and last subtheme of experiencing gender. Gender role is defined as masculinity or femininity related behavioral patterns and attitudes within a specific culture while gender expression is more about having a gendered presentation in daily life including choices of clothing, accessories and behaviors which have aspects of gender (American Psychological Association, n.d.; American Psychological Association, 2015). Under the main theme of experiencing gender, gender roles & expression consists of such patterns observed in the narratives as wearing femininely assigned clothes and accessories, playing, or not playing with gendered toys, removing bodily hair, becoming more feminine in appearance etc. It is observed that nine participants mentioned gender expression related narratives which included wearing make-up and going out, wearing nail polish, change in the appearance towards a more feminine direction, removing bodily hair, wearing girls' clothes. Thirteen participants mentioned gender roles related

memories such as make-up, piercing, boys' and girls' toys, playing with girls all the time, imagining herself as a wife etc. In the moments of gender roles and expression related patterns occurred, parental responses towards their children were found different from one another. Ten participants (participant 2,3,4,6,15,16,17,20,22,24) received directly negative responses from their parents when the patterns of gender roles and expression were observed. Those reactions were stated as verbal abuse, threats, rejection, psychological abuse, parental insensitivity and so forth. On the other hand, there were positively remembered moments for four participants (participant 5,10,12,25) in which participants were gifted, supported, and accepted. Additionally, although one participant's (participant 11) memory related with gender expression and gender roles includes parental control, it was not a hostile form of it. That's why, it cannot be categorized as negative or positive, it includes parental concerns about the child and social disadvantages of being transgender:

Görünüşüm ve tarzım giderek feminenleşmeye başlamıştı ve ailem de bir gün benle bu konu üzerine konuşmak istedi. Bana kadın olup olmak istemediğimi sordular. O zaman için buna net bir cevap verememişim. Babam benden daha az feminen gözükmemi talep etmişti ve eğer bir dönüşüm sürecine girmek istiyorsam bunu Türkiye'de değil, yurt dışında yapmamın daha iyi olacağını söylemişti. (Participant 11)

3.1.5. Inner Experience

Inner experience as a main theme of the current study consists of two subthemes as internal state and close & intimate relationships.

Internal State (n=18) includes such patterns as feelings of loneliness and helplessness, self-blaming, self-harm/suicide, questioning the self, feeling safe and intense memory. Feelings of loneliness and helplessness were observed in the narratives of five participants. There were twelve participants who mentioned that they remembered those times with intense feelings, or they had never been able to forget those specific moments. They were brought together under the pattern of intense memory. In the narratives of six participants (participant 4,6,7,20,21,24), It was observed that they had been questioning themselves especially in terms of

gender identity. These self-understanding related questions are brought together under the pattern of questioning the self. Self-blaming, self-harm/suicide and feeling safe were also observed in the narratives. Intense memories were observed in the narratives of twelve participants (participant 2,4,7,8,9,10,15,16,19,22,24,27). Four participants mentioned that it was either one of the most unforgettable or important moments in their life with *positive emotions* while five participants shared their *negatively remembered* moments that were unforgettable in their life. One participant mentioned that maternal rejection and acceptance moments had the deepest impacts in her life, and she shared with us the time when her mother bought a gift for her; how happy she was and the importance of that moment in her life. This autobiographical memory cannot be categorized as positive or negative, it has several twists since in the next section the same participant shared that her parents threatened and rejected her after learning her transgender experience. Another participant who had intense memory moments in her narratives mentioned the time when her parents began to control and direct her feminine behaviors into more masculine characteristics. She mentioned those moments and her feelings as follows:

...Mesela bir gün annemin babama bu çocuğu maça görür senle vakit geçirsin bana benzemeye başladı demesi unutamadığım bir andı. Demekki annem bendeki farklılığın farkındaydı. (Participant 24)

Other contents that were observed in the narratives of participants who had intense memory moments were the moment they had experienced; abusive verbal reactions from parents towards their gender expressions; acceptance and rejection moments; parental sensitivity (the moments of being taken care of themselves).

Close & Intimate Relationships ($n=3$) was observed in the narratives of three participants as physical and emotional intimacy with a friend, having a chosen family and finding common experiences with other trans women respectively:

Ben mahallede bir arkadaşşıma aşkıttım o da bana. Biz o zamanlar 5-6 yaşlarındayız. Birbirimizi öpüyor, okşuyoruz. Ben hep o benim kocam bende onun karısıyım hayalleri kurardım, kurardık. (Participant 4)

Ailemin yanımda olduklarını maddi manevi bana hissettirmelerini, seçilmiş ailemin bana desteğinden daha yoğun hissettiğim nadir ve birleştirici bir süreç oldu bizim için diyebilirim. (Participant 13)

Travestileri ilk Merter’de tanıdım. Müşterileri oldum. Zaman aslında onlarla ortak yanlarımı keşfettim. Kendimi bulmam zaman oldu. Küçük bir dağ evinde büyüdüm. Nerden bileyim ne olduğumu. İstanbul’da aslında herşey başladı. (Participant 21)

3.1.6. Emphasis on Adolescence

Emphasis on adolescence ($n=6$) is the sixth and last theme that emerged after the detailed analysis of the data in the current study. Adolescent years coincided with the period between 10-19 years of age (World Health Organization, n.d.). Participants who either stated the word “adolescence” as “ergenlik” in Turkish or the age period from 10 to 19 were included into the main theme of emphasis on adolescence. This theme consists of autobiographical memories of six participants. While two participants stated that they had some problems with their parents such as conflict and feeling of being rejected (i.e., feeling that her father ashamed of her), other two participants mentioned their status on psychological diagnosis (i.e., having a major depression), and dysphoria about growing bodily hair, separately. Another participant had an emphasis on the age of 11. She stated that although her parents did not interrupt her feminine attitudes and behaviors before the age of 11, they began to restrict her femininity afterwards. This narrative was found strongly related to ‘being an adolescent and not being a child anymore’ type of thinking which forces children to act appropriately to the assigned gender and gender roles. The last participant who was pointing out her adolescent years stated how she was called a girl by her neighbor in the family environment and her happiness about the situation. She stated those moments as follows:

Bir gün evimize yan komşu çaya geldi. O zaman yaşıam 14 bana bu kız kim demisti çok mutlu olmuştum ama bizimkiler o erkek demislerdi. Çok üzölmüştüm ama kadının yaklaşımına mutlu olmuştum. (Participant 23)

Although she was very happy with being assigned as a girl in her adolescent years, her parents directly interrupted the situation and tried to correct the neighbor's words about the gender of their child by calling her a boy.

Table 5 in the next page shows the relationship between the main themes & subthemes, and each participant included in the current study.

Table 5. The relationship between subjects and generated themes and subthemes.

Subject	Maltreatment			Supportive Parental Practices			Turning Points	Experiencing Gender				Emphasis on Adolesc.	Inner Experience	
	Threat	Punishment	Parental Maltreatment	Parental Acceptan.	Parental Protection & Support	Open-mindedness		Gender-A. Process	Coming out	Hiding the True Self	Gender Roles & E.		Internal State	Close & Intimate Relationships
1		√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√		√		
2	√	√	√							√	√		√	
3	√	√	√				√	√			√			
4		√					√				√		√	√
5				√	√	√		√	√		√		√	
6			√				√		√		√		√	
7				√	√	√			√					
8	√	√	√		√			√	√	√			√	
9				√	√	√			√				√	
10				√	√	√	√	√	√		√		√	
11			√	√		√		√			√			
12			√	√		√					√			
13					√								√	√
14				√	√	√		√				√	√	
15	√	√	√		√		√	√	√		√		√	
16		√	√								√		√	
17	√	√	√				√				√	√		
18				√					√					
19	√	√		√			√	√					√	
20	√	√					√				√		√	
21							√		√	√			√	√
22	√	√	√							√	√		√	
23		√	√									√		
24		√	√				√				√	√	√	
25				√	√	√					√		√	
26			√	√		√			√					
27		√										√	√	
Total	8	14	14	12	10	10	11	8	11	5	15	6	18	3

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

4.1. Discussion

The current study, to the best of our knowledge, is the first attempt to explore the parental autobiographical memories of trans experienced women. The findings from this study demonstrate six main themes which were generated as maltreatment, supportive parental practices, turning points, experiencing gender, emphasis on adolescence and inner experience. The current study is important for a number of reasons. This study presents one of the contemporary topics in gender and women's studies with a multidisciplinary approach by extending its scope and including other disciplines such as developmental psychology and autobiographical memory research. There are not many studies in autobiographical memory literature exploring trans experienced women's parental relationships. Furthermore, transgender related studies in developmental psychology literature are mostly about gender and identity development (e.g., Olson, Key, & Eaton, 2015; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014; Steensma & Cohen-Kettenis, 2018; Boskey, 2014; Fast & Olson, 2017) and gender socialization (e.g., Riggs & Bartholomaeus, 2015) of trans children and youth. Additionally, parent-child relationship had been mostly studied from a cis-oriented approach and theorized to just include cisgender children and their parental relationships as a result of ciscentric roots of scientific research. Briefly, since one of the main goals is to explore the patterns and themes that were generated from autobiographical memories of trans experienced women via thematic analysis, this study methodologically is an exploratory, inductive, and data-driven study. Regarding gaps in different fields of the literature as I mentioned above, presenting parental autobiographical memories of trans experienced women by allowing them to tell their experiences with their

own words provides a novel and an original content for gender and women's studies as well as other fields of research.

The first theme in the current study was generated as maltreatment in which several patterns were observed such as threatening and punishing the child, employing control over the child, and verbal abuse. Consistent with the findings of the current study, a study demonstrated that 62% of participants ($n=56$) stated how their gender roles and expression related attitudes and behaviors, which were inconsistent with their assigned gender at birth, were tried to be changed by their parents in their childhood and adolescence years (Catalpa and McGuire, 2018) which signifies parental control over the child. Furthermore, two other studies in the literature suggested that parents' usage of threats, guilt induction, rejection and love withdrawal in the moments of disobedience or disapproved behaviors of children could be classified as psychological control of the child (Barber, 1996; León-Del-Barco et al., 2019). These sorts of parental tendencies and restrictions towards the child were also coded as parental control (which sometimes extended to the punishment of the child) in the current study. On the other hand, the current study aims to propose that some findings may be associated with parental conditional regard in the aspect of parental reactions towards their trans children. Parental conditional regard refers to parental attitudes and behaviors in which parents show value, love, warmth, and acceptance towards their children if they act and behave appropriately to the parental standards and expectations (Curran, Hill, & Williams, 2017; Assor, Kanat-Maymon, & Roth, 2014). That is, the moment when the child behaves in a disapproved way according to familial and cultural values, then parents experience disappointment by their children which elicits anger and use of punishment strategies towards the child (Assor, Roth, & Deci, 2004). In other words, expectations of parents were shattered by their children since they came out as transgender and behaved inconsistent with the assigned gender at birth. Therefore, parents began to use punishments and other controlling strategies which were also frequently mentioned in the autobiographical memories of trans experienced women in the current study. It was imposed on the child that they are valued and accepted only if they act appropriately, conform to parental standards, and meet expectations. In addition, there are also several other studies demonstrated that in the moments of

wrongdoings and disobedience of children, parents may engage in nurturance withdrawal, love-withdrawal, and removal of warmth towards their children (Baumrind, 1966; Scarner, Schmader, & Lickel, 2009; Curran, Hill, & Williams, 2017). Similarly, in the current study some parents employed emotional and financial cut-offs, and denial which even extended to the rejection of their children as a person. Additionally, some parents cut the relationship with their children and abandoned them after the moment they learnt that their child is transgender according to the findings of the current study. Catalpa and McGuire (2018) had also similar findings to the current study, they reported that 43% of transgender identified participants ($n=39$) experienced lasting family breaks after they came out as transgender to their parents.

Moreover, there may be associations between parental reactions towards their children who came out as transgender and culture of honor. To clarify, Cohen and Nisbett (1994) argued that the social image and the protection of family has a significant importance in the cultures of honor. When the normal law or order is not effective or does not include some groups of people, power and hierarchy become the established and dominant structure of a particular society which is governed by honor culture, as the authors added. Social image and recognition from significant others were argued to be important for the self-identity of individuals since it places individuals in a certain status and value in that society. Honor, which can be ascribed by families or achieved, is strongly related to the protection of these values, maintenance of social image and not degrading it in the eyes of others (Moxnes, 1993). The author further suggested that considering patriarchal roots of many cultures, the honor of male masculinity and their protective tendencies over women is a constructed reality. For men, it is important to protect the honor of women since it addresses not just women's honor, but also theirs, and their families. When women have inappropriate actions and behaviors (e.g., the loss of chastity) in terms of cultural norms, this affects the honor of family as a whole and elicits feelings of shame on them. To better understand and comprehend the culture of honor, I exemplified several other studies in the literature. For instance, Sharma and Sharma (2021) mentioned punishment related experiences of women in Pakistan in relation to culture of honor. The authors reported that because of disobeying the familial rules

and not following dominant cultural patriarchal norms, Pakistani women who want to divorce from their husbands, were punished by both their parents and husbands. Regarding the perspective of culture of honor, it can be interpreted that the demands of Pakistani women from their parents elicited conflicts between them since family reputation, and social image would be harmed if their daughter as a woman divorced from her husband. Additionally, disobedient actions and behaviors of women most probably were seen as degrading the self-image of individuals within the family, breaking the social harmony and family ties in addition to its influence on the social image, and family honor and reputation (Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2008). In the literature, several studies suggested that in cultures of honor, members employ aggressive and violent reactions to degrading acts and threats towards their honor. Most of the time, family or group members want to face and hold the person responsible for their degrading actions towards family honor (Henry, 2009; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2008). Similar to the previous studies Scarner, Schmader, and Lickel, (2009) suggested that parental feeling of shame is associated with parental restrictive behavioral controls over children such as removal of emotional warmth since they thought that the child devalued their self-image by acting inappropriate to their culture. To come to the point, I want to address several associations between being a transgender child and culture of honor literature. Trans experienced people and specifically trans experienced children are not protected by the laws and social norms just like the culture of honor literature suggested. This opens a way for honor culture to take the lead and evaluate individuals whether they are appropriate or deviate from the norms, and punish or hide them if they deviate. Similar to the culture of honor literature, parents in the current study also used punishments (including rejection, emotional and financial cut offs, verbal abuse), threats (e.g., death threats), and several parental control strategies towards their children by referring to and devaluing the child's trans experience.

Second theme that was generated in the current study is supportive parental practices. There were several supportive parental practices that trans experienced women stated in their autobiographical memories as well as their experiences of childhood maltreatment. These parental support and acceptance related experiences varied from one to another. For instance, some parents demonstrated unconditional

acceptance towards their children, in addition to allowing their children to express themselves freely which is a characteristic of an open-minded parenting (Riley et al., 2013). Accepting their transgender child without conditions was also observed in the study of Catalpa and McGuire (2018). On the other hand, it was stated by participants that some parents accept their trans identity with several conditions. For instance, some parents asked their child to hide their trans identity around relatives. There are also autobiographical memories of participants in which parents showed acceptance towards them symbolically (e.g., buying a gift consistent with the gender of their child, not assigned gender at birth). Consistent with the literature, there was also one participant mentioned concerns of her parents about social disadvantages about being trans and gender-affirming process which at the same time signifies an acceptance of the child (see e.g., Pullen Sansfaçon et al., 2019). The authors also reported that parents had concerns about the safety and social status of their trans children in their lifetime, including experiencing violence, struggling to find a romantic partner, and so forth.

Furthermore, the findings in the current study are important for another reason. Regarding master narratives about trans people's parental relationships which mostly focus on experiences such as being rejected and kicked out of home, or being exposed to parental violence, the current study also provides counter-argumentative findings to these master narratives. The current study aims to propose the idea that parental maltreatment is the most vital part for trans people but the half of the story. In addition to trans experienced women who were maltreated in their childhood by their parents, there are also parents who express their unconditional support and acceptance towards their trans child which demonstrates the possibilities to change things about parenting trans and gender diverse children. However, it is also important to note that even though parental acceptance exists, most trans experienced women reported that they had negative parental reactions in their childhood towards their trans experience (including gender-affirming process, gender roles and expression related behaviors, and coming outs) which may result in adverse psychological outcomes for them later (Catalpa & McGuire, 2018).

The third theme of the current study was generated as *turning points*. I considered strong emotional breaks and rejection that lead to relationship cut-offs and leaving or being forced to leave home and reconciliations as turning points in participants' life course. In the literature it was strongly emphasized that it is critical to understand the importance of experienced events in one's life to call it a turning point (Hareven & Masaoka, 1988). The authors explained turning points as a process that involves a change in one's life path. As a result, a turning moment necessitates certain strategies and decisions of individuals. The findings of the current study also reference to these strategies and decisions since it is reported by trans experienced women that they were gone through a processes of identity formation/self-acceptance, coming out which most of the time means that being on the edge of parental and social rejection, and gender-affirming process, and so forth.

Another main theme of the current study is experiencing gender. I thought that Fivush's concepts of the loss of power and the loss of voice are strongly associated with several patterns that the *experiencing gender* theme included. As Fivush (2010) stated, voice and silence, which are socially constructed, is important for individuals' self and power. She argued that individuals can experience loss of power and loss of self by both being silenced by others and by silencing themselves. That is, experiences of trans experienced children demonstrated that since some participants thought that their parents could not bear to know their child is transgender and they were not ready for this information. They were silenced by the situation that their reality was too hard to be absorbed by their parents, and this information was implicitly indoctrinated to the child by dominant cultural narratives (e.g., Catalpa & McGuire, 2018; Pullen Sansfaçon et al., 2021). Although this type of being silenced by significant others does not show up explicitly in the autobiographical memories of participants in the current study, it is important to remember silencing can be employed in several ways. However, in the current study, trans experienced women silenced themselves in order not to be rejected by their parents and continue to have a relationship with them as Fivush (2010) also suggested in her article. Hiding the true self and not coming out patterns of trans experienced women in the current study were experienced as a loss of power and loss of voice in the light of Fivush's concepts. Additionally, I want to handle the issue of coming out of trans experienced

women and LGBTIA+ people in general, the obligatory nature of coming out process from another perspective. In the same article, Fivush stated that experiences which exceed the limits of norms and fail to satisfy expectations of dominant narratives are forced to explain why they violate both the norms, and the life-scripts. For them who violate the norms and the life scripts, (e.g., trans children in relation to the current study), as Fivush stated, explanatory narrative is a must while cisgender children do not need to come out to their parents as being cisgender, as a part of the canonical, they do not owe any explanation about being cisgender. Here, voice of, the coming out of trans and queer children signifies a justification of their identity, a loss of power while the silence of cisgender people who had appropriate experiences for the life-script, signifies the power, power of not to speak, explain, or convince anybody about what they experienced since it is the canonical one. They remained silent and trans experienced children need to voice out their experiences and convince their parents and society.

The fifth theme was generated in the current study as emphasis on adolescence which points out the period that individuals may begin to experience identity crisis (Sandhu et al., 2012; Taylor & Oskay, 1995). The authors argued that in this period of lifetime, individuals may experience and perceive strict rules and regulations about their lives by their parents which create conflict between them. Parents also expect more responsibilities from their adolescent children and want them to have some sorts of adult-like attitudes and behaviors (Benson & Johnson, 2009). In accordance with the literature, participants who had emphases on their adolescent years stated conflicts with their parents and how parental control is increased towards their feminine attitudes and behaviors which were inconsistent with the assigned gender. This may also cause a greater conflict between them since both expectations of parents, and children's identity crisis and formations are in action in the adolescence period.

The last and the sixth theme of the current study is inner experience. In the current study, parent related intense memories of participants were outshined especially in the moments of parental rejection, and their coming out processes. In the literature there are studies consistent with the pattern of intense memories of the current study.

For instance, Syrjämäki and Hietanen (2019) suggested that there is a strong relationship between social exclusion and rejection, and memory. That is, people who are rejected or excluded are more prone to better remember social information, especially the personally important memories due to the basic need of belongingness. On the other hand, Fivush (2010) argued that culture gives prescriptions about appropriate ways of living for individuals. Accordingly, there are some experiences of people where they exceed the limits and deviate from the norms, and others who appropriately live their lives in accordance with the norms. The author argued that the importance of voice and silence lies in the differentiation in these experiences since they address the power relations in several ways. From this point of view, I can say that for parents, the canonical narrative which occurs as being a cisgender male and female were threatened by the trans experience of their children. She added that individuals who threatened the canonical narrative were purposefully silenced or could not be heard by the dominant narrative which may have occurred as choosing not to listen or not paying attention to the violators. This was observed in the findings of the current study as denying, being insensitive, employing control towards the child which signifies tries to get rid of those threats towards the canonical narrative, their life-scripts. The current study aims to propose that it partially explains the patterns of feeling of loneliness and helplessness of trans experienced women which appeared in their autobiographical memories. On the other hand, Fivush (2010) suggested that narratives of resistance are also formed by those who are silenced since they deviated from the norms of that culture, and they came together to create a novel narrative which is against the canonical narrative they were exposed to. As inner experience theme of the current study also demonstrated, participants mentioned how they found common experiences with other trans women which helped them to find their identity; how they had supportive chosen families and how they formed an intimate relationship with their friends which also lead them to create a new form of narrative: narrative of resistances. The author further suggested that resistance narratives help people to gain their power and voice, and to heal themselves, which also empower the people who deviated from the dominant narratives and were punished by being silenced and isolated.

4.2. Limitations

Although the current study provides original and novel parental experiences of trans experienced women, it has some limitations. First of all, parental experiences of participants were obtained retrospectively in this study since it is almost impossible to reach trans experienced children and their parents. As a result, using retrospective method with adults who identified themselves as trans women, trans experienced women, and trans femme was the best option for now even though a significant passage of time exists and may influence the memories of individuals. Second of all, the current study was conducted via online survey with two questions which limit the researcher to ask further questions to participants in order to reach the details of the memory, or other aspects of it. Third of all, the influence of both parents was not considered since there is no separate question for each parent. That's why some participants wrote down their memories about their moms, others about their dads. Exploring both parents' influence on trans experienced women's autobiographical memory and comparing them became impossible. Even though this study did not have an intention to make such exploration, it might help to develop a new perspective.

4.3. Implications

The current study provides a number of implications for researchers, psychologists, policy makers, people who work with children in general, and most importantly for parents. First of all, the current study reported significant maltreatment experiences of trans experienced women in their childhood which demonstrates the probability of future psychopathologies that these individuals may suffer from. That's why, developing intervention programs for both trans and gender nonconforming children, and their parents is urgent. It is because most parents struggle with how to approach their children when they face with their coming outs as trans, and their so called 'inconsistent' behaviors with assigned gender at birth, parents should be informed about how to access trans-related informative sources and how to handle the developmental process of their children (Pullen Sansfaçon et al., 2019). Regarding conflicts and stigmatization that trans experienced children most likely to exposed to

in the socialization process, Abreu et al. (2019), argued that parental support also would have a positive impact on children in terms of buffering adverse outcomes of discrimination and stigmatization. Finally, other researchers may be inspired by the outcomes of the current study which may open the way to conduct further studies for them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816 /

20 Mayıs 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Başak ŞAHİN ACAR

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Murat KORKMAZ'ın "Ebevyenler Tarafından Kabul
Görmenin Trans Deneyimli Kadınların Otobiyografik Belleklerinin Duygusal Tonu
Üzerindeki Etkisi" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun
görölmüş ve **190-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
İAEK Başkan Vekili

APPENDIX B. INFORMED CONCENT / ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü öğretim üyesi Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin Acar danışmanlığında ODTÜ Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Çalışmaları yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Lucis tarafından yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye’de yaşayan trans deneyimli kadınların anne ve babaları ile cinsiyet deneyimleri özelinde yaşadıkları kabul-red sürecinin bireylerin otobiyografik belleklerinin duygusal tonu üzerindeki etkisini anlamaya çalışmaktır.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden araştırmacının soracağı anne-babanız ve cinsiyet deneyiminiz ile ilişkili soruları cevaplamanız beklenmektedir. **Anılarınızdan bahsetmenizi isteyeceğimiz bu çalışma ailenizle geçirmiş olduğunuz olası cinsiyet temelli kötü anılarınızı hatırlamanıza sebep olabilir.** Bundan olumsuz bir şekilde etkileneceğinizi düşünüyorsanız, çalışmaya katılmamanızı öneririz. Çalışma yaklaşık olarak 25 dakika sürmektedir.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya kurum belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir.

Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımlınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Çalışma, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular veya uygulamalar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmayı yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmanın olduğu formu kapatmanız yeterli olacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Psikoloji Bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar (E-posta: basaks@metu.edu.tr) ya da Lucis (E-posta: korkmaz.murat@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki açıklamayı okudum. Çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ediyorum ve istediğim zaman çalışmadan ayrılabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin tez çalışmasında kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Evet

Hayır

APPENDIX C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

GENEL BAKIŞ

Keşfedici ve veriye dayalı bir çalışma olan bu çalışma, trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynleri ile ilişkili otobiyografik anılarını geriye dönük olarak araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Toplanan verilerin analizinde tematik analiz kullanılmıştır. Tematik analiz sonucunda kötü muamele, destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları, dönüm noktaları, cinsiyeti deneyimleme, içsel deneyim ve ergenliğe vurgu olmak üzere altı ana tema oluşturulmuştur. Makale boyunca ilgili temaları ve kalıpları kapsamlı bir şekilde açıklamak için, bu çalışmanın giriş bölümünde otobiyografik bellek, toplumsal cinsiyet ve kadın çalışmaları, ebeveynlik ve çocuklukta kötü muamele konuları ile ilgili güncel literatüre yer verilmiştir. Daha sonra sırasıyla yöntem, bulgular ve tartışma bölümleri sunulmuştur.

BÖLÜM 1

GİRİŞ

1.1. Otobiyografik Bellek

Zihinsel-yapısal bir terim olan belleğin kökenleri, Klein'a (2015) göre hatırlama, ve anımsamadır. Bu anılar, işleyen bellek, epizodik ve semantik bellek, kısa süreli ve uzun süreli bellek ve otobiyografik bellek gibi çeşitli kategorilere sahiptir (Tulving, 1972; Conway, 1996). Epizodik bellek, hatırlayanın deneyimlediği benzersiz kişisel ayrıntıları ve bölümleri içeren bir deneyim türü olarak kategorize edilirken semantik bellek, dünya hakkında genel, soyut ve zamansız bilgileri içeren bir bellek türü olarak kategorize edilmektedir (Tulving, 1986; Tulving, 2001). Conway (2009) tarafından epizodik bellek, deneyime yakın kayıtlar olarak da tanımlanır ve bu hatıraların aslında olayların kesin birebir kayıtları olmadığını vurgular. Tulving (2001) de epizodik belleğin, bireylerin ne olduğunun farkında olduğu bir tür bellek olduğunu, semantik belleğin ise daha çok benlikten bağımsız olarak oradaki şeyleri bilmeye benzediğini savunmaktadır.

Literatürde otobiyografik belleğin epizodik belleğe eşdeğer olup olmadığı konusunda bazı spekülasyonlar olmasına rağmen Conway (1996), otobiyografik belleğin birden fazla bilgi türünü içerdiğini öne sürmektedir. Bu sebeple de otobiyografik belleğin epizodik bellekle eşdeğer olamayacağını savunur. Ek olarak, Hoerl epizodik bellek ile otobiyografik bellek arasında net bir ayrım yapar. Hoerl (2007) makalesinde epizodik belleğin ayrıntılı geçmiş deneyim ve olaylardan oluştuğunu, otobiyografik belleğin ise kişinin benliğine güçlü göndermeler içeren anılardan oluştuğunu belirtmektedir. Nelson ve Fivush (2004), otobiyografik belleği, bireyin geçmiş deneyimlerini olayın gerçekleştiği kesin zaman ve belirli yer gibi birçok ayrıntısıyla hatırladığı açık bir bellek olarak da tanımlamaktadır. Pillemar ve Kuwabare (2012)

ayrıca otobiyografik belleğin sadece kişinin geçmişi olmadığını, aynı zamanda bireylerin mevcut düşüncelerini, davranışlarını, tutumlarını ve planlarını dönüştüren ve şekillendiren, yaşanmış göze çarpan ve duygusal olaylar olduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Conway ve Jobson'a (2012) göre, yaşam senaryoları ve tarihsel olaylar, otobiyografik bellek için bir temel sağlar. Örneğin, eski nesillerden edinilen yaşam senaryoları, yeni nesillerin yaşam senaryolarını şekillendirir. Yeni nesiller ebeveynlerinin yaşam senaryolarını tekrarlar, geliştirir ve ifade ederler. Başkalarının otobiyografik anılarıyla paylaşılan geçmiş, ailelerin, toplulukların ve kültürün değerlerini, hikayelerini ve geçmişlerini gelecek nesillere aktarmalarına da yardımcı olur (Fivush ve Nelson, 2004). Otobiyografik belleğin işlevlerine ilişkin başka bir bakış açısı, birçok araştırmacı tarafından belirtilmiştir. Conway (2005), otobiyografik belleğin işlevlerinden birinin, önemli yaşam değişikliklerine karşı öz kimliği sürdürmek olduğunu belirtmiştir. Yani otobiyografik bellek, bireylere geçmişte kim olduklarını, şimdi kim olduklarını ve gelecekte kim olacaklarını hatırlamalarını sağlar (Bluck, Alea, Habermas ve Rubin, 2005). Wilson ve Ross (2003) ayrıca, kişinin kendisi hakkında olumlu bir bakış açısına sahip olmasının otobiyografik belleğin temel işlevlerinden biri olduğunu ileri sürmektedir.

1.2. Toplumsal Cinsiyet

Toplumsal cinsiyet, erkek, kadın, trans, nonbinary gibi toplumsal olarak yapılandırılmış cinsiyet kategorilerine atıfta bulunan bir terimdir (Amerikan Psikoloji Derneği, 2015). Aynı zamanda toplumsal cinsiyet kültüre ve zamana bağlı olarak değişebilen çeşitli sosyal norm ve rollerden oluşmaktadır (Dünya Sağlık Örgütü, t.y.).

Transgender, kendilerine doğumda atanan cinsiyet ile cinsiyet kimlikleri uyuşmayan bireyleri tanımlamak için kullanılan bir terimdir (APA, 2015). Öte yandan, cisgender, doğumda atanan cinsiyeti kendi cinsiyet kimliğiyle eşleşen bireyleri tanımlamak için kullanılır. Ayrıca, cisgender 'transgender olmayan' anlamında da kullanılmaktadır (APA, 2015).

1.3. Ebeveynlik ve Çocuk Üzerindeki Sonuçları

1.3.1. Destekleyici Ebeveyn Uygulamaları

Ebeveyn desteği, çocuğa katılım, sıcaklık ve kabul gösterme gibi sevgi dolu nitelikler içeren; ebeveynlerin çocuklara yönelik tutum ve davranışları anlamına gelir (Huver ve diğerleri, 2010). Bu bölümde, bu çalışmanın ana temalarından biri olan destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamalarına ilişkin olarak ebeveynlik literatürü destek ve kabul açısından incelenmiş ve açıklanmıştır. Dix ve ark. (2004), gelişim sürecinde çocuğun gelişimsel yararlarını arttırdığından çocuğa karşı duyarlı ve destekleyici olmanın önemli olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Benzer şekilde McNeely ve Barber (2010) çocuğu cesaretlendirme, çocuğa görevlerde yardım etme, çocuğa karşı sözlü ve sözsüz sevgi gösterme gibi çeşitli ebeveynlik davranışlarını içeren ebeveyn desteğinin çocukların gelişimi için çok önemli olduğunu belirtmiştir. Rohner, Khaleque ve Cournoyer'e (2005) göre ebeveyn kabulü, çocuklara karşı ilgi, destek, sevgi, şefkat ve sıcaklık gibi özelliklerden oluşmaktadır. Destekleyici ebeveyn davranışları Dix ve diğerleri (2004) tarafından ise çocuğun isteklerine, ilgilerine ve arzularına yönelik ebeveynlerin anlık olarak eylemde bulunabilmesi şeklinde tanımlanmıştır. Khaleque (2015), sevildiğini, kabul edildiğini ve takdir edildiğini hisseden çocukların, kötü muamele gören çocuklara kıyasla daha iyi gelişimsel sonuçlara sahip olma olasılığının daha yüksek olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Benzer şekilde, Kim ve Rohner (2003), sevgi dolu ve kabullenici ebeveynler tarafından yetiştirilen çocukların, destekleyici olmayan ve reddeden ebeveynler tarafından yetiştirilen çocuklara göre daha iyi benlik duygusuna, daha olumlu bakış açısına, daha az bağımlılığa ve yeterli duygusal istikrara ve duyarlılığa sahip olma olasılıklarının daha yüksek olduğunu savunmaktadır.

1.3.2. Kötü Muamele

Cicchetti ve Toth'a (2005) göre, kötü muamele, çocukların biyolojik ve psikolojik gelişimlerinin kesintiye uğradığı patojenik bir ilişki ortamına maruz kalmaları anlamına gelmektedir. Bu bölümde, bu çalışmanın ana temalarından biri olan kötü

muamele ile ilişkin olarak ebeveynlik literatürü incelenmiş ve açıklanmıştır. Rohner'ın PARTheory'sine göre, ebeveyn sıcaklığı ve kabulünün olmadığı durumlarda ebeveyn reddi söz konusu olacaktır. Red, düşmanlık ve ihmal olarak her iki şekilde de ortaya çıkabilmektedir. Ebeveyn düşmanlığı, çocuğu duygusal ve/veya fiziksel olarak incitmek, çocukla alay etmek, ve çocuğa hakaret etmek amacıyla çocuğa yönelik kasıtlı saldırganlık olarak açıklanırken; ebeveyn ihmali, çocuğun fiziksel, psikolojik, ya da duygusal ihtiyaçlarını göz ardı etmek, gibi davranışlardan oluşmaktadır (Rohner ve Rohner, 1981; Rohner, Khaleque ve Cournoyer, 2005). Rohner ve Rohner (1981), ebeveynlerin çocuklarını ne ölçüde kısıtladıklarına ilişkin eylemlerini gösteren bir durum olan ebeveyn kontrolünden de bahsetmektedir. Ebeveynlerin çocuklara yönelik davranışları, çocuklar üzerinde baskı kurarak onların davranışlarını yönlendirmeyi ve manipüle etmeyi içeriyorsa, ebeveyn kontrolü kısıtlayıcı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Kısıtlayıcı kontrol, çocuğun ve özerkliğinin sürekli olarak sınırlandırılması anlamına da gelmektedir. Bowlby'ye (1982) göre, olumsuz çocukluk deneyimlerinin en az iki tür sonucu vardır. Her şeyden önce, çocuklukta yaşanan kötü muamele deneyimleri kişiyi gelecekteki olumsuz olaylara karşı daha savunmasız hale getirir. İkinci olarak, bu deneyimler bireylerin ileriki yaşamlarında daha fazla benzer deneyimler yaşama olasılıklarını artırmaktadır.

1.4. Literatür Taraması: Trans Deneyimli ve LGB Çocukların Ebeveynleri ile Deneyimleri

LGBTİA+ (lezbiyen, gey, biseksüel, transgender, interseks, aseksüel ve artı) kişilerin ebeveynlerine açılma sürecinin kritik önemini vurgulayan birçok çalışma bulunmaktadır. (Fuller ve Rutter, 2017; Ryan ve diğerleri, 2010). Gençlerin anne babalarına açılmadan önce bazılarının anne babalarının onların açılmalarına olumsuz tepki vereceğini düşündükleri için korku ve kaygı yaşadıkları tespit edilmiştir. Öte yandan bazı çocuklar ebeveynlerini korumak istediklerini ve onları duygusal ya da psikolojik olarak kırmak istemediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bu nedenleri göz önünde bulundurarak bazı çocuklar açılmalarını erteleme kararı almaktadırlar (Pullen Sansfaçon ve ark., 2021). Trans çocukların açılma sürecinden önce yaşadıkları diğer bazı duygu durumları ise korkuya ek olarak şiddet ve ebeveyn tarafından reddedilmeyi yordamak olarak tespit edilmiştir. Bu, reddedilme ve şiddet korkusu

nedeniyle ailelerine açılmayan çocukların, trans olduklarını bilerek yıllarca ebeveyn desteğinden yoksun kaldıkları anlamına gelmektedir (Medico ve ark., 2020). Pullen Sansfaçon ve ark. (2019), çocuğu cinsiyet uyum sürecinde olan ebeveynlerle bir çalışma yürütmüştür. Çalışmanın amaçlarından biri de açılma sonrasında ebeveyn tepkilerini görmektir. Bulgulara göre, ebeveynlerin, çocuklarının trans olduğunu öğrendiklerinde, kızma, durumu inkar etme, şaşırma, çocuğa inanmama, açık olma ve gurur duyma gibi tepkiler verdiklerini ifade ettikleri görülmüştür. Ek olarak, çocuklarını kabul etme sürecinde bir tür kayıp ve yas evresi yaşayan ebeveynler de vardır ve trans çocuklarının cisnormatif bir toplumdaki konumu ve güvenliği konusunda endişeleri olan ebeveynler de. Koken, Bimbi ve Parsons (2009) yirmi trans kadınla aile kabulü ve reddi bağlamında nitel bir çalışma yürütmüştür. Bu çalışmada ebeveyn tepkileriyle ilgili olarak sıcaklık ve şefkat, düşmanlık, saldırganlık, ve farklılaştırılmamış reddedilme gibi çeşitli temalar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bulgulara göre, katılımcıların yarısı ($n=10$) sözel ve sözel olmayan sevgi gösterilerinden bahsederken, sekiz katılımcı fiziksel şiddet, sözlü taciz ve evden ayrılmaya zorlanma gibi olumsuz tepkiler içeren düşmanlık ve saldırganlık yaşadıklarını bildirmiştir.

Feinstein ve ark. (2014), cinsel olarak azınlıklaştırılmış kişilerin sosyal damgalanma nedeniyle azınlık stresi yaşadıklarını ve bunun da reddedilme duyarlılığına neden olabileceğini öne sürmüşlerdir. Yazarlar, bu kadar incitici bir süreci engelleyebilecek birkaç faktörün olduğundan ve bunlardan birinin de ebeveyn desteği olduğundan bahsetmektedir. Benzer şekilde, Pullen Sansfaçon ve diğerleri (2019) ebeveyn desteği ve kabulünün trans gençlerin iyi oluşları için çok önemli olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

3-12 yaş arası 73 trans çocukla yapılan bir araştırma, ebeveyn kabulü ve desteği konusunda önemli sonuçlar ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışmada, genel aile desteğinin veya çocukların sosyal uyum süreçlerine başlamasına izin vermenin, trans çocuklar için daha iyi zihinsel sağlık sonuçları doğurabileceği öne sürülmektedir. Yani çocuğun cinsiyet deneyiminin kabul edilmesi ve doğumda kendisine atanan cinsiyet yerine günlük yaşamda cinsiyet kimliğiyle kendini sunmasına izin verilmesi, gelişimsel olarak “normal” seviyede depresyon ve anksiyete gözlemlenmesi ile

ilişkili bulunmuştur (Olson ve ark., 2016). Bebes ve ark. (2015) İsrailli LGBT ergenler ile yaptıkları çalışmada, ebeveyn kabulü mevcut olsa bile ebeveynlerin çocukları üzerinde psikolojik kontrol uygulamaları durumunda çocukların psikolojik semptomlarının arttığını bildirmiştir.

1.5. Mevcut Çalışma

Mevcut çalışma, trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynleri ile ilgili otobiyografik anılarını keşfetmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın üç araştırma hedefi şu şekilde oluşturulmuştur:

1. Trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynlerine açılma süreçlerini incelemek,
2. Ebeveynlerin trans çocuklarının cinsiyet rolleri ve ifadeleri ile ilgili tutum ve davranışlarına nasıl tepki verdiklerini ve çocukların ebeveynlerinin tepkilerinden nasıl etkilendiğini incelemek,
3. Trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveyn ilişkilerinin hem sosyal hem de cinsiyet uyum süreçleri göz önüne alındığında hangi yönlerde değiştiğini anlamaktır.

BÖLÜM 2

YÖNTEM

2.1. Örneklem

Katılımcılara ulaşmak için amaçsal örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Mevcut çalışmanın bir parçası olmak için katılımcıların 18 yaşından büyük olması ve kadın olarak trans deneyime sahip olması gerekmektedir. Başlangıçta, ankete katılan 143 kişi bulunmaktadır. 105 katılımcı anketi tamamlamadıkları sebebiyle analizden çıkarılmıştır. Bu eleme sonrasında kriterlere uymayan katılımcılar kontrol edilmiş ve araştırmanın cinsiyet deneyimi kriterlerini karşılamayan 11 katılımcı da analizden çıkarılmıştır. Nihai örneklem, hem anketi tamamlayan hem de dahil edilme kriterlerini karşılayan ($E_{\text{yaş}} = 26,51$ yıl, $SD = 5,68$) 27 katılımcıdan oluşmaktadır. Ayrıca son örnekleme kendini trans femme olarak tanımlayan 6 katılımcı yer almıştır. Bu durum çalışmanın katılımcı kriterlerine aykırı bulunmadığı için bu katılımcılar da çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Katılımcıların yaş aralığı 19 ile 42 arasındadır. Katılımcıların eğitim düzeyleri farklılık göstermektedir; bir katılımcı ilköğretim, on bir katılımcı lise, üç katılımcı ön lisans ve on iki katılımcı lisans mezunudur. Katılımcıların meslek grupları öğrenciler, performans sanatçıları, avukatlar, vinç operatörleri, öğretmenler, seks işçileri, DJ'ler, modeller, psikologlar, berberler, şeklinde görülmüştür. Demografik bilgilerde belirtildiği gibi kronik hastalığı olan dokuz katılımcı bulunmaktadır. Geri kalan katılımcıların ise herhangi bir kronik hastalığı yoktur. Katılımcıların dördü ailelerinin tek çocuğu iken, diğerlerinin en az bir kardeşi vardır. 17 katılımcı yedi yaşında/daha önce trans deneyimi yaşadıklarını fark ettiklerini belirtmiştir. Bu örnekleme trans deneyimi yaşıyor olmanın farkındalığı için en erken yaş üç yaş olarak belirtilirken, trans deneyim yaşadığının farkına varmanın en yüksek olduğu yaş yirmi olarak bildirilmiştir. 24 katılımcı ebeveynlerine trans deneyimleri konusunda açılırken, bir katılımcı ebeveynlerine açılmamış, bir katılımcı kısmi bir açılma olduğunu belirtmiş,

bir katılımcı ise rızası olmadan trans deneyiminin ebeveynleri tarafından öğrenildiğini belirtmiştir. Katılımcıların açılma yaşı değişkenlik göstermektedir. Bu örnekte anne babaya açılmada en erken yaş dokuz iken, diğer açılmalar 14 yaşından sonra meydana gelmiştir. Dört katılımcı anneleri ile iletişim kurmadıklarını bildirmiştir. Üçü, kopukluğun trans deneyimleriyle ilgili olduğunu belirtirken, bir katılımcı, kopukluğun trans deneyimiyle ilgili olmadığını belirtmiştir. 13 katılımcı babalarıyla iletişimlerinin olmadığını belirtmiştir. Bunlardan 10'u iletişim kopukluğunun trans deneyimleriyle ilgili olduğunu belirtirken, üç katılımcı kopukluğun cinsiyet deneyimleriyle ilgili olmadığını belirtmiştir. Ayrıca altı katılımcı ebeveynlerinin evlilik durumlarını boşanmış olarak belirtmiştir.

2.2. Veri Toplama Araçları

2.2.1. Demografik Bilgi Formu

Bu çalışmada demografik bilgiler bölümü toplam 16 sorudan oluşmaktadır. Sorular, katılımcıların yaşı, cinsiyeti, eğitim durumu, mesleği, kronik hastalığı, ebeveynlerinin eğitim durumu, kardeş sayısı, trans deneyimlerini ilk fark etme zamanları ve ebeveynlerine açılıp açılmadıkları, ebeveynleri ile aralarındaki ilişkinin nasıl olduğu, ve ebeveynleriyle ilişkilerinin şu an devam edip etmediği ile ilgili sorulardır.

2.2.2. Otobiyografik Anılar Ölçeği

Anketin ikinci bölümünde ise katılımcılardan anılarını hatırlamaları ve yazmaları istenmektedir. Bu kısım iki ayrı sorudan oluşmaktadır. İlk soru, katılımcıların doğdukları andan itibaren ebeveynleri ile ilgili genel anıları ile ilgilidir. Şu şekilde sorulmuştur: *“Şimdi ebeveynlerinizle birlikte geçirdiğiniz doğumunuzdan bugüne olan süreci düşünmenizi istiyoruz. Lütfen bu süreç içinde ebeveynlerinizle yaşadığınız ve sizin için önemli olan bir anınızı anlatınız.”* İkinci soru ise, katılımcıların trans bir deneyim yaşadıklarını fark ettikleri andan sonraki ebeveynleri ile ilişkili anılarını görmeye yöneliktir. Bu soru şu şekilde sorulmuştur: *“Cinsiyetinize dair trans bir deneyim yaşadığınızı fark ettiğiniz andan sonraki süreci düşünmenizi*

istiyoruz. Lütfen bu süreç içinde ebeveynlerinizle yaşadığınız ve sizin için önemli olan bir anınızı anlatınız.”

2.3. Prosedür ve Veri Toplama

Mevcut çalışma, tamamlanması için çevrimiçi bir anket gerektirmektedir. Çevrimiçi anket, Qualtrics Online Survey Software kullanılarak hazırlanmıştır. Veriler toplanmadan önce Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu’ndan etik izin istenmiştir. Komiteden onay alındıktan sonra anket çevrimiçi olarak dağıtılmıştır. Anket, Facebook, Twitter ve Instagram gibi çeşitli sosyal medya platformlarında çeşitli LGBTİA+ gruplarıyla paylaşılmıştır. Trans kadın aktivistlerden de anketi arkadaşları ve kitleleri ile paylaşmaları istenmiştir. Anket, araştırmaya gönüllü katılım formu, bir demografik bilgi formu ve iki soru içeren bir otobiyografik anılar anketinden oluşmaktadır.

2.4. Veri analizi

Mevcut çalışmanın veri analizinde, Braun ve Clarke (2006) tarafından önerilen şekilde tematik analiz uygulanmıştır. Aşamalar Tablo 2’de gösterilmiştir.

Table 2. Tematik Analiz Aşamaları

Aşama	Tanım
1. Veriyi Tanımlamak	Metinleri okuma ve yeniden okuma, metinlerle ilgili ilk fikirleri yazma.
2. İlk Kodlama	Her metnin ilginç noktalarını kodlamak ve veri seti içinde ortak kalıpları veya kategorileri bulmaya çalışmak.
3. Tema Oluşturma	Kodları potansiyel temalar halinde toplamak, ortak örüntülere göre temalar oluşturmaya başlamanın ilk aşaması.
4. Potansiyel Temaları Gözden Geçirme	Potansiyel temaların hem ilk kodlama hem de tüm veri seti ile tutarlı olup olmadığının kontrol edilmesi.
5. Temaları Tanımlama ve Adlandırma	Temaların hem ilk kodlama hem de tüm veri için uygunluğunu kontrol ettikten sonra, her tema için net tanımlar ve adlar oluşturma.
6. Raporun Hazırlanması	Son aşama, analizi araştırma sorusu ve literatürle ilişkilendirme ve analiz raporunu üretme.

*Not. “Using thematic analysis in psychology.” by Braun, V., & Clarke, V., 2006, *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>*

BÖLÜM 3

BULGULAR

3.1. Bulgular

Toplanan verilerin detaylı analizinden sonra altı ana tema oluşturulmuştur. Ana temalar; *kötü muamele, destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları, dönüm noktaları, cinsiyeti deneyimleme, ergenliğe vurgu ve içsel deneyim* olarak oluşturulmuştur. Bazı temaların da kendi alt temaları bulunmaktadır.

Kötü muamele ana teması tehdit, cezalandırma ve ebeveynin genel kötü muamesi başlıklarıyla üç alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Bulgulara göre, otobiyografik anılarında: katılımcıların %29,6'sı ($n=8$) tehditle ilgili; %51,8'i ($n=14$) cezalandırma ile ilgili; %51,8'i ($n=14$) ebeveynin genel kötü muamesine ilişkin deneyimlerinden bahsetmektedir. Toplamda, kötü muamele ana teması katılımcıların %66,6'sında ($n=18$) gözlemlenmiştir.

Destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları ana teması, kabul edilme, ebeveyn koruması ve desteği, ve açık fikirlilik başlıklarıyla üç alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların %44,4'ü ($n=12$) kabul edilme; %37'si ($n=10$) ebeveyn koruması ve desteği ile ilgili; %37'si ($n=10$) açık fikirlilikle ilgili otobiyografik anılardan bahsetmiştir. Toplamda, destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları ana teması katılımcıların %55,5'inde ($n=15$) gözlemlenmiştir.

Üçüncü ana tema olan dönüm noktaları dikkate alındığında, katılımcıların %40,7'si ($n=11$) otobiyografik anılarında dönüm noktalarından bahsetmiştir.

Cinsiyeti deneyimleme ana teması, cinsiyet uyum süreci, açılma, gerçek benliği gizleme, ve toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve ifadesi başlıklarıyla dört alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların %29,6'sı ($n=8$) cinsiyet uyum süreci ile ilgili; %40,7'si ($n=11$) açılma ile ilgili; %18,5'i ($n=5$) gerçek benliği gizleme ile ilgili; %55,5'i ($n=15$) toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve ifadesi ile ilgili otobiyografik anılarından bahsetmiştir. Toplamda, cinsiyeti deneyimleme ana teması katılımcıların %88,8'inde ($n=24$) gözlemlenmiştir.

İçsel deneyim ana teması, iç durum, ve yakın ve samimi ilişkiler başlıklarıyla iki alt temadan oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların %66,6'sı ($n=18$) iç durum ile ilgili; %11,1'i ($n=3$) yakın ve samimi ilişkiler ile ilgili otobiyografik anılarından bahsetmiştir. Toplamda, içsel deneyim ana teması katılımcıların %66,6'sında ($n=18$) gözlemlenmiştir.

Altıncı ve son ana tema olan ergenliğe vurgu dikkate alındığında, katılımcıların %22,2'si ($n=6$) otobiyografik bellek anlatılarında ergenliğe ve ergenlik yıllarına vurgu yapmıştır.

BÖLÜM 4

TARTIŞMA

4.1. Tartışma

Bildiğimiz kadarıyla mevcut çalışma, trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynlerine yönelik otobiyografik anılarını keşfetmeye yönelik ilk girişimdir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular, kötü muamele, destekleyici ebeveyn uygulamaları, dönüm noktaları, cinsiyeti deneyimleme, içsel deneyim ve ergenliğe vurgu olmak üzere altı ana temayı ortaya koymaktadır. Mevcut çalışma birkaç nedenden dolayı önemlidir. Bu çalışma, toplumsal cinsiyet ve kadın çalışmalarının güncel konularından birini, kapsamını genişleterek ve gelişim psikolojisi ve otobiyografik bellek araştırmaları gibi diğer disiplinleri de içine alarak multidisipliner bir yaklaşımla sunmaktadır. Otobiyografik bellek literatüründe trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveyn ilişkilerini inceleyen çok fazla çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Ayrıca, gelişim psikolojisi literatüründe trans deneyimli kişilerle ilgili çalışmalar çoğunlukla cinsiyet ve kimlik gelişimi (örn. Olson, Key & Eaton, 2015; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014; Steensma & Cohen-Kettenis, 2018; Boskey, 2014; Fast & Olson, 2017), ve trans çocukların ve gençlerin toplumsal cinsiyet sosyalleşmesi (örn. Riggs & Bartholomaeus, 2015) ile ilgilidir. Ek olarak bu alanda ebeveyn-çocuk ilişkisi çoğunlukla cisgender odaklı bir yaklaşımla incelenmiş ve bilimsel araştırmaların cis merkezli kökenlerinin bir sonucu olarak sadece cisgender çocukları ve ebeveyn ilişkilerini içerecek şekilde teorileştirilmiştir. Ana hedeflerden biri trans deneyimli kadınların otobiyografik anılarından oluşturulan kalıpları ve temaları tematik analiz yoluyla keşfetmek olduğundan, bu çalışma metodolojik olarak keşfedici, tümevarımcı ve veriye dayalı bir çalışmadır. Literatürün farklı alanlarındaki boşlukları, yukarıda bahsettiğim gibi, göz önünde bulundurarak, trans deneyimli kadınların yaşadıklarını kendi sözcükleri ile anlatmalarına olanak tanıyarak onların ebeveyn otobiyografik anılarını sunmak,

toplumsal cinsiyet ve kadın çalışmaları için olduğu kadar diğer bilim dalları için de yeni ve özgün bir içerik sunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada ilk tema, çocuğu tehdit etme ve cezalandırma, çocuğu kontrol etme ve sözlü taciz gibi çeşitli örüntülerin gözlemlendiği kötü muamele ana teması olarak oluşturulmuştur. Mevcut çalışmanın bulgularıyla tutarlı olarak, bir çalışma göstermiştir ki %62 ($n=56$) ebeveynler doğumda kendilerine atanan cinsiyete uygun olmayan cinsiyet rolleri ve ifadeleri bulunan çocuklarının tutum ve davranışlarını özellikle çocukluk ve ergenlik yıllarında cinsiyet normlarına uygun biçimlere getirmeye, değiştirmeye çalışmaktadırlar. (Catalpa ve McGuire, 2018). Bu, çocuk üzerinde ebeveyn kontrolü anlamına gelmektedir. Ayrıca literatürde yer alan diğer iki çalışma, çocukların itaatsizlik veya onaylanmayan davranışlarında ebeveynlerin tehdit, suçluluk uyandırma, reddetme ve sevgiyi geri çekme gibi davranışlarda bulunmalarının çocuğun psikolojik kontrolü olarak sınıflandırılabilirliğini öne sürmüştür (Barber, 1996; León-Del-Barco ve diğerleri, 2019). Çocuğa yönelik bu tür ebeveyn eğilimleri ve kısıtlamaları, mevcut çalışmada ebeveyn kontrolü (bazen çocuğun cezalandırılmasına kadar uzanan) olarak da kodlanmıştır. Ek olarak, bazı ebeveynler, mevcut araştırmanın bulgularına göre, çocuklarının trans olduğunu öğrendikleri andan itibaren çocuklarıyla ilişkilerini kesmiş ve onları terk etmiştir. Catalpa ve McGuire (2018) de mevcut çalışmanın bulgularına benzer olarak, kendilerini transgender olarak tanımlayan katılımcıların %43'ünün ($n=39$) ebeveynlerine trans olarak açıldıktan sonra ailelerinde kalıcı ayrılıklar yaşadıklarını bildirmişlerdir.

Ek olarak, trans olarak açılan çocuklarına yönelik ebeveyn tepkileri düşünüldüğünde mevcut çalışma bu tepkilerin onur kültürü ile ilişkili olabileceğini vurgulamayı önemli bulmaktadır. Cohen ve Nisbett (1994), sosyal imajın ve ailenin korunmasının onur kültürlerinde önemli bir öneme sahip olduğunu savunmaktadır. Normal yasa veya düzen etkili olmadığında veya bazı insan gruplarını içermediğinde, güç ve hiyerarşi, yazarların da belirttiği gibi onur kültürü tarafından ele geçirilir ve o toplumun yerleşik ve baskın yapısı haline gelir. Aileler tarafından atfedilebilen veya kazanılabilen onur, bu değerlerin korunması, sosyal imajın sürdürülmesi ve başkalarının gözünde onu küçük düşürmemekle yakından ilişkilidir (Moxnes, 1993).

Yazar ayrıca birçok kültürün ataerkil kökleri düşünüldüğünde, patriyarkal erkekliğin onurunun ve kadın üzerindeki koruyucu eğilimlerinin toplumsal olarak kurgulanmış bir gerçeklik olduğunu ileri sürmüştür. Erkekler için kadın namusunun korunması sadece kadının onurunun korunması değil, aynı zamanda o erkeklerin ve ailelerinin de onur ve namusunun korunması anlamına da geldiği için önemlidir. Kadınların kültürel normlar açısından uygun olmayan eylem ve davranışları (ör. bekareti kaybetme) olduğunda bu, bir bütün olarak ailenin onurunu etkilemekte ve onlarda utanç duygusu uyandırmaktadır. Literatürde, namus kültürlerinde üyelerin onurlarına yönelik aşağılayıcı eylemlere ve tehditlere karşı saldırgan ve şiddetli tepkiler verdiklerini öne süren birçok çalışma bulunmaktadır. Çoğu zaman, aile veya grup üyeleri, aile onuruna yönelik aşağılayıcı eylemlerinden dolayı kişiyle yüzleşmek ve onu sorumlu tutmak istemektedir (Henry, 2009; Rodriguze Mosquera ve diğerleri, 2008). Trans deneyimli kişiler ve özellikle trans deneyimli çocuklar, onur kültürü literatürünün önerdiği gibi yasalar ve sosyal normlar tarafından korunmamaktadır. Bu, tıpkı onur kültürüne ilişkin literatüründe önerdiği gibi bir toplumda onur kültürü kurallarının baskın olmasına ve bireyleri normlara uygun veya normlardan sapmış olup olmadıklarını değerlendirme hakkını kendinde bulundurmasına, sapmaları durumunda ise cezalandırılmaları veya bir birey olarak gizlenmeye zorlanmalarına yol açar. Onur kültürü literatürüne benzer şekilde, bu çalışmadaki ebeveynler de çocuğun trans deneyimini değersizleştirerek ve aşağılayarak çocuklarına yönelik cezalar (örneğin; reddetme, duygusal ve finansal kesintiler uygulama, sözlü olarak taciz etme), tehditler (örneğin; ölüm tehditleri) ve çeşitli ebeveyn kontrol stratejileri kullanmışlardır.

Mevcut çalışmanın bir diğer ana teması da cinsiyeti deneyimlemedir. Bu çalışma, Fivush'un güç kaybı (loss of power) ve ses kaybı (loss of voice) kavramlarının, cinsiyeti deneyimleme ana temasının içerdiği çeşitli örüntülerle güçlü bir şekilde ilişkili olduğunu vurgulamayı önemsemektedir. Fivush'un (2010) belirttiği gibi, toplumsal olarak inşa edilen ses ve sessizlik, bireyin benliği ve gücü için önemlidir. Yazar, bireylerin hem başkaları tarafından susturularak hem de kendilerini susturarak güç kaybı ve benlik kaybı yaşayabileceğini iddia etmektedir. Mevcut çalışmada trans deneyimli kadınlar, Fivush'un (2010) makalesinde de önerdiği gibi, ebeveynleri tarafından reddedilmemek ve onlarla ilişkilerini sürdürmek için kendilerini

susturmuşlardır. Mevcut çalışmada trans deneyimli kadınların gerçek benliğini gizleme ve açılmama örüntüleri Fivush'un kavramları ışığında güç kaybı ve ses kaybı olarak yaşanmaktadır.

Ayrıca mevcut çalışma trans deneyimli kadınların ve genel olarak LGBTİA+'ların açılma sürecini, açılma sürecinin zorunlu özelliğini, başka bir perspektiften ele almayı da gerekli bulmaktadır. Aynı makalede Fivush, normların sınırlarını aşan ve egemen anlatıların beklentilerini karşılamayan kişilerin, hem normları hem de yaşam senaryolarını neden ihlal ettiklerini açıklamak zorunda bırakıldıklarına dikkat çekmektedir. Normları ve yaşam senaryolarını ihlal edenler için (örneğin, mevcut çalışmada trans çocuklar), Fivush'un belirttiği gibi, açıklayıcı anlatı bir zorunlulukken, cisgender çocukların cisgender olarak ebeveynlerine açılması gerekmemektedir çünkü baskın anlatının bir parçası ve sürdürücüsü olan cisgender çocuklar yaşam senaryolarına uygun deneyimleri ile topluma herhangi bir açıklama borçlu değildir. Yani trans ve queer çocukların buradaki sesi ve açılmaları, kimliklerinin meşrulaştırılması ihtiyacını ve güç kaybını (loss of power) ifade ederken; yaşam senaryosuna uygun deneyimlere sahip cisgender kişilerin sessizliği, konuşmama gücünü ifade etmektedir. Tıpkı Fivush'un makalesinde de tartıştığı şekilde, sessizlik güç kaybı olabildiği gibi bir güç pozisyonundan da gelebilmektedir.

Mevcut çalışmanın son ve altıncı teması içsel deneyimdir. Fivush (2010), direniş anlatılarının kültürün normlarından saptığı için susturulanlar tarafından oluşturulduğunu ve maruz kaldıkları kanonik anlatıya karşı yeni bir anlatı oluşturmak için bir araya geldiklerini öne sürmektedir. Mevcut çalışmanın içsel deneyim temasının da gösterdiği gibi, katılımcılar diğer trans deneyimli kadınlarla karşılaşma anlarında kendi kimliklerini bulmalarına yardımcı olan ortak deneyimler bulduklarından; kendilerini destekleyen ve güvende hissettikleri seçilmiş ailelere sahip olduklarından, ve arkadaşlarıyla yakın, kabul edildikleri ve romantik ilişkiler kurduklarından bahsetmektedirler. Bu tıpkı Fivush'un direniş anlatılarında da önerdiği gibi trans deneyimli kadınların yeni bir anlatı biçimi yaratmış olduklarına işaret etmektedir: bir tür direniş anlatısı. Yazar ayrıca direniş anlatılarının insanların seslerini kazanmalarına ve kendilerini iyileştirmelerine yardımcı olduğuna, bunun da

baskın anlatılardan sapan, susturularak ve tecrit edilerek cezalandırılan insanları güçlendirdiğine vurgu yapmaktadır.

4.2. Çalışmanın Kısıtlılıkları

Mevcut çalışma, bildiğimiz kadarıyla trans deneyimli kadınların ebeveynleri ile ilişkili otobiyografik anılarını keşfetmeye yönelik ilk girişim olsa da bazı kısıtlılıklar içermektedir. Bu çalışmada öncelikle trans deneyimli çocuklara ve ebeveynlerine ulaşmak neredeyse imkansız olduğundan, yetişkin katılımcıların ebeveynleri ile olan deneyimleri geriye dönük olarak elde edilmiştir. Geriye dönük yöntemin kullanılması, aradan çok uzun zaman geçmesi ve bireylerin anılarını hatırlama şekillerinin bu süreçten etkilenmesi anlamına geldiğinden bir kısıtlılık oluştursa da, şu an için en iyi seçenektir.

İkinci olarak, mevcut çalışma, bahsedildiği üzere iki soru ile çevrimiçi anket yoluyla yapılmıştır. Bu ise araştırmacının anıların detaylarına veya diğer yönlerine ulaşmak için katılımcılara daha fazla soru sormasını sınırlayan bir yöntemdir.

Üçüncüsü, anılar anketinde her bir ebeveyn için ayrı birer soru olmadığından her iki ebeveynin çocuk üzerindeki etkisi ayrı ayrı gözlemlenememiştir. Bu nedenle, bazı katılımcılar anneleriyle, bazıları ise babalarıyla ilgili anılarından bahsetmektedirler. Bu sebeple her iki ebeveynin katılımcıların otobiyografik anıları üzerindeki etkisini keşfetmek ve bunları karşılaştırmak imkansız hale gelmiştir. Her ne kadar bu çalışma böyle bir inceleme yapma niyetinde olmasa da, bu etkinin göz önünde bulundurulması yeni bir bakış açısı geliştirmeye yardımcı olabilir.

4.3. Etkileri

Mevcut çalışma, araştırmacılar, psikologlar, politika yapıcılar, genel olarak çocuklarla çalışan insanlar ve en önemlisi ebeveynler için bir takım çıkarımlar sunmaktadır. Her şeyden önce, bu çalışma, trans deneyimli kadınların erken yaşlarda yaşadıkları kritik kötü muamele deneyimlerini bildirmektedir. Bu, bize bireylerin gelecekte maruz kalabileceği psikopatolojilerin olasılığını göstermektedir. Bu

nedenle hem trans hem de gender non-conforming çocuklar ve ebeveynleri için müdahale programlarının geliştirilmesi acil bir gerekliliktir. Çoğu ebeveyn, trans olarak açılan ve/veya toplumsal cinsiyet normlarına uygun tutum ve davranışları olmayan çocuklarına nasıl yaklaşımları gerektiği konusunda zorluklar yaşamaktadır. Bu sebeple ebeveynlerin trans cinsiyet deneyimi ile ilgili bilgilendirici kaynaklara nasıl ulaşabilecekleri ve trans deneyimli çocuklarının gelişim sürecini nasıl yönetebilecekleri konusunda bilgilendirilmeleri çok önemlidir. (Pullen Sansfaçon ve diğerleri, 2019). Ek olarak, mevcut çalışma diğer araştırmacıların üzerine düşünebileceği ve esinlenerek ileri çalışmalar yapabilecekleri bulgular sunmaktadır.

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