# MIGRATION OF HIGH-QUALIFIED TURKISH WOMEN FROM TÜRKIYE: DESKILLING AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

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# MIGRATION OF HIGH-QUALIFIED TURKISH WOMEN FROM TÜRKIYE: DESKILLING AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

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Migration of High-Qualified Turkish Women from Türkiye:

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# DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Akife Alan, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

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ABSTRACT

Migration of High-Qualified Turkish Women from Türkiye:

Deskilling and New Opportunities

This thesis focuses on the post-migration experiences of highly qualified immigrant women from Türkiye. Based on the social media group called “Migrant Women,” the reasons for the migration of qualified immigrant women, the issues they have difficulty with after migration, the process of re-entering business life after migration, and their future perspectives were examined. The interviews with 15 people were evaluated from an intersectional perspective on Bourdieu's concept of capital. In addition, women's marriage, children, divorce, and similar processes and their effects on women's lives before and after migration have been tried to be understood with the concept of 'vital conjunctures' of Johnson-Hanks.

It was evident from the interviews that the women faced numerous challenges after migration. These included a lack of language skills, discriminatory attitudes and behaviors, a deficit in social connections, and the emotional toll of loneliness and deskilling. To counter the loss of social capital, highly qualified migrant women form social media groups, such as the Migrant Women group. Highly qualified immigrant women have shown impressive initiative in the face of deskilling after migration. They have taken the lead in starting new training programs, driven by their plans for migration, displaying their ability to take charge of their own adaptation. It has also been observed that the validity of these capitals after migration varies depending on variables such as race and gender, shedding light on the intricate and multifaceted dynamics of post-migration experiences.

# ÖZET

## Türkiye'den Yüksek Nitelikli Kadınların Göçü:
## Niteliksizleşme ve Yeni Fırsatlar

Bu tezde Türkiye'den göç etmiş yüksek nitelikli göçmen kadınların göç sonrası deneyimlerine odaklanılmaktadır. Göçmen kadınlar isimli sosyal medya grubundan yola çıkarak nitelikli göçmen kadınların göç etme sebepleri, göç sonrası zorlandıkları konular, göç sonrasında yeniden iş hayatına giriş süreçleri ve gelecek perspektifleri irdelenmiştir. 15 kişiyle gerçekleştirilen mülakatlardan çıkan sonuçlar Bourdieu'nun sermaye kavramı ve kesişimsel bakış açısı ile değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca kadınların evlilik, çocuk, boşanma ve benzeri süreçleri ve bunların kadınların göç öncesi ve sonrası yaşamlarına etkisi Johnson- Hanks'ın "hayati konjektür" kavramı ile anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Görüşme yapılan kadınların göç sonrası en çok zorlandıkları konuların dil sermayesinin eksikliği, ayrımcı tutum ve davranışlar, sosyal sermayenin yokluğu ve bunun getirdiği yalnızlık ve niteliksizleşme olduğu görülmüştür. Nitelikli göçmen kadınlar göç sonrası kaybedilen sosyal sermayeyi göçmen kadınlar gibi oluşturdukları sosyal medya grupları sayesinde bir nebze hafifletmeye çalışmaktadır. Yüksek nitelikli göçmen kadınların göç sonrasında yaşadıkları niteliksizleşme durumunu aşmak için yeni eğitimlere başladıkları ve bu yeni eğitimlere başlama motivasyonlarının göçe dair gelecek planları ile bağlantılı olduğu görülmüştür. Niteliksizleşme yaşamayan kadınların durumunda ise Türkiye'den edinilen kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik sermayenin etkileri görülmüştür. Bu sermayelerin göç sonrası geçerliliğinin ırk ve cinsiyet gibi değişkenlere bağlı olarak değişkenlik gösterdiği de gözlemlenmiştir.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| METU | Middle East Technical University |
| TUIK | Turkish Statistical Institute |
| TTB | *Türk Tabipler Birliği* Turkish Medical Association |
| TÖMER | *Türkçe Öğretim Merkezi* Turkish Education Center |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| USA | United States of America |
| UK | United Kingdom |

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

In a post on the immigrant women's social media account at the beginning of 2022, the success of a Turkish scientist living in the USA was mentioned:

> "Associate Professor, one of the Chicago-based members of the Immigrant Women group and Director of the ALS Research Centre at Northwestern University in the USA. Dr. Hande Özdinler became one of the ten scientists who made the best inventions.
>
> Dr. is the hope of ALS patients with her successful work on reviving the motor neuron cells that cause ALS disease. Hande Özdinler explained that she started this work for her brother, whom she lost due to a brain hemorrhage.
>
> The scientific studies of Hande Özdinler, who studied molecular biology at Boğaziçi University and then completed her master's degree in genetic biotechnology at Boğaziçi University, brought her the Harvard Centre for Nervous System Repair award. Özdinler was also listed as one of the 10 "Best Inventor" scientists by the "International Innovation" magazine in 2015.
>
> We congratulate her and thank her on behalf of humanity."[1]

These and similar posts made me question whether the story of women among successful Turks living abroad is being told enough. Although the successes of the Turkish Diaspora, which lived abroad, especially in Germany, with the labor migration agreements in the 1960s and has now reached the fourth and even the fifth generation, were brought to the agenda from time to time, the perception about women was that they were "dependent immigrants." When Uğur Şahin and Özlem Türeci found the Biontech vaccine, Google's mention of Özlem Türeci as "Uğur Şahin's wife" may be the most striking example of this perception.

However, another problem was that people in the migration flow called "brain drain" or "high-qualified migration" were seen as immigrants who quickly achieved

[1] See Appendix D

the best of everything and did not suffer any problems. Was it really like this? Alternatively, to whom was this situation valid?

When I followed the account of immigrant women and looked at the literature regarding the situation of immigrant women, I saw that there was a decrease in the social status of immigrant women after migration. On the other hand, the posts on this social media account about 'successful' immigrant women, as I gave the example above, were not insignificant. They shed light on immigrant women's challenges and the need for support and understanding.

Rather than looking at highly qualified immigrants as 'lucky' immigrants who can easily access everything or as people who have to work below their qualifications, this thesis study examines how all these processes develop from the eyes of the subjects. It is a thesis study set out with the aim of fostering understanding and empathy towards the experiences of immigrant women.

## 1.1 Research question

The posts on the "migrant women" social media account inspired this study. I started following the immigrant women's social media account on my Instagram account. I was interested in reading about the difficulties faced by women who migrated abroad and their experiences, disappointments, or success stories shared on this account. Thanks to these women's posts, I realized a side I did not know about life abroad. I found it very valuable to read about the re-establishment of life abroad and what happened in this process from the eyes of the women, to see the issues in the middle of daily life, such as grocery shopping, learning a new language, going to the doctor, registering the child to school, told by the actors themselves.

In fact, living abroad was something I was familiar with. I knew about the "Turkish Diaspora" due to the institution I worked for. However, reading migration stories from the perspective of women's experiences, especially from the eyes of educated and qualified women, was personally and academically interesting. I was reading stories that sometimes intersected with women's experiences in labor migration in the 1960s but sometimes contained very different problems and needs. Moreover, this situation showed that the profile of immigrant women was also changing. What is life like after migration for qualified migrant women? This question led me to write this thesis.

The Instagram account, initially named 'migrant mothers,' later changed its name to 'migrant women.' This change in nomenclature piqued my interest, as it highlighted women's self-identification as being based on 'femininity' rather than 'motherhood.' This shift in focus was significant in the context of the development of feminist consciousness and the changing profile of feminization of migration. It prompted me to delve deeper into the challenges faced by women in their new lives after migration, the influence of family, the country of migration, the ideas and experiences brought from Türkiye, and how they coped with these difficulties.
As social media has become an integral part of our lives, especially with the expanded usage during the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact on immigrants has become increasingly apparent. The need to understand the role of social media in allowing immigrants to share their stories in their own language, connect with others from their country, and maintain ties with their homeland has never been more pressing. [2]

[2] Social media platforms are functional for migrants in accessing information, communicating, emotional transfer, establishing intercultural relationships, identity, and participation, and have turned both forced and voluntary immigrants into digitally connected migrants. (Leurs& Prabhakar, 2018, pp. 247-248)

While determining my master's thesis topic, the central question of my research was how migrant women who migrated abroad from Türkiye mobilized the capital they brought before migration in order to survive in a new country in the post-migration period or what their strategies were to gain new forms of capital after migration. By constructing the study through "migrant women" social media accounts, I wanted to examine mainly the women who follow this account and their stories. What are the difficulties women face after migration? What is the relationship between their status of being unqualified or not and the capital they possess? What are the motivations of women who have just started a new education or chose a new career path after migration?

## 1.2 The significance of investigating the migration trends of highly qualified Turkish women

There is a growing perception, fueled by media reports and social media posts, that the migration of qualified individuals from Türkiye to other countries is on the rise. This perception is not unfounded. While the existing data provides some insights into the migration patterns of university graduates and professionals, there is a pressing need for more comprehensive information to understand the full extent of this trend. For example, according to the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) data, only 59 doctors applied for a good conduct certificate that allowed them to work abroad in 2012 (cited in Danış, pg. 9). This number reached 3,015 in 2023. In the first four months of 2024, 681 physicians applied for a good conduct certificate. (TTB) After seeing these statistics, I asked if they had a gender distribution. They informed me that in 2023, 1314 women (43.44%) and 1711 men (56.56%) applied, while in the first six months of 2024, 576 women (45.82%) and 681 men (54.18%) applied.

Although the number of women is lower than that of men, these statistics show that the difference is not very high and that female healthcare workers are migrating abroad (or intend to migrate) almost as much as their male counterparts.

When I decided to write this thesis, I requested information from TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute) regarding the education and gender of people migrating abroad. Although there is gender and province information on migration abroad in the statistics sent to me, there is no information on people's education. The statement, "information about the country of emigration, marital status, educational status, profession, employment status and reason for migration, which is not available for the population migrating abroad, could not be provided" has been said. Accordingly, excluding the migration of foreign nationals and looking at the migration rates of only Turkish citizens between 2016 and 2019 in terms of male and female distribution, 33,002 Turkish female citizens immigrated in 2019. This number was 25,506 in 2016. For men, it was 43,820 in 2016 and 51,861 in 2019.

It is also relatively new that migration abroad has started to be included in statistics. In the statement sent to me, “Within the scope of international migration statistics, only migration information from abroad was recorded from the 1975-2000 period population censuses. However, as a result of the studies carried out on existing administrative records, information on migration coming from abroad and going abroad was recorded for the first time in 2018 for the years 2016 and 2017, based on administrative records," it has been said.

Since the statistics contain general information, there is a crucial need to obtain gender-specific data about why people migrate (finding a job, marriage, education, etc.). However, since gender distribution is not given to us along with individuals' educational status, it is impossible to distinguish between qualified

immigrant women and qualified immigrant men. Since this study is inspired by the 'migrant women' account, it focuses on women. Still, it is essential to conduct both quantitative and qualitative studies on men and compare migration conditions and processes to understand the gender dimension of the issue.

However, when we look at the latest published migration statistics of TUIK, the number of people migrating abroad from Türkiye increased by 62.3% in 2022 compared to the previous year, reaching 466 thousand 914. 55.7% of the immigrant population was men, and 44.3% was women. Of the population going abroad from Türkiye, 139 thousand 531 were Turkish citizens, and 327 thousand 383 were foreign nationals. (TUIK, 2024)

The age groups of the population migrating from Türkiye show that the highest number of immigrants is in the 25-29 age group, with 15.8%. The 30-34 age group, with 13.4%, and the 20-24 age group, with 12.8%, followed this age group. The fact that the ages of the women I interviewed are between 28-44 is meaningful as it is proportional to the age group that most migrate from Türkiye. (TUIK, 2024) The distribution of the population migrating from Türkiye by province shows that İstanbul has the highest number of immigrants, with 39.5%. Ankara followed İstanbul with 9.8%, Antalya with 6.7%, Samsun with 3.4%, and Izmir with 3%. As mentioned above, there is no data on whether these people immigrated as qualified immigrants, but Türkiye's developed provinces and cities with good universities are İstanbul and Ankara. It is possible to establish a correlation between these two situations. (TUIK, 2024)

While we need more specific data on the migration of educated women, studies on the intentions and reasons of educated women and men can provide valuable insights. However, before delving into these studies, it is crucial to examine

the situation of women in education and business life in Türkiye from a gender perspective. This will help us understand the need for gender equality in these spheres and its potential impact on migration trends.

In Türkiye, women's education is increasing year by year. Still, at the same time, there is disappointment for educated women who cannot achieve equality in business life because their education is not fully rewarded. If we look at the statistics, according to the latest published statistics of TUIK, the average duration of education has increased over the years. While the average education period for Türkiye in general was 7.3 years, 6.4 years for women, and 8.3 years for men in 2011, it is 9.2 years in 2022 for Türkiye in general, 8.5 years for women, and 10.0 years for men. (TUIK, 2024)

While the rate of women aged 25 and over who completed at least one level of education was 67.5% and 82.8% of men in 2008, this rate was 86.7% for women and 96.1% for men in 2022. When the labor force participation rate is examined according to education level, it is seen that women participate more in the labor force as their education level increases. The workforce participation rate of graduate women is 68.8%. However, it is also announced in TUIK data that the employment rate of women is less than half of men, highlighting a significant disparity. According to the results of the Household Labor Force Survey, the employment rate of the population aged 15 and over in 2022 was 47.5%. This rate was 30.4% for women and 65.0% for men. (TUIK, 2024)

Inadequate childcare services is one factor that negatively affects women's employment. This situation is also reflected in statistics. According to the Household Labor Force Survey results, the employment rate of individuals in the 25-49 age group with children under the age of 3 in the household was 59.8% in 2014 and

60.5% in 2022. When this rate is examined by gender, it is seen that the employment rate of women in the 25-49 age group with children under the age of 3 in the household is 28.0% in 2022, and the employment rate of men is 90.5%. The difference between the participation of men and women who have children in business life is relatively high, and this indicates that childcare is seen as the responsibility of women and is carried out within the home. (TUIK, 2024)

Although women actively participate in business life, the salary differences between genders show that women's labor is devalued. It is also explained in TUIK reports that the gender wage or earnings gap favors men at all education levels. The gender wage or earnings gap is defined as the percentage ratio of the wage or earnings difference between men and women to the male wage or earnings. According to Earning Structure Statistics, the highest difference for the indicator calculated by annual average gross wage-salary was realized for higher education graduates at 17.1%, and the lowest difference was realized for primary school graduates and below at 12.4%. For the indicator calculated by annual average gross earnings, the highest difference was realized for high school graduates at 19.6%, and the lowest difference was realized for primary school graduates and below at 14.5%. (TUIK, 2024)

With the transition to 8-year compulsory education in 1999-1997 and mandatory 12-year education in 2012 in Türkiye, the schooling rates of female students increased. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the net schooling rate at the primary school level was 93.7% for boys and 93.5% for girls. The number of female students is also increasing at the higher education level. As a matter of fact, in the 2019-2020 academic year, 48.3% of the students studying for associate degrees and above were female students, but it is noteworthy that the fields of higher education

are gendered. For example, as of the 2019-2020 period, at the undergraduate level, for every hundred female students, there are 72 students in the field of humanities and arts, 61 in the field of education, 59 in the field of health and welfare, 239 in the field of computer science, and 245 in the field of engineering, manufacturing, and construction. On the other hand, it is also noteworthy that there are 72 male students for every 100 female students in the field of mathematics. In addition, another interesting finding is that in the field of engineering, manufacturing, and construction, where female student rates are low in many countries, the rate of female students in Türkiye is relatively high, at 28.9%. The current gender distribution of students in higher education indicates that female students mainly gravitate towards traditional female professions. Educated women in Türkiye are more likely to escape gender-based discrimination than uneducated women. Considering the demand for a professional workforce in engineering and related disciplines of developed countries, Türkiye's women's education in these fields may explain their higher intention to migrate from Türkiye. (Elveren&Toksöz & Bodur, 2023, pp.87-88)

Although there has been an increase in women's labor force participation rate in Türkiye over the years, as of 2019, this rate is 34.4%, which is relatively low among OECD countries. The labor force participation rate was 33.9% for high school graduates, 34.1% for higher education graduates, and 71.5% for higher education graduates—these proportional differences between women's labor force participation according to their educational status in Türkiye.

It is about how well women can harmonize work and family life. While highly educated women can purchase care services from the market because they earn relatively higher wages than less educated women, women with lower education

and lower wages generally have to quit their jobs when they have children due to the inadequate public care services in Türkiye. On the other hand, they are affected by unemployment rates. When looked at, it is seen that there is a gender gap among highly educated women. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of unemployed women increased by 69%, while the number of women with higher education increased by 85%. These rates reveal that the possible career plans of highly educated women may turn into disappointment and may impact migration decisions. Women's disadvantages in entering the labor market continue but can be partially overcome with higher education.

In light of all these statistical data, it is possible to say this: while women are increasingly approaching equal status with men in education, participation in business life and gender inequalities in business life cause qualified women to be attracted to opportunities and possibilities abroad. In the interviews, when asked, "How did you decide to migrate?" some participants said dissatisfaction and gender discrimination in business life in Türkiye were effective. Especially women who lived abroad with short-term experiences noted that after returning to Türkiye, they became aware of many situations that they had normalized in Türkiye. For this reason, they decided to migrate permanently. The need for social freedom is also a reason to migrate:

> "It is good that no one has to deal with your life abroad.
> In Türkiye, everyone is involved in each other's lives"[3]

[3] "Yurtdışında kimsenin senin hayatınla muhatap olmaması güzel bir şey. Türkiye'de herkes birbirinin hayatının içinde."

## 1.3 The definition of highly qualified migrant

Initially, I intended to focus on qualified immigrant women, defining them as those with a bachelor's degree or higher education. However, as I delved deeper into the topic, I discovered the intricate nature of the highly skilled immigrant concept, a complexity that I believe would captivate your interest.

In the Royal Society report dated 1963, the concept of brain drain was used for the first time, and attention was drawn to the migration of British scientists to the USA. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines brain drain as the migration of educated and talented people from their country of origin to another country, resulting in a decrease in the skill resources of the country of origin. (Aktaş Çelik, 2023, pg. 31-32)

Although brain drain, which was initially described as the migration of only scientists, has now been replaced by the broader concept of "highly qualified migration," there is no internationally accepted definition of the term "highly qualified migrant." Weinar & Koppenfels mention that the definition of skilled immigrants is generally decided by policymakers and shaped "according to need" by administrative institutions (As a matter of fact, Germany's latest skilled labor immigration law confirms this situation by highlighting certain professions or determining criteria such as the age of immigrants.) Therefore, high-skilled immigrants are defined as foreign workers who share specific characteristics defined by states and qualify for a particular visa category. While the basic criteria used by this state-centered approach are education and skill level, salary criteria are sometimes added to these two indicators. (Danış, 2023, pg. 12)

The problem with the phrase "highly qualified" is defining quality. The widely accepted criterion in this regard is the level of education, but with the spread

of university education, the value attributed to a university degree has decreased. Additionally, how to determine the qualifications of people working in fields such as culture, arts, and media, where the qualification criteria are more challenging to determine, also arises as a question. Other categories are outside the high-skilled immigration channels but can fit into the high-skilled immigrant typology due to their education (students, dependent immigrants (usually spouses), and refugees). (Danış, 2023, pg.13)

The salary indicator used to define a highly qualified immigrant varies depending on the person's profession and age. The EU's blue card regulation defines a qualified immigrant as someone who earns at least 1.5 times the average salary in that country. However, in this case, since the salary of a young academician is not included in this scale, that academician should not be considered highly qualified. Therefore, salary cannot be an exact criterion. (Danış, 2023, pg.13)

Today, highly qualified immigrants, unlike blue-collar workers, irregular immigrants, and refugees, are relatively well-paid white-collar professionals who work in various branches of the service sector and creative industries, such as health, education, finance, and software, by the residence and work legislation of the countries they live in. In this respect, the terms brain drain and high-skilled migration can be used interchangeably since the immigrant group in question is a segment that earns its income with brainpower rather than manual labor. (Danış, 2023, pg. 15)

Highly qualified immigrants can migrate for various social, political, and economic reasons. The reasons generally cited as motivation for migration are to earn more money, to have more social opportunities, and to benefit from the opportunities of a higher quality life abroad. Since these opportunities are primarily

available in developed countries, we see that highly qualified immigrants highlight these countries in their destination country preferences. (Aktaş- Çelik, 2023, pg.33)

Today, in scientific research, various concepts such as high-skilled migration, migration of higher education, and intellectual migration are used instead of the idea of brain drain to describe this migration phenomenon. However, the problem of definition continues due to the large number of existing concepts, the difficulty of literal translation from English to Turkish, and the difficulty of determining the characteristics of the mentioned immigrant group. Today, among these concepts, it is seen that the concept of highly skilled/ highly qualified migration stands out compared to others in terms of frequency of use and comprehensiveness in research and academic studies. (Aktaş- Çelik, 2023, pg.33-34)

While the International Migration Organization started to define the highly qualified immigrant group, it underlined that this concept has no common internationally accepted definition. It stated that the characteristics of a highly qualified immigrant are in a comprehensive sense. A highly skilled immigrant is a person who has received higher education, typically after at least two years of education. More specifically, a highly skilled immigrant is someone who has completed a particular profession through higher education or professional experience and has reached the level of qualification required to do a job. (Aktaş-Çelik, 2023, pg. 34)

In this thesis, I defined women with at least a bachelor's degree education and a certain amount of work experience as "highly qualified/skilled immigrants." However, it is necessary to distinguish between high-skilled migration and high-skilled migrants because only some high-skilled immigrants migrate within the scope of high-skilled migration. In my study, while their spouses immigrate with the visa

types that highly qualified immigrants benefit from, there are cases where the same or even more educated women immigrate as dependent immigrants. In addition, by deskilling, I mean the situation of someone who cannot find a job that suits her qualifications or works in jobs that are below their qualifications.

In my interviews, I asked these women how they define themselves. Despite being immigrants, they pointed out that their migration was under more advantageous conditions than most. They also feel that they are seen differently from other immigrants or by the citizens of the country they live in:

> "The British see us as part of the brain drain and say 'you are already British,' and they get offended when we call ourselves immigrants. For the British, what is important is how much you contribute to society."(Seher)[4]

However, some mentioned that this different perception could sometimes be a disadvantage, especially when not receiving government support when looking for a job:

> "There is a distinction among immigrants: there is government support for refugees. You are left in the middle if you come from Türkiye and are middle class. They say, 'You are a university graduate; you will find a job anyway,' and they do not care." (Feray)[5]

Nonetheless, they primarily still define themselves as "skilled/ qualified immigrants" or "expats."

## 1.4 Content of the chapters

In the introduction chapter, I delve into the origins of this study, detailing how the compelling stories of immigrant women I encountered on social media sparked my curiosity and led to this research. I then shift to a discussion on the working

[4] "İngilizler bizi beyin göçü olarak gördüğü için siz ingilizsiniz zaten diyip biz kendimize göçmen dediğimiz zaman alınıyorlar. İngilizler için önemli olan topluma ne kadar katkıda bulunduğun."
[5] "Göçmenler arasında şöyle bir ayrım var: mülteciler için devlet desteği var. Türkiye'den gelmiş ve orta sınıf isen ortada kalmış oluyorsun. Üniversite mezunusun sen zaten iş bulursun diyip ilgilenmiyorlar."

conditions and fields of education for educated women in Türkiye, underlining the lack of data that would enable an analysis of qualified immigrants in the emigration statistics. I also clarify the ambiguous nature of the definition of highly skilled immigrants and how I employ this term in my study, setting the stage for the research that follows.

In the second chapter, I comprehensively review relevant literature on qualified immigrant women, ensuring that my research is firmly grounded in existing knowledge. I then elaborate on my theoretical framework, adopting an intersectional perspective on Bourdieu and discussing how the concept of cultural capital can be evaluated within the scope of this study. Additionally, I attempt to analyze instances where women, despite possessing adequate capital, may not utilize it due to critical junctures, using Johnson-Hanks' concept of "vital conjunctures."

In the methodology chapter, I provide a detailed account of my research process, ensuring transparency and allowing the audience to understand the steps taken to gather and analyze data. I assess the possibilities and limitations of conducting online interviews and reflect on my positionality as a researcher and my insider-outsider status in relation to the interviewees, thereby establishing the study's credibility.

In the fourth chapter, where I evaluate the field results according to the theoretical framework, I provide detailed accounts of the participants' stories. I explore the challenges they faced during the initial days of migration, their processes of re-entering the workforce, their experiences of deskilling, and the relationship of these experiences to their existing capital. I also include the stories of women who embarked on new educational paths, explaining the processes that led to these new beginnings and their connections to future perspectives.

In the conclusion chapter, I summarize the findings of this study and emphasize the need for further research.

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Changing profile of women migrating abroad from Türkiye

If we start the story from the 1960s, migration is familiar to Turkish women. Many workers migrated to Germany because of the labor agreements between Germany and Türkiye in the 1960s. Labor migration from Türkiye to Europe was initially almost exclusively male. Immigrants called "Gastarbeiter" (guest workers) began to fill the need for low-esteem, socially undesirable, grueling, dirty jobs. (Unat, 2002, pp. 162-164)

In the meantime, a more finger-based workforce was needed in many industries. There has been a demand for the labor of female immigrants in this type of work. Women immigrants began to be employed in sectors such as iron and steel, manufacturing, automotive, electronics, food and packaging, and cleaning. For these women, working abroad was a brand-new experience. Many women who had never entered working life until then were placed in workplaces abroad at the insistence and encouragement of their fathers, husbands, or other male relatives. Many of these women aimed to provide a workplace for their male relatives through family reunification. (Unat, 2002, pp. 162-166)

Due to Germany's need for female workers, women do not keep long waiting lists as men do. Women who applied could quickly go to Germany as workers. In the autumn of 1966, West Germany started to turn to a policy of rejection instead of immigration, which was encouraged due to the economic contraction. Despite this, although the number of Turkish women who migrated between the years 66-68 started to decrease, it still constituted an important share of the total immigrant

women. (Nocera, 2018, pp. 65-88) In other words, in addition to being dependent immigrants, Turkish women migrated individually and even had their husbands and families migrate through them.

It is observed that there are some changes in the profile of those who migrated from Türkiye in the 2000s. Although migrations continue for reasons such as labor migration, marriage migration, education, etc., we observe that people who have completed their education in Türkiye and have work experience migrate to work in a different country. They migrate with expat visas and are called "highly qualified migrants." Women also participate in the migration process by receiving job offers or their spouses receiving job offers. "New migrant women" are the target group of this research. They are educated and qualified, some of them have working experience, and their working, socialization, and mothering experiences are different compared to the past. (Toksöz, 2021)

Considering the migration processes of Turkish women, although migration has spread to many countries recently, when both the women interviewed and the studies in the literature are examined, it is observed that women mostly go to countries such as Europe, the USA, and Canada, which are the usual migration routes for Türkiye. In addition, this situation is related to the fact that the brain drain is still concentrated in these countries, and the brain drain from Türkiye is still towards these countries. However, qualified migration also occurs, especially in Asian countries or Gulf countries, and there is not enough literature on migration in these geographies. There remains a need to conduct studies on these regions.

## 2.2 Discussions about the high-qualified migrant women

### 2.2.1 Invisibility of high-qualified migrant women

When the literature on highly qualified immigrant women is examined, it is seen that the first discussions are about the invisibility of highly skilled immigrant women and the reasons for this invisibility.

Eleonore Kofman's work in the late 90s and early 2000s brought attention to the previously overlooked women's migration, a shift influenced by societal and economic changes. Kofman (1999) highlights the evolving nature of labor migration, particularly regarding women's involvement. Despite this, mainstream research often portrayed women migrants as dependents, undervaluing their economic contributions. The categorization of immigrants, particularly women, remains problematic, with many skilled women being categorized as dependents rather than qualified migrants.

Kofman (2000) stresses the urgency of understanding migration beyond a simplistic individualistic lens, highlighting the interconnectedness of family and societal dynamics. The migration of skilled women, often through family reunification, challenges traditional notions of skilled migration. However, despite their increasing numbers, immigrant women still face invisibility and gender inequalities exacerbated by immigration policies that may exclude them from settlement and citizenship. Kofman (2014) underscores the pressing need to address these inequalities in immigration policy to combat exclusion and inequity.

Studies after Kofman also focused on the invisibility of immigrant women and their reasons. The survey conducted by Purkayatsha and Bircan in 2021 mentioned that since women migrate "dependently" on men in family migrations, while the qualifications of the men and their potential in the labor market are generally known,

there is not enough information about the qualifications of the women who migrate with them. (pg.1) In addition, where women work intensively, care, education, and domestic services are not considered "qualified" jobs, and fields dominated by men, such as the business world and engineering, are considered "qualified" jobs. (Purkayastha& Bircan, 2021, p.6) [1]

Saskia Sassen stated that despite all the high-skilled immigration policies, highly qualified people sometimes work in very different business lines. Not every university graduate emigrates with the privileges they portray. For example, highly qualified asylum seekers or university-educated women provide care and cleaning services. New graduates and people who have graduated from departments other than technical fields and, therefore, are not among the professions required in the qualified immigration criteria, people with high qualifications who have migrated with their partners, etc. Therefore, more than relying on quality will be explanatory enough. In addition, gender, nationality, and class should also be taken into consideration. (cited in Guhlich, 2017) Some immigration policies, the perspective of immigrants in the country of immigration, and the methods of collecting statistics may also cause the invisibility of women in high-skilled immigration. It is understood that there are (though not always officially) categories of immigrants that are acceptable or unacceptable, excluding many immigrant groups and women. Such situations may cause some immigrant groups to be disadvantaged when migrating or to be ignored after migrating. Even the application requirements of some countries for immigration create a disadvantage for groups such as women and young people. Some countries, such as Germany and the UK, require qualified immigrants to have a certain amount of savings in their accounts before entering the country. This situation

primarily affects young graduates and women, who generally earn lower salaries than men. (Guhlich, 2017)

Most of those who migrate with family migration are women, and policies regarding family migration are shaped according to the gender perspective that sees men as responsible for the livelihood of the house. In this case, sponsored family members are also seen as "unliberated," fragile, and confined to the home. The majority of studies in the literature focus on the lack of women's participation in the workforce, forced marriages, etc. Since it focuses on issues, immigrant women are seen as subjects of a patriarchal society limited to the reproduction of the private sphere. (Bircan, 2021, p.6) Family migration and skilled migration are treated as two separate categories in statistics. This dichotomy sees those who come with family migration as uneducated and needing state intervention to develop their capacities. However, it is known that among those who come with family migration, there is a very high proportion of highly educated immigrants. (Bircan, 2021, pp. 4-6)
The skills of the applicant's partner often need to be recorded. However, changes in the points system in some countries, such as Australia (since 1989) and Canada (since 2002), have begun to take into account the educational level of the spouse. However, many skilled women may not be counted as such simply because they were not working at the time of application for migration, and instead, they are categorized as 'not in the labor force' or 'home duties.' This categorization can significantly impact the recognition of skilled women in migration statistics.

In her study, Riano asks women about their reasons for migrating and mentions that regardless of the reason they migrate, if they get married, they are included in the statistics as dependent immigrants only due to marriage. The government statisticians and social scientists no longer regard them as skilled

migrants but as marital migrants. They do not appear in the statistics on skilled immigrants, and the authorities now perceive them as dependents rather than potential employers. (Riano, 2012, pg.31)

Suppose we consider the statistician of the "sending" country rather than the "receiving" country, as mentioned in the introduction; in Türkiye, the characteristics of migrants, the information about the destination countries, and the reasons for migration are not recorded. Information on skilled migration and gender differences is obtained indirectly through professional associations (such as the Turkish Medical Association) or alumni portals of university alumni associations. Since no exact statistic exists, only indirect inferences can be made.

However, as I will discuss in later sections, among the women I interviewed, contrary to popular belief, there are women who found jobs and migrated on their own, with their husbands subsequently migrating dependent on them. Additionally, some women went abroad as students and later decided to stay permanently or were not employed when they first arrived but found jobs later on. For these women, their invisibility in statistics is an issue. Nevertheless, this and similar research can address the invisibility of the qualifications of skilled women in academic studies.

### 2.2.2 Deskilling

In studies on highly qualified immigrant women, in addition to the invisibility of these women, there are also studies focusing on the experiences of women after migration, and the common theme in these studies is deskilling. Deskilling is a situation experienced by more than highly qualified immigrant women. While situations such as the lack of equivalents in the country of migration for the qualifications gained in the country of origin, the acceptance of some professions as

more advantageous, and the obstacle of immigration status to working in a qualified job may be the case for every immigrant, it has been observed that there are some specific situations for women.

It is known that only a small portion of immigrants work in jobs that correspond to their qualifications and that processes of deskilling, underpaid, or reorientation occur. This makes its impact felt both at the macroeconomic level and in people's own lives. (Guhlich, 2017, pg. 48) It is observed that foreign-born women fall behind both native-born women and foreign-born men. The immigration status with which women enter the country affects their situation in the labor markets, and as mentioned above, even if they are highly qualified, it becomes very difficult for them to enter the labor markets because they enter the labor markets as dependent immigrants within the scope of "family reunification." Classifying women as dependent immigrants restricts their legal status and economic rights, regardless of their past work experience. Women who come with family reunification face structural problems that sometimes work in their favor and sometimes against them, and this affects their socioeconomic mobility positions.

With migration, the loss of social ties in the country of origin and the decrease in childcare or housework support may also cause women to withdraw from the labor market. In cases where there is not enough childcare in the country of migration, or it is high cost, women stay at home and undertake childcare. The fact that childcare is already considered a woman's responsibility is one factor that makes it difficult for women to enter the labor market. The idea that the breadwinner is male causes vocational training to be more oriented towards/inclusive of men. Unemployment forces women to take on the traditional caregiver role. Moreover, despite being so isolated, women are expected to integrate into their new country

easily. While legal statuses shape women's opportunities, the economic activity they engage in also affects the shaping of gender roles within the same ethnic community. (Mushaben, 2009, pp. 1249-1274)

The participation of migrant women in the labor market was affected, besides structural and legal constraints, by gender stereotypes and ideas about the gendered role division within the family and by insufficient child-care facilities in the country of migration. The biographical narratives of women revealed that they were often confronted with images of "foreign wives" who were supposed to prioritize caring for their family and household over professional self-realization. Since the positioning of migrant women in the labor market was often worse than that of their spouses, they were the ones who usually looked after their children and the household, thereby postponing their professional goals. While the lack of child-care facilities affected all families with small children, migrant women were more vulnerable because they missed the family and social structure that would support them (Riaño, 2012, p. 38).

In a study conducted in 2021 with women who emigrated from Türkiye to the United Kingdom, almost all participants had a tough time when they first came to the UK. Most of the participants had difficulty in finding the support they needed because their spouses were working and they were staying at home with the child. One of the most challenging aspects of being abroad is staying away from their comfort zone, family, or a supportive environment in Türkiye. (Şahin&Aytaç, 2021, pp. 1-13) Migrant women encounter additional challenges because their families live abroad, leaving them without a supportive social network to help care for their children. (Riano, 2012, pg.38)

Another problem for the immigrant women (as well as for the other migrant groups) experienced in the early days was the language problem. They have to wait to enter the labor market until they have been sufficiently trained in the new language. This also affects their socialization in a new country. (Şahin&Aytaç, 2021, pp.1-13)

The most critical factor in women's deskilling after migration is their inability to transfer the qualifications they acquired in the country of origin before migration to the host country. At this point, studies focusing on the subject of transfer of capital have been carried out. While some women have difficulty transferring their capital, others may be in a luckier position. It is also seen that women carry out various strategies to increase their opportunities for participation in the workforce after migration, and while carrying out these strategies, they sometimes mobilize their pre-migration capital and sometimes open up new opportunities in the countries they migrate to. Connections at previous work, connections with friends who have immigrated to that country before, or social ties provided by the family facilitate women's social life after migration, and this increases their employment opportunities. While some women improve their social mobility by mobilizing their transnational social and cultural capital and negotiating childcare and family relations, others may stay in low-profile jobs for a long time due to a lack of social resources and irregular status. Even if women do not know the language of the country they immigrated to, they can take part in jobs related to immigrants in areas where their mother tongue is needed. Thus, they can find a job by mobilizing their ethnic and cultural capital. In addition to all these, the economic capital gained while in the country of origin also opens the way for women to invest in starting a business in the post-migration process.

At this point, two perspectives come to the forefront and are particularly relevant to this study. One of these is intersectionality, and the other pertains to studies based on Bourdieu's concept of capital. While I will discuss Bourdieu's place in migration studies and examine exemplary studies on highly skilled migrant women from a Bourdieusian perspective in subsequent sections, I will now focus on a few studies conducted from an intersectional perspective and explain why it is essential to study highly skilled migrant women intersectionally.

### 2.2.3 Intersectional evaluation of high-qualified migrant women

Kimberle Crenshaw advocates that feminist and antiracist efforts often treat issues of sexism and racism as separate, overlooking how they intersect in real life. This marginalizes women of color, as their experiences are not fully represented in either discourse. She argues that intersectional identities, like those of women of color, are not adequately considered in feminist and antiracist practices. In her earlier work, she used the concept of intersectionality to show how race and gender shape Black women's employment experiences, revealing that these experiences cannot be understood by looking at race or gender alone. Building on this, she explores how the intersection of race and gender influences the structural, political, and representational aspects of violence against women of color. This underscores the importance of considering multiple aspects of identity in understanding social issues. (1991, pp. 1242-1245)

In the same vein, there are situations where the post-migration experiences of skilled migrant women must be evaluated through the lens of intersectionality. This is because they face challenges both as women in the workforce or daily life and as

"foreigners" in a new country, which can subject them to discriminatory or even racist treatment.

In this section, I will discuss three studies that illustrate how intersectionality is applied in research on highly skilled migrant women. One of these studies examines the experiences of migrant women working in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in "male-dominated" Germany. (Grigoleit-Richter, 2017) The article aims to understand how cultural prejudices, state regulations, and organizational practices shape their career trajectories. Highly skilled non-EU migrants face significant barriers to entering the German labor market despite the high demand for skilled labor. These barriers are often due to cultural prejudices and restrictive state regulations that hinder companies from hiring international talent. The technology sector is heavily gender-segregated, favoring men and devaluing the contributions of women, particularly those from migrant backgrounds. Gender stereotypes and the male-dominated work culture hinder women's career progression. To overcome these barriers, migrant women employ various strategies to gain the necessary skills and cultural competencies. Despite their efforts and successes in entering the labor market, they frequently encounter reminders of their 'otherness' and limitations imposed by gendered and ethnicized biases. (Grigoleit-Richter, 2017, pp. 2738-2752)

In a study conducted in Australia, which has a colonial history, it was found that both Anglo-White and non-Anglo highly skilled immigrant women face career progression challenges due to colonial patriarchal power structures. However, the Whiteness prevalent in the upper echelons of the Australian capitalist colonial labor market mainly benefits the vertical career growth of the Anglo White group, highlighting the privileging effects of racism. The study reflects the systemic issues

of racial and gender discrimination in career progression within Australian organizations. (Carangio, 2023, 1-19)

Lastly, I would like to discuss a study conducted on educated Turkish women living in the United States who migrated with their spouses. The study shows that women encountered various structural (e.g., visa restrictions) and cultural (e.g., patriarchal norms) barriers that limited their career advancement. Over time, these constraints led to a process of re-domestication, where the women's priorities shifted from career ambitions to focusing more on reproductive labor and family well-being. The study highlights how the intersection of global capitalism and patriarchy influences high-skilled immigrant women, often leading to long-term career disadvantages. (Paçaçı- Elitok & J. Nawyn, 2023, pp. 4946-4963) This study is significant because it focuses on Turkish women, highlighting how the patriarchal structure of Turkish family life and its associated expectations persist after migration. As a result, many women abandon their career goals and undergo re-domestication. This underscores the role of both cultural expectations and structural processes in shaping their experiences.

### 2.2.4 Migrating the qualities

We have said that the fact that qualifications cannot be transferred after migration is one of the reasons why qualified immigrant women become unqualified. In order to understand and explain this situation, Migration researchers (Cederberg, 2017; Erel, 2010; Kelly, 2012; Nowicka, 2013, 2014; Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010; Ryan et al., 2015; Samaluk, 2016) have increasingly adopted a Bourdieusian framework to understand better how cultural and other forms of capital are transferred internationally. (cited in Christou & Kofman, 2022, pg. 47)

The migration researchers' turning to the Bourdieusian framework plays a functional role in understanding how the capitals owned play a role in re-entering the workforce after migration. However, before moving on to how Bourdieu has found a place in migration studies, I will introduce some of his concepts, focusing on those relevant to this thesis.

For Bourdieu, capital encompasses material or embodied labor, allowing individuals or groups to harness social energy. Capital exists in economic, cultural, and social forms, each convertible under certain conditions. Bourdieu criticizes economic theory for overlooking non-commercial exchanges, advocating for a broader understanding of all capital forms and their transformations, which shape social dynamics.

Bourdieu's concept diverges from Marx's, considering capitalist and non-capitalist forms of labor alike. In modern societies, access to income depends on cultural and social capital, especially education and networks (Swartz, 2011). Cultural capital includes verbal skills, cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences, and educational knowledge. Bourdieu identifies three forms:
Embodied: Predispositions acquired through socialization, starting in childhood.
Objectified: Cultural objects requiring specialized skills, like books and art.
Institutionalized: Educational qualifications determine social status and job market success.

Social capital comprises resources belonging to a network that provides support and entitlements. The volume of social capital depends on the network's size and each member's capital. It is intertwined with economic and cultural capital and requires continuous investment to maintain and benefit from relationships (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu discusses converting economic capital into social and cultural capital, emphasizing the effort involved. This conversion is seen as an investment in social exchanges. Different types of capital vary in ease of conversion, with economic capital generally being more accessible for conversion into social and cultural capital than vice versa (Swartz, 2011, pp.108-110).

Habitus is the internalized behavior patterns shaped by cumulative capital accumulation experiences. It aligns individual aspirations with social hierarchies, fostering behaviors to maintain or challenge social distances. Habitus resists change, reinforcing existing predispositions through primary socialization and gradual adaptation to new situations (Swartz, 2011, p. 273).

Unlike rational actor theories, Bourdieu argues that actions are shaped by implicit cultural and social predispositions, not conscious calculation. Actions involve uncertainty and allow for strategizing within social contexts to maximize benefits beyond economic reasons, including status gain (Swartz, 2011, pp. 21-22).

### 2.3 Evaluating Bourdieu's "capital" in terms of race and gender

One of the prominent works regarding how Bourdieu is featured in migration studies is by Umut Erel, whose perspective focuses on examining capital in terms of gender, class, and nationality. Erel challenges the idea of migrants as individuals who come with a backpack containing capital that either fits or does not fit into the host country. She discusses how all these types of capital are shaped by class, gender, and ethnicity and how migrant women produce new types of capital through their ethnicity and gender (Erel, 2010). Based on this perspective, I will attempt to understand the processes by which the skilled migrant women I interviewed use or fail to use their qualifications or make new beginnings in relation to their status as

women and as migrants from Türkiye. Before doing so, I will address the criticisms directed at Bourdieu by feminists and scholars of critical race theory.

### 2.3.1 Feminist readings of Bourdieu

Feminist scholars critically review and expand upon Bourdieu's ideas on reflexive modernity, detraditionalization, and gender. While Lois McNay emphasizes Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field, she finds his treatment of gender incomplete. Lisa Adkins challenges the notion of unambiguous detraditionalization of gender and emphasizes the interplay between the social and cultural dimensions in shaping gender and sexuality. These feminist engagements not only highlight the complexities of gender transformations but also call for a more integrated approach that considers both social and cultural factors. (Kenway & McLod, 2010, pp.534-538) McNay argues that Bourdieu’s focus on the durability of gender norms and his concept of habitus fail to fully account for the complexities and changes in gender identities. She suggests that Bourdieu does not sufficiently recognize the internally complex nature of subjectivity and the impact of social and historical changes on how women experience and navigate different social fields. (McLeod, 2005, pp.21-259)

Feminist engagements with Bourdieu offer new ways to conceptualize gender, habitus, and social fields. They emphasize the importance of addressing change and continuity in gender relations and the need for a contextual analysis of habitus and field. The renewed interest in Bourdieu's work among feminists reflects a desire to understand the organizing structures of inequality and the social patterns embedded in subjective experiences. (Mc Leod, 2005, pp. 21-26)

Another criticism is that Bourdieu does not delve deeply into the complexities of gender identity and its intersections with other social categories. He views gender divisions as universal and natural, structuring all social life. This oversight means that while gender characteristics appear in descriptions of dispositions and capital, gender as an analytic category is secondary. McCall argues that Bourdieu's concepts, while helpful, fall short of fully exploring the dynamic and intersectional nature of gender identities. Bourdieu's focus on the biological body and symbolic violence limits his analysis, making it necessary to extend his ideas to account for the cross-class, racial, ethnic, and sexual hegemonies that shape gender identities. (McCall, 1992)

I also observed the processes of entering or withdrawing from business life of the women I interviewed within the scope of this thesis, the issues they had difficulties with, the way they acquired a social environment, and the processes that developed in women's lives such as marriage, children, and divorce also played a role. In this respect, I realized that Jennifer Johnson-Hanks' concept of vital conjunctures is functional. In fact, Johnson-Hanks also produced this concept with inspiration from Bourdieu. She critiques the traditional life cycle model, which assumes coherent, sequential stages of life, and proposes the idea of "vital conjunctures" as a unit of social analysis. This concept integrates demographic vital events with Bourdieu's idea of the conjuncture of structure and action, emphasizing the fluidity and variability of life events. (Johnson- Hanks, 2002, pp. 865-880) Johnson-Hanks takes the term 'conjuncture' from Bourdieu (1977), who uses it to express the conditions that manifest social structure and that thus serve as the practical context for social action. 'Vital' comes from the demographic term' vital event,' referring to important status passages such as birth, marriage, and death

(Johnson-Hanks, 2002, p. 872). Vital conjunctures may be ushered in by events such as graduation, marriage – or immigration." (Liversage, 2009, pg. 122)

Johnson-Hanks argues for recognizing the fluidity and unpredictability inherent in human lives, particularly during significant change or uncertainty periods. She highlights the importance of flexibility and the suspension of long-term planning in navigating vital conjunctures. In times of uncertainty, individuals often cannot rely on predetermined plans and must adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. She suggests that this flexibility is crucial for understanding how people make decisions and pursue aspirations when the future is uncertain. The women in her study demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptability in navigating their vital conjunctures, inspiring us with their ability to make decisions based on immediate opportunities and constraints rather than long-term plans. (Johnson-Hanks, 2015, pp. 6-16)

In her study on young Cameroonian women, Johnson-Hanks notes that these women experience uncertainties in education, family life, and work life. These uncertainties are often a result of gender inequalities in education, barriers encountered in the workplace, and societal expectations. She concludes that young Cameroonian women face uncertainties about the future due to the challenges they encounter in education and work life. It is observed that family structure and societal expectations contribute to these uncertainties. Gender inequalities in education and barriers encountered in the workplace make it difficult for women to realize their potential, negatively influencing societal progress fully. Their futures are not fixed, and they must navigate multiple potential paths, making decisions based on immediate opportunities and constraints rather than long-term plans. The case studies also highlight the gendered nature of these processes, showing how gender

influences the opportunities and challenges individuals encounter during vital conjunctures. (Johnson- Hanks, 2002, pp. 865-880)

Johnson-Hanks explores how social structures and institutions influence vital conjunctures, shaping individuals' possibilities and constraints. She discusses how institutional contexts, such as educational systems, labor markets, and family norms, interact with individual agency to produce varying life outcomes. (Johnson-Hanks, 2015, pp. 6-16) In this thesis, I demonstrate how women reconcile the situations, limitations, or opportunities they encounter during the migration process with their expectations to develop strategies for themselves.

As an example of how "vital conjuncture" is used to analyze the situation of highly qualified migrant women, I will mention Anika Liversage's study. She conceptualizes migration as a "vital conjuncture." Liversage interviewed 15 highly qualified Eastern European immigrant women and seven highly qualified immigrant men from Eastern Europe to serve as reference material. (pg. 124) After the women came to Denmark, they struggled to learn Danish for the first year or two. Then, they attempted to find a job, and at this stage, they faced different problems. (pp. 126-127)

While some of the highly qualified immigrant women, especially those from natural sciences, have the chance to continue their previous professional lives, others face the problem of being "just a housewife" and resort to different strategies to find a place for themselves in highly qualified sectors: re-educating themselves, becoming "cultural brokers" for other immigrants or returning to their home country. Although especially highly qualified immigrant women believe that they will preserve their identities, this is only the case for some of them. As a result, these women are forced

to reconceptualize both their actions and identities to be included in the new society's labor market. (Liversage, 2009, pg. 121)

This research demonstrates that some women redirected their focus toward different horizons. In certain instances, this reorientation enabled them to become skilled professionals engaged in meaningful work within the higher echelons of the labor market. They achieved this through three distinct avenues: leveraging the immigrant identity they gained during the immigration process, acquiring a new professional identity through retraining in their existing field or in new areas, or returning to their home country and thus reverting to their previous pre-migration identities. (Liversage, 2009, pp.131-132)

### 2.3.2 Critical race theory and Bourdieu

Bourdieu is criticized not only by feminists but also by those studying ethnicity and racism for ignoring the other factors that create inequality beyond social classes. Because Bourdieu's framework was designed for the French context of domination and societal reproduction, focusing on class, Bourdieu's framework alone was not intended to analyze inequality where various other identities such as race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation play a significant role in shaping inequality, for example in the USA. (Tichavakunda, 2019, pg.6)

However, even though he does not directly address race, some views suggest that his research, especially on Algeria, could shed light on studies concerning race. Bourdieu approached race not as a fixed biological category but as a complex social construct, which is particularly evident in his studies on Algeria, where he examined caste and racialization dynamics. His analysis of Algerian society highlighted how caste divisions created de facto racial segregation between Europeans and Arabs,

shaped by colonial governance and economic disparities. Bourdieu analyzed racism as a tool to legitimize unequal power structures rather than a natural order, emphasizing the social construction of racial hierarchies. (Wallace, 2017, pg. 909) Cultural capital, a central concept, originally aimed to explain how cultural and educational resources perpetuate social inequality. It encompasses symbolic wealth valued in society, influencing social and academic outcomes linked to family background, racial disparities, and societal inequalities. Cultural capital operates as convertible resources exchanged within educational and social settings, influencing status and opportunities. The influence of race on experiences and manifestations of cultural capital is recognized in sociological and educational research. (Wallace, 2017, pg.908) Cultural capital is not just classed but also fundamentally racialized. Although some studies recognize the role of race, they do not center it, treating it as a secondary factor to class. Cartwright calls for fundamentally reconsidering cultural capital theory to integrate race as a core element, not just a contextual factor. (Cartwright, 2022, pg. 319)

In this study, we can observe the impact of race and ethnicity on cultural capital in real-world situations. For instance, the lack of recognition for diplomas obtained from Türkiye in the countries to which individuals migrate and job applications being rejected because they applied from Türkiye are clear instances of racial discrimination. Additionally, migrant women working in lower-status jobs have reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace, highlighting the need for a more inclusive understanding of cultural capital. Moreover, it is discussed in detail in the following pages that women are subject to discriminatory and exclusionary attitudes regarding daily and urgent needs, such as finding a house, due to the

country and culture they come from.These experiences underscore the importance of our research in addressing real-world inequalities.

## 2.4 Bourdieu in migration studies

In this section, several examples of articles from the literature will be presented to illustrate how Bourdieu's concepts have been utilized in migration studies. Subsequently, the focus will shift to discussing how highly skilled migrant women are addressed from a Bourdieusian perspective.

Bourdieu stresses the significance of understanding an individual's overall capital, comprising cultural, economic, and social aspects. He also highlights how individuals strategically position themselves to utilize their capital effectively. The configuration and magnitude of capital should be viewed in the context of an individual's social journey in acquiring and valuing capital. This is especially crucial in comprehending how migrants employ their capital, as the temporal and geographical paths and dimensions that shape and activate capital are pivotal in understanding its utilization. The migration process is not static but dynamic and transformative, and understanding this is crucial in comprehending how migrants employ their capital. (Erel, 2010, pg.647)

In his 2019 article, "Migration-Facilitating Capital: A Bourdieusian Theory of International Migration," Jaeeun Kim argues that research on international migration has not fully utilized Bourdieu's theory. Kim uses Bourdieu's framework to explore how states, migrants, and migration brokers interact in acquiring, transforming, and validating various forms of capital for migration. He examines how state policies and frontline gatekeepers develop capital that aids migration and how brokers help migrants appear to have such capital, challenging state control over identity,

qualifications, and mobility. Using Bourdieu's concepts like 'field,' 'habitus,' 'illusio,' and 'symbolic violence' (the imposition of the dominant culture's norms and values on the less powerful), Kim analyzes how migrants strive to acquire migration-facilitating capital, leading to material and symbolic stratification. While state practices within national borders have been studied, he notes that Bourdieu's theory also applies to transnational dynamics but overlooks noncitizens and supranational entities. The pursuit of migration-facilitating capital is strategic, influenced by migrants' resources and habitus, beyond mere economic calculations (Kim, 2018, pp.262-288).

The study by Magdalena Nowicka examines how Polish entrepreneurs in Munich use their economic, social, and cultural capital from both Poland and Germany to position themselves transnationally. Through seven case studies, the study identifies three types of transnational social positioning: single space, bi-local, and overlapping, and proposes a new interpretation of Bourdieu's theories for transnational contexts. The research highlights the need for an analytical framework to understand social inequality transnationally, showing that social positioning results from the interplay of various types of capital across borders. (2013, pp.29-47)
To understand the role of the social capital among migrants, the study "With a Little Help from My Friends" by Janine Leschke and Silvana Weiss examines how social networks affect job searches and overqualification among recent migrants from Central Eastern Europe (CEE) to Western Europe. Using data from the 2014 European Labour Force Survey, the authors find that while social networks help migrants find jobs, they often lead to overqualification, trapping them in low-skilled sectors with high migrant shares. This issue is more pronounced for CEE migrants, who, despite being highly educated, frequently work in low-skilled jobs with limited

career prospects. The study highlights the need for further research on the complexity of job-search strategies and the role of social networks in labor market outcomes. (Leschke & Weiss, 2020, pp. 769-788) In subsequent sections, this thesis will discuss data indicating that women work in jobs below their qualifications.

Another article discusses the migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), specifically Slovenian and Polish, who navigate the transnational labor market and seek to acquire valuable cultural capital in the UK. Using Bourdieu's framework highlights how these workers, driven by colonial cultural capital, engage in various strategies to enhance their skills and status. The study reveals that they rely on cross-cultural and ethnic-niche intermediaries to help them navigate the job market and convert their existing capitals into recognized forms. It critiques the neo-colonial dynamics influencing these strategies and underscores how the workers' quest for improvement often results in their exploitation by intermediaries. The article contributes to migration and postcolonial studies by revealing the symbolic and material power dynamics shaping workers' experiences and opportunities. It also notes variations among CEE workers and emphasizes the role of gender, age, and cultural dimensions in these processes. (Samaluk, 2015, pp. 1-17) The notion that migrants are not passive but active strategic actors forms the foundation of this thesis. As will be demonstrated in the subsequent sections, highly skilled migrant women, even when experiencing a loss of qualifications, employ various strategies to navigate and overcome this situation.

In my interviews, women expressed that their migration was motivated not by economic reasons but by desires for a more accessible life, better education for their children, and distancing from social norms. However, according to the study conducted by Caroline Oliver and Karen O'Reilly, despite migrants' anti-materialist

rhetoric and new lifestyles, class distinctions persist. The concept of lifestyle migration suggests a move towards individual self-realization, aligning with Giddens' idea of reflexive modernity. In this context, people relocate for a simpler, more fulfilling life. However, Bourdieu's framework helps explain the persistence of class through cultural and economic capital. Migrants often reproduce their class positions through habitus despite attempts to start anew. The study shows that even in new social fields, class structures remain influential, limiting the possibilities for significant reinvention of habitus. (Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010, pp. 49-66)

There are also studies on "capitals" and their transfer and reproduction by migrants, as well as on the concept of "habitus" concerning national borders and the positions of migrants as individuals who transcend these borders. In "Bourdieu, Social Space, and the Nation-State: Implications for Migration Studies," Reed-Danahay applies Bourdieu's concept of social space to migration research, emphasizing that national boundaries and social movements are socially constructed. She argues that national territories should not be viewed as strictly defined entities and highlights the importance of understanding emplacement and displacement within societal perceptions. Shared “common sense” and educational institutions shape Bourdieu’s social space, linked to physical space through habitus. Bourdieu focuses on cognitive and classificatory spaces rather than geographic boundaries, noting that the state's "national social space" construction marginalizes local cultures. This framework suggests that individuals can participate in national social space without residing in the state, and immigrants may only partially integrate despite living within the state. Migrants often occupy marginal positions due to a lack of social, cultural, and symbolic capital. Changes in social space can affect their sense

of belonging, especially if their habitus is unprepared for new social arrangements (Reed-Danahay, 2017).

In his 2020 study, Alario Ennes examines Bourdieu's concepts of embodiment to understand how migration shapes the social construction of the "migrant body" within power relations. He argues that the migrant body is a product of these dynamics, influencing migrants' positioning in specific fields. Ennes uses Bourdieu's notions of habitus, hexis, strategy, field, and capital to highlight the embodied dimension of migration studies. Bourdieu's perspective includes sensory dimensions like smell, touch, and taste, with habitus maintaining a visceral connection to the social world. Hexis, a form of habitus, incorporates social elements into the biological body. Ennes identifies two modes of forming the migrant body: 'inherited' (unconscious aspects shaped by origin) and 'strategic' (adaptation and learning in the new context). Time in the destination country is crucial for acquiring habitus and field-specific capital. He suggests the migrant body is objectified through migration, influenced by aesthetic practices and bodily techniques, converting stigma into traits that offer inclusion and resistance (Ennes, 2020, pp. 26-58).

After providing examples of studies that utilize the concepts of capital, habitus, and field, I intend to focus specifically on research that centers on highly skilled migrant women and explains their experiences using Bourdieu's concepts. Rıfat Mahbub investigates the educational and migrational trajectories of middle-class women originating from urban Bangladesh and relocating to Britain. She delves into how their perceptions of gender and education transform throughout this migration process. The study concentrates on women who grew up during the 1980s and 1990s and migrated in the early 2000s. Their education received robust support from their families, particularly their fathers, while their mothers, despite being

predominantly homemakers, also placed high importance on education. The study employs Pierre Bourdieu's theories of educational and cultural capital. It introduces three distinct categories of academic capital elite, standard, and general to highlight the differences in the valuation of qualifications before and after migration. In Bangladesh, educational attainment was significantly bolstered by familial support. However, migration brought forth new gender dynamics, emphasizing the need to comprehend both the educational processes and outcomes of the experiences of migrant women. (2015, pp. 871-886)

In another work of her in 2019, Mahbub explores the relatively underexamined domain of labor market experiences among educated first-generation Bangladeshi immigrant women in Britain. Utilizing an intersectional framework, it applies Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of 'capital,' 'habitus,' and 'field' (1986) alongside Yuval-Davis's theory of 'situational intersectionality' (2015) to scrutinize the employment barriers these women face and their varied strategies to overcome them within the UK labor market. The study categorizes the narratives of twenty-eight participants into three groups: full-time professionals, part-time wage earners, and economically inactive women, highlighting how capital mobilization influences South Asian immigrant women's employment decisions. The participants' situational differences—within a complex web of unequal capital portability, skill non-recognition, limited familiarity with British cultural capital, family economy, and lifecycle stages—shaped their immediate and long-term employment choices. The analysis underscores the importance of examining the employment of contemporary first-generation Bangladeshi and other South Asian Muslim women through the lens of capital mobilization, considering the specific contexts in which they operate. This inquiry examines how Bangladeshi women, who mainly migrated to Britain as

spouses of skilled immigrants, navigated the labor market. Utilizing Bourdieu's theories to interpret interview narratives, the study reveals that these women's unequal employment positions are closely linked to the value of their academic capital in the labor market. Their strategies included re-skilling, obtaining a British education, and working in fields adaptable post-migration. These approaches are influenced by their gender, class, race, and religious identities. The research contributes to debates on gender and skilled migration by using an intersectional framework to capture the diverse experiences of immigrant women, focusing on their identities and employment from a capital movement perspective. (pp. 1-2)

With Rifat Mahbub's study, we transition to examining highly skilled migrant women by integrating Bourdieu's concept of capital with the framework of intersectionality. Umut Erel is a prominent academic who applies Bourdieu's concepts in migration studies, mainly focusing on migrant women in Europe. Her research reconsiders cultural capital within the context of skilled migration, critiquing the "rucksack approach," which views cultural capital as transferred from one country to another. In "Migrating Cultural Capital: Bourdieu in Migration Studies" (2010), Erel examines skilled migration in the UK and Germany. She argues against the idea that cultural capital is merely transferred between countries and instead explores how migrants validate their cultural capital through various mechanisms. Erel highlights that cultural capital is not homogeneous but is influenced by gender, ethnicity, and class.

In the article "Migrant Capitals" by Erel and Ryan (2019), the authors use a Bourdieusian framework to discuss how migrants access and mobilize different forms of capital. They emphasize that migrants' journeys are influenced by gender, class, ethnicity, and citizenship status. The article suggests a multi-level analysis to

understand how migrants build new capitals in new environments, considering the impact of socio-political factors.

In "Engendering Transnational Space: Migrant Mothers as Cultural Currency Speculators" (2012), she investigates how migrant mothers use cultural resources strategically across different national contexts. Erel illustrates how middle-class European mothers in London leverage transnational cultural resources to enhance their children's educational opportunities.

Erel's studies challenge the notion that capitals are transferred between countries, emphasizing that capitals must be understood through an intersectional lens, including ethnicity and gender. Her research aligns with the perspective that new forms of capital can be acquired post-migration, similar to the focus of this thesis on understanding how women mobilize and create cultural and social capital after migration.

First and foremost, we consider how I will benefit from Bourdieu and the uses of Bourdieu in the migration literature in this thesis. I will address how women who migrated from Türkiye transformed the capital they acquired in Türkiye after migration. These women, who are highly educated, possess cultural capital, which enables them to find jobs and establish social networks through cultural capital after migration. Similarly, knowing the destination country's language also carries the characteristic of cultural capital acquired through education. In this and similar respects, a significant part of my thesis revolves around the transformation of capitals into each other.

Although social capital acquired through friendships, previous work experiences, family, and similar networks is helpful in the migration process, social

media can also be a source of social capital, especially today and during the migration process.

I believe that cultural and social capital (and sometimes economic capital) are beneficial for migrants during the migration process. However, migration is not always a "game" that yields profits; sometimes, it can be a process that leads to the loss of capital. Indeed, as will be discussed in the findings, especially the loss of social capital experienced by women can lead them to take on the sole responsibility of childcare and withdraw from the job market as a result.

On the other hand, like Erel, I do not think that migrants come to the new country with a suitcase of capital that can be fitted into the new country. Migrants acquire various capitals after migration as well. Moreover, I believe that the migration process opens doors to acquiring new capital, such as learning a new language, starting a new education, or working in a new field.

I adopt the idea that migrant women resort to various methods to balance the capital loss they experience after migration, and therefore, they are actually "strategic actors." Although they may not have the opportunity to transform the capital they acquired within the system of the country they migrated to (for example, if the diploma obtained in the country of origin is not valued in the country of migration), women try to establish a position for themselves in that country by resorting to various strategies starting from a lower position.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, although Bourdieu's concepts of cultural, social, and economic capital are functional in understanding whether highly skilled migrant women work in jobs that match their qualifications post-migration, I argue, similar to the studies above, that analysis should also consider gender and ethnicity to understand situations where these women are unable to work in jobs that match their

qualifications. As we will see in the fieldwork section, discriminatory discourses that begin from the early days of migration, the non-recognition of diplomas, and similar situations reflect the experience of being foreign in that country and the image of the country of origin in the eyes of the host country.

At this point, it is striking that Riano's study reveals that it is not the field in which the diploma is obtained that is important but the country from which it is received. The study highlights that immigrants struggle to transfer their cultural capital across borders, challenging human capital theory. Switzerland's (the country where the research was conducted) immigration policies often overlook these difficulties, assuming skilled migrants integrate seamlessly. (Riano, 2012, pp. 38, 40). These women engage in various social and political activities to rebuild their social and cultural capital, sometimes leading to job opportunities. Many pursue further education to enhance their employability in Switzerland. Successful integration often involves delaying childbirth, sharing childcare, or divorcing to pursue professional goals (Riano, 2012, pp. 40-41). Human capital theory's assumption that educational attainment correlates with professional status does not hold for skilled migrant women, mainly from non-EU countries. What matters more is the relevance of their education and experience in Switzerland (Riano, 2012, pp. 25-44).

Additionally, to observe how certain aspects of women's lives influence their decisions before and after migration and to understand the impacts of being a woman, a mother, and making decisions regarding marriage on their decision to migrate and their future plans, it is essential to consider the gender factor. As mentioned earlier, Johnson-Hanks's "vital conjuncture" concept is also helpful in this context.

## 2.5 The contribution of this thesis

I also wanted to give information about the subject of my thesis study by looking at the theses in Türkiye in my literature review. First, studies on migration abroad in Türkiye and the situation of women in these migrations focus on women in the Turkish diaspora that formed in Europe with the labor migration in the 1960s. These studies focus on the experiences of women active in Turkish associations, try to understand how concepts such as being an immigrant and honor construct women's identities and discourses (Olcay-Özer, 2009), try to explain the factors affecting the psychological resilience of women after migration (Çakır, 2009) or return on the experience of educated women. (Combres, 2007)

There are studies focusing on the business life of immigrant women. However, these generally provide information about the working lives of women who have been "settled" for a long time. There are studies describing how cultural demands from fellow citizens, called "ethnic entrepreneurship,[6]" affect women in the hairdressing industry. (Kavuş, 2018) Studies generally focusing on post-migration work experiences have been examined under labor economics. (Erdoğan, 2021) There are also studies on women's religious and political identities and their representation in the media. (Şahin, 2008, Yüce, 2016, Ardıcı, 2015, Değirmenci, 2014, Gayırnal, 2021)

As a study conducted with the intersectionality perspective among the thesis studies, Sarıgöl's 2013 thesis analyzed the experiences of Turkish migrant women in

[6] Ethnic entrepreneurship is a multifaceted phenomenon that eludes simple explanations provided solely by culturalist or structuralist perspectives. The former underscores the role of cultural attributes in fostering entrepreneurial success among ethnic groups, suggesting that inherent cultural traits lead to business achievements. Conversely, the structuralist viewpoint considers the move towards entrepreneurship by immigrants as a response to barriers encountered in the host country. The involvement in entrepreneurship varies not only between different ethnic groups but also within individuals of the same ethnicity in the host society. (Kavuş, 2018, pg. 31)

Germany using intersectionality theory, focusing on the overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. The thesis draws on bell hooks' work on the intersection of race and gender, emphasizing the multiple layers of discrimination faced by women of different backgrounds. She finds that there are internal divisions and "othering" among Turkish women based on factors such as ethnicity, religion, and class. (Sarıgöl, 2013)

I will discuss two studies focusing on women in research on skilled migration, "new wave[7]" migration and "brain drain." The first is Aksoy's thesis, which focuses on the experiences of Turkish mothers who migrated to Berlin between 2009 and 2019. She questions how their identities, sense of nationhood, and feelings of belonging are influenced by their personal experiences and the broader socio-political context of Türkiye. This thesis provides insights into the evolving identities and senses of belonging among Turkish women who have migrated to Germany, highlighting how both personal factors and the broader socio-political context of Türkiye shape their experiences. It contributes to understanding the "new wave" of Turkish migration, particularly in terms of gendered experiences and the renegotiation of national belonging. (Aksoy, 2021)

The second study was conducted on immigrant women social media group, also my target group. The thesis explores the concept of social solidarity, its transformation in the digital age, and the role of civil society organizations. This thesis is a thesis studied in the Department of Labor Economics. (Tur, 2023)

[7] Generally, this term refers to individuals who have moved to pursue advanced degrees or to take up highly skilled employment opportunities. The concept of "new wave migrants" has emerged as a distinct category over the past ten years. As increasing numbers of these migrants have embraced this identifier, and as their unique characteristics compared to other migrants have begun to stand out more in societal discussions, it is fair to say that they represent a specific collective identity. However, it is important to note that the demarcations of this group can sometimes be variable. (Aksoy, 2021,pp. 31-32)

As can be seen, there are few studies on skilled migration that focus directly on high qualified migrant women's experiences. My study fills this gap and paves the way for future research in this area. It is expected to significantly contribute to the understanding of the post-migration experiences of qualified immigrant women, their re-entry into business life, the challenges and opportunities they face, their relationship with the capital they acquired in Türkiye, their future perspectives, and the strategies they adopt according to this perspective. This contribution is particularly important in the context of the high-qualified Turkish migration, and it is my hope that it will inspire and inform future studies in this field.

# CHAPTER 3

# METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Qualitative research

As I embarked on this research, my perspective was not to view migrant women as either victims or heroes due to the challenges or successes they encounter but rather to listen to and analyse their stories from their own perspectives. The curiosity about women's post-migration experiences also justifies using the qualitative method in this study. Through interviews, women were allowed to convey their stories in their own words, stories that play a crucial role in shaping the research inquiry. The interview method is utilized to give voice to participants and allow for situational analysis. It enables the revelation of information that might remain undiscovered under the radar of surveys or standardized data collection formats. Additionally, biographical and life history interviews or unstructured interviews allow participants to actively shape the research inquiry and enable the researcher to see areas not initially considered as part of the research. (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, pg. (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, pg. 172)

When formulating the questions, I made a conscious effort to comprehend both pre- and post-migration processes. Some questions were tailored based on individual stories, while others were omitted or replaced with alternative questions. Moreover, if needed, I asked more detailed questions during the interviews to deepen our understanding of the subject matter. In this way, the interview questions were structured in a semi-structured manner, allowing for flexibility and adaptability in the research process.

Semi-structured interviews establish a flexible framework for interviews, typically driven by the researcher's focus or a specific area of investigation. In this approach, the interviewer focuses on the main topic while allowing the interviewee room to delve into related subjects, fostering a collaborative and exploratory environment. This approach is conducive to generating knowledge and keeps the research process engaging and intriguing. (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, pg. 173)

## 3.2 Research process

As I embarked on this research, I faced the challenge of conducting long-term face-to-face research while working full-time in Türkiye. Despite the constraints, I was determined to understand the experiences of educated women who had immigrated recently. This determination led me to explore alternative research methods.
For this reason, I actually considered doing a content analysis on the account of immigrant women rather than the interview method. However, I chose the interview method as it allows for a more in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. To conduct this research, I had to follow the Instagram posts of the immigrant women's account and the Facebook group. Because the medium where women shared their experiences, asked each other questions or opened new discussion topics was the closed Facebook group. To become a Facebook group member, the requirement was to live abroad or plan to move abroad within six months.

I sent an e-mail to the group's corporate e-mail stating that I wanted to join the group as a researcher and that those in the group would know my researcher identity. However, the answer was negative. They said that they did not include the researchers in the Facebook group because they cared that the people in the group

felt comfortable and that they did not feel the need to limit their sharing, but that they were happy for immigrant women to be the subject of research, so if I wanted to meet with the women in the group, they could help me. First, I wanted to meet with the group's founders and hear from them about the establishment and development of the group. The first interviews were held via Zoom in July 2022 and August 2022, separately with the two women who were the group founders. Then, I sent them my contact information and a text introducing myself and the study to be shared in the Facebook group. Many women responded positively and said they could support my work and meet with me.

The initial interviews took place between December 2022 and January 2023. Subsequently, administrators of the 'migrant women' group shared my thesis research topic and called for interviewees on their Instagram accounts. The second round of interviews occurred during May and June 2023, all conducted via Zoom. To ensure the best quality for these interviews, I acquired a premium Zoom account specifically for these interviews. With their permission, I recorded their voices, refraining from taking videos or photos to ensure their comfort. I made detailed notes while they spoke, allowing me to transcribe my observations immediately after each interview. This approach minimized the need to review the recordings afterward. Interviews were held for periods ranging from 40 minutes to 2 hours.

### 3.2.1 Interviewing online

The convenience of online meetings is that they allow me to meet independently of the location since I work full time. However, it was still not possible to act independently of time. I tried to meet outside of working hours. The time difference between women from different countries caused problems in arranging meeting

times and caused some meetings to be postponed several times due to the inability to arrange the time, and then those interviewees could not be reached. Despite these challenges, the efficiency of online interviews remained a reassuring factor. However, it is believed that there is no limitation regarding the content of shared information due to online conversation. Another convenience for women was that they could have conversations even when their spouses or children were in another room. They did not need to leave the house to participate in the interview or arrange for a researcher to come to the house. However, of course, this did not provide the opportunity to observe women's home order more closely.

Another advantage of working online is that it allows one to meet with women from many different countries, sometimes even on the same day. This also enabled us to capture similar or country-specific differences in the stories of women living in different countries.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings and even research via digital platforms became widespread. Therefore, the women I interviewed were also very familiar with online meetings, with the added effect of living abroad. Of course, the fact that these women are educated also makes them advantageous regarding digital literacy. Likewise, working with a different sample group might have been challenging. At this point, I started researching digital research and online interviews.

Online interviews offered several advantages: reduced travel needs, lower transcription costs, time savings, and the ability to reach geographically or socially isolated people. However, the lack of non-verbal cues and the need for reading, reflection, and typing could introduce delays and ambiguities. Interviewers had to adapt by using shorter, closed questions and maintaining a lighter dialogue. This

interviewer's adaptability instilled confidence in the research process. (Davis et al., 2004, pp. 947-951) The physical separation between researchers, interpreters, and participants complicates the interview process. (Chiumento et. al, 2018, pg. (Chiumento et.al, 2018, pg. 9)

As an example of online interview research, Maryam AlKhateeb's analysis of using Skype in her research highlights its efficacy in overcoming barriers related to location, accessibility, and cost. Additionally, it ensured participant anonymity, which was paramount given the sensitive nature of the research topic, and facilitated data collection within a constrained timeline. Conversely, participants needed more support towards face-to-face Skype interviews due to concerns about privacy and anonymity. Technical issues, such as internet bandwidth and Wi-Fi signal strength, also presented challenges. Cultural factors, including the social acceptance of video communication, influenced participants' willingness to engage. AlKhateeb concludes that, despite certain limitations, the benefits of utilizing Skype for qualitative interviews surpass the drawbacks, particularly in contexts necessitating sensitivity to privacy and cultural norms. (2018, pp. 2253-2260)

It is observed that there are three paradigms for immigrants working on digital platforms. (1) Migrants in cyberspace; (2) everyday digital migrant life; (3) migrants as data. (Leurs& Prabhakar, 2018, pg.250) This thesis work aligns more closely with the second paradigm. This is because the second paradigm evaluates online and offline relationships as a whole. Instead of solely focusing on digital platforms, it incorporates physical spaces and digital practices into a comprehensive investigation. Studies examining the role of social media in the formation of diasporic identity through semi-structured interviews, unstructured discussions, and observations are considered within this scope. The use of media by migrants can only

be understood by evaluating it within its social, spatial, and temporal contexts. Technologies, media, and the internet are not separate entities but rather influence and are influenced by the routines of everyday social existence. (Leurs& Prabhakar, 2018, pg. 252) In this regard, within this thesis work, women's stories have not been evaluated solely based on their social media posts; interviews have also been conducted to examine their lives from a broader perspective. Although the interviews were not conducted face-to-face, women were evaluated not only based on the personas they present on social media but also on their background stories and the broader narratives they do not share online.

At this point, it is necessary to mention the following. When asked about their connections with Turkish associations in their host countries, the women interviewed generally reported having no such connections, and some even expressed a reluctance to establish such relationships. This situation, especially in light of recent or skilled migration, suggests the need to consider alternative channels, such as social media alongside or in addition to traditional NGO structures, when reaching out to individuals. In this context, there arises a pressing need for further research on the topic of digital diaspora or digitally connected migrants within the migration literature.

### 3.3 Participants and information about the Target Group

The detailed stories of the interviewees are discussed in the next chapter, where the findings are analyzed. However, I would like to mention their demographic profile, the way and the reason for their migration. I changed the actual names of the interviewers. Only the founders of the migrant women group (Pınar and Esra) have their real names.

In this thesis research, diverse groups of 15 women were interviewed, each with a unique story to tell. The ages of the women range from 28 to 44, and among them, there are 12 married and 3 single women, representing a wide range of marital statuses.

The distribution of women by country is as follows:

Canada: 1, Ireland: 2, Germany: 4, Sweden: 2, USA: 1, UK: 2, Australia: 1, Belgium: 2

Seven of them are mothers with one or two children, highlighting their sacrifices for their families. Their children are under the age of 18. Five of them have master's degrees, and the others have graduated with a bachelor. All of them had working experience in Türkiye before migration; however, some of them did not work in their areas. As I will discuss in the next chapter some of them quit their jobs for raising children or because of dissatisfaction with their job.

The cities they lived in Türkiye are generally İstanbul and Ankara, and some of them were born in cities like Kocaeli, Bursa, Mersin, Zounguldak, and Kütahya. Their migration years are between 2017- 2022. The interviews were conducted in the last six months of 2022 and the first six months of 2023, providing a significant time frame to understand the new types of migrants over the past five years. Contrary to the literature, 11 out of the 15 women I interviewed, despite migrating with their husbands, are categorized as independent migrants because they found employment themselves. However, as will be discussed in the following pages, they still needed to experience deskilling.

Regarding the reasons for migration, three individuals cited their husband's job, three mentioned the desire for their children to receive a better education and have a better future, three aimed for a more equal and liberated social life due to

gender inequalities, and two reported migrating to overcome their husband's job difficulties and seek new job opportunities abroad. Additionally, some mentioned economic or political reasons, and in certain cases, the aforementioned reasons were intertwined. For instance, the desire for better education for their children and economic reasons overlap, as well as the wish for a more liberated social life and career advancement. Furthermore, there are those whose perceptions of Türkiye changed after short-term educational programs, leading them to decide that living abroad would be better for them. In conclusion, the migration of skilled migrants is not solely driven by economic reasons or, in the case of women, by their husbands' jobs but is significantly influenced by motivations such as their children's education and future and women's pursuit of a more equal and liberated life.

In this section, I would also like to give information about the "immigrant women" social media group because I reached the interviewees above through this group. To better understand this group we can look at a survey conducted by the founders of the platform. The 'Migration Routes Survey,' which was conducted with 986 members between the ages of 25 and 44 between December 17 and January 18, aimed to gather information about the educational background, migration reasons, and employment status of the group's members. The majority of women who participated in the survey have migrated in recent years. The education level of these women is high. 55% of the women participating in the research have a university degree (2 or 4 years), and 40% have a master's degree or higher. When compared to all women living in Türkiye, it is seen that the rate of having a university education or higher is approximately nine times higher.

The most striking result of this study is that the female workforce potential has virtually evaporated after the "brain drain" of educated and currently employed

women in Türkiye. Fifty-four percent of the women participating in the research need to be fixed. 94% of those who stated that they do not work in the country they currently live in stated that they work in Türkiye. This indicates a considerable workforce loss.

Almost 90% of the participants are mothers, mostly with one child. This situation suggests that although more than half of the women who migrated are working in Türkiye, they cannot participate in working life abroad due to reasons such as language problems, work permits, as well as lack of support in child care. The majority of women (64%) who are still active in business life work in a company or government institution on a salaried basis. It is observed that 42% of immigrant women working in Türkiye are qualified experts/workers, and 40% are managers. Therefore, the fact that the employment rates in qualified jobs in Türkiye are lower than the rates received abroad also indicates a loss of qualifications. Women try to cope with this loss of qualifications by re-joining their education lives in their country and learning the language. (Toksöz, 2021, p. 158)

### 3.4 The position of the researcher

When a researcher shares the ethnic or national background of the subjects, it is believed that they gain insider status regarding the perspectives and social positions of those being studied (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, p. 179). However, as a researcher in this study, I think that I am sometimes an insider and sometimes an outsider. As a woman born and raised in Türkiye and as a woman who is aware of gender expectations, interviewing women was, of course, a point that brought us together. Being single may have created a distance between the interviewers regarding child care and household chore sharing.

Apart from gender, the fact that we share similar backgrounds in terms of education and cultural capital has also created situations in which I am an insider. I have studied in the same schools and lived in the same cities as some interviewees. However, as someone who goes abroad frequently for business reasons and has many friends living abroad, having an idea about life abroad, especially social and political life in Europe, sometimes helped me understand more easily what the interviewers were saying. Being 35 (33-34 years old at the time of the interview), I was on a close age scale to the interviewees.

Despite all the similarities, the fact that I am currently in Türkiye and working in a government institution may have caused a distance between the researcher and the interviewer. Considering these aspects, I think that the "third position" typology (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, p. 180) beyond the insider-outsider divide is more suitable for the researcher's identity in this research. It is a hybrid insider-outsider situation, where you can be an insider in one part of the conversation and an outsider in the other.

It is thought that investigating the researcher's position, background, proximity, and distance to the research field will have some benefits. The researcher can avoid stereotypical portrayals of the researched group, ensure that the interviewers' voices are heard during the research process, and act with the awareness that the researcher and the interviewers jointly construct the data collection process. (Fedyuk & Zentayi, 2018, pg. 185) For these reasons, inspired by Bourdieu's concept of reflexivity, I tried to constantly review my own position when starting the research process, conducting interviews, and writing the results. Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity involves examining social origin, position in the field, and intellectual bias. It helps researchers understand their own position in the social field and its

impact on their work. In my research, this meant constantly questioning power dynamics, self-interest, and biases and providing the context of my background to enhance transparency in the research process.

# CHAPTER 4

# TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE AND START NEW BEGINNINGS

## 4.1 The difficulties in the first days of migration

In this part, I will address the issues that the women I interviewed confronted after migration. Their resilience in the face of challenges such as skill loss, capital transfer, and new beginnings, which I will discuss in the later stages, is evident in their proactive exploration of various solutions and strategies. Despite the difficulties, these individuals began to explore various solutions and strategies. The prominent issues they faced included reverting to the homemaker role, losing social capital, discrimination, de-skilling, and finding housing.

Twelve of the women I interviewed were married at the time of the interview. Some were married before migrating, while others were married after migrating. However, even if they were married, some women found a job and even migrated with their husbands through the job they found themselves rather than as spouses. The women who are dependent immigrants, that is, who migrate because of their spouse's job, are the ones who have the most problems with sudden changes in their migration status and loss of qualifications. Migration creates a "vital conjuncture" for these women. With migration, many habits change suddenly. Especially when having a child, motherhood and immigration emerge as two processes that must be dealt with.

One of these women, Pınar, immigrated to Canada because of her husband's job. Pınar, whose husband is currently in another country for work reasons, aims to stay in Canada with the children and obtain Canadian citizenship. When I ask Pınar about the first issues she had difficulty with after migration, she talks about her

longing for Türkiye, the feeling of lack of support and inadequacy that comes with being alone, and the illness caused by the stress induced by these. The group named Migrant Mothers (Pınar is one of the founders of that group) and later Migrant Women, which provides a platform for sharing experiences, offering support, and advocating for the rights of immigrant women, emerged because of such a feeling. Esra, who lives in Ireland and is another founder of the immigrant women's group, also mentions that she had the most difficulty in raising children without support after immigration. Esra, who could not work for the first year due to childcare, mentions that she had difficulties in the social environment.

> "The identity and environment I created while in Türkiye suddenly slipped away."[8]

For immigrant women, the loss of social capital that occurs with migration, combined with being alone in childcare, is one of the most difficult issues. The migrant women are trying to create new sources of social capital to cope with such situations; they gain new social capital. This underscores the crucial role of social support in the migration process, highlighting the significance of community and empathy.

Feray, who lives in Sweden, also mentions that it was difficult for her to repeat the issue of staying at home alone with her child, which she felt and had difficulty with when she became a mother while in Türkiye, with migration abroad. It seems that taking on the role of a homemaker again, even if only for a very short time (September to January), frightened her.

Although migrating with children leads to re-domestication, a process where women who were previously employed outside the home become primarily

[8] "Türkiye'de oluşturduğum kimlik, çevre bir anda elimden kaydı."

responsible for domestic tasks, migrating within marriage also allows spouses to establish solidarity with each other. Deniz, who lives in Germany, emphasizes that it is important and valuable for two people to support each other during migration. Women who migrate with their own nuclear family may have an advantage in some respects over women who migrate independently. Barbara Pusch's research (Pusch, 2010) delved into the role of the family in migration processes, drawing from 88 biographical narrative interviews with highly educated migrant individuals in Germany, Türkiye, and Canada. In her analysis, Pusch highlighted howthe partner assumed a central role not only in the decision-making process of migration but also in facilitating integration into the labor market. Partners often provided financial assistance, social connections, and essential knowledge for navigating life in the destination country. Additionally, they played a significant role in obtaining legal status and assisting migrants in their interactions with authorities. Marriage to a partner with legal status in the destination country often meant gaining access to legal rights that expanded opportunities both within and beyond the labor market. This included pursuing further education, undergoing re-skilling courses, practicing their profession, or venturing into self-employment (Pusch, 2010, pp. 288–290). Although family brings challenges such as family duties, childcare, etc., it also serves as a source of both financial and emotional support for migrants.

Feyza, who lives in Belgium, also says that finding a house is difficult, but since her husband has lived in Belgium before, he takes care of finding housework. On the other hand, migration to a country where the language is unknown may cause a decrease in women's self-confidence. Feyza expresses this situation with the following words:

> "I was someone who did not go home to Istanbul; I came here. I had my car with me and my driver's license, but since I did not know the rules very well,

> my husband always drove it. I had a hard time because I had to ask my husband when I was going somewhere. I was glad when I could go to the market alone. Learning the language of this place gave me confidence. I started the course immediately in September… As I traveled without navigation, my sense of belonging increased."[9]

For women, children's education is a bigger factor in the migration decision but migrating with children can cause difficulties for women, even if it is for the good of the child. For Nil, who lives in Germany, finding a school for her child with special needs while also dealing with discrimination was one of the most difficult issues after immigration. She confronted the discrimination her child faced, which led to him losing a year of education. She mentions that there are invisible glass ceilings in Germany. There were interviewees who reported that they experienced implicit discrimination on other issues in Germany. Comparing it with the UK, Nil says that everything would be easier if we were there, but when she looks at the balance of loss and gain, she says that he (her son) will at least know three languages in the future.

One of the issues that women, whether single or married, struggle with is 'discrimination,' which can happen to almost every migrant. The interviewers especially experienced this during the process of finding housing. While the issue of finding rental housing is already a widespread problem in major cities, some women linked their inability to find housing to being from Türkiye.

Ece, who immigrated single, also thinks that she is discriminated against in Germany. Ece said that she started to see the negative aspects 7-8 months after immigrating to Germany and that she had the most difficulty in finding a house. Since she has no relatives in Germany, she needed help finding a guarantor for the

[9] İstanbul'da eve girmeyen biriydim, buraya geldim. Arabam altımdaydı, ehliyetim vardı ama kuralları pek iyi bilmediğim için hep eşim kullandı. Bir yere gideceğim zaman eşime sormak zorunda kaldığım için zorlandım. Markete tek başıma gidebileceğim zaman sevinmiştim. Buranın dilini öğrenmek bana güven verdi. Eylülde hemen kursa başladım, navigasyonsuz gezdikçe aidiyetim arttı.

house. She thinks she was asked for a deposit of 10,000 Euros *"because she is Turkish."*

For Gülsüm, who lives in Germany, racism has been the most challenging issue.

> "Moving abroad takes courage. It took me a while to feel accepted by this society."[10]

Although they migrated as 'skilled migrants' and made this decision with the desire to build a better life, they faced discrimination in the countries they migrated to because they came from another country (especially Türkiye[11]). Gülsüm mentions encountering racism during her house-hunting process. Over the span of four years, she did not receive even a single housing advertisement. It was only when her German colleagues at work asked if she might be facing discrimination due to her name that she realized the situation. Subsequently, she sent an email to the relevant people accusing them of racism. As a result, she immediately found a house and even received several offers.

> "Immigrants do not immediately realize that they encounter racism, and since there is already a language barrier, they have difficulty understanding and making sense of it."[12]

On the other hand, there is a tendency for skilled migrants to be more accepted and embraced in the countries they migrate to. In her article "Family Migration as a Class Matter," Eleonore Kofman discusses how migration itself is a class issue. While unskilled migrants were accepted in the 1960s due to labor needs, over time, it became undesirable for migrants to live dependent on state aid. The term "migrant

[10] "yurtdışına taşınmak cesaret işi…Bu toplum tarafından kabul edildiğimi hissetmem zaman aldı"
[11] In Germany, there is an increasing opposition towards migrants. This situation takes a concrete form in politics with the the rise of the AfD party. However, the fact that Turks have been living in Germany in large numbers since 1960s draws attention to Turks as the largest immigrant group. Direct or indirect attacks or right violations against Turks are occurring. Those who migrate as skilled migrants are also sometimes subjected to these racist attitudes.
[12] "Göç eden insanlar ırkçılıkla karşılaştıklarını hemen farkedemiyorlar, zaten dil bariyeri de olduğu için bunu anlamakta ve anlamlandırmakta zorlanıyorlar."

with poor prospects" began to be used to describe migrant groups, including Turks, who were thought to be unable to become good citizens or contribute to national unity and sustain a self-sufficient life. Therefore, the migration of low-income, uneducated, and socially disadvantaged individuals started to be restricted. Integration criteria such as language proficiency, education, and financial resources became essential for migration. In addition to economic sufficiency, highly educated individuals with high cultural and social capital, who are believed to integrate well, are also considered suitable for migration, even if they work in middle-class or low-income, insecure jobs. (Kofman, 2018, pp. 33-34). Indeed, some interviewees mentioned that they were distinguished from 'other migrants' and were more accepted by their society.

These two situations may seem contradictory, but they are not. Although skilled migrants are separated from refugees or others perceived as 'uneducated,' they thus appear to be in a somewhat more advantageous position due to their acquired cultural capital. Their 'foreignness' still manifests in small but vital matters such as finding housing. At this point, if we recall Bourdieu's interpretation of racism by those who work in that country, even if they are educated immigrants, being a "foreigner" in that country, even if they know the language of that country, is not enough for them to be accepted by the society. For these reasons, it is crucial to evaluate Bourdieu's concept of capital from an intersectional perspective in the context of gender and race. Especially for immigrants, it is observed that the capital that immigrants acquire in their country of origin cannot easily circulate in another country (as we will see in the later stages, such as not accepting the diploma, discriminatory attitudes in the workplace, being one step behind). This state of being a foreigner is felt even in the first days of migration while they are still looking for

house. However, it is useful to add the following at this point: Since the interviewees still thought that the social and economic life in the countries they migrated to was advantageous for them, they did not attribute such discriminatory attitudes to the whole society. They continued to strive to gain a place for themselves in the country they were in.

Financial loss and de-skilling are significant challenges that migrant women face, often not immediately apparent in the early days of migration but becoming evident later on. Despite these hurdles, the women I interviewed demonstrated remarkable resilience. They navigated issues like finding housing, enrolling children in school, needing support, and noticing discriminatory behaviors during these processes with determination.

Johnson-Hanks argues that 'life stages' in anthropology do not progress uniformly for everyone. Instead, 'vital conjunctures' such as having children or migrating can emerge, prompting individuals to adapt and forge new paths. Among the women I interviewed, migration and motherhood were two such vital conjunctures. The women's ability to adapt to these life stages was evident in the formation of a group called 'migrant mothers,' which later evolved into 'migrant women' to include single women. T

The name of the immigrant women group was “Migrant Mothers” in the beginning; however, it changed to “Migrant Women” later. When I asked the reason, they replied:

> "We were mothers and migrants; we had questions like how can I live as a mother in a foreign country, and how can I raise my children. After a while, single women joined the group, and we came together in the context of being women. Also, we became more conscious about being a woman."[13]

[13] “Biz anne ve göçmeniz. Çocuğumu başka bir ülkede nasıl yetiştirebilirim, yabancı bir ülkede nasıl annelik yapabilirim gibi sorularımız vardı. Bir süre sonra gruba bekar kadınlar da katıldı ve kadınlık paydasında bir araya gelmeye başladık. Ayrıca kadınlık bilincimiz de zaman içerisinde gelişti.”

> "The group functions as a therapy group and sometimes as a news agency. At first, there were more emotional sharing in our group because we were not that crowded. There are now "old" immigrants joining the group. New and old together… Women from over 100 countries… USA, England, Germany in particular… We founded the immigrant women's Facebook group based on our own personal needs."[14]

The issues and some posts on their Instagram account are as follows: emotions, raising children, education of children, health system, work life, socialization, supporting the other women, and success stories of these women. They explained their aim as;

> "To be able to bring together women who have moved and plan to move abroad, to find solutions to similar problems together, to speak in their mother language with people who have similar experiences, to share the difficulties and happiness of the processes they are going through."

Also, another question I had was whether they had any interaction with Turkish associations in the countries they immigrated to. The majority of the participants stated that they were not in contact with Turkish associations - or even that they did not particularly prefer to do so. When I evaluated these two situations in conjunction with each other, I came to the following conclusion: Turkish associations abroad are not areas where social capital can be created for qualified immigrant women. This is actually related to the social differences between those who migrated abroad as labor migrants in the 1960s and those who migrated as skilled laborers.

The concept of diaspora is quite broad. Generally, when the Turkish diaspora is mentioned, what is understood is that the Turks and their grandchildren went abroad as workers, especially to Europe, with the labor migration in the 1960s. However, with the brain drain, the concept of diaspora is expanding, including those

[14]"Grup bir terapi grubu işlevi görüyor bazen de bir haber ajansı gibi … İlk başlarda bizim grubumuzda duygusal paylaşımlar daha fazlaydı çünkü bu kadar kalabalık değildik… Grupta artık "eski" göçmenlerden de katılanlar oldu. Yeni ve eskiler bir arada. 100 küsür ülkeden kadın. Abd, İngiltere, Almanya yoğunluklu. Göçmen kadınlar facebook grubunu kendi kişisel ihtiyaçlarımızdan yola çıkarak kurduk."

who go to work or study, even for a short time. It has to be like this because, from the answers to the questions in this study, there are people who go abroad with short-term training programs and then decide to immigrate completely, and even if they go with short-term business agreements, they decide to stay completely. However, when I asked, *"Do you define yourself as an immigrant, diaspora, or something else?"* the answers were generally *"immigrant."* One participant said that defining them as "immigrants" is unfair to those who fled the war without any job security to save their lives. In other words, the qualified immigrant women I interviewed could neither feel fully close to the "settled" Turkish diaspora that came a long time ago through labor migration nor to the immigrants who came as refugees. Although this state of not being close was sometimes experienced as a complete separation, it was not always such a strict separation.

Diasporas are unquestionably diverse communities. Within a diaspora community, different groups may have different needs, backgrounds, and goals for the future. As a result, one can see a variety of organizational styles, passions, and identity constructions within a diaspora group. (Baser & Halperin, 2019, pp. 215-216)

I think that "migrant women" social media accounts are an example of "digital diasporas" (Candidatu& Ponzanesi, 2022) because they use social media as a new support and socialization system instead of the classical NGOs. However, it does not mean that digital diaspora or digitalization of diaspora replace classical NGOs. They replied positively when I asked whether they think of establishing a classical NGO. Although social media has some advantages, it also has some limitations. They can join some of the campaigns, but they cannot create one because they need to have some legal procedures.

After this point, I want to talk about how social media is used as social capital. Based on the "forum" example, Faucher discusses whether social media groups can also be social capital. There needs to be a concrete reward mechanism offered to people in these groups. When he "posts" something, a person gains the "likes" he can get if it is found informative or interesting to others. (Faucher, 2018, pp.1-12) Migrant Women social media account is also an example of social capital. When I asked the interviewees about their relationship with social media, especially during the immigration process, I realized that they could also get support from there. Pınar, one of the platform's founders, says that the group emerged out of a common need to be a mother in a new country. However, this group generally consists of educated women and, especially, women who have migrated recently. In fact, we can observe that people belonging to a certain "habitus" interact on these and similar platforms.

Social capital in immigration can be effective in many areas, including finding a job in that country, finding a house, finding a school for children, and even obtaining information about which product to buy from which market. Esra, the other platform founder, says that they opened the group;

> "to reduce the feeling of loneliness, to learn things such as where to go and how to go to the doctor." … Over time, subgroups formed within the group. For example, "immigrant women are learning German, immigrant women are on holiday, immigrant women and special children, immigrant women live healthily"."[15]

In addition, women communicated with each other according to their locations and had face-to-face meetings.

[15] "Grubu yalnızlık hissini azaltmak, nerde ne olur, doktora nasıl gidilir gibi işleri öğrenmek için açmıştık. Göçmen kadınlar grubu sonra alt gruplar doğurdu. Göçmen kadınlar Almanca öğreniyor, göçmen kadınlar tatilde, göçmen kadınlar ve özel çocuklar, göçmen kadınlar sağlıklı yaşıyor…"

## 4.2 Re-Entering work life

In the process of re-entering working life after migration, women often face significant challenges such as diplomas not being recognized in the country of migration, starting at a disadvantage, postponing work due to childcare, or starting a new education. Despite these hurdles, they try to navigate these obstacles.
In the next chapter, I will touch on the situation of women entering new education and business areas, that is, making new beginnings with migration. Therefore, this section will address situations where qualifications cannot be transferred and qualifications are lost. Then, I will talk about the mobilization of capital by women who were able to enter working life.

Nil, who graduated from Kocaeli Industrial Engineering and completed his master's degree at Bilgi University, was working in the field of human resources in a company in Türkiye. She first tried to go abroad on behalf of the company she worked for and made some applications, but it did not work. She applied for different positions in different countries. She thinks that the negative results stem from her Turkish identity. When she received negative feedback from her applications, she applied for a position below her qualifications and was accepted. She came to Germany after accepting the job.

"Taking the risk of going one step behind is necessary."[16]

Although Germany was a country she chose because of her disabled son, despite the discrimination he experienced at school and the language barrier experienced by the whole family meant that her son would still have a better education there anyway. She believes that her child will be someone who knows many languages in the future, even if they have difficulty now.

[16] "Bir adım geriden gitmeyi göze almak lazım"

It is evident that motherhood significantly influences career decisions. The desire to provide a better education for their children often leads women to accept jobs below their qualifications. As we have discussed, motherhood and migration are pivotal factors in women's lives, shaping the paths they choose. Nil, a mother of a disabled child, has based her career and migration decisions on this.

Feray, another married interviewee with children is one of the most striking examples of this section. Feray graduated from METU Industrial Engineering. She was born in Mersin and graduated from Mersin Science High School. Her parents were teachers. She has a brother, a university graduate who works in business. After graduating, she went from Ankara to Istanbul and started working as a business analyst in a private hospital and then as an assistant inspector in a bank. However, she left the job due to "mobbing". Later, she started working in an international NGO. Therefore, Feray is someone who made a career change while in Türkiye. However, this career change was interrupted due to the child.

> "I had the idea that I would raise my child myself,
> but I realized that this was not suitable for me."[17]

She gave birth in the USA so that her child could get a US passport. Because she knew that a passport was a valuable thing, she wanted her child to have this passport. They moved to Sweden when the child was two years old. Her husband is a mechanical engineer and worked at an electronics company when he was in Türkiye. When they decided to immigrate, they applied through her husband's job, and Feray immigrated depending on her husband. She mentions that she was confined to her home in Sweden due to language problems and childcare issues at first, which was not good for her, and that she returned to the mood she experienced when she was in

[17] "Çocuğuma kendim bakacağım gibi bir düşüncem vardı ama bunun bana uygun olmadığını anladım."

Türkiye. She sends the child to nursery and enrolls herself in a language school. Then, she starts looking for a job and applies to an employment agency. However, at this point, although she admits that she was not actually looking for a job seriously, she states that her response from the institution still upset her.

"With this CV, you can only be a receptionist"[18]

This answer makes her realize that no matter how good her diploma is in Türkiye, she should actually have a diploma in Sweden. For this reason, she is starting the two-year data analysis department in Sweden, where she can study in English. There are several breaking points in Feray's story. First, she quit her job and started working in an NGO, thinking she was subjected to mobbing at work. She took a break from working due to motherhood and found herself in a new situation with migration. All of these are "vital conjunctures" for her, and now, as she told me at the end of the interview, it is another vital conjuncture if she is considering divorce. However, Feray has economic and cultural capital; she needs a network related to the field she studied, that is, lack of social capital, which may have been a factor in the process of finding a job. However, the fluctuations in her career are also related to the vital conjuncture situations in her life. With each new situation, another possibility emerged, and Feray acted on these possibilities.

Feyza, who lives in Belgium, is another person I want to discuss regarding the inability to transfer qualifications. Feyza graduated from the Department of American Culture and Literature at Istanbul University in Türkiye. After graduation, she worked in a three-year college and in a study center for one year. She had her first child in 2012 and her second child in 2017, and she gradually stopped working because of the children. When she entered university, she actually wanted to study

[18] "sen bu cv ile ancak otelde resepsiyonist olarak dursun"

psychology. She received therapy for six years and participated in psychodrama groups. As a result of this interest, she later completed her master's degree in psychology at Gelişim University. However, since her bachelor's degree was not in psychology, she decided not to do anything related to psychology ethically. If she had stayed in Türkiye, she was also considering studying for a psychology degree. Her husband previously lived in Belgium but came to Türkiye when he got married. This was the reason why they came to Belgium and decided to migrate. She has not had a full working life since she came to Belgium. She worked in the production department of the factory for a very short time, but there were people on the team who she thought were racist, and an argument ensued. Later, she joined another team but worked there for a short time and then left. Now, she has applied for training at the employment agency and will start training in the field of logistics. She chose this department because it was a field that interested her and because they offered education in English. She talks about the difficulty of finding a job without knowing Dutch. She is currently studying Flemish at the B2 level. In addition to her logistics training, she also plans to sell essential oils over the Internet. However, she plans to start such a business after learning about its tax and similar regulations in Belgium. In Feyza's case, withdrawal from working life occurred while she was in Türkiye with her children before her migration. Although there were attempts to re-enter business life with migration, these were interrupted due to reasons such as racism and lack of language knowledge. While she is now planning to study logistics and enter business life, she is also evaluating the possibilities of doing business over the Internet without any spatial or linguistic restrictions.

There are different situations for those who migrate as singles. Ece, 28 years old, was born and raised in Bursa and graduated from METU psychology in 2018.

As soon as she graduated, she came to Germany, where she had previously come for the Erasmus program. Ece actually wanted to start a master's degree, but she could not start the master's degree because she did not have sufficient German language knowledge. She worked with immigrant children in institutions such as the Child Protection Agency and worked as a mini-job in a position such as helping an older man. In fact, she is not far outside her profession, but she has not worked as a psychologist in the strict sense. In order to work as a psychologist in Germany, one must complete a long certificate training.

Meanwhile, her boyfriend came to Germany and started his master's degree in sociology. After improving her language a little more, she started her master's degree and certificate training that enabled her to work as a psychotherapist. She now works as a psychologist and states that ;

"Language is a huge barrier."[19]

In Ece's case, it is not possible to talk about a complete loss of qualifications because she immigrated as soon as she completed her education, she did not gain any work experience while in Türkiye, but in her case, her language capital was not sufficient (even though she had been learning German since the time she came to Erasmus, it was not sufficient for a master's degree in psychology) emerged as an obstacle. However, since she was still determined to stay in Germany, she improved her German language skills by working mini-jobs for children and the elderly, earning a living without any support.

Esin, another single immigrant interviewee, was born in Zonguldak in 1982. After graduating from Uludağ University, Department of Philosophy, she worked in a rehabilitation center. 2017 she went to Spain for ten months to work on a project.

[19] dil çok büyük bir bariyer”

She learned from a Spanish friend in Spain that she could go to the USA with an au-pair program. She came to the USA with the au-pair program. She currently works as a part-time babysitter and is receiving training in data analysis. After immigrating to the USA, she married an American man, and her husband worked as a manager in a flooring store. Like Özlem, Esin has made "immigration" the main issue and shaped business-related decisions based on this. She is considering staying in the USA permanently, so she does not mind working in a job below her qualifications. On the other hand, she is receiving new training to focus on business areas that will enable her to be permanent.

Burçak was the third single woman I interviewed. Her education life was interrupted due to her accident. Although she was educated in the field of traditional Turkish Arts, she did not have a school or work environment where she could improve herself in this field. Therefore, she is one of those who worked in his field and did not gain work experience while he was at Türkiye. In fact, she had been thinking about migrating abroad since she went to language school in Italy in 2016. We see in some stories that there are situations where migration itself becomes a goal rather than migrating to find a job. First, the decision to migrate is made, and then the opportunities are evaluated. In the introduction section, we have mentioned the reasons for migration in more detail. We can say that in Burçak's case, the economic crisis was the cause. She says she was only accepted for volunteer work and could not find a job in her field because he did not have a sufficient network in Türkiye. Burçak, who met someone who had returned to Türkiye from Australia and started thinking about the Australian option, first came to Australia as a language school student. Now she has started her diploma education. Burçak, who planned to stay in Australia for at least 5-6 years, thought about ways to stay in Australia permanently

and make a living simultaneously. During this period, she worked as a babysitter and waitress. She found a babysitting job through an immigrant women's group. This can be interpreted as the effect of social capital on finding a job. Since she is paid for babysitting, she does not have to report her working hours. She mentions that she was subjected to implicit discrimination in the restaurant where she worked. She could get paid as much as she could shift shifts but was not given any shifts. That is why she is thinking of quitting her job. Even if women find employment, discrimination in the workplace also emerges as a problem.

Although the number of single women among the interviewees is low, there are some common points in all three stories. These common points include a shared goal of migrating, a belief that establishing a life abroad would be beneficial, and a lack of concern about the type of job they would have abroad. For all three women, migrating is a goal in itself, and since they believe that it would be better for them to establish a life abroad, working as a babysitter, server, or similar job is not a concern. Of course, there may also be an age effect in this case. The ages of the three single women interviewed were around 28-31 at the time of the interview. These ages, when it is still possible to take risks in life, may motivate them to experience life abroad and face difficulties. Women with children take into consideration many factors, such as their children's school, livelihood, and future, but there is no such agenda for single women. However, as I mentioned, migrating together between married people also makes it easier for spouses to support each other.

Seher, an interviewer who has not experienced any loss of qualifications but has experienced a decrease in her earnings, provides Turkish education to foreigners in a way similar to her job as a translator and interpreter and continues this online. Seher was born in Kütahya and started studying at Boğaziçi University Translation

and Interpreting Department in 1997. However, when she had difficulty in English, she went to the UK as an au pair for one year and then returned to Türkiye and continued her education. She graduated in 2002 and started working immediately. She first worked at TÖMER[20] for many years as a director in several educational institutions and founded her own company in the 8th year of her working life. She provides translation services to expats coming to Türkiye. In fact, she met her husband when she came to Türkiye for her husband's job. Her husband was a Turk living in Hungary. She actually never thought of emigrating herself. She mentions that she was financially comfortable while in Türkiye. However, they decided to emigrate when her husband could not do the job he wanted in Türkiye (her husband was in the IT sector). They first thought of migrating to one of the Scandinavian countries. Still, there was a period when applications from Türkiye were evaluated negatively, and they decided to go to the UK with the Ankara Agreement.

> "I was working until I got on the plane and continued working online with my students. I did not look for a job. We applied for the Ankara Agreement through me."[21]

Seher continued to work as she was without going through any job search process, but the profile she was teaching changed, and therefore, she experienced a financial decline.

She has had students from the UK, but she says that her students in UK have lower profiles than those in Türkiye.

> "The British are very stingy. I am currently working for 25-30 pounds. There is a decrease in both financial and profile levels compared to Istanbul. Before the pandemic, I was giving face-to-face lessons; with the pandemic, everyone wanted to continue online because it was more convenient. People usually want to learn a little Turkish because they are married to Turks…I had no intention of emigrating, my business was going well. I was guiding expats who came to Türkiye, I was getting paid hourly. After I came here, I started

[20] The instutions under the universities, which give Turkish education for foreigners in Türkiye.
[21] "Uçağa binene kadar çalışıyordum, öğrencilerimle online çalışmaya devam ettim. İş aramadım. Ankara Anlaşmasına benim üzerimden başvuru yaptık. "

> to deal with more Turks.When I was in Türkiye, I lived as if I were in Europe, now in UK, I feel like I am in Türkiye…"[22]

> "Not everyone is as lucky as we are. We came with our savings. We are not in the same situation as those who work for 3 cents in a kebab shop." [23]

Seher's advantage was that she immigrated to a country where she already knew the language and culture, and her business already had an international character. She also states that they came to UK with some savings. In other words, economic, cultural, and social capital were sufficient for Seher. Because she was able to continue earning money or establishing a social life in the UK through the students she had while in Türkiye. Even though there is a financial decrease, she still considers staying because of the other benefits of living in UK.

Suppose we summarize the situation of women who cannot continue their careers, lose their qualifications, or experience financial decline after migration. In that case, we see that a few situations come to the fore. We see that there are situations where diplomas that we would agree with the criticisms about Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital are not recognized in another country, job applications are rejected because they are foreigners (or even, in some cases, mainly because they applied from Türkiye), and they accept being one step behind for these reasons. Even though they were educated, urban women, they realized that they were "foreigners" in another country and were discriminated against. This situation actually shows that the perception of skilled and educated migrants being more accepted is not always valid. We have seen that some women also experienced difficulties in the first days.

[22] "İngilizler çok cimri. Şu an 25-30 pounda çalışıyorum. İstanbul'a göre hem maddi hem de profil düzeyinde düşüş var. Pandemiden önce yüz yüze ders veriyordum, pandemi ile birlikte herkes daha ucuz olduğu için online devam etmek istedi. İnsanlar genelde Türklerle evli oldukları için biraz Türkçe öğrenmek istiyorlar... Benim göç etme niyetim yoktu, işlerim iyi gidiyordu. Türkiye'ye gelen expatlara rehberlik ediyordum, saatlik ücret alıyordum. Buraya geldikten sonra daha çok Türkle muhatap olmaya başladım. Türkiye'deyken sanki Avrupa'daymışım gibi yaşıyordum, şimdi İngiltere'de kendimi Türkiye'deymişim gibi hissediyorum…"

[23] "Herkes bu kadar şanslı değildir. Biz birikmiş paramızla geldik. Kebapçıda 3 kuruşa çalışanlarla aynı durumumuz yok."

Now, we see that there are women who are exposed to discriminatory attitudes in business life.

Language capital emerges as another deficiency and an obstacle to quickly entering business life. However, since this deficiency can be compensated over time, after living in that country for a while and attending courses, it was possible to gradually compensate for it and participate in social and business life.

> "Those who went to Germany in the 1960s without knowing the language are superheroes."[24]

This statement from Feray, who lives in Sweden, expresses the difficulty she experiences due to the language barrier and also reflects the difficulties experienced by the participants as qualified immigrants from time to time. Their comparison with worker immigrants from small cities without knowledge of a foreign language summarizes their appreciation and sympathy for them at some points, even though they see themselves as separate from them.

Motherhood is among the most critical factors affecting business life. This situation caused women to withdraw from business life in Türkiye, independent of migration. However, the loss of social environment, loneliness, and lack of support experienced with migration caused women to be stuck in the roles of homemaker and mother and thus to experience disappointment. Situations such as marriage or divorce also affect whether migration is permanent or not. Esra, who lives in the USA, is already planning to stay in the USA permanently, and her marriage has further strengthened this situation. For Feray, starting a new education in the country she immigrated to and gaining financial income is essential for deciding on divorce. In other words, although the existence and sufficiency of capital affect job

[24] "1960'larda dil bilmeden gelenler süper kahraman"

opportunities after migration, situations such as marriage, motherhood, or divorce also create "vital conjunctures" that affect women's ability to chart their own paths. The number of single participants was relatively low, but the standard narrative among these three people is that migration itself is a goal. Working in lower-level jobs or other business fields is not a problem in pursuing this goal. The gains brought by immigration itself and "being able to go abroad" have sufficient meaning for these women. This actually leads us to think about the symbolic meaning of "migration."

As I will discuss in more detail later, the opportunities that come with living abroad can sometimes compensate for the capital losses experienced. As a matter of fact, although Seher followed a similar career path in business life and experienced a financial decline, considering the cultural and social opportunities that living in the UK brings, she still does not think of returning to Türkiye, at least for now.

> "Our standard of living has increased in different ways. Everyone is expected to have a hobby here…You cannot establish a conversation unless you are interested in a few different things. Volunteer activities are an integral part of daily life. We couldn't have done these if we stayed in Türkiye"[25]

I would particularly like to draw attention to the fact that some of these women quit working or moved to other fields because they were unsatisfied with their business life in Türkiye or for reasons such as motherhood. This is one of the reasons for the "new beginnings" that I will discuss in the next section. While migration opens a new page for women, it also provides the opportunity to review the business life and past education that was interrupted while in Türkiye and to evaluate new education and job opportunities along with a new country and a new life.

Now, I will look at women who can continue their business lives more easily after migration and how they can mobilize their capital. At this point, I will look at

[25] "Hayat standardımız farklı anlamda yükseldi. Burada herkesin bir hobisinin olması bekleniyor. Konuşmalar öyle ilerliyor, Eğer ilgilendiğiniz birkaç farklı şey yoksa muhabbet de kuramıyorsunuz. Gönüllü faaliyetler günlük hayatın ayrılmaz bir parçası. Türkiye'de kalsak bunları yapamazdık."

the first examples of women who can use their ethnic and cultural capital. I will talk about women who create or find jobs through their knowledge of the Turkish language and ties with Türkiye.

Pınar is our interviewee, who is also the founder of the immigrant women group and lives in Canada with her two children. Pınar was working in the field of marketing while in Türkiye. Staying at home with her children and raising them without support after migration was one of the most challenging issues for her, and this stress caused her to suffer from some diseases. She is currently studying for a bachelor's degree in psychology in Canada. However, she also established an immigration consultancy center to provide consultancy to immigrants like herself. , she provides consultancy services to those who want to come from Türkiye to Canada for education, work, or birth, with the consultancy company she established in partnership with another Turkish woman living in Canada.

Ceylan got married in 2018 and moved to Ireland with her husband in 2019. Ceylan graduated from ITU Management Engineering in Türkiye. She was working in marketing while she was in Türkiye. They planned to emigrate, but she resigned after getting married (to receive marriage compensation). The idea of emigrating began to emerge after the explosion in Beşiktaş in Türkiye. When she started thinking about emigrating, she applied for jobs but received rejection responses from most of them. Ceylan went first, and her husband came to Ireland 1.5 years later. Ceylan found a job as a subject expert on TikTok, but she was not satisfied with the job because it was unrelated to her education or knowledge. She later changed jobs. Although she stated that she was not satisfied with her job, she came to Ireland to find a job thanks to her knowledge of the native language. She is also not a dependent immigrant; on the contrary, she is an immigrant woman whose husband

came later. Since the team consists of Turks, his current social circle generally consists of Turks.

Another interviewee who was accepted for a job because she speaks Turkish is Özlem, who lives in Belgium. Özlem is also a graduate of Boğaziçi Translation and Interpreting Department. 2016 was the year she came to Belgium for her master's degree. Later, when she returned to Türkiye, she began to find the things he had previously seen as "normal" in Türkiye as disturbing, and this time, she decided to emigrate completely. In 2018, she first found a job in the Netherlands and lived there for about two years. She worked in marketing there and found her job through LinkedIn. She came to Belgium in 2020. The biggest factor in her coming to Belgium was her Belgian boyfriend, whom she was about to marry. When she came to Belgium, she had trouble finding a job because she did not know Dutch. She was able to find a job at a multinational company because they were looking for someone to produce Turkish content.

In the literature on the mobilization of ethnicity and native language knowledge after migration, it is stated that migrants activate this knowledge to find a job through immigrant networks. There is a tendency for them to find jobs, especially in services for immigrants, through their immigrant identity and by taking advantage of social state opportunities, but these jobs are generally below their qualifications. (Diken, 1998, Liversage, 2009, Erel, 2010) However, in light of the above examples, this situation does not always occur this way. Even though Seher's economic earnings have decreased, she can continue her profession. She did not switch to another profession. Pınar established a new business with her partners and became a company partner. This may be somewhat valid for Ceylan. Even though she found a job in a company using her native language, she sees her job as a job that is not very

related to her education and does not fully reflect her experience in Türkiye. However, as mentioned in the literature, jobs are not only in services for immigrants. Pınar's job is more aimed at immigrants, but it is not low profile or a social service job.

Aside from ethnicity and language capital, the social and cultural capital acquired through previous work experiences plays a significant role in the employment of immigrant women. This multifaceted approach to employment sheds light on the diverse factors that contribute to their success.

Connections and networks established while in Türkiye also facilitated the emergence of new job opportunities post-migration. Derya and her husband, both graduates of METU (Middle East Technical University), residing in Gothenburg, Sweden, initially had few acquaintances from METU. However, over time, the number of acquaintances increased, and they even formed separate WhatsApp groups based on the departments of METU graduates. One factor contributing to the increase in the number of acquaintances from METU was the practice of many workplaces, including the automotive company where her husband worked, hiring through referrals and METU graduates serving as references for each other. At this point, I would like to touch upon Bourdieu's explanation of what kind of social capital "big schools" are, using the example of graduates of schools such as METU and Boğaziçi University, who can establish wide networks abroad. Bourdieu mentions that graduates of certain schools create a clique spirit among each other, similar to family ties. School friendships enable people who are similar to each other to get closer to each other. Bourdieu considers this group spirit as a source of social capital that allows group members to participate in the capital they own. (1992, pp. 217-218) Alum associations and graduates abroad' ability to come together quickly

and help each other with job opportunities support this analysis. Additionally, employers also prioritize graduates who have each other's references.

Not only school but also acquaintances established in professional life are sources of social capital mobilized after migration. Gülsüm, who lives in Germany, is married and has a child. She graduated from Uludağ University Department of International Relations in 2011, went to Germany for volunteer service in 2012, and lived there for a year. After returning to Türkiye, she did not do anything related to international relations but worked in the field of tourism. She met her husband while working in the tourism field in Antalya. They decided to emigrate as a result of a traffic accident they had. After the accident, fear began to arise within them, and they decided to emigrate. Since she had lived in Germany before, when she came to Germany, the president of the association she volunteered for helped her find a house. Gülsüm is one of the immigrant women who found a job before her husband. One of Gülsüm's most important advantages in finding a job is that, in addition to the environment she has gained in Germany, the sector in which she finds work is one of the jobs that can be easily done anywhere in the world. While working in the tourism sector in Türkiye, she managed the hotel's social media accounts. Gülsüm, who says that she has been interested in creative works since her childhood, first found a job in a photocopier in Germany and then worked in graphic design. She later founded her own company on photography and video, leveraging her personal interests and skills. Another advantage for Gülsüm was that she had no problems getting a work permit, thanks to her Bulgarian citizenship.

Deniz graduated from the Marmara Department of Business Administration in 2016 and then completed her MBA at Bilgi University. She went to Germany with the Erasmus program in 2015. While she was in Türkiye, she worked as an expert

manager, first in a small German company and then in another German company. She got married in 2020. They started thinking about emigrating in 2021. Even though she applied to different countries, her heart was in Germany. They started working remotely in June and came to Germany with "qualified immigrant" status in September. She expresses that she is satisfied with her job. Deniz's Erasmus experience in Germany and the fact that she worked in German companies while in Türkiye facilitated the process of establishing a social life and finding a job in Germany. As a matter of fact, she started working remotely before emigrating and had already reached a certain status when he arrived in Germany.

Sedef, another immigrant woman whose previous work experience played a role, came to the UK in 2018. She has been married for ten years, and she graduated from the history department of Boğaziçi University in 2010. She was a graduate of the French High School. Her aunt lived in the USA, and she stayed with her for a short time while she was at university. Her husband was also a graduate of Mimar Sinan University Sociology Department. When her husband started having problems with work while she was in Türkiye, they decided to immigrate, but in fact, Sedef said:

> "I always wanted to immigrate. I was born and raised in İstanbul but did not feel like I belonged. There was an envy for life abroad."[26]

Her husband had a child from his previous marriage. Sedef thought that she did not want to give birth to children and that she wanted to emigrate, so she decided to immigrate to the UK with the Ankara Agreement. While Sedef was in Türkiye, she was working for a British company, and the headquarters of this company was in London. When she started thinking about emigrating, she also met with this company

[26] "Ben hep göç etmek istedim. İstanbul'da doğup büyüdüm ama çok da ait hissedemiyordum. Yurtdışında yaşamaya özenme vardı."

when she came to the UK for work. Sedef was working in the media field while she was in Türkiye. She is currently working in the same field in the UK. Her husband also works on disability in a company's foundation business. Sedef established a business with the Ankara Agreement and came here. Again, there is a situation where the man receives a woman's visa. Later, she closed her company, started working in a media company, and continued there. However, during our interview, she explained that there were changes in her work situation and that she tried different types of work for visa reasons. For example, she mentioned that at one point, she worked as a waiter at an acquaintance's cafe for about a year and worked as a photographer for about three weeks. Her husband also worked in the kitchen for a short time. In other words, although Sedef continues to work in a job similar to her in Türkiye, she is still someone who has experienced fluctuations in her job situation and is willing to work in low positions. Her knowledge of English and the fact that she worked for a British company while in Türkiye were effective in her migration to the UK.

Something caught my attention in the stories of these women, that is, the situation of women who were able to continue in the fields they worked in after migration when the jobs of these women were digital jobs or sustainable jobs in digital media, the post-migration transition process becomes a little easier. I argue in the next section that women who switch to new education or new business fields use this as a strategy due to the feature of digital jobs that can be done anywhere. However, before this, examples such as Deniz working in a job that allows her to work remotely and Seher teaching "online" lessons, and thus not losing her job, women working in digital jobs have an advantage in terms of qualification transfer after migration in today's world. It shows that they are in position. In this case, the

pandemic period and the widespread remote and online working practices during this period have certainly had an impact.

To sum up, language capital, previous work experience, short-term experiences abroad, citizenship other than Turkish citizenship, and the more easily transferable nature of some jobs also provide advantages to qualified immigrant women in entering business life after migration. However, if the women I interviewed plan to stay permanently in the country they migrated to or plan to migrate to another country, implement strategies such as starting new education programs. I will discuss this situation and its reasons in the next section.

Also, I want to add that despite the widespread belief and studies that qualified immigrant women become "dependent immigrants" if they immigrate married. Therefore their qualifications are not visible, and they experience a loss of qualifications, in my interviews, I actually found women who found a job and got a visa independently of their spouses, or even helped their spouses to emigrate, or who found a job and got a job while they were single. I observed that there were women who emigrated and got married later. In fact, some of their husbands took care of the children when they worked.

### 4.3 New beginnings and future perspective

Upon examining the social media posts of migrant women, I observe that migration has provided them with an opportunity to reassess their life trajectories, even from their time in Türkiye. A Turkish woman working as a career counselor in Germany shared on her social media account:

> “Many people who come to Germany from Türkiye, after overcoming the initial shock and settling in, start contemplating more existential questions like ‘What do I want?’ This feeling of a fresh start propels them to seek my support to redefine their paths. Many of us could not ask ourselves, ‘What do

> I want?' while in Türkiye, as life was about fulfilling necessities. However, in Germany, even those who came due to their spouse's job or found a job themselves, but are now free from the survival struggle, are questioning 'What do I want now?'"[27]

When I decided to write my thesis, I noted that there are also gains despite the challenges and losses that come with migration. I observed that women were seizing new opportunities, such as learning a new language, starting new educational pursuits, or engaging in hobbies, which they could not do in Türkiye. Through my interviews, I realized that many of these new educational endeavors were born out of necessity. The unavailability of job opportunities with their existing qualifications and diplomas pushed women towards further education. However, it is important to note that the acquisition of new cultural capital should not be limited to formal education and diplomas. Despite the difficulties, some women found the cultural life of their new country beneficial, engaged in new hobbies, or anticipated that their children would receive better education and grow up in a more refined environment. They also viewed citizenship acquisition as a significant gain.

As mentioned earlier, migration acts as a vital conjuncture in women's lives, creating critical turning points that significantly impact their future trajectories (Alber, 2016, pp. 17-25). Hence, the conflicts arising from migration also open doors to new possibilities, shaping women's future projections. In my interviews, the challenges faced during migration simultaneously opened up other possibilities. Migration is a vital conjuncture, a critical life point in which several futures are possible. When highly skilled migrant women experienced deskilling after migration, they reconceptualized their actions, a concept referred to as "future horizons" in Liversage's article (2009). They respond to this uncertain stage in different ways. However, I believe that in addition to reconceptualizing their futures within this vital

[27] See Appendix D

conjunture, they are also evaluating their current situation according to their future plans and employing strategies to utilize the opportunities at hand. In this section, I will focus on the stories of five women who started new educational pursuits after migration: Pınar, Feray, Esra, Burçak, and Feyza. I noticed that their initiation of new educational programs was aligned with their future plans.

Feray, who lives in Sweden, graduated from METU with a degree in industrial engineering. She left her job as a business analyst in Türkiye due to mobbing and later worked for an NGO before leaving the workforce due to childcare responsibilities. After migration, she did not actively seek a job but felt disheartened when the employment agency suggested she could only be a receptionist with her CV. Additionally, she is considering divorce, which is prompting her to seek economic independence urgently. To avoid future unemployment and to be employable anywhere in the world, she started a two-year data analysis program in Sweden, aiming for a profession she can practice globally. Returning to Türkiye is not among her long-term plans, but she may consider immigrating to another country after her child grows up.

Esin, currently living in the USA and working part-time as a babysitter, graduated from the philosophy department in Türkiye. Upon arriving in the USA, she learned about data analysis courses from the host family she stayed with and is now undergoing software training, which she mentions is very popular in the USA. She views childcare as a temporary job and plans to advance in software, aiming for long-term residence and citizenship in the USA.

Gülsüm, although not starting a new education, is interested in graphic design and working in this field outside her formal education. Her statement explains why Esin and Feray are pursuing data analysis, a globally viable profession:

> "Finding a job is no longer regional; all you need in today's world is a good computer and fast internet." [28]

She also does not plan to return to Türkiye but is considering migration to other countries.

Burçak and Feyza have started new educational pursuits for different reasons. Burçak, who had a traditional arts education in Türkiye but never worked in the field, came to Australia for language education, working in various jobs like childcare and waitressing while pursuing a diploma in culinary arts and hospitality management. She aims to obtain permanent residency (PR) in Australia and choose a field that interests her, although her long-term goal is to remain in Australia permanently.

Pınar, living in Canada with her two children, plans to stay long-term for her children to obtain Canadian citizenship. While managing a migration consultancy business, she is also pursuing a psychology degree, prompted by the psychological challenges and physiological repercussions she faced as a single migrant mother of two.

I asked the interviewees about their future perspective including whether they intend to return to Türkiye or consider migrating to another country. Their responses can be grouped as follows: staying at least for a certain period to obtain citizenship for themselves and their children, staying until their children's education is complete, not considering returning to Türkiye but contemplating migration to another country, or planning to return to Türkiye upon retirement.

Seher, living in the UK, remarked:

> "I always called Türkiye my home. Here, I always felt like a foreigner. However, when I recently visited Türkiye, I did not feel like calling it home anymore. Where is my home? To resolve this question quickly, I avoid meeting with Turkish people here. I want to have a permanent home here, even if we move elsewhere, so that this can be our base. We sold our house

[28] "İş bulmak artık bölgesel değil günümüz dünyasında. Tek ihtiyacın olan iyi bir bilgisayar ve hızlı bir internet"

> and car and closed bank accounts in Türkiye to ensure we would not return. Without these steps, we might have gone back."[29]
>
> "The first few months are like a honeymoon, like a tourist, meaning the desire to share everything that is new and visited. When I go to Türkiye, I miss my home (that is, Ireland)." (Esra)[30]

The decision to return to Türkiye or not is also related to the reasons for migration. Despite the difficulties in the host country, dissatisfaction with the home country's economic, social, or political conditions often leads to the decision to stay or consider migrating to another country. However, these are current thoughts, and it is uncertain if they will change in the future. Nevertheless, their current envisioned futures determine their current strategies, aiming for citizenship and integration into the host country, sometimes avoiding interactions with more insular Turkish communities there.

Women are devising strategic moves to navigate their vital conjuncture, with most planning to either stay permanently in the host country or migrate to another. Those planning to stay aim to obtain a diploma from the host country's education system, while those considering migration focus on acquiring qualifications valid worldwide.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, many of us continued working from home via computers, and those able to do so economically survived the crisis. The rise of digital jobs, enabled by mobile devices, the Internet, and digital technologies, presents expanding opportunities and innovative approaches. Workspace can be

[29] "Türkiye'ye hep evim diyordum. Burada hep yabancı hissi vardı. Son Türkiye'ye geldiğimde "evim" demedim. Artık burası da benim evim değil diye düşündüm. Evim neresi ? Bu sorgulamayı bir an önce bitirmek için Türklerle görüşmeyi pek istemiyorum. Burada hep bir evimiz olsun istiyorum, başka bir yere gidecek olsak bile burası bizim için merkez olsun. Evi, arabayı satıp, banka hesaplarını kapatıp geldik ki dönmeyelim. bunları yapmasak dönerdik."

[30] "ilk birkaç ay balayı gibi, turist gibi yani gezilen yeni gelen herşeyi paylaşma isteği… Türkiye'ye gidince artık evimi (yani İrlanda'yı) özlüyorum"

global, requiring only a laptop and reliable internet connection (Sánchez-Vergara, Orel & Capdevila, 2023, pg. 236).

With the pandemic, digital jobs became more advantageous, eliminating the necessity for the workplace and employee to be in the same location. Thus, the country of residence does not need to be the same as the country of employment. Among the women I interviewed, those starting new digital education programs were generally considering migration to another country rather than returning to Türkiye. To avoid recurring problems, they focused on "globally applicable" jobs. Women who did not experience deskilling often had jobs sustainable in digital environments. Just as marriage, migration, and motherhood are vital conjunctures, the pandemic created a vital conjuncture worldwide[31], prompting strategic planning to avoid job loss. Some women I interviewed used this opportunity to strategize for their migration journey.

[31] In an interview held during the pandemic, Johnson-Hanks explains the pandemic as a vital conjuncture situation that we are experiencing worldwide. She states that she sees the future as a period in which it is uncertain and many options are possible. (Vital Conjunctures and COVID-19, 2021)

# CHAPTER 5

# CONCLUSION

My initial curiosity about the post-migration lives of highly qualified women from Türkiye set the stage for this thesis. I was intrigued to understand whether these women, as skilled migrants, were in a favorable position or faced disadvantages due to their inability to utilize their skills. The social media posts of these educated women, detailing their reasons for migration, the challenges they encountered post-migration, and their reluctance to return to Türkiye, sparked my interest.

Despite experiencing deskilling and taking on the role of homemakers, these women displayed a remarkable determination to carve out a new life for themselves. Their emphasis on the benefits of living abroad and their firm intention not to return to Türkiye is the reason for this determination. This determination to forge a new path prompts us to ask: What types of capital did women who did not experience skill loss possess? Why did women describe their post-migration lives as 'a new life'? What were the motivations of women who embarked on new educational paths?

My questions evolved at the beginning and during the research process. My curiosity, sparked by following the 'Migrant Women' social media account, a platform where migrant women share their experiences and struggles, and obtaining information about the group from its founders, turned into a research project. The group, initially named 'Migrant Mothers,' later changed its name to 'Migrant Women.' This change occurred due to the development of gender consciousness and the inclusion of women who were not mothers over time. However, another observation I made as the research progressed was that naming the group 'Migrant

Mothers' initially indicated that 'migration' and 'motherhood' were pivotal points in these women's lives, leading them to solidarity with other struggling women.

In the introduction, I analyzed women's education and business life in Türkiye. Although women's education level is increasing, the fact that educated women cannot find what they are looking for in business life (a job suitable for their qualifications, a wage suitable for the job they do) shows that educated women have a high potential to migrate. However, when we look at the migration statistics from Türkiye, we need more information on education levels to understand which women go to which countries for which reasons.

Some interviewees stated that the reasons for migration were gender inequality and the social life in Türkiye. At the same time, some evaluate this situation for their children's future, although not for themselves, and decide to migrate.

Another issue I touched on in the introduction is the uncertainty of the definition of qualified migration and the difficulty of defining what qualification means. However, according to the IOM (International Organization for Migration) definition, a highly skilled immigrant is a person who has received higher education, typically after at least two years of education. In my thesis, I also included women who graduated from university and had at least short-term work experience in Türkiye as qualified migrant women. However, of course, since I set out with the social media account of migrant women, my interviewees were women who currently live abroad and use social media.

I also asked my interviewees how they defined themselves, and I mostly got the answer “migrant.” However, a few participants stated that calling themselves

migrants was inaccurate because they did not migrate under the same conditions as other migrants.

I considered the literature that focused on highly qualified migrant women. The primary topic discussed in these studies was the invisibility of qualified migrant women and the reasons for this invisibility. One of the reasons for this invisibility is that most of the qualified migrant women migrated with their husbands and were not working at the time, so they were registered as dependent migrants. Another reason is that the countries receiving immigration generally do not list the fields where women work intensively under qualified professions. In addition, they migrate under other categories that are valid for both men and women, such as migrants who migrate as students and then decide to stay permanently.

Another prominent theme in the literature is, of course, deskilling and its reasons. Here, due to the influence of gender norms, providing for the household is seen as the man's duty, and if the man finds a job faster and at a higher price, the woman takes on the responsibility of childcare and housework. However, in my interviews, it is also evident that the opposite results occur. Indeed, 11 of the 15 women I interviewed found jobs themselves, and even their husbands migrated due to them. This adaptability of migrant women, who were able to find jobs and even shift traditional gender roles, is truly impressive and highlights the change for highly qualified migrant women.

At the same time, transferring qualifications is one situation that arises in the context of deskilling. At this point, many researchers have used Bourdieu's concept of capital, especially to understand the problems related to the transfer of capital acquired from the country of origin to the country of immigration. I also used

Bourdieu's concept of capital in order to understand which qualifications women can or cannot transfer.

My research, which incorporates insights from racism studies and feminist criticisms of Bourdieu, underscores that despite possessing qualifications or capital, migrant women often face barriers in utilizing this capital, mainly when the ethnic and gender dimensions are considered. The findings of my study reveal instances of discrimination against women in their daily and work lives, as well as instances where women choose to withdraw from the business sphere due to gender norms.

In the Methodology section, I mention that I worked with a qualitative method using semi-structured interview questions and conducted online interviews. I have shared the Turkish and English versions of the research questions in the appendix. I conducted online interviews because the women following the group lived in different countries, and I did not have the opportunity to travel for extended periods due to my full-time job. This approach offered practicality and efficiency, as the interviewees could participate in their home environment without going out or making any preparations. It also provided me with time and financial convenience. However, online interviews can also experience disconnections when there is an internet connection problem and gestures and facial expressions cannot be understood. There was no internet problem in my interviews, but I did not have the opportunity to observe the women's daily lives with my own eyes; I was content with understanding them through their words. In addition, it was challenging to interview people in countries with significant time differences, such as the USA.

I conducted interviews by contacting group members via Facebook and Instagram. Following general questions about their age, marital status, and education, I asked how they decided to migrate, their challenges in the early days after

migration, and their efforts to enter the workforce. Subsequently, I directed my questions based on their responses. If they had re-entered the workforce or secured a job before migrating from Türkiye, I inquired about how this process unfolded; if not, I asked why. Lastly, I asked about their plans. Their expectations for the future also shaped their current strategies.

In the fourth section, I talked about my findings. I made the design here according to my questions. After asking about their birth, education, marital status, and number of children when they migrated, I continued by asking how they decided to migrate and what they experienced in the first days after migration.

Especially for married women with small children, childcare, as well as the loneliness caused by the loss of social ties while in Türkiye, lead to a re-domestication process. For women who migrate as dependent migrants, depending on their spouses when the language of the country is not known and not meeting other people in the country can also cause a decrease in self-confidence.

The interviews also mentioned finding a house as challenging in the first days. A striking point in this process is that some participants, especially those living in Germany, thought they encountered racist attitudes. Here, two contradictory situations arise, such as both thinking they are privileged because they are highly qualified immigrants and yet realizing that they are foreigners. However, although cultural capital, such as education, qualifications, etc., is possessed, the country from which one migrates and which ethnicity one belongs is also essential. In this respect, Bourdieu's cultural capital should be read as intersectional, including race. The country of origin and the culture of that country are should be included in the cultural capital. Therefore, the fact that qualified immigrant women's housing, work life, or

qualifications acquired in Türkiye are not accepted suggests that Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is also functional for migration and immigration studies.

Then, I asked about the processes of entering business life. Here, I examined separately the women who had difficulties in the process of re-entering business life and the women who did not. I examined the stories of the individuals in more detail. I touched on where the stories of the women converged and diverged. For women who have difficulty continuing their business life and who experience deskilling, the reasons for accepting work below their qualifications are also related to the reasons for their migration. For example, women who migrate so that their children can receive a better education may accept to continue one step behind.

In some of their stories, they had already withdrawn from business in Türkiye due to childcare or job dissatisfaction. This situation and migration have made it even more difficult for them to re-enter business. It is essential to recognize the existing literature that has already highlighted the issue of language capital as a significant challenge for migrant women. Understanding the role of cultural and social capital, as well as the nature of the job, which includes the type of work, the level of skill required, and the opportunities for career advancement, can provide valuable insights into the experiences of migrant women in business life.

Finally, I asked about their plans. I realized that this question was also related to women who changed their work life or started their education again. Migration creates a vital conjuncture in these women's lives and makes many possibilities possible. They can take on the role of homemaker, enter the workforce again, or start a new education. At this point, uncertainties and possibilities about the future and hopes shape what kind of action they should take today. Here, I focused on the stories of five women who started their new education. These women's visions

for the future are that they and their children will get citizenship in their country, stay in that country permanently, or migrate to another country. They do not plan to return to Türkiye in the near future. For this reason, they are trying to get a diploma that will allow them to get a valid profession in that country or focus on a field they can do even if they migrate to another country. I realized that these fields are digital jobs, and the pandemic affected this.

As a result, the discrimination women experience in the process of finding a house and de-skilling in business life, even though they have cultural capital in terms of education, language, city culture, etc, is consistent with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. Although Bourdieu did not directly study migration, we can include the country of migration within cultural capital, and the fact that the cultural capital received from this country is not found valuable in another country can be explained by the concept of cultural capital.

Women's new beginnings and educations are a testament to their resilience in the face of the vital conjuncture situation that occurs with migration. The imaginations about the future that form today's strategies are a source of inspiration. The de-skilling of women is not only related to migration but also occurs in the home country due to mobbing, discriminatory attitudes, or childcare in business life, and migration makes an extra contribution to this.

The contribution of this thesis is that there are not enough studies about qualified migrant women in Türkiye. Migrant women and qualified migration are treated as two separate phenomena. My study brings these two issues together and, unlike the literature, shows that women may not be dependent migrants but rather active actors who also ensure the migration of their husbands. It also shows that deskilling is not only a process after migration but also occurs due to job

dissatisfaction or some obligations in the home country. Those women have a space to make a new start after migration.

Despite the general perception of migrant women as dependent migrants, 11 of the women I interviewed were independent, having found jobs and migrated without relying on their spouses. In fact, some had facilitated their husbands' migration, with their husbands applying for migration through them. Although women who migrated with family migration faced deskilling, this deskilling was not solely due to family migration. The capital that skilled migrants possessed was deemed invaluable in the countries they migrated to because this capital was valuable within national borders. Although foreign language proficiency, prior residence in the host country, and social capital in the host country were advantages, more was needed; education acquired in the host countries was considered valuable. This observation highlights the national limitation of using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. However, being a "foreigner" in the host country is not limited to the recognition of diplomas. Some interviewees expressed that they encountered racist behaviors during housing searches and in workplaces. Although they believed they were desired individuals in the host country due to being skilled migrants, they struggled to feel a sense of belonging. Being "skilled" or possessing specific cultural capital, such as living in a developed city in Türkiye, learning languages other than English from high school onward, and having prior international experience, did not prevent them from encountering discriminatory attitudes.

However, unlike the view that Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is ineffective in countries with high racial and ethnic diversity and leads to a 'blame the victim' perception, I believe that the difficulty migrants face in applying their skills in host countries—despite having significant cultural capital in their home

countries—actually supports Bourdieu's analysis of cultural capital. His assertion that individuals without familial cultural capital fail in their educational lives and that those without sufficient cultural capital cannot possess economic capital applies to migrants, especially skilled migrants. Despite possessing cultural, economic, and social capital in Türkiye, the women I interviewed still took time to feel a sense of belonging in the host countries. Discriminatory attitudes reminded them that they did not belong there. However, another point that emerged from the interviews was that some women did not feel a sense of belonging to Türkiye either, and some had long desired to migrate for this reason. This situation results in feeling "suspended in between," where they do not fully belong to either the host countries or Türkiye.

So, why do they still want to stay in the host countries and not return to Türkiye? The answer to this question is connected to their initial reasons for migration. While continuing this study with research on men and comparing the results would be beneficial, in this study, when women were asked about their reasons for migration, gender inequality emerged as a factor. Some interviewees directly expressed this, while others noted that many things they considered normal in Türkiye were not "normal" after short-term international experiences. They highlighted that people in Türkiye were too involved in each other's lives. These responses reflect a desire for a more free social life, especially for young women. Another point is the symbolic meaning attributed to living abroad in Türkiye. Again, conceptualized by Bourdieu as symbolic capital, the desire for recognition and prestige associated with living abroad is a significant factor. For married women with children, the future, education, and safety of their children are additional reasons for migration. This situation leads them to make plans that only involve returning to Türkiye once their children complete their education.

Similarly, some interviewees expressed planning to stay long enough for their children to obtain passports. The value placed on passports is related to the desire to access the symbolic, economic, and social power that passports possess. This indicates a desire for their children to be treated equally with citizens of other countries if they wish to migrate in the future.

The highly qualified women develop strategies to cope with these post-migration conditions that result in deskilling and loss of social capital and, sometimes, economic capital. These strategies include being willing to start a step behind and gradually advance, accepting to work in different fields, and starting a new education to obtain a valid diploma in the host country, as discussed in the literature. These strategies are also determined by the "vital conjunctures" they are in. Johnson-Hanks' "vital conjunctures," which interrupt life stages such as marriage, motherhood, and migration, have also been critical in the lives of the women I interviewed. Women who had already withdrawn from the workforce due to motherhood in Türkiye experienced difficulties in transferring their qualifications when they wanted to re-enter the workforce after migration. These processes led them to acquire new social capital through "motherhood" and "migration" and to start new education to cope with the deskilling that came with migration.

This thesis aims to understand the efforts of women to overcome deskilling and their strategies in this regard. It combines the view that migrants' qualifications are shaped by various components such as gender and ethnicity and that new capital can be created (Erel, 2010) with the view that two critical life periods such as migration and motherhood form' vital conjunctures' for women (Johnson-Hanks cited in Liversage, 2009).

Women determine their strategies according to their plans for the future (e.g., obtaining citizenship for themselves and their children or migrating to another country). As a result, they apply for new education or job sectors. The individuals interviewed in this study stated they did not intend to return to Türkiye. However, we are still determining whether these intentions will change over time. Therefore, continuing studies on skilled migrants to observe temporal changes, conducting research on men to provide a comparison, and studying specific schools to examine the conditions under which their graduates migrate and their post-migration lives are necessary. Moreover, although Europe and America are still the primary destinations for skilled migrants, studying skilled migrants from other geographies will be essential to understanding geographical differences.

# APPENDIX A

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions about the Profile

· Your age

· At what age and in what year did you emigrate? Which country did you immigrate to?

· What was the marital status at the time of immigration? What now? Are there any children?

· What was your profession while you were in Türkiye?

· What is the last school level you completed in Türkiye?

- What is your Citizenship Status?

Decision to Migrate, First Migration Memories, Immigration Experience

- Is this your first migration experience?

· What are the reasons for migration?

· What were the issues you had the most difficulty with in the first days of your immigration?

· Who were the people you contacted when you first went to your country?

· Did you try to be acquainted with social media etc. before you went? If you have had such initiatives, did you see the impact of them when you went there?

- Who are the people around you after migrating abroad? How was your environment shaped?

Questions about Education and Working Life

- Have you attempted to look for a job after moving abroad? Are there any difficulties encountered in this process?

- In which sectors did you look for a job and in which sector did you find it?

- What is your satisfaction with your current job?

- Which networks did you use during the job search process (internet, acquaintances, postings, friend groups, family connections, old work friends and business contacts, spouse's circle, etc.)?

- If there is a change in your career life, how was the decision for this change made?

- What kind of effects did rejoining business life in another country have on family life and the organization of daily life?

Digital World

- How long have you been a social media user and what applications do you use?

- Have there been any changes in your social media use after immigration?

Future Perspective

-What are your plans for the future? Are you thinking of continuing to live in the country you currently live in or is there a possibility of immigrating to another country?

## APPENDIX B

## YARI YAPILANDIRILMIŞ GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

Demografik Profil

- Yaşınız
- Hangi yaşta ve yılda göç ettiniz? Hangi ülkeye göç ettiniz?
- Göç ederken medeni durumunuz neydi? Şimdi nedir? Çocuğunuz var mı?
- Türkiye'de iken hangi alanda çalıştınız?
- Türkiye'de iken en son bitirdiğiniz okul nedir?
- -Vatandaşlık statünüz nedir ? (Türkiye vatandaşlığı haricinde vatandaşlığınız var mı?)

Göç Etmeye Karar Verme Süreci, Göç Deneyimi ve Göç Sonrası İlk Anılar

- Bu sizin ilk göç deneyiminiz mi?
- Göç etme sebepleriniz nelerdir?
- Göçün ilk günlerinde en çok zorlandığınız konular nelerdir?
- Göç ettiğinizde ilk irtibata geçtiğiniz kişiler kimler oldu?
- Gitmeden önce sosyal medya ve benzeri kanallarla gideceğiniz ülkedeki kişilerle İletişim kurdunuz mu? Eğer kurduysanız bunun etkisini gördünüz mü?
- Yurtdışına göç ettikten sonra çevreniz kimlerden oluşmaya başladı? Çevreniz nasıl şekillendi?

Eğitim ve İş Hayatı

- -Yurtdışına taşındıktan sonra iş aramaya çalıştınız mı? Bu süreçte karşılaştığınız zorluklar var mı?
- Hangi sektörlerde iş aradınız ve hangi sektörde iş buldunuz.

- Mevcut işinizden ne kadar memnunsunuz?
- İş arama sürecinde hangi ağları kullandınız (internet, tanıdıklar, ilanlar, arkadaş grupları, aile bağlantıları, eski iş arkadaşları ve iş bağlantıları, eşinizin çevresi, vb.)?
- Kariyer hayatınızda bir değişiklik varsa, bu değişiklik kararı nasıl alındı?
- Başka bir ülkede iş hayatına yeniden katılmanın aile hayatı ve günlük yaşamın düzenlenmesi üzerinde ne gibi etkileri oldu?

Dijital Dünya

- Ne kadar süredir sosyal medya kullanıcısısınız ve hangi uygulamaları kullanıyorsunuz?
- Göç ettikten sonra sosyal medya kullanımınızda değişiklikler oldu mu?

Gelecek Planları

- Geleceğe dair planlarınız neler? Şu an yaşadığınız ülkede yaşamaya devam etmeyi mi düşünüyorsunuz yoksa başka bir ülkeye göç etme olasılığı var mı?

# APPENDIX C

# PARTICIPANTS

| Name | Country | Birth Year | Marital Status | Children | Education | Migration Year | Migrant Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pınar | Canada | 1982 | Married | 2 | Marmara University MBA | 2017 | Dependent |
| Esra | Ireland | 1985 | Married | 1 (after the interview, she gave birth to her second child | Galatasaray University Master of Arts in Communication | 2017 | Dependent |
| Nil | Germany | 1982 | Married | 1 | Kocaeli University Industrial Engineering+ Bilgi University MBA | 2021 | Independent |
| Ece | Germany | 1994 | Single (Have a boyfriend) | 0 | METU Psychology | 2018 | Independent |
| Feray | Sweden | 1984 | Married | 1 | METU Industrial Engineering | 2018 | Dependent |
| Esin | USA | 1982 | Married (but she was single when she migrated) | 0 | Uludağ University Philosophy | 2018 | Independent |
| Seher | UK | 1979 | Married | 0 | Boğaziçi University Translation and Interpretation | 2022 | Independent |
| Burçak | Australia | 1995 | Single | 0 | Mimar Sinan University Traditional Arts | 2022 | Independent |
| Gülsüm | Germany | 1990 | Married | 1 | Uludağ University International Relations | 2019 | Independent |
| Deniz | Germany | 1992 | Married | 0 | Marmara University Business Administration, Bilgi University MBA | 2022 | Independent |
| Feyza | Belgium | 1984 | Married | 2 | İstanbul University American Culture and Literature, Gelişim University Master of Arts in Psychology | 2021 | Dependent |
| Sedef | UK | 1985 | Married | 1 | Boğaziçi University History | 2018 | Independent |
| Özlem | Belgium | 1992 | Single | 0 | Boğaziçi University Translation and Interpretation | 2018 | Independent |
| Ceylan | Ireland | 1989 | Married | 0 | Istanbul Technical University Management Engineering | 2019 | Independent |
| Derya | Sweden | 1989 | Married | 0 | METU | 2017 | Independent |

APPENDIX D

INSTAGRAM SCREENSHOTS









# APPENDIX E

# ETHICAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (Sbinarek)

Sayı : E-84391427-050.01.04-172514 18.03.2024
Konu : 2023-31T Kayıt Numaralı Başvurunuz Hakkında

Sayın Doç. Dr. Bülent KÜÇÜK

Tez danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz öğrenciniz Akife Alan'ın "Migration Of The High Qualified Turkish Women From Turkey: Deskilling & New Opportunities / Türkiye'den Yüksek Nitelikli Kadınların Göçü: Niteliksizleşme& Yeni Fırsatlar" başlıklı projesi ile Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (SBİNAREK)'e yaptığınız 2023-31T kayıt numaralı başvuru 14.03.2024 tarih ve 2024/02 sayılı kurul toplantısında incelenmiş ve projeye etik onay verilmesi uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya on-line olarak katılımıyla ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. Onay mektubu tüm üyeler adına Komisyon Başkanı tarafından e-imzalanmıştır. Bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Saygılarımızla,

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Işıl ERDUYAN
Kurul Başkanı

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