A THREE-LAYERED ANALYSIS OF TURKEY'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM: INTENTIONS, IMPLEMENTATIONS, AND GENDER OUTCOMES

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

A Three-Layered Analysis of Turkey's Social and Economic Support Program: Intentions, Implementations, and Gender Outcomes

Female poverty, that can be rendered temporarily invisible by the traditional conjugal union, becomes a non-negligible problem when social aid mechanisms gain essential importance over single-parent households that are in majority led by mothers who themselves have become a new social risk both demographically and politically. Social investment paradigm aims at this new risk in a way to reduce the costs of motherhood and divorce especially for single mothers. This thesis examines a form of gendered economic vulnerability that has become visible with divorce or separation over a welfare program, Socio-economic Support Service (SED). Relying on the interviews with four bureaucrats, eight social workers, and eleven beneficiary single mothers; this study reveals both the challenging and route-making qualities of divergences between the designed, implemented and experienced SED. First it shows that, the criteria that trace whether the beneficiaries really lack alternatives to survive force women to make a choice between men and the state and most women prefer being dependent on the state's budget. Hence, this policy ends up empowering women who want to build a new life outside the normative family. Secondly, since care policies fail to create alternatives, informal employment and compressed motherhood undermine government's ideal of warm family environment. Besides, intergenerational transmission of poverty cannot be prevented as long as child poverty is considered separate from gender inequality. Over all, this thesis argues that social policy can give birth to unintended possibilities through practice and interaction of different domains.

ÖZET

Türkiye'nin Sosyo-ekonomik Destek Programının Üç Katmanlı Bir Analizi: Amaçlar, uygulamalar ve toplumsal cinsiyet çıktıları

Hem demografik hem politik olarak yeni bir toplumsal risk haline gelen tek ebeveynli haneler üzerinde sosyal yardım mekanizmalarının öneminin artması geleneksel evlilik kurumunun geçici olarak görünmez kıldığı kadın yoksulluğunun üzerindeki örtüyü kaldırdı. Bu bağlamda; sosyal yatırım paradigması kadınların annelikleri üzerinden yararlanabileceği birtakım hakları gündeme getirdi. Bu tez, boşanma ile görünür hale gelen bir ekonomik kırılganlığı daha çok yalnız annelerin yararlandığı sosyal yardım programı Sosyo-ekonomik Destek Hizmeti (SED) üzerinden irdeliyor. Dört bürokrat, sekiz sosyal çalışmacı ve on bir yararlanıcı bekar anne ile yaptığım görüşmeler; tasarlanan, uygulanan ve deneyimlenen SED arasındaki açılmanın aileci siyasete hem meydan okuyan hem de ona yeniden rota oluşturan niteliğini ortaya koyuyor. En önemlisi, SED normatif ailenin dışında yeni bir hayat kurmak isteyen kadınların elini güçlendiriyor. SED'in diğer planlanmamış sonuçları ise şunlar: Yararlanıcıların yeteri kadar alternatifsiz olup olmadığının izini süren kriterler kadınları erkekler ile devlet arasında bir seçime zorluyor ve kadınlar daha çok istikrar vaat eden devletin bütçesine bağımlı kalmayı yeğliyor. Bakım politikaları alternatif yaratmakta başarısız olduğu için sıkıştırılmış annelik hükümetin sıcak aile ortamı idealini baltalıyor. Ayrıca, çocuk yoksulluğu toplumsal cinsiyet meselesinden azade düşünüldüğü için yoksulluğun nesilden nesile aktarılması önlenemiyor. Sonuç olarak; bu tez normlar ve idealler etrafında tasarlanan bir zihinsel inşa olan politikanın uygulayıcı eliyle ve diğer politikalarla ilişkilenerek tam da varoluş amacıyla çelişen yeni ihtimaller doğurabileceğini gösteriyor.

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I have deeply experienced during the process of writing this thesis that single motherhood is not an issue of marital status, rather, it is a problem of division of labor. I have learned strategies to study on the sly, to create time “not to forget who I am”, and to navigate between what I have to do, what I want to do, and what I cannot be able to desist from doing. First and foremost, I would like to thank my tired to death eyes and Selda Bağcan who accompanied me with her unique voice in every step of this thesis. Then, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my husband who has got the chance to savor equality in order to lessen the burden on me; to my father who has become honorary mother of Ali and patiently shared my sleeplessness; and to my mother who unfortunately and self-sacrificingly resigned from her job to open my way to graduation. I also should specifically thank my sister Bahar Kılınç who stood with me both physically and emotionally from the very beginning of my ideological relationship with feminism; and my other Muslim feminist sisters Sıla Türköne, Devrim Sena Kılınç, Rümeysa Nur Kara, Ayşe Yıldırım Yiğit their emotional support and political guidance which has granted me a lens for capturing the relationships between different layers of oppression and inequality. Then again, I am grateful to all the women who welcomed me in their homes and great-heartedly shared the most private parts of their life stories. And, of course, there are not enough words to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor Biray Kolluoğlu for her guidance and patience; to dear Volkan Yılmaz and Saniye Dedeoğlu for their acceptance to participate in my thesis jury. Finally, Ali, my son, I should apologize you for “the wrong time” and my intolerance during the times of extreme sleeplessness. I dedicate this thesis to you for your unconditional love.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> I went to the Social Service Center *(Sosyal Hizmet Merkezi)* to cancel my application to the aid. I do not know whether my husband will return home. Fortunately, my neighbors assist me. I also earn money by selling these ornaments. I have a husband for good or ill; so why should I burden the state? (see Appendix A, 1)

Zarife was not the only person I interviewed who envision husbands and welfare benefits as mutually exclusive. Orloff (1996) underlines traditional marriage based on the gendered division of labor – "with men responsible for families' economic support and women responsible for caregiving and domestic labor as well as for producing babies" (p.53) as a veil concealing women's economic vulnerability; so "when marriage rates are high, one sees relatively low poverty rates for women and low gender poverty gaps" (p.56). For this reason, Hobson (1994) attaches importance to analyzing poverty of single mothers "who are residuum in the male breadwinner ideology" (p.175) so that it would be possible to unveil the long-term effects of women's financial dependency on men in traditional marriage. For instance, as Casper et al. (1994) analyzed by drawing on the data from Luxemburg Income Study, Italy's marital composition – "most Italians between the ages of 18 and 57 are married" (p.600) – results in low gender poverty gap despite high poverty rates since "having a high prevalence of marriage means that men and women share the same standard of living, whatever that standard is" (p.602). However, as Hobson (1990) highlighted, family should be viewed as a matter of power and a "bargaining unit" rather than a "unit of shared interests" (p.237). That is, it is significant not to neglect gender inequality while thinking on intra-household distribution of resources. According to her, it can be thought as a "two-way mirror" (Ibid, p.238): women's

labor market status affects their bargaining power in the family while their position in the family – as unpaid care workers- affects their status and earning potentials in the labor market.

Gökovalı and Danışman-Işık (2010) revealed that Turkey is not exempt from the worldwide tendency of feminization of poverty. They found that women living alone are poorer than married women while divorced and married women have also higher poverty ratios compared to men. That is, women face with considerably high poverty risk –accumulated during the marriage and burst with divorce or separation- when they become head of the family. Feminization of poverty has forced the government to put women – actually 'women without men'- on the political agenda through poverty alleviation programs especially since 2011 (Gökovalı, 2013). This thesis analyses a welfare program, Socio-economic Support Service (*Sosyal Ekonomik Destek Hizmeti* [SED]), which is mostly benefited by *women without men and with children*. As Özar and Yakut-Cakar (2013) define, "women without men" are "divorced and deserted women, and women with imprisoned spouses" (p.27) but the crux of the benefit is that those women are mothers and they pose the risk of transmitting their fate to their children. Ministry of Family and Social Policies'[1] (*Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı* [ASPB]) General Directorate of Child Services introduced a social assistance program in 2015 targeting families which are in danger of dissolution for economic reasons "in a way to fill the void left by the social security system" as stated in the website of the program[2]. It aims to compensate the households which are deprived of employment-based social security benefits for the sake of the best interest of children; so, it is not surprising that the main beneficiary

[1] The name of the Ministry in that period

[2] https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/chgm/uygulamalar/sosyal-ve-ekonomik-destek-hizmeti/

profile of SED is those women who are unemployed and single (Kırlıoğlu, 2015); that is, are neither insured workers nor dependent beneficiaries. SED is given either to the "normal families" which are in danger of destabilization for economic reasons; or "already destabilized families" due to divorce or separation. In both cases, SED aims to promote family integrity and families' capacity to care.

Daly (2000) proposes feminist researchers to focus on the distributive principles and incentive structures of a given welfare program "to capture the material resources provided by the state to women and men, as individuals and as members of families; the conditions under which redistribution is effected between them; and the outcomes in terms of gender-based processes of stratification" (p. 63). Incentive structures are the alternatives state creates for men and women "to participate, or not, in the labor market; and to be independent, or not, of the family" (p.70). In this thesis, I introduce in general the care policies and labor market regulations in Turkey shaped in a context of the significant rise in single-mother households as both a demographical and a political phenomenon, then I locate subjective stories of welfare beneficiary women after-divorce poverty and care burden, forming and sustaining an autonomous household as the head of this new family, and their individual strategies to cope with work and family conflict within this context. By distributive principles, Daly refers to the risk universe –which risks are collectivized? -, construction of entitlement –within which framework individuals deserve to be publicly supported? - and treatment of different family types –which types of families are promoted or punished? (p.65). First of all, SED's risk universe largely consists of marriage failures and the care deficit. Further, its eligibility criteria are shaped within the neoliberal familialist framework which designates women paradoxically as active workers and primary caregivers. And lastly, it

supports single-parent families to normalize and stabilize them and dysfunctional male-breadwinner/female-caregiver ones temporarily to enable them to sustain their normality and self-sufficiency.

In the very beginning of my interactions with beneficiary women, I realized that they apply a range of strategies to escape the tension between different statuses they assume. By the design of the benefit with its objectives and criteria of entitlement, women are enforced to cope with incompatibilities between their statuses as single women, mothers, workers, and citizens by constantly burrowing through the very construction of the same benefit. In this way, they successfully sustain their status of being welfare beneficiaries despite they violate some of the eligibility criteria. This enables them to sustain their autonomous lives they have formed after divorce or separation. I also realized that SED has an unwritten agenda –such as the cohabitation rule as I discussed in the sixth chapter- which can be grasped only by interviewing with the social workers who implement it in the field. Since SED opens a wide scope for social workers' discretion in implementation, this second agenda is manifested in various negotiations with potential beneficiaries. For this reason, I include this intersubjective space between beneficiary women "opening up their homes and lives for intervention" (Alkan, 2012, p.112) and social workers who are responsible for social diagnosis. Social diagnosis consists of several steps to determine entitlement:

> The first interview with one needing treatment, the early contacts with his or her immediate family, the consultations with those outside his or her family who may give insight or cooperation, the examination of any documents bearing upon his or her problem, the later correlation of these separate items. (Richmond, 1917, p.51)

In order to grasp every step of the process and the relations among them, I interviewed social workers from each position ranging from home visitors to first

interviewers. After that, I also realized the limitations of supplementing these interviews with the analysis of policy documents in explaining the relationship between discursive space manifested in the narratives of social workers and various implementations re-shaping the very design of the benefit. Therefore, I also interviewed bureaucrats who can see SED at a desk; that is, can reflect on the discursive framework of SED as isolated from disorienting encounters with beneficiary women in the field. Ultimately, I integrate these three layers – discourses, implementations, and outcomes- in the discussion of how the construction of a benefit directs its implementation; how its implementation leads to divergences from its own objectives; and how these divergences open new windows into state agenda and women's lives.

I formulate this three-layered analysis of SED as intentions by combining policy documents of SED and interviews with bureaucrats; implementations by combining interviews with social workers and beneficiary women; and gender outcomes by locating beneficiary women's subjective narratives in the context of Turkey's social investment agenda for single mothers. Lastly, I make inferences about possible returns of these gender outcomes to the state and formulate these unintended consequences as state outcomes. In the next chapter, I briefly discuss gendered division of labor in male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model as the basis of women's economic vulnerability dramatically unfolded after divorce or separation. Here, I point to dysfunctional forms of marriage as a social security institution and criticize state's genderizing role – "promoting different gender roles for men and women" (Saxonberg, 2013, p.8) letting intra-family inequalities last and assuming responsibility only when husbands disappear. In the third chapter, I argue that women without men find a firm place in the global policy agenda for the sake of

their motherhood. In a context where the number of single mothers are rising and are marked as demographic risk and political problem, social investment agenda of preventing intergenerational transmission of disadvantage drives poverty alleviation programs for female-headed households while at the same time active labor market policies increasingly problematize these women's overrepresentation as welfare beneficiaries. I briefly explain worldwide tendency towards social investment and single mothers' specific position on this agenda. After that, I portray Turkey's institutional and normative framework of social investment embedded in neoliberal familialism. In the last chapter, I introduce SED with its mode of operation and ultimately analyze three separate divergences as new routes challenging neoliberal familialist framework. Firstly, I focus on the cohabitation rule –losing the benefit when a marriage-like relationship is detected by social workers in home visits- implemented as de facto. The social workers in the field are actively searching to see whether the women receiving the benefit have a relationship with a man. If they find clues that there is a man about the household, they either cut the benefit or do not provide in the first place. I expand on the gendered cost of this unwritten rule and women's negotiations between men and the state. Secondly, I elaborate on the activating design of SED. SED is a temporary and acute benefit provided with the assumption that women will be integrated in the labor market in the long run. However, as I discuss under the title of "Unsupported Activation", Turkey's care policies which do not create affordable and accessible alternatives for mothers especially with children under the age of three and inadequate work and family reconciliation mechanisms cause a deviation from the aim of preventing intergenerational transmission of poverty. And lastly, I handle the main ground of supporting female-headed households which is the aim of stabilizing and

normalizing these fragile families. Since SED dissociates the problem of gender equality from the problem of child poverty; it does not truly succeed to "normalize" these households and to make them "economically self-sufficient warm family environments". In this regard, I discuss individualization of marriage failures and women's opportunity to construct an autonomous life outside the marriage institution -and private dependency in general terms- with this public support more or less compensating for considerably acute life-course transitions such as divorce and separation. That is, as Socialist Feminist Collective (2013), which is a feminist activist group and organizer of the most powerful campaigns for women's rights in Turkey, insist on their motto "There is a life outside the family!"[3], I conclude these overall analyses with a discussion of whether SED can enable its beneficiaries to sustain "a life of their own" outside the patronage relationships with men or compel them to re-marry.

1.1 Methodological approach

Segal (2016) proposes two models of social welfare policy analysis: the sequential model and the critical theory model. She defines the sequential model as a way to trace the multi-layered dynamism in creation and operation of welfare programs. It typically examines three layers of impact for a given program: the intended impact, the actual impact, and a follow-up impact "on those who have been affected by the policy and its subsequent programs" (p.133). As opposed to this, as she explains, critical theory model of analysis seeks "to understand the impact of power imbalances on the development of social welfare policy" and investigates "who is making policy decisions, who benefits, and who does not benefit" (p.134). My

[3] "Aile dışında hayat var!"

analysis integrates both models. I trace the convergences and divergences from the "intended impacts" –that is, policy goals- largely affected by dynamic and multiple implementations of social workers, various combinations of the institutional complementarities for the intended impact, unbalanced gender relations and individual strategies of beneficiary women to negotiate the very distributive principles and mode of operation of the program. I do not pursue consistency between different levels of impact, rather I put emphasis on deviations both as new routes to mobilize different statuses and interests of beneficiary women and new challenges to the neoliberal familialist framework of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* [AKP]) government.

Özar and Yakut-Cakar (2012) has already introduced an in-depth analysis of divorce as a gendered life phase and the role of Turkish welfare regime on reinforcing women's socio-economic vulnerability. Yıldırım (2017) also meticulously conducted a research to reveal the multifaceted challenges of divorce both as a decision-making process and a window to a new life for women. The focus of analysis in this thesis is not the gendered cost of divorce or social policies targeting divorced women. Rather, divorce, in addition to other forms of living outside the normative family model such as women under religious marriage, women cohabitating with their partners, women whose spouses are imprisoned, deserted women and women with occasional husbands who visit home "at their own sweet will" ("*keyfine göre*"), in the words of my interviewees, are handled as an analytical tool to capture the void gender-blind and genderizing policies leave as a huge potential for divergent and "dangerous" outcomes.

Fonow and Cook (2005) propound five guiding principles for feminist methodology. Firstly, a feminist researcher should continuously take into account the

significance of gender asymmetry as a basic feature of social life. In line with this, I trace the dynamics behind gendered cost of divorce through a discussion of gendered division of labor. Secondly, they assert consciousness-raising should be relied on as a methodological tool to bridge individual narratives and collective experiences. I often hauled relevant narratives from one interview to the other in order to underline the unexceptional nature of women's conditions both under marriage and after divorce. Thirdly, a feminist researcher should challenge the norm of objectivity and reveal her own common ground of experience with the participant woman during the research. During the process of fieldwork, I have dramatically encountered with the fact that single motherhood is not a matter of marital status, rather it is directly a matter of division of labor. As a married woman, mother, and researcher, I realized that I have largely been sharing interviewed women's experiences of sole-parenting since my husband comes home from work approximately 3 hours before bed time. I could not manage the everyday flow of life in the tension of maintaining this research "in order not to forget who I am", as feminist academic and activist Feyza Akınerdem (Facecook post limited to friends, Şubat, 2020) expressed impressively, by struggling not to injure my motherhood and wifehood. In the interviews, I did not hesitate to share these challenges with the women who largely supposed that educated women do not have such problems. Being reflexive in all steps of the research prevents us from being under the illusion that our status as feminist researchers totally remove power relations from the stage and construct a purely equal ground (Devault, & Gross, 2007). Fourthly, a feminist researcher should aim at unraveling the hidden experiences of women in order to make them heard. And finally, the research should aim at the empowerment of women with its results. In interviews, women often changed their tones while telling the part of their stories

whose influence will most probably extend to their future life chances such as retirement by assuming that I would channel their problems and claims to the policy-makers "who can take necessary steps for them", as they often expressed. For me, this was an apparent need to be heard at the political level so in this thesis, I seek to unveil the potential of vulnerability of these women within the existing configuration of the welfare regime to disrupt policy intentions and point out the fact that both marriage and divorce call for policy. As Mies (1983) stated, feminist methodology politicizes all the processes of research; thus, this study aims to transcend merely taking women as subjects of a research and endeavors to contribute to the inclusion of single mothers into the political agenda with its results.

1.2 Research design

I interviewed four bureaucrats of the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services (*Aile, Çalışma ve Sosyal Hizmet Bakanlığı* [AÇSHB]); eight social workers –three of them were responsible for the first interview with the applicants while the rest were ones making home visits to determine the "real needy"- and eleven "women without men with children" who benefit from SED. Majority of these women were divorced but I also encountered with other forms of living that are outside normative family such as religious marriage, cohabitation without marriage, and being married to intermittent husbands. I interviewed these three separate groups of people – bureaucrats, social workers and beneficiary single mothers- simultaneously in order to grasp the entire picture, as one group was filling the void another group left. I conducted open-ended and semi-structured interviews and, in order to complement bureaucrats' narratives about state intentions, I also elaborated on the policy documents of SED. I interviewed bureaucrats in their offices, social workers in

Social Service Centers, and beneficiary women either in their homes or public spaces such as cafes depending on their own demands. I requested social workers and beneficiary women to sign the consent forms I had prepared to clarify the aims and content of the research. In interviews, I did not use a tape recorder, instead; I took notes simultaneously. Afterwards, I employed thematic content analysis and uncovered the main themes of the field in line with the three layers I aim to unfold: discourse, implementation and experience.

CHAPTER 2

MARRIAGE AS A BUREAUCRATIC SUSPENSION FOR GENDERED POVERTY

Even though in every step of my fieldwork I was excited for opening a new window to reveal the social side of policy-making; that is, to show that it is not purely a technical process with a fixed relationship between inputs and outputs; rather it is a social process affected by other systems of social relationships and so produces unintended outcomes and even by making breaches in its own intentions. However, as a feminist researcher, the most attractive part of the field for me was interviewing women who have one more choice except selling their labor-power to capitalists, in Marxist terms (Marx, 2004), which is to sell their motherhood to the state. As Ecevit (2012) explains, even if sex-segregated division of housework can more or less be mediated by new technological tools, child care is inevitably a "labor-intensive" form of work which cannot be fully automatized or socialized (p. 261). For this reason, motherhood as the basis of benefit opens a space to bargain with the state while at the same time poses the risk of subordinating women's disadvantage derived from the care burden to children's needs to be cared.

These women often associated their past "passiveness" – that is, remaining outside the labor market- with their present (after-divorce) deprivation; and by passiveness they actually referred to their unpaid work as "housewives" or "marriage workers" (Kerestecioğlu, 2006). Although they are normatively responsibilized for overwhelming this passivation constructed through marriage via individual strategies as I exemplify below, the non-negligible value of their product, children as the crux of building (UNICEF, 2017) and transforming the future (UNICEF, 2014) has

enforced policy-makers to take into account women's needs as mothers regardless of their marital statuses. In this chapter, I briefly present some significant tensions between women's different statuses rooted in the paid work/unpaid work dichotomy which have been heatedly discussed around the boundary between gender and class.

The Single-parent Households Report of the ASPB (2011a) identifies that; 1) most women participate in the labor force in order to alleviate their after-divorce poverty, but these are relatively the fortunate ones in comparison with those who cannot find job opportunities in their area of residence; 2) most single parents have difficulties in finding a proper place for their children during working hours while the 5% quota set for them in the day care centers assigned by the ASPB is to a large extent unknown or inadequate, 3) many single mothers cannot afford the household rents and go back to their family's home, and 4) most women do not receive alimony either voluntarily or involuntarily. Additionally, another report (ASPB, 2013a) predicts that the proportion of single-parent households will be 10% in 2023 while majority of them will be female-headed (p.52). The necessity of reducing the cost of divorce was an inevitable challenge to the familialist orientation of the government to reduce divorce rates; so that even the provocative Parliamentary Research Commission for Investigating the Factors that Affect the Family Integrity and Divorce Events and Determining the Measures to Be Taken for the Strengthening of the Family Institution *(Aile Bütünlüğünü Olumsuz Etkileyen Unsurlar ile Boşanma Olaylarının Araştırılması ve Aile Kurumunun Güçlendirilmesi İçin Alınması Gereken Önlemlerin Belirlenmesi Amacıyla Kurulan Meclis Araştırma Komisyonu),* which is known as Divorce Commission Report and declared in 2016 "to reinforce the perception that divorce is a social destruction" and "to suppress women's legal rights" (Gender Equality Monitoring Association, 2016) as I expand on in the next

chapter, implied that men's attitudes towards women and children should be enhanced and commended that duties and responsibilities in the family should be distributed fairly. What compelled the Commission to partly compromise with the equality framework at the expense of the very abstract "intra-familial balance and harmony" (Aydın, 2016) of the justice framework can be deduced from its finding that the most common ground for divorce for women is the stereotypical problems of behavior and communication which can be associated with hegemonic masculinity "based on practice that permits men's collective dominance over women to continue" and "actually does refer to men's engaging in toxic practices—including physical violence—that stabilize gender dominance in a particular setting (Connell, & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.840). As the report indicates, 68% of divorced women state that they got divorced because of their husbands' indifference to the intrafamilial problems and laying the burden on them; while husbands' inadequate emotional support, self-justification, condescending attitude, systematic jealousy, and their will exert discipline and control were also identified as common grounds for divorce (s.237). Nevertheless, AKP's family discourse associates increasing family instability with "major social problems" such as modernization, rather than gender processes such as "familial inequalities and relations of power" (Yazıcı, 2012, p.116).

Family Education Program (*Aile Eğitim Programı*) which was initiated in 2009 consists of a set of modules devoted to increase family members' capacity for maintaining healthy and integrated families; but failed, that is dissolved families have also a place in the program. In the material designed for the training of trainers, single mothers are recognized as disadvantaged both economically and socially, but they are expected to cope with their structurally constructed disadvantage by their

individual efforts (AÇSHB, 2016). It is clearly stated that women suffer from severe economic difficulties when marriage ends due to their vulnerable relationship with paid work, inadequacy of affordable childcare facilities and social norms and values (p. 28-29). However, in the face of these barriers, women are counseled to "use their own resources" (p.33) such as capacity to problem solving, calculating the balance of income and expenditures, mobilizing their social network for receiving support and also benefiting from "social facilities" such as micro-credit institutions and vocational education and training.

The training material includes, three single motherhood stories that are supposed to "inspire" or provide exemplary behavior to women who find themselves in similar situations. The first story talks about a woman who totally relies on informal support from her mother since she is unemployed and to a large extent is unemployable. She is portrayed as feeling humiliated and helpless. The second woman is also supported by her family during the acute process of divorce but she "makes a difference" by utilizing the opportunities at hand. She finds a job while she is living with her family and successfully manages her wage and alimony. Later on, she benefits from the non-repayable credit of the Small and Medium Industry Development Organization *(Küçük ve Orta Ölçekli İşletmeleri Geliştirme ve Destekleme İdaresi Başkanlığı[KOSGEB])* and becomes a micro entrepreneur. At the end of the story, she becomes the partner of the company for which she was working previously. Lastly, the third woman is relatively "privileged" with her human capital and easily comes to the fore in the competitive labor market. She reaps the fruits of her past efforts on "investing in herself" and in contrast to the woman of the first story, she feels self-confident. These three single-mother stories represent the program's approach to the issue rather than the objective position of single mothers.

Of course, this selective representation is blind to countless stories which could reveal the fact that marriage failures need policy interventions beyond individual efforts.

Further, AÇSHB collaborates with the Directorate of Religious Affairs *(Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* [DRA]*)* while executing this program and muftis are also tasked with disseminating the education program to the public. However, there is always the risk of carrying a second agenda to the casework, either deliberately or not with the authority derived from their religious status. In November 2013, Istanbul Office of Mufti disseminated a khutbah titled "The Decision Eroding the Society: Divorce". According to this, there has to be a legitimate and vital ground for divorce and women who get divorced without such a ground are banned from going to heaven. Further, women are advised to see the glass half full for the sake of the best interest of their children in the face of problems they otherwise may turn into grounds for divorce. At this point, there is not a binding provision to preclude the transmission of DRA's approach to divorce as a matter of life and death and also a matter of heaven and hell to the Family Counseling Program –as well as other services such as Family '*İrşad'* –a religious concept which can be defined as act of showing the true path (Turkish Religious Foundation, 2020) - and Counseling Offices for fragile families or Moral Counseling and Religious Guidance for students in public dormitories, elders in asylums and fatally ill persons in hospitals- to the field of social services. As a result, women are expected to eliminate potential marriage failures since their potential to legitimize divorce poses the risk of care deficit; while at the same time to mediate their post-divorce poverty which stems from the very gendered infrastructure of the marriage. In this way, they can grant

their self-reliance to the state budget instead of relying on their "privileged position as deserving poor" (Buğra, & Yakut-Cakar, 2010, p.532).

There was not any woman who benefit from such counseling services among my interviewees but almost all women I interviewed stated that they stood for in-marriage difficulties for the sake of their children. Their insistence on struggling to straighten their shaky marriages was not religiously motivated, but rather they told that they did not want to "disturb their children's order" and tolerate their problems within marriage to allow "a normal family life" to last "for better or for worse". The normal family life in their narratives was roughly composed of the gendered division of labor. According to this, children must have a "normal mother" who tidy the house, cook three meals a day, take care of children while the husband is out at work to bring home the bacon. Almost all women referred to their concerns for disturbing this functioning order their children got accustomed to while talking about the difficulty to decide to get divorced. Before the divorce, interviewed women varied in terms of class positions due to their marital status; for instance, they could be married to rich contractors or seasonal construction workers. However, after their divorce, their material conditions converge as a result of, for instance, the bureaucratic tricks of ex-husbands such as transferring personal assets to relatives through nominal sales; deprivation of alimony and family support; beside being outside the paid work. My fieldwork also demonstrates that not women who were married to lower class men but also those married to upper class men could become impoverished after divorce and start benefiting from SED.

2.1 Unpaid labor and gendered cost of marriage

Delphy and Leonard (1984) introduced the concept of domestic mode of production apart from the industrial mode of production. While the latter is defined by capitalist property relations, the former is framed by patriarchal family relations. She highlighted that these are autonomous systems while patriarchal mode unites women as a distinct class oppressed by men from different class positions. Reversely, it also unites men as a beneficiary group of women's exploitation; so Delphy (1977) defined men as "the main enemy". Similarly, Federici (1975) defined housewives as "servants of the working class" (p.3) and advocated wages for housework:

> Capital creates the housewife to service the male worker physically, emotionally and sexually – to raise his children, mend his socks, patch up his ego when it is crushed by the work and the social relations (which are relations of loneliness) that capital has reserved for him. It is precisely this peculiar combination of physical, emotional and sexual services that are involved in the role women must perform for capital that creates the specific character of that servant which is the housewife, that makes her work so burdensome and at the same time invisible. (p.78)

However, for Zaretsky (1976), housewife and the proletarian are "the two characteristic laborers of developed capitalist society" (p.114) and he insisted that even if it seems to serve men, women's unpaid work serves capitalism. This discussion is significant for me to highlight that these women who severely suffer from economic deprivation after divorce or separation "have claims against men" (SFK, 2011) as SFK formulized in 2011 to demand compensations for the lifelong cost of gendered division of labor. This formulation may serve the politicization of gendered cost of divorce since women's after-divorce poverty is largely rooted in the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model. Acker (2004) highlights that this root-bound gendered division of labor lays double burden at women's door –unpaid

reproductive labor and deprivation of power in the sphere of production- while rewarding men with double advantage – exemption from the routine, unpaid, degraded reproductive responsibilities and power in the sphere of capitalist production. Hence, Acker concludes that it contributes to the continuation of gender inequalities and also shapes the sex-segregated organization of capitalist workplaces where women do not receive equal returns even if they succeed to be included in paid work.

Hartmann (1979) was one of the first feminists to draw attention to the material basis of gendered division of labor and she insisted that since the majority of men "want their women at home to personally service them" and they "seek to control women's labor power" (p.14), they may conflict with capitalists' – "a smaller group of men", interests who "want most women, not their own" to participate in the labor market. Folbre and Hartmann (1989) wrote that "appropriation of surplus by men"- that is, unpaid work of women- is "patriarchal exploitation" since "men benefit economically from their traditional authority as fathers and husbands" (p.92). They opposed to classical Marxist explanation "which equates gender processes to noneconomic processes" (p.93) since as Benston (1989) claimed in her classic essay on the material conditions of the secondary status of women, women's subordination is primarily rooted in the economic value attached with the work they disproportionately engage in:

> In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. Their work is not worth money, is therefore valueless, is therefore not even real work. And women themselves, who do this valueless work, can hardly be expected to be worth as much as men, who work for money. (p.4)

As a challenging example, EVID-SEN's *(Ev İşçileri Dayanışma Sendikası)*, a trade union of domestic workers, struggle to be recognized as a legal union blurs the boundaries between women's status as workers who do domestic work for wage and as women who normally do such works which "have historically been cast as women's work" (Fraser, 2016a, p.99) for love, not money (Nelson, & Folbre, 2000). In 2011, Governorship of Istanbul applied to the court with the demand of discontinuation of activities of EVID-SEN which is the trade-union of domestic workers with the slogan of "we are domestic workers, not rags!". According to the 60th article of the Law no 2821 which defines the scope of the activities of trade-unions, domestic work is not a sector neither for employers nor employees to be organized in a trade-union so EVID-SEN had no legal basis with its claim that "domestic workers are workers" (Erdoğdu, & Toksöz, 2013, p.17). The very unbalanced recognition, valorization and compensation of domestic work in comparison with other sectors of the paid work are rooted in the sex composition of this sector. Nevertheless, while paid domestic workers have begun to claim their rights with reference to the Labor Law according to which they can define their employment relationship with the host; unpaid domestic work is still regarded as a voluntary activity which does not allocate responsibility within the family which "conceals the real power relationships" (Anderson, 2001, p.31). As the leader of EVID-SEN, Gülhan Benli explained, although they aim to organize unpaid domestic workers in addition to the paid domestic workers and the women engaging in home-based work, their attempts have largely been remained one-sided due to the lack of such a demand in "face-to-face relationships with housewives" (Umut Sen, 2017). That is, women who are unpaid domestic workers also do not recognize themselves as worker, though their work largely shapes their statuses as women in relationship

with marriage and motherhood, as workers in relationship with the labor market and poverty, and as citizens in relationship with the welfare state and benefits.

According to Walby et al. (2012) intersectional experiences should be analyzed by relying on the distinction between system and environment. To her, "each system –such as economy, polity, family, civil society- takes all other systems as its environment" (p.458). That is, there is no hierarchy among different bases of inequalities –such as gender, race, class- each of which has its own ontological basis; rather they overlap each other while co-existing in a given context. However, as I saw in my fieldwork, marriage as "the weekend haven of men and reason for being of women" (Comer, 1984, p.81) overrides other systems in determining women's position. Yıldırım (2015) formulizes marriage as "enhousing" (p.3) women through the "ethics of female bird that can be defined by being a good housewife and a good mother". That is, women are equipped with "the state of being with a house" –with a family, actually- when they marry and in exchange for this so-called secured and protective zone, and they are expected to "turn a house with four walls into a nest" by behaving in accordance with traditional gender roles. In this sense, divorce directly means "dehousing" (p.5) those women, in Yıldırım's words; so that women are left naked in terms of protection and security. In this regard, I associate women's stories of marriage in terms of their motivation to marry, patterns of sharing domestic responsibilities with their husbands, in-marriage poverty and husbands' –or ex-husbands'- functionality as the head of the family with these women's post-divorce financial situation. Yıldırım (2015) concludes, "Some extremely important drawbacks after a divorce such as financial problems and overwhelming responsibility on the shoulders of women are not inherent in divorce itself" (p.96). These are related to the gendered division of labor and unfold after divorce when the

vulnerability of women within the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model is unveiled. Therefore, I handle marriage as a bureaucratic suspension for gender poverty gap since even if women suffer from economic deprivation as dependents on men who are unemployed or work in informal and low-wage jobs; these women are bureaucratically still regarded as being supported by their husbands. They become a member of a household with a joint income and expense balance; and lose their individual basis of rights claiming for compensation to their dependence on a dysfunctional male-breadwinner.

UN Women and World Bank (2018) found that women are poorer than men especially from age 20 to age 34 coinciding with "the peak productive and reproductive ages" (p.5). This gender poverty gap is interpreted as resulting from women's disproportionate unpaid work and low labor market participation especially interrupted with marriage and having children. On the other side of the coin, ASPB (2014a) suggests that marriage consolidates men's relationship with labor market while discouraging women from paid work. Hence, marriage is designated as a social security institution for women through the very design of the social policy programs. For instance, daughters can be entitled to survivor's pension until they marry or be formally employed whereas sons' marital status does not affect entitlement. For them, there is an additional age limit so they must be integrated into the labor market until the age of 25 at the latest (SGK, n.d.). Women lose their benefit in relation to their dependence on formally employed male relatives when they marry since it is assumed that they are economically supported by their husbands. Male-breadwinner family model provides both "an informal mechanism and a formal normative framework for welfare provision" (Kılıç, 2010 p.169).

Furthermore, women can benefit from widow's pension only when their husbands die, in other words, only if they do not abandon the marriage until it abandons them. For other women without men, there is not any well-defined mechanism to compensate their vulnerability since they are assumed either to receive alimony or to be under the responsibility of another breadwinner. Ankara Bar Association (2019) states that majority of the divorced women cannot receive alimony and even they do not demand it due to bureaucratic difficulties or ex-husbands' violence. Further, deserted women and women with imprisoned spouses are suspended between being totally naked in terms of economic protection due to the dysfunctional male-breadwinners and the bureaucratically continuing status of being dependent on a normative male-breadwinner. Peace and Democracy Party[4] *(Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi [BDP])* member of the parliament Akat-Ata's (2013) parliamentary question to the Minister of Family and Social Policies Fatma Şahin in that time drew attention to the marriage barriers preventing women to benefit from social policies such as religious marriage and dysfunctional marriages in case of imprisoned and relinquent husbands. She criticized that social policies are still designed on the basis of traditional family model while there is a range of informal family forms "which are not recorded but a part of the social reality", in addition to the increasing number of single-parent households.

2.2 Women's dependence as the basis of benefit

Özbay (1982) speaks of "women aspiring to be housewives" (p.214) who migrated from rural areas where they were unpaid agricultural laborers to city centers which re-located them as full-time housewive dependent on male-breadwinners. This

[4] Ex-name of the Democratic Party of Peoples (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*)

aspiration was derived from the fact that those women who had been working both as agricultural laborers and unpaid domestic workers were suffering from time poverty deeper than the full-time housewives. This new status consolidated with urbanization –full-time housemaker- defines women's relationship with social rights as dependence on a male-breadwinner and, as Lewis (1992) also explained, male-breadwinner/female-caregiver marriages function to subordinate women "to their husbands for the purposes of social security entitlement" and promotes them "to undertake the work of caring at home without public support" (p.162). Similarly, Abramovitz (2017) highlights that the industrial family ethic which is based on women's disproportionate unpaid labor "offers women a new status and the comforts of patriarchal protection while fostering women's oppression in ways that served the needs of both capital and patriarchy" (p.111).

Lister (1990) points out the fact that while men's dependence on women for caring and servicing in the family reinforces their higher status in both private and public spheres, women's economic dependency on men also serves anyone except men. That is, men's dependency on women's care work grant them a range of conjugal rights without any cost –since, for instance, their health insurance is not reduced by half when wives also benefit from it- whereas women's dependency on men has profound costs especially being unfolded after divorce or separation. For instance, Sapiro (1986) explains that women are dependent on their husbands to receive social security or on their role as mothers to receive welfare benefits and those benefits provided to women mainly aim at enabling them to care rather than enabling them to survive outside the paternalistic relationships. On the contrary, as she highlights, the programs which are generally benefited by men promote their independence and self-reliance. Relying on this "two-channel welfare state" in

Nelson's (1990) words, Pateman (1987) argues that the dichotomy of men's independence and women's dependence is the primary obstacle for the formation of democratic citizenship. In this regard, Sirman (2005) refers to familial citizenship which is based on women's obedience to the male head of the family who is also the ideal citizen:

> Most important of all, men as husbands rather than as fathers become legally the sovereign power within the family and the polity. They are the ones who are defined as independent subjects able to enter into a formal relation with the state. Women, exalted as mothers, are citizens only to the extent that they fulfill their role as helpers and advisors. (Sirman, 2005, p. 164)

It is also possible to argue as Seccombe (1974) that the economic relationship between husband and wife is an equal exchange. That is, the value of women's unpaid work is equal to the value they receive from their husbands' wage packet within a relationship of economic patronage. Yet, the major failure of this argument would be "not to recognize the effects of the wife's economic dependence on her husband and the power relations within the family" (Gardiner et al., 1975, p. 51). That is, Seccombe's assumption of equal input-output becomes invalid due to the fact that the vast majority of women do not have alternatives since "women are tied through marriage to housework" (Ibid, p.49). Harrison (1973) also rejected Seccombe's assumption of equal input-output within the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model, rather he stated that the wife receives only her subsistence. However, he claimed that unpaid work of women "is performed outside the capitalist mode of production" (Molyneux, 1979, p.9) so for him, women who are full-time housewives and wage earners constitute two separate camps within the relations of production. As a response, Molyneux laid emphasis on the fact that what unites

women is their peculiar relation with home manifested in the advanced capitalist countries as family wage, the gendered division of labor, and the premium placed on women's reproductive role (p.24). That is, as Federici (2018) summarized, "every woman is a working woman".

Basic assumptions about gender shape the very infrastructure of social policy (Bussemaker, & Van Kersbergen, 1994) and the prevalence of the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver model may explain Turkey's policy agenda targeting women's relationship with the labor market and caring work. One of the most revealing examples is when a woman went to the President and complained about her unemployment, Erdoğan asked her "What does your husband do?" (Anonymous, 2019). Even if a range of activation plans such as The National Employment Action Plan (2014-2023) and Female Employment Action Plan (2016-2018) have been initiated in that period in contrast with President's attitude degrading women's labor market participation; gendered division of labor is promoted by care policies fixing women's caregiving roles –elaborated on in the next chapter- and gender-blind social security reforms and labor market regulations reinforcing existing inequalities. For instance, Yaman-Öztürk (2010) summarized the main aim of New Labor Law enacted in 2003 as "to increase female employment in accordance with the requirements of capital and within the frame of patriarchal norms" since it fixes women's primary caregiver role while promoting paid work just as secondarily. As Toksöz (2015) highlighted, increased female employment can be transformative in Fraser's (1995) terms, that is, "aimed at correcting inequitable outcomes precisely by restructuring the underlying generative framework" (p.82) only if women can access to decent works and opportunity to improve their capacities for collective action and organization (p.168). Rather, as Toksöz (2015) stated, it would not "disrupt the

consensus between patriarchy and capitalism" (p.196). In Turkey, as Buğra and Yakut-Cakar (2010) highlight, "the whole system of social protection, in its formal and informal components, was family-centered" (p.529) so women's caring role in the family has increasingly begun to be more significant as the basis of citizenship status.

Turkish pension system is also based on the male-breadwinner model "where women are defined extensively as dependents" (p.35) and results in "lower life-time earnings" (p.36) for women especially in old age (Elveren, 2013), Within this structure of gender relations, full-time unpaid worker women rely on their husbands' income to survive with the assumption of intra-familial sharing of resources, then they are expected to sustain their lives by relying on the pension benefits as widows. Elveren (2008) states that the majority of pensioner women (84%) have pension benefits as dependents on their husbands or fathers. However, in Turkey, there are at least two institutional obstacles vitiating this assumption of problem-free dependency in male-breadwinner model. Firstly, Turkey has a large-scale informal sector with the rate of 33% (Social Security Institution, 2018) so many women cannot benefit from social security benefits as dependents. Further, since the majority of the informal workers are female workers (Diskar, 2018), the gender gap for retirement benefits is also high (Yağmur, 2017). Secondly, informality is not only the problem of labor market but also of marriage in Turkey. In 2015, the Constitutional Court removed the penalty for religious marriage without civil marriage and as Civelek and Koç (2007) note, although the rate of religious marriage without civil marriage has decreased in comparison with the rate of 1990s, there is still an alive form of informal marriage walking arm in arm with polygamy – "*kumalık*"- especially in the Eastern province (Ulutaş, 2019). These women are deprived of even the dependent status to benefit

from social security benefits and suspended between a considerably flexible and unsecured form of marriage which does not grant women even a dependent status to benefit from social rights and being totally naked in terms of economic protection outside both the labor market and marriage institution. Turkish social security system neglects the informality of both labor market and marriage and increases the relative profitability of relying on a well-functioning male-breadwinner for women with low attachment to the labor market.

On the other hand, in 2006 the Social Security and Universal Health Insurance Law was reformed in a way to expand working life-phase and equalize women with men on the ground of late retirement and more premium (Demirci, n.d.). In opposition to this "abstract equality", as Acar-Savran (2018) criticized, Women's Platform for Social Rights (*Sosyal Haklar için Kadın Platformu*) was organized around the demands for gender-based depreciation, early retirement for paid workers, public healthcare services and right to retirement for unpaid workers independently of the status of their husbands or fathers (SFK, 2016). Various feminist groups claimed that the reform reinforces existing gender inequalities and deepens women's economic vulnerability stemmed from their disproportionate unpaid work (Keig, 2008). While rejecting the protective social policies defining women's rights on the basis of their dependency on male relatives, they do not abandon their demands for positive discrimination in order to mediate the cost of the gendered division of labor for women. They highlight that women deserve this positive discrimination as a compensation for "unpaid labor" and the social benefit it produces (SFK, 2016).

Fraser (2016a) discusses varieties of the relationship between women's unpaid work and capitalism at different stages and highlights that gendered division of labor, in her words "the separation of social reproduction from economic

production" (p.102) underlies the basis of women's subordination. She writes, "liberal capitalism privatized social reproduction; state-managed capitalism partially socialized it; financialized capitalism is increasingly commodifying it" (Fraser, 2016b). In each case, "a specific organization of social reproduction went with a distinctive set of gender and family ideals" (Ibid, para. 6). Strong male-breadwinner countries such as Turkey, as Lewis (1992) defines, where women's low and generally part-time labor market participation is combined with the lack of child care services and "the long-lived inequality between husbands and wives in regard to social security" (p.159); tend to draw "a firm dividing line between public and private responsibility" (p.164) for women's claims as wives, mothers and paid workers. Hence, in Turkey, as I discuss in next chapters, state assumes responsibility for women only when husbands or fathers fade from the scene relying on the normative commitment to the assumption that men provide for women in an ordinary family. However, this allocation of responsibility between men and the state allows gendered division of labor to persist and even to be fixed when social policies rely on the norm of male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family.

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I call attention to the material basis of the gendered cost of divorce: gendered division of labor. As I explained above, male-breadwinner/female-caregiver model determines women's bargaining position both in the family and labor market so gender processes are not noneconomic processes. Hence, traditional marriage based on gendered division of labor seems to be the main determinant of women's economic vulnerability. Since men leave home together with their resources, even women who were previously married to well-to-do men may share

the same fate of high poverty risk with women whose had economic difficulties before their divorce. That is, marriage can veil economic cost of gendered division of labor until it unfolds after divorce or separation in the form of extreme poverty and dependency.

This marriage model also forms a basis for social policies; so many women benefit from basic social rights as dependents on their male-relatives. While women's citizenship status is defined by their roles as family members, men largely benefit from social rights relying on their labor market status. Further, state assumes responsibility for women's poverty only when they become "women without men" that is, only as substituting male relatives which are supposed to economically support those women; but this is true only when either those women are widowed instead of divorced or they are "without men and with children". As I also observed in the field, marriage functions to a large extent as a bureaucratic suspension which leaves women's poverty out of the political frame. In reality, intrahousehold allocation of resources is affected by power relations between men and women and claims for compensation for marriage failures must rely on women's disproportionate unpaid work which determines lifelong gendered cost of divorce, rather than their caring role.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL INVESTMENT

Morel et al. (2012) define social investment as an emerging policy paradigm; that is, it is not a well-established in practice but it definitely points out a divergence from both welfare retrenchments of the 1980s and male-worker-breadwinner-based social insurance of the post-1945 (Hemerijck, 2018a). In 2013, Social Investment Package of European Commission defined the rationale of social investment as "to prepare individuals, families and societies to respond to the new risks of a competitive knowledge economy, by investing in human capital and capabilities from early childhood through old age" (Hemerijck, 2018b, p.58) in the face of increasing poverty and social exclusion within the context of 2008 crisis. Here, the state does not fade from the scene as it is suggested by the neoliberal doctrine; rather it takes an active and positive role in enabling individuals to develop their full potential (Jacobsson, 2009, p.120). The assumption is, even the most disadvantageous and poorest people can participate in the global economy when they are enabled to develop their full potential.

Hemerijck (2018c) summarizes three policy functions of the social investment paradigm as stock of "human capital and capabilities over the life course", flows of "contemporary labor market and life-course transitions" and buffer to "maintain strong minimum-income universal safety nets as income protection and economic stabilization" (p.812); that is, it includes social protection and public responsibility just as the post-1945 welfare state did but priorities in spending considerably differ. In the Keynesian period, state was responsible for ensuring a functioning economy with full employment and redistributing resources for a greater

equality than the market promises to provide. However, the social investment state does not aim for income equality, rather it emphasizes equality of opportunities and life chances. Accordingly, Jenson and Saint-Martin (2003) defines social investment as the governing dynamics of a new citizenship regime in which the boundaries of the responsibility mix changes in a way to widen the scopes of markets, families and the voluntary sector for welfare provision.

In this chapter, I will explain this changing responsibility mix through the rising significance of motherhood –especially single mothers as a disadvantaged group- in social policy agendas for the sake of "common good"; and the activation policies targeting welfare beneficiary mothers in accordance with normatively constructed relationships between self-sufficiency, good motherhood and good citizenship.

3.1 Mothering in the name of society

Especially in 2000s, child poverty has increasingly come to be handled with regard to the matter of household composition. For instance, UNICEF (2000) highlighted that changing role of the state within market economy and increasing poverty rates considerably affect children, especially within disadvantaged families as follows:

> Those who grow up in poverty are more likely to have learning difficulties, to drop out of school, to resort to drugs, to commit crimes, to be out of work, to become pregnant at too early an age, and to live lives that perpetuate poverty and disadvantage into succeeding generations. (p.3)

Although there is an almost global tendency to re-design welfare architecture from a social investment perspective, "there is a huge variation in implementation" (Jenson, & Saint-Martin, 2003). What is common for all interpretations of social investment

are investing in children through early childhood education and family benefits aimed at poverty alleviation on the one hand, active labor market policies for the sake of preventing intergenerational transmission of poverty on the other. As OECD (2018) highlights, almost one child in seven lives in income poverty in OECD countries and, as a policy response, it attaches importance to stable and full-time parental employment and recognizes that access to affordable childcare services is crucial for integrating low-income parents into the labor market. As Saraceno (2015) emphasizes, weakening of the male-breadwinner model has enforced welfare states to take women's vulnerable relationship with the paid work into consideration. Esping Andersen et al. (2002) explains this new woman-friendly social contract as an inevitable policy response to low fertility rates when women's economic empowerment leads to a greater family instability so only such an orientation can manage this new social risk and serve the collective welfare of society at large. For instance, Ukraine has passed from a demographic crisis with low fertility rates and this raised concerns about the future economic growth of the country from the end of 1990s (Nizalova et al., 2016). In order to overcome this crisis, maternal/parental leave system and provision of subsidized childcare were brought to political agenda as a way to alleviate work and family conflict for mothers. As a result, Ukraine has a fully-paid maternity leave of 18 weeks and the opportunity to take unpaid leave additionally. Moreover, it has been guaranteed to return to the same workplace after the leaves for child sickness end so that career breaks are prevented to a large extent.

As Esping-Andersen et al. (2002) suggest, the trade-off between fertility and female employment threatens the sustainability of the welfare state and there is a need for a new welfare state reformed in line with the changes in family, demography and labor market:

> The financial viability of the welfare state in the 21st century depends critically on both the revenues generated by high levels of women's labor force participation, on the one hand, and their willingness to reproduce the next generation, on the other. (p.160)

They emphasize that the male-breadwinner/female caregiver model is no longer the driving motor of the labor market so that the new welfare state cannot neglect the necessity of creating alternatives for women in the face of the tradeoff between fertility and employment. social investment paradigm puts emphasis on the issue of work and family reconciliation and it recognizes that unless this conflict is resolved on behalf of women; social and economic development of a society will continuously be undermined (Jenson, 2009). In other words, unless motherhood is incentivized in the name of society at large; that is, as a public good, developed countries cannot reap the advantages of "the irreversible and desirable gender revolution" (Esping-Andersen, 2002, p.20) manifested in increased female employment. Today's developed world re-designs their welfare programs to facilitate women's double-burden but the way it occurs is highly gendered as I explain in this chapter and the next one.

3.2 Changing responsibility mix

As Hemerijck (2018a) points out, the social investment paradigm proposes a welfare system which focuses on enabling individuals to be adaptive, self-reliant and employable subjects within the competitive and knowledge-based economy and to sustain their dual-earner families and parenthood harmoniously. That is, it prioritizes the self-sufficient employees against welfare beneficiaries and reinforces dual earner-families rather than male-breadwinner/female-caregiver model. The profound

emphasis on individual responsibility has transformed the balance between the notions of deserving and dependency so that active labor market policies turn into mechanisms which devalue being a welfare recipient. Along with the social investment paradigm, transitional labor market and individual life course models also contribute to the paradigm shift which has transformed the allocation of responsibility among individuals, governments and communities in the face of new social risks (Knijn, & Smit, 2009). All prioritize the labor market insiders and the main figure of this scene is the self-sufficient worker who is – more or less according to the different interpretations of the paradigm about the allocation of responsibility - responsible for his or her continuity in the labor market.

As another approach paving way to the paradigm shift, individual life-course model takes social protection as a barrier to the improvement of human capital (Bovenberg, 2005). According to this, individuals must maximize their human capital, constantly update themselves and increase their employability in order to survive in a world where the sole foothold is the labor market. In the name of saving people from dependency and letting them become economically self-sufficient individuals, the new paradigm overvalues the power of human capital at the expense of the problem of working poor. For instance, Europe 2020 Strategy, which is European Union's agenda aiming to overcome the structural weakness of Europe's economy by increasing its competitiveness and productivity simultaneously, officially defines its priority as a 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', in which 'better educational levels help employability and progress in increasing the employment rate helps to reduce poverty' (European Commission, 2020, p.8-9). That is, it envisions a linear relationship between education, employment and prosperity. Further, it also promises that this kind of route for poverty alleviation brings about an

inclusive and sustainable growth. The main motivation within this framework is to recover the economy of European Union member states and their competitiveness in the global capitalist economy, sustainability is expected to be ensured by increased employment and minimum reliance on public support.

It is not possible to struggle with poverty by only increasing the number of insiders, especially in the case that accumulative concerns subordinate the redistributive ones. Moreover, when the employment created pushes people into insecurity and instability, it reinforces social exclusion of insiders, rather than being inclusive. As Taylor-Gooby et al. (2015) also summarize, higher employment in itself has only a limited impact on poverty alleviation and more jobs are not always the best route to social inclusion. Accordingly, the inclusiveness that European 2020 Strategy frames refers to the aim of including more people – who most probably were previously welfare recipients, - in the labor market, even though the cost of this self-reliance will be less security within flexible market relations. Thus, this new policy framework does not truly take the problems of the insiders such as low wages, insecurity, poor work conditions, and flexibility into consideration. In this regard, increasing inequality and prevalence of low-quality jobs are not "serious problems in and of themselves" (Jenson, & Saint-Martin, 2002, p. 92), rather they are politicized only if individuals are trapped in bad conditions in a way to affect future life chances or threaten the social cohesion in the present.

For Schmid (2006), there should be a balance between individual and public responsibility in face of a risk – he terms it as social risk management- and puts the freedom to act – inspired from Sen's capabilities approach- in the labor market at the center of this balance. Freedom to act ensures "transitions from one employment status to the other, including combinations of work and education or work and

unpaid care" (Schmid, 2017). However, these transitions are generally not *enabling* for women but imposed on them in a way to undermine their capability to develop a boundaryless career over the life-course. For instance, pregnancy and having a pre-school age child negatively affect women's continuity in the labor market (Looze, 2017). They generally result in withdrawal, change or, when possible, transition to part-time works. In any case, women's future wage and career are undermined since wage growth and promotion normally require an uninterrupted career. However, the harshness of the motherhood wage penalty differs according to welfare regime type (Nizalova et al., 2016). For instance, in liberal regimes, when the unleashed competitiveness of the labor market and weakness of social safety net are combined, the price of motherhood is so high that most single mothers live under extreme poverty (Mahon, 2006).

3.3 Single motherhood as a new social risk

As a result of the changing balance both in family –rising divorce and decreasing marriage rates (OECD, 2019) - and labor market –increasing female employment rates (OECD, 2020b), single parenthood has become more prevalent and rendered as a prominent social risk – "the truly disadvantaged" in Wilson's (1987) terms- as generally combined with extreme poverty and dependency. While unemployment, old age, disability and ill health have declined in importance as old risks which the Keynesian welfare states strove to mediate, new social risks consist of work and family reconciliation, single parenthood, having a frail – that is, dependent- relative, having low or obsolete skills and insufficient social security coverage (Bonoli, 2006). Single mothers seem to embody all these risks with their double burden and empirically revealed low human capital which restrain them to low-quality jobs.

They have also “frail relatives”: children. Orloff (2016) argues that single-mothers are the ideal sample illustrating the economic vulnerability of all women which is somehow disguised by the dominance of the male breadwinner model. Accordingly, children in single-mother households face a greater risk of poverty which is predominantly attributed to their parents’ low labor market attachment: “Helping parents gain good-quality employment is crucial for reducing child poverty and reversing the decline in living standards experienced by many families. It involves enabling parents to have a stable and if possible full-time job” (OECD, 2018, p.6). As a policy response, a range of welfare reforms aiming to promote employment have been introduced to *bring liberty* to single mothers who are trapped by the so-called chronic dependency on social assistance (Harris, 1993). However, these women still mainly contact with the welfare state as mothers, especially with the social investment paradigm which aims at breaking the intergenerational chain of poverty by lifting women and has dominated the welfare programs (Boeri, 2018).

According to the dominant understanding of the social investment paradigm, the overrepresentation of single mothers as welfare recipients not only threatens the economic sustainability of welfare states but also poses a moral danger by structuring the relational meanings of citizenship and dependency, parenthood and responsibility, rights and duties, work and productivity. For instance, an Irish politician condemned welfare recipient single-mothers as “promiscuous women” who throw off their responsibilities and “create a new lifestyle of welfare economy” which is “morally and socially wrong” (Millar, & Crosse, 2018, p.13). In the US, this political discourse of dependency is racialized with the term “welfare queen” implying that “most welfare recipients are black and unworthy of assistance” and “symbolizing the perceived problems within poor black communities” (Nadasen,

2007, p.53) such as unemployment and family instability. Single mothers are generally represented as battening on the public support with little effort to "stand on their own feet" and at the same time, condemned for their delinquent parenthood when they are employed (Wall, 2013). It is important to add that, such moral rhetoric does not target single-fathers and they do not have to struggle with these contradictory stigmas.

In many welfare reforms under the influence of the new paradigm which takes children as determining the economy of the future society, good parenting is associated with good citizenship and welfare dependency is regarded as hindering both. However, as Federici (2018) also lays emphasis on, welfare is not charity and the relationship between the state and those women who are condemned for being dependent on the state is an interdependency relationship. Despite this fact, productivity – that is, the paid work- constitutes the main component of the normative construction of good citizenship and motherhood and the processes of normative commitment and policy-making mutually trigger each other.

3.4 Bringing liberty to single mothers: from welfare to work

From the second half of the 1990s, "rising budget deficits, high structural unemployment and rising poverty" (Cantillon, 2011, p.435) forced many welfare states to implement reforms by which passive social protection was replaced by employment growth. As the most typical example, in the US, 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and removed the guaranteed need-based cash assistance (Ahn, 2012). It introduced work requirements and time limitation for eligibility in order to activate welfare recipients.

This reform pushed single mothers to “move from welfare-reliance to combining welfare and work” and it is associated with “a decrease in harsh parenting, increase in positive parenting, and decreases in both internalizing and externalizing behavior problems among children” (Dunifon et al., 2003, p.23). That is, welfare dependency is linked with bad parenting and regarded as pathological for both parents and their children. Here, the market citizenship model overshadows the rights framework and the borders of deservingness are drawn by the normatively constructed relationship between employment and self-sufficiency.

In Germany, as a response to the high unemployment rates, what came to be called Hartz reforms were introduced and several labor market regulations such as cutting unemployment benefits were implemented (Gerlitz, 2018). Here, as the reform intended, female employment rate has risen but majority of those women were employed in non-standard woks. The increase of in-work poverty after the reform can be attributed to the decreased distributive performance of the labor market; that is, the phenomenon of working poor. Moreover, changes in employment patterns and in family structure overlapped so that non-standard employment and single-parenting jointly worked against income pooling. As a similar example with its consequences but different in terms of administrative composition, in 2000s, the non-mandatory welfare-to-work program in Israel –Woman of Valor- was designed as similar to civil society projects and aimed not only to help single mothers find a job but also to improve their labor market position at large (Herbst-Debby, 2018). It included low-income single mothers from various disadvantageous groups such as immigrants and organized a wide range of workshops, trainings and consultancy service in order to enable them to “hunt” (Ibid, p.154) a job. Although those women made an incredible effort to take on paid work, they complained about their bad work

conditions and their unchanged life standards. For those women, employment provides only a means of survival, instead of a decent life while, at the same time, the inadequacy of day care services reinforces the time pressure on them. Precarious and low-paying jobs with limited social rights worsen their already vulnerable conditions so that employment does not correspond to empowerment, self-sufficiency and independence for those women.

Similarly, in the Global South, conditional cash transfers are integrated with individual capacity-building and skill improvement mechanisms such as vocational training courses in order to remove the so-called dependency syndrome without any attempt to transform the institutional basis –social and employment rights- of such a dependency. As a result, neither dependency nor poverty has been reduced since conditional cash transfers contributed to the expansion of informal economy (Papadopoulos, & Velázquez, 2016). As the last and a stimulating case, in India, World-Bank-funded women entrepreneurship intended to "lift women, their families and communities of poverty" (Boeri, 2018, p.157) also reinforced informal economy. Within these projects, women's employment is seen as a means for struggle against poverty –especially child poverty- but the type of employment it created reinforced the very structure behind women's poverty. By producing temporal and unsecured home-based works, these policies pave the way for more exploitation. When the boundary between work and home is blurred, women's double burden gets imbricated and their work could be still seen as trivial since it is performed in the house.

Jaehrling et al. (2015) analyze the impact of the activation policies targeting single mothers on poverty reduction in a period of economic downturn after the 2008 crisis. In this period, single mothers in most European countries increasingly began

to participate in the labor market but their paid work was not generally translated into a means for alleviating the poverty risk they faced with. For instance, two-thirds of single mothers in the United Kingdom and half of single mothers in Germany were living under the relative poverty threshold in this period since their paid work failed to release them from financial difficulty. On the other hand, as the same research indicates, even in Sweden, employment does not sufficiently protect single mothers from material hardship since there is a range of intervening factors neutralizing the poverty-reducing effect of high employment rates. One of these neutralizing factors is the necessity of single mothers to take into account non-wage factors while looking for a job. They tend to sacrifice income in exchange for convenient conditions for work and family reconciliation. Felfe (2012) defines the job characteristics which are not suitable for single mothers, such as long distance between workplaces or children's schools and work hours which are non-coincident with school schedule, as disamenities. In order to avoid disamenities, single mothers can accept the jobs that promise a family-friendly working environment but low wages and harsh conditions. However, the advantage of family-friendly works is generally neutralized by their broad flexibility. Flexibility can turn into a reciprocal relationship between the employer and the employee; so, the significant question should be that flexibility is on behalf of whom. For instance, a single mother might tend to accept unpaid overtime in exchange for the opportunity to bring her child/children along with her, just as Haynes (2008) summarizes with the statement that "I'm flexible for them and in return they're flexible for me" (p.635). On the other hand, Gutierres-Domenech (2005) argues that if mothers are offered broader flexibility to combine childcare and part-time work, more mothers will move into part-time employment instead of being trapped in inactivity. Further, flexibility is not

necessarily combined with instability and reduced social rights, rather it can be an exit door for single mothers while reconciling work and family with a new balance between flexibility and social security (Wilthagen, 1998).

When the welfare-to-work programs enforce women to accept any job regardless of the wages and conditions they offer in the name of being freed of welfare dependency, paid employment might not be an empowering experience for those women. As Baker (2010) also highlights, when they are forced to pass from welfare to work immediately; women complain about their stressful lives, time poverty, lack of social support and of freedom to choose between alternative jobs. With reduced safety nets and accelerated active labor market policies which are not supported by adequate public childcare services, both welfare recipients and low-wage workers necessarily employ a set of individual survival strategies to alleviate their double burden under extreme poverty. As Edin and Lein (2018) successfully summarize, reduced safety nets and accelerated active labor market policies which are not supported by adequate public childcare services enforce welfare recipient women to employ a set of individual strategies to manage the paradoxical alternatives on hand in order to alleviate their double burden under extreme poverty:

> Our mothers learned five primary lessons from their low-wage work experience. First, although even a low-wage job paid more than welfare, it also cost more to work. These costs often equaled, and often even out- weighed, a job's earnings advantage. Second, taking a job made the pursuit of other work- based strategies more difficult, so that mothers who relied primarily on these strategies would realize a net loss when they went to work. Third, work income was less stable than welfare income-employers who offer low-wage jobs can seldom guarantee their workers full-time hours, and they are more likely to lay them off than other employers are. Furthermore, such workers were seldom eligible for unemployment insurance. Fourth, things would probably not improve over time be-cause most low-wage jobs offer virtually no premium on experience. Fifth, working in the low-wage sector was often not compatible with parenting. (p.263)

That is to say, welfare dependency is not a pathological syndrome women are trapped in, rather it can be handled as a rational choice to survive in the face of work-at-any-cost policies. The work encouraging nature of the current welfare programs is based on the assumption that "the path to success in the labor market begins with accepting any job, even one that may not pay well and may not be full-time" (Herbst, & Tekin, 2011, p.911). However, when the structural vulnerability of women – especially low-skilled ones with care responsibilities- within the labor market, his type of employment is far from bringing self-sufficiency in the long-run. Employment alone is not a solution to alleviate poverty risk –and the so-called dependency syndrome- after divorce or childbirth, rather, it should be complemented with other benefits and services: family allowances, generous parental leaves, childcare provisioning for children under 3 and childcare provisioning for children ages 3-6 (Misra et al., 2012). Herbst and Tekin (2011) revealed that single mothers' probability of not only employment but also full-time employment increases when they receive child care subsidies.

In conclusion, it is significant to highlight that even if these from-welfare-to-work reforms targeting single mothers follow more or less the same motivations and assumptions, their outcomes may differ according to the welfare context of the country. For instance, in 1998, Norway introduced a work-encouraging reform targeted at single parents and reduced the benefit period for support with the inspiration from the welfare reform of the U.S. in 1996 (Loken et al., 2018). Though both Norway and the U.S. reformed their cash benefits nearly along the same line, single mothers in Norway had alternative benefits such as health-related benefits, generous maternity leaves and highly-subsidized day care so they were affected by

the reform less than the mothers in the U.S. Reforms in both countries pushed single mothers into part-time work whereas in Norway single mother's poverty rate –both in terms of income and time- is less than those in the U.S. That is, in face of the trade-off between employment and care responsibilities, access to affordable or subsidized child care is a vital condition especially for lower-class families.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I briefly explained the social investment paradigm which corresponds to an exact divergence from both post-1945 welfare paradigm based on the male-worker-breadwinner social insurance model and welfare retrenchment of 1980s which aimed to minimize public spending for the sake of further economic growth. This new paradigm sees public spending as productive; that is, as a means of reinforcing economic development so it drives a welfare setting by which state assumes responsibility to promote self-sufficiency of individuals and dual-earning of families. In order to promote self-sufficiency, it constructs a linear relationship between human capital, employment, and poverty alleviation. That is, it problematizes poverty as a matter of labor market, rather than a public matter requiring citizenship-based compensation.

For this reason, many states have reformed their social assistance programs in a way to incentivize beneficiaries to participate in the labor market instead of relying on welfare benefits which are supposed to passivize people. In this regard, single mothers have become the most debated category of new social risks with their high poverty and dependency rates. They also pose the risk of transmitting their disadvantage to the next generations who are the workers and tax base of the future society. However; welfare reforms which have been launched with the aim of turning

welfare beneficiary single mothers into active worker-parents have failed to ensure self-sufficiency of those women. When women are largely left without public support to transcend their structural vulnerability in the labor market, employment alone does not ensure them a decent life even in the most developed countries. These women are enforced to work in flexible, low-paid and unsecured jobs via from-welfare-to-work reforms and to employ a range of individual strategies to cope with their double burden under extreme poverty in a context where public childcare facilities do not complement labor market regulations.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIAL INVESTMENT IN TURKEY

Typically, the social investment perspective manifests itself in a given society dominantly in three policy-domains: active labor market policy, family policy and, education and training (Nikolai, 2009, p.102); thus, analyzing the patterns of public expenditure in these domains seems to be the most straightforward way of revealing the objective situation of the social investment in Turkey. However, I will bring it up for discussion with a specific focus on the paradoxical trajectories of Turkey's welfare regime –as Buğra defines (2013), cultural conservatism and economic liberalism- since I advocate that this combination prevents the translation of the policies which can be seen as typical social investments into successful employment outcomes for women. For successful social investment outcomes, various policies to promote stock, flow and buffer which are the different functions of social investment policies in addressing the risks associated with human capital, employment, and poverty should institutionally complement and reinforce each other (Sabel et al., 2017). That is, as Dröbing and Nelson (2017) briefly express, "successful promotion of stock, flow, and buffer depends on coherence between policies and how they are implemented" (p.138). In Turkey, the coexistence of familialist care policies which promote the ideal of caring family, birth incentives which define the employment and career of women as subordinate to motherhood, and labor market flexibility with less social protection especially for the informal workers -majority of whom are women, as Diskar (2018a) highlighted- do not complement each other in a way to restore the vulnerable relationship of women with the labor market.

4.1 Absolute female caregiver/dual earner as and when required

As different from the main tendency of OECD members, Turkey's female labor market participation rate decreased between the years 1998-2008, even though the education level, marriage age and childbearing age of women increased in the same period (Buğra, Yakut-Çakar, 2010). Turning the crisis into an opportunity in real terms, women's labor force participation began to increase and the male-breadwinner's failure to cope with the destructive effects of the economic crisis in 2008 imposed the necessity to change the balance between paid and unpaid work (Toksöz, 2012). Turkey was caught unprepared to the collapse of male-breadwinner and the crisis of care impelled the government to invest in creating a new family-work balance for the women who were already thrown into the paid work. For this reason, AKP's policies of work and family reconciliation target to remove the barriers for female workers to be mothers, rather than alleviating the care burden of the outsider unpaid caregivers. However, Ilkkaracan (2012) highlights that the latter should be seen as a path to inclusive growth; that is, to include the "reserve army of labor" whose unemployment is no longer profitable in a context where insecurity and low wages for male workers 1) have forced women to "supplement" the family budget; and 2) made easier the intrusion of women who possess lesser bargaining power in the labor market (Yazıcı, 2012).

In addition to the declining earning power of the male-breadwinner with low wages and high risk of unemployment under market liberalization (Ilkkaracan, 2013), rising importance of the marketization of female labor as a development strategy – as summarized in the Female Employment Action Plan, "beyond being a wish, a requisite" (ÇSGB, & İşkur, 2016, p. 5) - also threatened the sustainability of the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model as not only a concrete socio-

economic unit but also a normative framework. Until 1990, the male-breadwinner had a firm legal basis in Turkey with the Article 159 of the Civil Law. According to this, married women's decisions about their careers were based on the consent of their husbands. Beyond equality, this rule was challenged by feminists as the institutionalization of the subordination of women (Karakuş, 2020) and, as might be expected, this rule was reinforcing the "exploitable dependency" – in Fraser's (2000) definition, dependency on oppressive and unsatisfactory relationships due to being deprived of secure breadwinner-quality jobs (p.15)- of women by undermining their earning capacities systematically whereas the husband's career knew no bounds.

In the early 2000s, the process of candidacy for European Union widely shaped gender equality framework of Turkey by legal reforms (Buğra, & Keyder, 2006; Akkan, 2018; Dedeoğlu, 2012; Dedeoğlu, 2013; Coşar, & Yeğenoğlu, 2011; Güneş-Ayata, & Doğangün, 2017). Firstly, the Civil Law of 2001 removed the legal basis of male head of family and changed the marital property in a way to guarantee the women's right on the properties acquired during the marriage. After the acceptance of "equal financial responsibility" between couples by the new Civil Law, Labor Law of 2003 established the Rule of Equal Treatment and clearly expressed that women cannot be discriminated on the basis of sex. This legislative path was significant to remove the barriers for dual earner families but its effect was limited since, as women's relationship with labor market is remarkably framed by the gendered division of domestic labor (Tüsiad, & Kagider, 2008, p.157). For instance, according to the OECD (2020a), Turkey is one of the countries in which women engage in unpaid work at the most with a high probability to withdraw from the labor market after marriage and childbearing (İlkkaracan, 2012). In the same way, TUIK (2016a) indicates that the proportion of the "female-caregiver households" is 92.4

(86% mothers and 7.4% grandmothers as primary caregivers) while only 2.8% benefits from professional care services (TUIK, 2016b). That is, legitimization of the dual-earner family has not brought along dual-caregiving.

Even if the absolute power of husbands to draw the boundaries between paid and unpaid work for women was limited by legal reforms, World Bank (2009) revealed the prevalence of involuntary housewifery (p. 19) since marriage and childcare remarkably determine the low rates of female labor market participation in Turkey. Similarly, Keig (2017) declared that care burden is still the primary ground for women to be kept in the gendered division of labor and 55% of the women who are not in the labor force stated their domestic responsibilities as the reason. However, as TUIK (2016a) indicates, the most prevalent intrafamilial problem which is stated as paving the way for divorce by both sexes is the division of unpaid labor; that is, women no longer arrange the domestic work quiet and retiring, rather they turn the male indifference to unpaid work into a big deal. Further, for women, the second most common ground for divorce is stated as men's inability to earn a living for the family with the proportion of 42.6%. While the male-breadwinner losing power, as International Labor Organization (2017) found, 87% of women in Turkey want to work and this is higher than the world average which is 70%. Further, only 1/10 of women in Turkey want to engage in full-time caring work whereas the world average of it is 2/10. Apparently, the female-caregiver/male-breadwinner model has become not only nonprofitable, but also unsustainable in Turkey as the involuntary housewifery with increased intrafamilial tension derived from the gendered division of labor and weakened earning potential of the male-breadwinner overlap.

In line with this non-negligible rate of being trapped in involuntary caring work, the rate of preschooler (3-5 ages) children whose mothers work outside the

home is only 7% and the main tendency is to transfer the primary carer role to other women such as grandmothers or daughters (UNICEF, 2011). Moreover, the enrolment rate of children below the age of 3 is 0.2% while the OECD average is 33% (International Labor Organization et al., 2016). That is, until the child reaches the primary school age, women's labor market participation to a large extent depends on informal support from other women. As Can (2019) says, Turkey's increasingly family-centered social policy environment reinforces this kind of intergenerational solidarity as a way of increasing female labor market participation. For instance, the Grandmother Project to Support Female Employment was initiated in 2017 in order to financially support caregiver grandmothers and paved the way for the institutionalization of the exclusion of men from the caring work in a context where the considerably limited public childcare facilities do not create alternatives. As ILO (2018) shows, Turkey's public expenditure on the selected care policies – pre-primary education, long-term care services and benefits and maternity, disability, sickness and employment injury benefits- is among the lowest ones with a proportion less than 1% of the GDP. Hence, European Commission (2016) implicitly condemns Turkey for its overspending on the pension system since majority of women and informal workers -56.3% of women do not participate in the labor market and 35% of workers employed informally (TUIK, 2019) - are excluded from the system by not paying premium.

Lastly, the symbolic parental leave of only 5 days[5] consolidates the supporting role of men in the caring work while right to infant and child care is attached to the number of female workers despite the fact that single-father households' rate is increasing year by year (TUIK, 2013). Overall picture of classical

[5] In accordance with the Labor Law no. 4857

indicators of social investment apparently shows that both “redistribution of the care burden from households to the public sphere through socialized services” and “from women to men through legislation on care leave and labor market regulation” (İlkkaracan et al., 2015) have been built on sand in Turkey. Accordingly, European Social Policy Network’s report on social investment in Turkey concludes that despite the increasing concerns for removing the trade-off between motherhood and paid work, Turkey has still no consistent and successful social investment agenda (Adaman et al., 2015).

4.2 The ideal of “caring family”

The Family Guidance (Çiftçi, & Biçici, 2005) which was published with the support of the Prime Ministry Institution of Family Research advocated that institutional care services such as day-care centers cannot substitute the family which is the ideal environment for healthy development of children. This booklet was distributed to the newly married couples in wedding halls. In the same period, in 2005, the Return to the Family Project aimed to send the children who were in the Social Service and Child Protection Agency’s *(Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu [SHÇEK]*) residential homes due to economic reasons back to their families by providing financial support to the caring family (Yazıcı, 2012). As the General Director of the SSCPA summarized, such policies move through the premise that regardless of the upbringing styles, education levels and cultural conditions – he used the phrase of “no matter how bad they are” (TEPAV, 2006, p.6)”, childcare in the family is accepted as better than the best of the institutional care. Moreover, it also serves the same purpose on the cheap with the bonus of providing a warm family environment. As Kaya (2015) summarizes, AKP’s ideal strong and caring family can be seen as a

neoliberal agent which is the problem-solver of what would otherwise be a burden on the budget. The ideal family is envisioned by the government as a living solidarity organism evolving from kindergarten (Anonymous, 2019a) to old age home (Anonymous, 2006); that is, functioning as an intergenerational loop by which you reap what you sow. In the same way, various conservative groups criticized the policies promoting institutional childcare with the statement of "who reaps kindergarten sows the old age home" (Bulaç, 2011). Within this framework, public care facilities are regarded as breaking this chain of natural solidarity which is assumed as inherent in "our roots" as opposed to the atomized Western societies (Anonymous, 2019c).

In the Symposium of Intergenerational Solidarity and Active Ageing, the Deputy Secretary of the ASPB stated that old-age homes are "imported" solutions which are not compatible with "our social fabric" (ASPB, & Ankara University, 2012, s.27). Further, the General Vice President of AKP declared that all the required social assistance programs would be implemented in order to enable families to take care of their old-age persons while institutional old-age care services would be extended for the ones who are, in a sense, naked in terms of caring relatives and deserving dependents on public care (Ibid, p.279). In this context, as Erdoğan (Anonymous, 2019b) said in the 1st Old Age Council, the ideal family is where the "wisdom" of grandparents is transmitted to children and to restore this "inherently solidary" unit which would minimize the need to institutional care for both elders and children was highlighted as an urgent policy goal as much as the goals of life-long learning and active ageing. Within this political discourse, the warm family environment is idealized against the cold public institutions since care is normatively constructed as "inherent in femininity" (p.13), "natural expression of love" (p.13),

and taken-for-granted obligation for family and kin with a tendency to de-institutionalization (Leira, & Saraceno, 2002). In line with this dominant ideology of warm family, ASPB signed a range of protocols with Islamist organizations such as *Muradiye* Foundation of the Naqshbandi tariqa (2013), pro-government IHH Humanitarian Relief Fund (2014) and Human and Wisdom Foundation *(İnsan ve İrfan Vakfı)* which was established by the President's son Bilal Erdoğan in order to disseminate "compassion homes" –which can be defined as a family-type childcare service as opposed to the dorm-type institutions (ASPB, 2013b)- cooperatively.

As Bora and Üstün (2005) highlighted, the builder of the so-called warm family environment is largely assumed and promoted to be women. According to the Turkish Family Platform which is an umbrella organization gathering the NGOs with the aim of advocating the family institution against institutional care services, women's "natural" tendencies such as compassion, forgivingness, empathy, and communication skills contributes to the continuity of the warm family environment (Gültekin, 2014). In contrast to putting the full responsibility of the ideal family on women's shoulders, Açev introduced the concept of involved fatherhood key dimensions of which are care, control and warmth (Akçınar, 2017). In harmony with the exclusion of caring father from the dominant discourse, Açev found that 91% of fathers in Turkey do not take primary care responsibilities and they "fail to engage in any one-on-one activity that would support child development despite being in the same room with their children" (p.23). Further, they apply to the "warmth" (p.22) just as a way of calming in time of crisis.

Of course, the dominant assumption of the warm family environment is open too much scrutiny, while globally the majority of femicides is committed by family members and at their own homes, so UN Women (2020) states that "home is the

most dangerous place for women". As the We Will Stop Femicide Platform (*Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu* [KCDP], 2019) periodically shows, the main ground for femicides in Turkey is "wanting to divorce", the most common crime scene is their own homes and the primary murderers are husbands and ex-husbands. Besides, as ASPB and Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies (2015) revealed, 4/10 of women were exposed to physical or sexual violence and early marriage doubles this rate while wealth level, education and employment do not change it significantly (p.83-85). Further, 62% of married women declared their husbands' psychological violence such as control, jealousy and restriction (p.94) and ¼ of them suffered from economic violence such as disallowance to work or causing to being dismissed (p.97). The report concludes that this multi-faced picture of violence against women is dominantly determined by the marital status; so that marriage quintuples women's violence rate (p.90). Similarly, Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation (2016) points out that the rate of women residing in its shelters despite their continuing civil marriage is 57% and the ones whose violence force women to leave their homes are 43% husbands, 9% ex-husbands, 7% fathers, %23 male relatives, 7% partners, and 4% ex-partners. This being the case, reducing the cost of divorce for women finds a place only in the activation programs to grant their after-divorce poverty to the budget or in the social assistance programs to prevent the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage. That is, it is not problematized in itself as a problem of gender equality.

As Jenson (2009) explains, gender equality is an integral component of the social investment perspective "as a means to an end, rather than the end in itself" (p.468) for the sake of "women's political importance as voters, taxpayers, and bearers of the next generation of workers and taxpayers" (p.406). In Turkey, a two-

pronged policy agenda – gender equality and sacred family -as Dedeoğlu (2012) defines, "a pendulum between EU legal regulations and AKP's conservative discourse", shape the ambivalent investments in women and family. The very rebranding of the State Ministry Responsible for Women and Family in 2011 can be seen as the first sign of the paradigm shift which swept away the positive effects of the EU harmonization. As the integral part of this paradigm shift, we can predicate the institutionalization of the Directorate of Religious Affairs within the field of social policy on the protocol signed between the Directorate and the ASPB in 2011. Its content is summarized as to develop "education, counselling and social service models to cope with the problems families face with" (ASPB, & DRA, 2011, p.1) or, in a sense, the problem of family. While religion was being re-functionalized in the field of social work to define, disseminate and make possible the ideal caring family (Kaya, 2015), this intrusion was also supplemented by the budget allocation (Eralp, 2018). In 2013, the DRA's budget overtook the total budget of 11 other Ministries (Koşar, 2013). The budget of ASPB is higher than the DRA; however, the share of women's shelter is not even 1% and Directorate General on the Status of Women's *(Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü)* share is gradually decreasing year by year (Parliament's Committee on Planning and Budget, 2017). Accordingly, there is still not even a Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center *(Şiddet Önleme ve İzleme Merkezi)* in every province (Selçuk, 2019). In contrast to the meagre number of women's shelters we have been observing a striking increase in the number of Family and Religious Counselling Offices discrediting women's shelters, kindergartens and old-age homes as resulting from the "destructive effects of modernity on the family" (DRA, 2018). It can be found in 81 provinces and 293 districts (DRA, 2019). While this is happening, religion is being mobilized and this

huge gap can be read as the "replacement of the struggle to stop violence against women by a struggle against the factors undermining family integrity" (Eralp, 2018). As a reflection of this changing policy priorities, the clash between the gender justice of GONGOs and gender equality of feminist organizations has been accelerated.

While gender equality was being marginalized against gender justice as "non-domestic and non-national" claim (Bia News Center, 2015), In Women and Democracy Association's *(Kadın ve Demokrasi Derneği)* International Woman and Justice Summit in 2014, Erdoğan (Anonymous, 2014) rejected the equality as "lifting the aggrieved to the level of the one who aggrieves" by highlighting the "entrustment of women to the men by the God". As opposed to the "feminism which locate women and men in an antagonistic power struggle" (Aydın, 2017), Kadem advocates "the harmony and complementarity of men and women" (Gümrükçüoğlu, 2019) as essential components of the rising discourse of gender justice. Further, when the law 6284 no -the Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence Against Women- which offers a choice for women to exit the relationships in which they are exposed to violence with several sanctions for the male partners was entered in force in 2012, the AKP member of parliament Ramazan Can criticized it as "stealing men's thunder" (Çimen, 2012). In the following period, this law was –and still being- increasingly attacked by conservatives, especially organized around the Family Platform and Yeni Akit, a pro governemnet newspaper. With their massive efforts on molding public opinion which is supported by radical Selefi groups such as Hizbullah[6] and conservative movements such as Milli Görüş[7], Istanbul Convention and the law 6284 no are blamed for "patologizing maleness", "discriminating men",

[6] Their news page: https://dogruhaber.com.tr/yazar/mmedet-solmaz/11655-6284-sayili-kanun-aile-kurumuna-dinamittir/

[7] Their news page: https://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/1529676/devlet-aileyi-neden-korumuyor

"creating a society without family", "discrediting fathers" and also resulting in the increase of femicides (Anonymous, 2019).

The family crisis was rapidly becoming more than a demographic problem and turning into a political clash which determines the direction of gender policies. In this context, the conservative gender climate AKP has promoted "simultaneously trivialized legal advances and unleashed traditional forces in a strongly traditional society" (Güneş-Ayata, Doğangün, 2017). As a milestone, the Divorce Commission Report in 2016 prescribed the extension of Divorce Process Counselling and legal conciliation mechanisms, limitation on the period of alimony -it was stated that permanent alimony appropriates men's lives- and ensuring men's right to contact with their children even if there is a restraining order against them. The report was interpreted by feminists as to protect the family at the expense of women. At this point, it is highly significant to remind the coalition between the Commission and the new actors of gender politics: Divorced and Injured Fathers. The Divorce Commission, as commonly used, met in 24 February 2016. This meeting could be seen as the footfall of the Report which sparked public reaction. In the meeting, an "alimony weary" man whose divorce case is continuing for 17 years, an "injured" woman who made child marriage "voluntarily" but her husband arrested for the "unfair" marriage age in the law, a secondarily injured woman from Divorced People and Their Families Platform who complained about the "unfair" alimony her son is paying, a father from Fathers Left Without Child Children without Father Platform who gave harsh criticism about the "courts' favoring the women" who put economic and psychological pressure on men, and lastly, the representative of the Divorced Fathers who talked about mothers' using of their shared children as "bargaining chip" delivered their speeches (TBMM, 2016). Besides all these, Members of AKP,

MHP and CHP in the meeting were in agreement with the guests, especially on the subject of equal victimhood between women and men during the divorce process. On the other hand, there were two women from women's shelter and talked about their reasons for divorce and the challenges they faced with during this period but there is not even one registered sentence which represent the content of their speech. As a whole, the portrait of the Parliamentary Investigation Commission points out the official recognition of the Divorced Fathers[8] as an agent in shaping family policies.

Under the influence of this newly-emerging countermovement and their countless visits to the Parliament and ministries; ultimately, the discourse of "equal victimhood" has gained legitimacy and women's rights of custody and alimony were threatened by the Victim Rights Law Draft in 2017. Although the Divorced Fathers visited, for instance, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Family and Social Policies before this meeting; they were still the messenger for themselves, rather than solution partners. Strikingly, their gradual recognition of being solution partners for the family agenda against the women who, in a sense, "earn their bread from divorce" (via "alimony terror"[9]) and the ones who are more satisfied with divorce (divorced women's happiness rate was 41.7 while men's one was 29.6; TBMM Research Commission Report, 2016, 109) reveals the fact that the very abstract "family crisis" is occurring between two sexes in conflict of interests and the relative autonomy of the state is getting blurred in favor of the males. This can be also interpreted as the politicization of fatherhood beyond the bounds of the issue of care work in a context

[8] I will use the phrase of "Divorce fathers" instead of specifically mentioning any association or platform. There is a range of groups organized around the same discourse, while at the same time there is an ongoing tension between them about which one is the true address to represent the "unjust suffering" of divorced men.

[9] The terms "nafakazedeler" and "nafaka terörü" were coined by this counter-movement. See also https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/nafakazedeler-artik-dayanacak-gucumuz-kalmadi-491213.html

where status of motherhood come to the top of the agenda from all quarters due to the increasing strategic importance of care work.

At this point, we can talk about a policy pendulum playing between equal victimhood of the ones whose strategical partnership is useful for reinforcing the sacred family agenda by suppressing the rising wave of opposition from feminist movement or women's movement; and equal opportunity of ones whose tie-breaking status of motherhood is profitable for both economic development and global image of the country. It is necessary to remember the fact that the most massive opposition actions after the July 15 failed coup were organized by women under the pressure of the State of Emergency (Gürcü, 2017). In this period, public demonstrations for March 8 International Women's Day were prohibited. As Coşar (2019) summarizes, the post-coup period can be characterized as "a new national liberation war, with a remarkable increase in the frequency and intensity of reference to enemies inside and outside the country" and feminists with their opposition potential and "non-domestic and non-national" right claims have attracted the hostility of the government and conservative wing in general. Ultimately, the family crisis was associated with the so-called "matter of survival" (Aksu, 2019) and feminists were blamed to incentivize divorce. As the issue of family has become an issue of national security (Coşar, 2019), Erdoğan declared a national mobilization to protect at least the nuclear family –which is expected to "fill the void left by the retreat of the state from public services" (Coşar, Özkan-Kerestecioğlu, 2016)- whereas it is too late for the extended family.

Of course, the issue of family does not owe its place in the policy agenda to the AKP totally; for instance, the Law on the Establishment, Duties and Procedures of Family Courts which was highlighting the state's mission to protect and regulate

the family institution and passed into law in 2003 had been prepared before AKP's accession to power. However, as Yılmaz (2015) summarizes, AKP transcends simply protecting and strengthening the family; it rather targets transforming it "as a means of armoring the conservative political hegemony" (p.383). As two defining components of the AKP-period welfare regime (Buğra, 2013), while collaborating with the Directorate of Religious Affairs for the "cultural conservatism", ASPB signed a number of protocols with Turkish Employment Agency (*Türkiye İş Kurumu* [İşkur]) and The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (*Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı* [ÇSGB]) in line with the requirements of the "economic liberalism". Both the Divorce Commission Report and Kadem imply that the well-functioning familial system of Turkey is threatened by not only demographic and economic transformations but also the changed mentality which undermines the "inner balance and harmony" (Democratic Party of Peoples, 2016) of the families. At this point, we can say that two major partners of the ASPB were functionally selected to restore the mentality paving way for the dissolution of families on the one hand; dependency syndrome after the dissolution on the other.

4.3 The ideal of "marketized citizen"

In 2010, the Action Plan for Increasing the Effectiveness of the Social Assistance System by linking it to Employment *(Sosyal Yardım Sisteminin İstihdam ile Bağlantısının Kurulması ve Etkinleştirilmesi Eylem Planı)* highlighted the temporariness of social assistance and the necessity of increased labor market participation for a sustainable economic well-being. In 2012, Ministry of Labor and Social Security (*Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı* ÇSGB]) and Ministry of Family and Social Policies signed a protocol with the aim of "to remove the need to

social assistance" (İşkur, 2013, p.89) and in order to facilitate beneficiaries' application to the İşkur, all the Foundations of Social Philanthropy and Solidarity *(Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Vakıfları)* were refunctioned as İşkur Service Points (Ibid, p.76). Within the context of the 10th Development Plan's (2014-2018) Action Plan of Labor Market Activation Program and National Employment Strategy's (2014-2023) agenda of "strengthening the relationship between employment and social protection"; 1) reducing gradually social assistance of beneficiaries who do not participate in labor market activation programs, 2) guaranteeing incentive pay to private sector employers for their employing welfare beneficiaries, and 3) financially supporting welfare beneficiaries for going to job interviews (between 40 and 100 TL) and giving one-time allowance (one third amount of the minimum wage) in case of starting a job with the referral of the İşkur were decided. Further, the protocol signed by the ÇSGB, İşkur and General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity in 2010 had necessitated for welfare applicants – not the beneficiaries- to be directed to İşkur and this rule resulted in an inflated accumulation in İşkur.

The Medium-term Program (2013-2015) of the Ministry of Development decided to generalize the active labor market policies in order to "increase the employability of the disadvantaged" and "reinforce the link between social assistance and employment" (p.25). At this point, vocational training courses are prioritized as a way to create skilled labor in line with the requirements of the labor market but these courses are far from ensuring secured jobs for their participants (Erdoğdu, & Kutlu, 2014). Further, the Vocational Training Partnership Protocol signed by the Ministry of National Education and Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges *(Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği)* which is the legal representative of the private

sector in 2019 paves the way for re-designing vocational high schools in line with the requirements of the private sector. That is, future generations of workers are re-arranged as flexible labor force "to respond to the rapid transformations in the labor market and economy" (Eğitim Sen, 2018). However, the fragile relationship between employability and employment is largely neglected in activation programs just as the design of social assistance programs –eligibility criteria and needs assessment techniques- assumes that employment on its own sweeps away the poverty. As a way of means-testing, inspection of social security excludes the working poor from social assistance programs to a large extent so that problems of the labor market and needs assessment are intertwined (Kutlu, 2016). Accordingly, if the welfare beneficiary rejects the job or vocational training courses referred by İşkur three consecutive times, AÇSHB is authorized to deprive them of the social assistance for one year. Many welfare beneficiaries avoid applying to İşkur or going to job interviews referred due to the fear of losing the social assistance they receive when they get a job (Bolat, 2016, p.46). Moreover, many beneficiaries choose informal work due to the belief that insured employment obstructs social assistance entitlement (ÇSGB, 2015, p.14). As the General Directorate of Family and Social Researches (2010) revealed, majority of the welfare beneficiaries engage in income-generating activities within the scope of informal economy such as seasonal labor, hawker's trade, dish washing and cleaning work.

While the policy of integrating social assistance and employment is to a large extent institutionalized in a relatively genderless language, there are specific activation programs targeting women on the basis of their motherhood status. For instance, in 2018, Erdoğan declared the project of "Mother at Work" *(İş'te Anne)* within the context of 100-Day Action Plan. According to this, mothers with children

of 0-15 years will be given 80 TL per day in return for their participation in vocational education while at the same time they can benefit from kindergarten allowance amounting to 400 TL. At the same way, "Mother's Work Child's Future Project" *(Annemin İşi Benim Geleceğim Projesi)* was launched with public-private partnership (Borusan Holding, ASPB and the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology) and it was decided that the opportunities of day care centers will be extended in 10 organized industrial zones. Lastly, ASPB announced the EU-funded Project of Supporting Female Employment through Institutional Childcare Services *(Kurumsal Çocuk Bakım Hizmetleri Yoluyla Kadın İstihdamının Desteklenmesi Projesi)* in 2019. According to this, women with children under the age of primary-school (0-60 months) will receive 650 TL monthly for two years on condition that they are covered by Social Security Institution and enroll their children in kindergartens, preschools or day care centers. However, while the selected cities for the implementation of this project –Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Elazığ, İzmir, İstanbul, Malatya- do not address to the regional inequalities between the West and East sides of the country, the very limited duration –until 2022- of the benefit undermines the project's potential to sustainable work and family reconciliation. As the most significant dilemma of the project, the condition of being covered by SGK can cause Matthew effect –the phenomenon that social policies first and foremost benefit middle and higher-income groups (Bonoli et al., 2017, p. 66)- especially while majority of the employed women are informal workers with low wages in Turkey (Metin, 2011).

Despite the inadequacies of the existing policies, it can be obviously said that care – in the form of care deficit- has imposed itself as an "objectively public matter" (Candas, & Silier, 2013, p.109) against the neoliberal tendency of privatization and

depoliticization. Just as the demographic crisis of the shortage of men after the World War II pushed women to the realm of paid work in mass for the first time (Goldin, 1991), another demographic crisis –low fertility- enforces social investment states to enter into the realm of unpaid work of care. The politicization of care work and marketization of female labor in Turkey have taken shape within a two-pronged policy environment. As Savran (2018) reveals, the equal opportunities framework's domination was gradually replaced by a differentialist and familialist gender justice approach since 2011. Firstly, The Prime Ministry Circular titled "Increasing Female Employment and Ensuring the Equality of Opportunities" in 2019 and establishment of the Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men in 2009 consolidated the equal opportunities framework for the issue of gender equality. According to the Circular, the provisions of the Labor Act no 4857 about the obligation of providing day-care centers in both public and private workplaces were decided to be pursued and controlled. Moreover, gender equality approach was included in the programs of state institutions and organizations and local governments; while at the same time vocational courses orientation towards just creating employment was re-envisioned with the perspective of women's human rights. However, as Tepav (2010) summarized, the child-centered design of the benefits guaranteed by the Circular ignores other faces of care burden such as disability and old-age. Contrarily, social assistance programs reinforce women's caring role in these areas with Residential Care Allowance which provides a monthly payment rather than providing accessible professional services. Further, while distribution of caring work "from women to the public" was put on the agenda despite its inadequacies, the deep gendered inequality of the sharing of unpaid work; that is, "from women to men" still was not mentioned even if majority of women

cannot benefit from these regulations as they are excluded from the labor market due to the intensity of their care responsibilities. It is as if imbalanced sharing of the care work is left to the mercy of the invisible hand.

World Bank (2010) which is the primary agent of the equal opportunities framework states that 1/3 of the distribution of wealth inequality in Turkey stems from inequality of opportunities. As a policy recommendation, it emphasizes the role of social policy to ensure the equality of opportunities which can be turned into achievements by individual effort; that is, states are not responsible for the redistribution of resources and material outcomes, rather they only regulate the opportunity structures. This individual risk management perspective in the field of equality and social justice is criticized by feminists and they campaigned against the Committee by declaring that equal opportunities framework neglects the historically constructed gender inequalities and does not promise a de-facto and without any reserve equality (Women's Human Rights Education Program, 2009, p.10).

According to the Diskar (2018b), there is a remarkable gap between the unemployment rates of women and men with higher education, while informal employment is widespread among women with the rate of 41.3 which is higher than the general informality rate of 32.5 in 2017. Further, as Keig (2017) revealed relying on the data of the years 2014-2016, women's rates of both labor market participation and unemployment are increasing simultaneously. In this context, as Toksöz (2016) summarizes, policies to incentivize female employment have two main trajectories: flexibility and entrepreneurship; but this development strategy does not truly promise decent works. As Akkan and Serim (2018) highlight, flexible labor market regulations via part-time work and temporary employment agencies for the sake of work and family reconciliation do not create decent works especially in combination

with the absence of adequate public provision of care and the gendered division of unpaid labor. Moreover, as Keig (2013) states, micro-credit programs aiming to increase female employment through entrepreneurship require risk-taking while majority of the beneficiaries have little business experience. Thus, it is highly different from creating regular jobs with social security. Further, majority of women's businesses are home-based and piece-work and characterize the gendered division of labor such as food production, sewing and hairdressing (UNDP Turkey, 2003).

In 2019, The Employment Mobilization *(İstihdam Seferberliği)* was initiated and it defined "women, disabled persons and men between the ages 18-25" (Turkish Labor Union, 2018, p.38) as primary targets. However, it leaves the goal of employment creation to the market mechanism by mobilizing the private sector employers with a range of incentives. As I emphasized before, the most widespread reason of being excluded from the labor market for women is the care burden and unless childcare services are extended in a way to include the low-class and low-educated women rather than remaining limited to the ones who can afford, the Employment Mobilization seems to have a low potential to create decent jobs for women. The National Employment Action Plan (2014-2023) also acknowledges that the incentives for increasing female employment since 2008 have failed to satisfy the expectations and the problems of occupational sex segregation, high informality, prevalence of low paid and unsecured jobs, low human capital, and disincentivizing care responsibilities have influence on this failure. Accordingly, as İşkur (2018) revealed, women are the ones who participate in the vocational courses at the most but employed the least. That is, the thesis of human capital which constructs a linear relationship between high human capital and employment remains incapable of

explaining the structural barriers women face with despite their individual effort to increase their employability.

In the period of 2007-2012, approximately 4 million people were employed and 48 percent of this new employment consisted of women (Toksöz, 2016). However, as Buğra (2013) emphasized, even though this non-negligible increase in female employment had the opportunity to re-define gender roles; it occurred within the scope of flexible labor market relations paving way for a deeper exploitation and walking arm in arm with the pressures to cutting social spending. For instance, in 2008, increasing the Employment of the Groups Requiring Special Policy as part of the National Employment Strategy set a range of goals for work and family reconciliation (AÇSHB, 2019c, p.54) but most of them remained on paper. Nevertheless, it is significant that the care burden was officially recognized by the government as a disincentive for female employment but the focus is still to enable employed women to be mothers rather than easing the employment of mothers. At this stage, low levels of female employment and labor market participation have begun to be approached "in an ideological environment where women are perceived as care providers in private life, while they are expected to leave their much-emphasized difference at home when they come to participate in the labor market" (Buğra, 2013, p.151). Accordingly, the rationale of the work and family reconciliation was expressed as to increase the fertility rates in the 10th Development Plan (The Ministry of Development, 2018, p.50). That is, the gender equality framework was not only subordinated but also instrumentalized by the sacred family agenda.

In the 9th Development Plan (2007-2013), low female labor force participation and employment rates were stated as the reason of Turkey's falling

behind the EU average (the female labor force participation and employment rates are declared as one third of men's rates in the report, p.37); while in the 10th Development Plan (2014-2018), government's huge political concern for the risk that the future Turkish society will share the same fate with developed countries; that is, low fertility rate will result in increased share of the inactive and non-productive population was clearly expressed (p.192). That is, as Esping-Andersen (2009) concludes, women are expected to both contribute to the economic development with their earning potential and not to leave their equally significant potential of reproducing the future generations of workers and taxpayers. While the 9th Plan focuses on productivity, the 10th Plan pays particular attention on reproductivity; so, it promises to remove the structural barriers forcing women to choose between motherhood and paid work and to implement alternative models such as secured and flexible employment, parent leave, extensive and available childcare facilities aimed at work and family reconciliation.

With the aim of accelerating Turkey's process of converging with the developed economies on a global scale, the 10th Development Plan –as different from other development plans- includes Primary Transformation Programs *(Öncelikli Dönüşüm Programları)* which prescribe social and economic reforms in specific domains such as productivity, employment, public investment, budget planning, technology development, informal economy, energy efficiency, urban transformation and occupational skill training. Among these acute policy programs, Protection of the Family and Dynamic Population Structure Program *(Ailenin ve Dinamik Nüfus Yapısının Korunması Programı)* transcends being a domain-specific set of goals and points out a new paradigm to frame more than one domain. Briefly, it can be said that this program aims at increasing 1) fertility, 2) female employment, 3) family

integration for "social welfare and social capital" (ASPB, 2015, p.1). In this regard, alleviating the work and family conflict is prioritized in the name of "removing the burden of women regarding the protection of family" (Anonymous, 2015) whose social cost will be serious if the state does not undertake the financial cost. As a result, maternity allowance, family counseling services, part-time employment opportunity for mothers until the age of primary school, public and private childcare facilities took their places on the policy agenda. the program includes incentives for both getting and staying married such as premarital education which is seen as a preventive service, "Dowry Account" *(Çeyiz Hesabı)* which is a sort of individual pension for reducing the cost of marriage, and Family and Divorce Counseling *(Aile ve Boşanma Süreci Danışmanlığı*) as a conciliation mechanism in case of marriage crisis or a curative service minimizing individual and social cost of the "inevitable" dissolutions of families.

As Acar and Altunok (2013) summarizes, while neoliberal doctrine requires the welfare states to retrench from public expenditure, the neo-conservative rationality associates it with a moral mission inherent in nationalism, religiosity and tradition. For instance, while declaring the "Family Package" and introducing the reforms regarding work and family reconciliation, Davutoğlu (Anonymous, 2015), the Prime Minister during that time, made an analogy between mothers and soldiers as legitimate beneficiaries of the programs aiming to compensate the costs of unpaid leaves. According to the Women's Labor Platform (2015), the Package essentially has two purposes: 1) to define women as mothers only and frame their position in public sphere and labor market in accordance with this motherhood status, 2) to generalize flexible and unsecured employment which is the main tendency of the capital starting with women on the ground of motherhood. Further, Toksöz (2016)

asserts that this program can neither increase fertility nor female employment as it stands since the seeming opportunities such as part-time work and extended maternity leave will turn into disincentives for employers not to employ women whose potential or actualized motherhood undermines the cost-efficiency of the employment relationship. Unskilled and low-class women will not benefit from these so-called opportunities due to the fear of being dismissed while the inadequacy of public childcare services still reinforces work and family conflict on the other (Toksöz, 2015).

The overlapping of sacred familialism and the equal opportunity agenda seems as a paradox at first. The paradoxical coexistence of labor market activation policies and incentives to marriage and motherhood in addition to the huge policy gap for domestic violence was also stated as the main ground for the failure of both social investment and gender equality agendas in the Policy Document on Early Childhood Well-being and Female Employment (UNICEF, 2013). In the 5th Family Council (ASPB, 2014b), it was clearly advocated that care is the work of the family and state gets involved only when the former fails. Taking all these into account we can argue that overall attempts –such as cash-for-care schemes, maternity leaves, and flexible work arrangements for mothers- for work and family reconciliation serve the purpose of revivifying the care function of the family. As Akkan (2018) expresses, AKP is promoting is not the traditional family but "a new imaginary construct that is molded by a combination of cultural conservatism and economic liberalism" (p.13). That is, female employment and childcare facilities have gained public recognition since AKP was forced to re-design its politics of care in a way to restore the caring function of the family institution in accordance with the challenging structural transformations in demography and labor market.

In conclusion, the existing welfare regime of Turkey which can be defined as the synthesis of familialism and clientalism (Buğra, & Candaş, 2011) reinforces women's caring role within the family and undermines the policies of increasing female labor market participation. As the 10th Development Plan revealed, AKP's female employment agenda is subordinate to the demographic concerns for the reproduction of the dynamic population structure; that is, work and family reconciliation policies are designed to promote motherhood for those who are already employed and avoid disturbing their careers or earning capacities rather than to mobilize the women who are kept in full-time unpaid work. For this reason, as Kılıç (2010) also suggests, the lack of adequate public provision of care, reinforcement of women's caring work and increasing emphasis on flexible and home-based works by which women manage their double burden "without disrupting the established gender division of domestic work" (p.177) complement each other in AKP's ambivalent synthesis of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism.

4.4 Conclusion

In Turkey, especially after the economic crisis of 2008, rising female labor market participation and decreasing earning power of male-breadwinners have undermined the ideal of caring family. Further, increasing divorce rates and decreasing marriage rates also have increased the concerns for care deficit. That is, male-breadwinner/female-caregiver model has become not only unprofitable for economic growth but also unsustainable; so care policies have been designed to enable women who have already entered paid work not to give up their caring roles. In order to restore family ethic, ASPB signed a range of protocols with DRA which disincentivize divorce. Nevertheless, the number of single-parent households is

increasing and majority of those families are female-headed. There are numerous pathways of divorce and some women have material and social resources to pass such a crisis period successfully but many women suffer from severe poverty after divorce. Due to the absence of adequate childcare facilities and labor market regulations, they mostly become welfare beneficiaries outside the labor market. In order to restore social assistance programs in a way to turn these women into active worker-parents, ASPB collaborates with İşkur both as a controlling authority to test welfare beneficiaries' willingness to work, and an opportunity provider via vocational training courses and employment counseling services. In the same line, development plans, government plans and many specific programs and policy packets have been launched to increase female employment. However, all prioritize to increase fertility and fix women's caregiving role as their primary status which also determines their relationship with the labor market. While women's double burden is largely left at the mercy of private sector, labor market regulations such as part time work for mothers or extended maternity leaves reinforce the gendered division of care labor. Hence, AKP's female employment agenda which takes route according to the EU membership process has been subordinated especially after the 2010s to the dynamic population agenda and flexible labor market policies complement this conservative tendency in a way to reinforce women's economic vulnerability.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROGRAM ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT

In the 10th Development Plan (2014-2018), it is stated that "children's deprivation due to poverty" (p.42) must be alleviated. That is, their poverty must not prevent the exercise of rights such as access to health services or education. Although this plan has a wide coverage of child well-being –such as promoting their social integration, supporting early childhood development, and creating opportunities to develop their full potential- as the interviewed bureaucrats asserted, SED is not launched as such a comprehensive child policy, rather it primarily aims to ensure that poverty is not turned into a deprivation of access to public services. Its primary aim is to enable children to live with their own families despite poverty; that is, "every child has the right to live with its family"[10] unless there is no possibility for negligence and abuse. SED attempts to protect family integrity, to support children within their families and to develop an alternative to "over-costing institutional childcare" (ASPB, 2016). SED primarily relies on the principle that "no child should be removed from its home for reasons of poverty alone" (Lundberg, 1921), just as the Mothers' Pension in the US which is the processor of AFDC. SED shares a similar motivation towards de-institutionalization of children with AFDC and both programs promote partnership with beneficiary mothers to normalize female-headed families as an investment in the future of the society:

> The state and the mother entered a partnership in which both parties assumed certain responsibilities directed toward ensuring that a small

[10] It is derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and used as the main principle of SED.

> group of needy children would remain in their own homes and be so supervised and educated as to become assets, not liabilities to a democratic society. (Gooden, 2003, p.255)

The Decree Law no 633 on Some Regulations in the Field of Social Services which defines the duties and the organization of the ASPB associates the well-being of children and women with "family integrity and family welfare" in face of the "social and cultural corrosion" (ASPB, 2011b). Thus, ASPB (2011) prioritizes policies and strategies for empowering families as "the most natural and healthy environment of children" (p.15) as well as promoting "equal opportunities for women" (p.2). However, the relationship which is discursively constructed between well-being of children and of women is largely disentangled in SED's practice so women's problems are individualized and left outside the intervention process, as will I expand on in the next chapter. SED is officially presented with the motto of "children under the roof of their families, families under our roof" and a symbol of home. As the ex-Minister of Family, Labor and Social Services summarized, families are supported for their partnership with the state in "raising generations which will shape the society's future, have high living standards, be well-educated and healthy, and internalize social and cultural values" (ASPB, 2016, p.3) as an investment in the future.

5.1 Mode of operation

While children as national resources are supported within their families, families are also supported to become immediately self-sufficient by the very mode of operation of SED. Mode of operation in social policy refers to "defining and operationalizing principles on which methods and techniques can be determined" (Wilensky, & Lebeaux, 1958). In this regard, SED is a residual benefit which is offered as "a safety

net for those who have no other kind of provision available" (Spicker, 2005, p.347) and means-testing as "a technique for identifying people with limited command over resources" (p.351) is applied to differentiate the real needy applicants. The amount of the payment is layered on the basis of the educational status of children. In 2020, SED payments are 733.69 TL –roughly 1/3 of the minimum wage of the year[11]- for pre-school, 1100.53 TL for primary education and 1173.90 TL for secondary education as stated in the Minister's website[12]. Caregiver parent can receive this child benefit for maximum two children and this limitation keeps the payment below the minimum wage.

As another component of its mode of operation, SED has unwritten moral conditions such as not being involuntarily unemployed or cohabiting with a partner. Such conditions unfold an additional layer of selectivity to identify the deserving poor apart from the material basis of entitlement such as deprivation of basic rights, unemployment or over-indebtedness. As the proof of their willingness to work, applicants are required to apply to İşkur as the prerequisite of applying to SED. Akyıldız (2018) who conducted a research on SED beneficiaries in Trabzon stated that majority of SED beneficiary women (71%) have been registered to İşkur (p.87) but only 8% of them got a job (p.88). Further, ASPB (2014a) shows that recipients of SED are largely primary school graduates (60%) and 93.8% of them are unemployed (p.87). It is also estimated that almost half of the SED recipients are single mothers with low labor market status (Özata et al., 2016). In order to mediate these fragile households' material and social deprivation "resulting from uncontrollable factors", as stated in the Regulation about Social and Economic Support Services with No

[11] The net minimum wage is 2324.70 TL in 2020.

[12] https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/chgm/uygulamalar/sosyal-ve-ekonomik-destek-hizmeti/

29284 (ASPB, 2015a); SED is constructed as an acute program which ultimately aims to integrate its beneficiaries into the labor market, as I discuss in the next chapter.

5.2 Process

SED is a means-tested and child-based benefit which is determined on the basis of Integrated Social Assistance System *(Bütünleşik Sosyal Yardım Sistemi)* query which is "an e-government system that electronically facilitates all steps related to the management of social assistance" and "integrating data from 22 different public institutions and provides 112 web-based services in one easily accessible online portal" (ASPB, & World Bank, 2017, p.5) in addition to home visits. Potential beneficiaries are subjected to "the first interview", as social workers define, in which their "involuntary unemployment", "good parenting", and "being real needy" in terms of economic deprivation are questioned. They also fill in an application form, Social Assistance Application Form, by which basic information about them such as household composition, property ownership, and monthly income can be integrated into the database to be confirmed. Then, their personal finances and assets, social security benefits, applications to İşkur, and other sources of income such as scholarship from Credit and Dormitories Institution are investigated through Social Assistance Information System (*Sosyal Yardım Bilgi Sistemi* [SOYBIS]) and BSYS. These systems aim to identify false statements of applicants and prevent the provision of recurrent assistance. If applicants pass the Soybis query, social workers make "unannounced visits" to their homes in order to confirm their deservingness.

5.3 Subpolicy

Within the Handbook for Administrators and Members of Profession[13], it is instructed that social workers must insist on explaining beneficiaries that SED is not a regular income and meticulously differentiate the ones who are eligible for work from others who should necessarily be supported (ASPB, 2016). Institutional and procedural route for canalizing those workable beneficiaries to the labor market is clearly defined by the Handbook. However, the process of determining the real needy is largely left to the discretion of social workers with a range of loose criteria such as "behaving in line with human dignity" or "not undermining people's sense of social justice" (ASPB, 2016, p.16-17). As interviewed social workers also claimed, SED's implementation is not strictly designated by the body of current law so it opens a wide scope for their personal discretions to determine about a case. Moore defines this diffusion of local social workers' moral judgments to decision-making mechanisms on who would receive the benefit as subpolicy (Michel, 1993). That is, this looseness embodied in home visits enables social workers to operate a relatively autonomous process "from the cold atmosphere of SHMs", as several social workers emphasized, to eliminate potential beneficiaries on the basis of the dynamics of their own encountering with applicants.

For instance, the Social Services Law no 2828 about intervention to people in need of care institutionalizes the decisiveness of the discretion of social workers. According to the law, children cannot be separated from their families unless social workers reach the conclusion that it must be. The only legitimate bases of such a separation are stated as negligence and child abuse but, for instance, how to

[13] I will call the Members of Profession as social workers in this chapter since I interviewed both members of profession and social workers from various professions who are responsible for 'the first interview" with applicants.

determine negligence is totally based on the discretion of social workers. Of course, the criteria of good parenting can be more or less compromised on the basis of common sense. However, since social workers are also socialized within a society and most probably internalize the dominant values and norms of this society, it is highly difficult to say that they successfully dissociate their prejudices from their professional discretion. For instance, one social worker admitted that he does not want to approve the application of the wives of "terror defendants" because of the possibility of her sharing this cash benefit with her husband. Another social worker told that he wanted to reject the case of a woman who "assaulted him" in a home visit but he could not do it "for the best interest of the child". Further, many social workers told that they usually cannot invest "enough" energy and time in each case to "make the right judgment" due to the caseload.

Although there must be a Council composed of ten social workers as a decision-mechanism for every case in SHMs, many social workers stated that these councils are either not established or put in process merely as a procedural trivia. Some social workers told that even when there was no such Council in a SHM, they still tell applicants that there is so that they are not seen as the sole decision making authority on a case especially when an applicant objects to the decision. On the other hand, even if this Council is established, some of them stated that it does not function as a negotiation space, rather the home-visitor of the case "has the last word" and the Council gathers just as a procedural requirement. As I observed in the field, this high confidence in the discretion of social workers turns the process of implementation into a negotiation process between the beneficiary or applicant women and social workers who are the "face of the state", as many social workers expressed. When they encounter with women in their homes; eligibility criteria, objectives and bases

of entitlement of SED are re-shaped within this negotiation process so that this face-to-face relationship which is not legislatively regulated opens a window of informality. It is largely not implemented as an impersonal and standardized benefit in Weberian terms, instead, is open to bargaining and also “cheating”, as I discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

DIVERGENCE AS A NEW ROUTE

Spicker (2005) argues that a social policy program should be analyzed by its effects, "rather than by the process which is undertaken" or from a myopic perspective focusing on the "intended recipient" (p.356). He emphasizes on possible outcomes of a policy diverging from state intentions; for instance, "the disadvantage of women can be addressed by targeting men" (p.356). As he also stated, divergences between state intentions and policy outcomes are largely resulted from the very way by which the benefit is provided. Both the design of the benefit –eligibility criteria, objectives, complementary benefits- as a bureaucratic construct and implementation of it through social diagnosis affect the provision and cause divergences so SED has many unintended consequences. Hence, it was significant for me to reveal what type of family SED promotes, which women are rewarded and which ones are punished at the end of the provision process, and what are the potential returns to the state in terms of social investment agenda which is the drive motor of SED. This chapter traces the possibilities of divergence for SED by focusing on the divergences of beneficiary women's statuses as citizens, mothers, and workers. I advocate that such divergences create new grounds on which certain identities and interests are negotiated between women and the state.

By analyzing The Return to the Family and de-institutionalization of the children under SHÇEK's care which can be regarded as laying the foundations of SED, Yazıcı (2012) presents two cases, Ayşen and Gülsüm, "who do not fit into an idealized discursive image of a family and who most importantly need the state's help to survive" (p. 128). Both women were deprived of familial support and applied

to the state support in order to “be able to stand on their own feet” (p. 127) with their children, but “without men”. However, “policies emerging from a discursive emphasis on strengthening the family” walk arm in arm with the “neoliberal objective to diminish state responsibility for social protection” (p. 128); so social workers insistently directed these women to “non-state resources” (p. 126). While Ayşen was partly convinced about giving her child up for adoption as a result of the conflict-ridden interview with social workers, Gülsüm left the office with her child “to manage”[14] her helplessness by herself. This thesis reveals that women are still striving to manage their triple burden, extreme poverty, isolation in terms of deprivation from solidarity, and futurelessness by themselves despite they receive state support. However, it could only include the ones, just as Gülsüm did, who “let their children share the same fate with themselves”, as one woman expressed while telling her self-hatred due to her “making children companions in her misfortune”. Whereas Gülsüm took this road despite the state, women in this thesis did it with the state’s support.

In the first section, I analyze the cohabitation rule and the trade-off it creates between the patronage of a male-breadwinner and public dependency of being welfare beneficiary. Secondly, I focus on the activating and acute design of SED in the form of unsupported activation and its effect on women’s experiences of paid work and motherhood. I also attempt to predict the potential outcomes for government agenda on the family ethic and children as national resources. Lastly, in the third section, I elaborate on the pedagogicalization of beneficiary parents to normalize fragile families. This last section sheds light on how SED largely compensates for marriage failures and supports women’s family heading by trying to

[14] I refer to the vague statement social workers often tell the applicant women, "You have to manage" *(“idare edeceksiniz”*).

select the fragile households for healthy development of children. In each section, I present the divergences between state intentions and potential outcomes for the state and women which are substantially shaped in line with the way in which SED is implemented.

6.1 Intention: "To determine potentially self-sufficient households"

The Circular of 16 February 2012 introduced the cohabitation rule for the widow's pension but it is also implemented for the SED de facto as the social workers I interviewed expressed. Cohabitation rule can be defined as the loss of welfare benefits when "living with a partner in the same home" or "marriage-like relationship" (Tranter et al., 2008, p.709) is detected. It is implemented in also some EU countries such as the UK. According to this rule, being a single parent and cohabitation with a partner are mutually exclusive (Rowe, 2017). In the UK, means-tested benefits' entitlement is assessed on the basis of the couple's joint income in case of cohabitation whereas in Turkey cohabitation means total loss of benefit. Even if it does not directly hinder social assistance, in the UK, the amount of payment is reduced or the household cannot be entitled to the benefit when the joint income is taken into account. Therefore, women often conceal their cohabitation and British state struggles with this widespread false statement which is assumed to have a non-negligible cost on the state budget: "Living together fraud is now the single largest element of fraud in income support and we aim to make significant savings by stopping these cheats" (Hain, 2008).

The cohabitation rule –with various implementations in the field- assumes that women are financially supported by their partners within the same household. However, cohabitation is not a single form of relationship with a fixed set of

obligations and rules. A divorced woman with children may continue to parent alone while cohabiting with a new partner. Moreover, her partner may not accept financial responsibility of a child from previous relationships. She may also suffer from secondary poverty due to unequal distribution of money in the household controlled by the male earner. That is, there is a wide range of possibilities which can lead women to conceal their cohabitation. While social workers who necessarily establish face-to-face relations with beneficiary women encounter with varieties of cohabitation in women's everyday life, bureaucrats I interviewed used a hyper-abstract language by which distribution of responsibilities between individuals, households and the state is clearly defined without any concern for touching on the realities of women. When I elaborated on the gendered design of the rule, some found it a "politically trivial detail" while others emphasized social workers' responsibility to differentiate the "real victims of cohabitation" –for them, only involuntary cohabitations fall into this category- from "arbitrary beneficiaries of cohabitation" –that is, ones willingly attempting to generate additional income from the state "in spite of having alternatives". Nevertheless, all compromised on the significance of cohabitation rule in drawing the responsibility boundaries:

> State is not interested in who is in a relationship with whom, or who lives together with whom. We are not concerned about people's private lives. However, if there is an employable, healthy one in the home, we expect that he/she assumes responsibility for the household subsistence. We want to get involved only when there is no employable, healthy person in the home. What is ideal for us is self-sufficiency. (see Appendix A, 2)

It is significant to note that bureaucrats to a large extent used a genderless language while talking about cohabitation, they just portrayed an adult individual who is healthy enough to work and laid the primary responsibility on it. They did not

problematize being a full-time housewife dependent on a well-functioning male-breadwinner. In this context, the statement of "we are not interested in women's private lives" means that imbalanced gender relations including the division of labor and intra-household distribution of resources are also irrelevant as long as the household can manage its poverty by not turning it into a public problem. While "welfare and social security services are weakened under neoliberal policies and are largely compensated for by mechanisms of the social and private domain" (Acar, & Altunok, 2013, p.20); cohabitation rule maintains the macro-economic agenda of individualization of social risks by differentiating the households which have income-generating capacities from others which require public support to survive, that is, the households without alternatives.

Even though some bureaucrats highlighted that cohabitation paves the way for child abuse and it is mothers' responsibility to provide a secure family environment for their children; the main axis of bureaucrats' advocacy of the cohabitation rule was its role in defining where state's responsibility for poverty alleviation starts and ends. As one bureaucrat summarized, "if there is no child in the family, it is beside the question; if there is a healthy, employable adult in the household, it is also the same" within the scope of the SED. That is, poverty becomes a public issue only when it is intergenerationally transmitted and since "neoliberal policies seek to manage social problems, such as poverty, while reducing state spending and maximizing the efficiency of political resources" (Randles, & Woodward, 2018, p.41) public responsibility to break this cycle of poverty is envisioned as a residual mechanism eliminating the potentially self-sufficient households one way or the other.

Sainsbury (1996) defines the breadwinner model as a gender ideology structuring welfare policies through assigning a strict division of labor between husband and wife. Here, the husband is the head of the household and responsible for other family members so the unit of the benefit is the family. Contrarily, individual model, as she explains, recognizes that each person in the family is responsible for his or her own subsistence and spouses share financial tasks and care burden. Therefore, the unit of benefit is the individual. Cohabitation, as a "marriage-like relationship", is envisioned within the framework of breadwinner model so that under whatever form of relationship –formal or informal- this new form of household –which is usually composed of the mother, child or children, and the male partner who has no biological bond with the child/children in the home- is expected primarily to stand on their own legs through employment rather than relying on welfare benefits. Ultimately, what cohabitation rule identifies in home visits is mostly males which are assumed as regular income sources in the form of regular partners.

To sum up, in my interviews with bureaucrats, cohabitation was purely an economic issue and it was largely problematized within an implicit breadwinner model. For instance, one bureaucrat said that "if the state provides for you, what does your husband do?"[15] in order to explain the eligibility criteria of the SED. Although the very construction of the SED, as a substituting for the male-breadwinner, enables single mothers to be the most common beneficiary group, SED can exceptionally be given to dual-parent families which have the opportunity to maintain a well-functioning male-breadwinner/female-caregiver model in case that they pass through crisis periods due to, for instance, considerable amount of debt or severe accidents

[15] *"Eğer sana devlet bakacaksa, kocan ne işe yarıyor?"*

hindering the breadwinner from employment for a short-period. That is, it compensates the dysfunctional male-breadwinners under civil marriage while neglecting the fact that religious marriage ("*imam nikahı"*) without civil marriage is largely prevalent for the beneficiary profile of the SED (Civelek, & Koç, 2007).

6.1.1 Implementation: The generous male-breadwinner as a bureaucratic construct

All the social workers I interviewed stated that determination of a regular/marriage-like relationship results in the loss of cash benefit according to the unwritten procedure of the SED. In order to detect the signs of such a relationship, social workers have the authority to rummage wardrobes and shoe cabinets which are the common use areas having the potential to reveal "marriage-like relationships". While some social workers strictly follow this procedure with a full commitment to the rationale that "in a normal relationship, men economically support their partners", there are also ones who reject to intervene in women's "private lives" if the material conditions of the home show that possible cohabitated partner also does not save that women and child/children from poverty. Relying on the main goal of the SED, to support disadvantaged children within their families –here, what they mean by family is generally the mother and her child or children-, the latter group of social workers apply dissociated criteria; that is, they ground on the everyday manifestations of the living standards of the children in household such as the conditions of the houseware, saturity of the fridges or unpaid bills without incorporating the relational information in needs assessment. Differently, the former group of social workers tend to neglect the *hic et nunc* conditions of children and apply associated criteria by integrating the material with the relational in inducing that, for instance, "the owner of this male coat in the wardrobe provides for the child

or children in this home"[16] (Kaya, 25, social worker). It is significant to emphasize that this assumption reflects not only social workers' individual perceptions of gendered roles and duties, but also institutional recognition of the male-breadwinner model since social workers I interviewed stated that they are officially recommended in in-service trainings about how to determine cohabitation in home visits in order to reveal "additional income sources". However, this is also an unwritten procedure just as the cohabitation rule itself.

However, in contrast to this assumption of men as additional income sources, almost all of the single mothers I interviewed talked about in-marriage destitution due to the dysfunctional male-breadwinners. For instance, one interviewed woman's daughter said that "My mother's fatherhood is better than my father's"[17] while explaining the economically relieving effect of the separation of the father from home. She talked about her father's selfish spending habits and the gap between the living standards of him and them. Since the women I interviewed were predominantly suffering from downward mobilization after separation or divorce, in the very beginning of my fieldwork I thought that women would tell their experiences of relative deprivation – that is, "an interpersonal comparison between the individual and another person, or a comparison between an individual's current situation and his or her past or future situation" (Smith, & Hugo, 2014, p. 233). However, interviewed women often emphasized that they were already feeling like the "men of the house" since they had to support themselves and their children. Some women told that they acquired the knowledge of using illegal electricity and natural gas during their marriages due to the unpaid bills until the cut-off. In addition to

[16] *"Bu erkek ceketi kiminse odur bu evdeki çocuğa bakan eden genellikle"*

[17] *"Benim annem babamdan daha iyi babalık yaptı"*

poverty, they attributed the systematically unpaid bills to their husbands' attitude of "deluge after me" ("*benden sonrası tufan*") because men do not spend much time at home like women and children. They also told the stories of men's "backing out of their promises" ("*sözlerinden dönmeleri*") after they married and implied that the hope for a "generous breadwinner" attracted them to marry since they were suffering from severe poverty in terms of both income and time. For instance, Esra (32, two children, SED beneficiary for 2 years)[18] stated that "He had promised me to turn my hell into heaven. But I just wanted him not to make us dependent on somebody else"[19]. Another woman highlighted that she expected to "spare time to mothering" instead of leaving her children to grandmother care when she married. However, the most common sentences I heard in my interviews were "he pauperized us" ("*bizi ele güne muhtaç etti*") and "he disappointed me". All the interviewed women highlighted that their ex- husbands did not have an economic function as it is generally assumed:

> How am I supposed to continue with a man like a vase? He is responsible for our present misery. What he saved for us, for his children is only debt. Bills were not being paid during my marriage, it is still the situation, nothing has changed. Fridge was empty in his presence; it is now empty too. If I will do everything, what does this man even do? Sorry but I do not want to continue with such a hump. (see Appendix A, 3)

As married women, their poverty was not a primary subject for the domain of social policy since they were supposed to be under their husbands' responsibility and to benefit from some basic rights such as access to health services as dependents of men. However, macro-economic factors such as the prevalence of low-wage and

[18] I will use this format (Name, age, number of children, duration of benefit) when I refer to the statements of interviewees.

[19] *"Bana cehennemini cennete çevireceğim dedi. Ele güne muhtaç olmayayım yeter dedim"*

informal jobs in addition to the high rates of unemployment (TUIK, 2019) on the one hand; gender-based power relations which strengthen men's position of controlling resources in family on the other have disrupted the well-accepted function of marriage, which is based on male-breadwinner model, for women as a social security institution. Even if it is weakening on economic grounds, male breadwinner still persists as a bureaucratic construct shaping the construction of benefits just as the cohabitation rule implies that men are responsible for the subsistence of women and their children within the same household. According to the rule, it is not possible to rely on two sources of income –social assistance and male-breadwinner regardless of whether he is functioning or not- simultaneously and, in order to sustain their relationship with social policy, beneficiary women have to restrict their relationships with men. When their regular and all-pervading – pervading the most private spaces such as the wardrobe in the bedroom- relationship is determined by social workers, they most probably lose their benefits due to the assumption that they are financially supported by these male partners. Here, it is significant to highlight that social workers I interviewed directly search for the signs of this bureaucratically constructed male-breadwinner, rather than of concrete material conditions giving the impression that this household is economically supported by someone:

> If a man enters a house, money also enters there. This is what normal is. This is also necessary. Otherwise, which woman carries a man's cross?[20] Some women are trying to benefit from both men and state but this is not possible. They do not marry in order not to lose the money the state gives but they sustain illicit cohabitation. (see Appendix A, 4)

[20] *"Aksi halde, hangi kadın bir adamın külfetini çeker?"* as stated in original.

Apart from Kaan, several social workers also mentioned another gender implication of the rule: women tolerate the "burden" (*"külfet"*, as they stated) of living together with a man only reciprocally. What they imply while talking about this burden is usually the sexual relationship and the burden of taking care of a man. In their narratives of cohabitation, sex was regarded as women's gift to men which require economic reciprocity. Further, they also approved the potential difficulties of cohabitation for women such as imbricated domestic responsibilities or increased control and oppression in addition to the "disturbing demands for doing womanhood"[21]. However, majority of the social workers defined this kind of relationship nearly as a voluntary exchange relationship in which the generous male-breadwinners compensate the "burden" of women through economic support. In this framework, sex is nearly defined as a "female resource" and men are assumed to need to sell their qualities to acquire sex. That is, "men would have to offer other benefits to persuade women to have sex, even if women desire and enjoy sex too" (Baumeister, & Vohs, 2004, 342). As interviewed women's narratives about their expectations from marriage also confirmed, especially for low-class women with the double burden of breadwinning and caring, men's ability to earn a living for the family and granting somewhat "free time" to childcare may encourage women to undertake "the burden" of a relationship.

Strikingly, some interviewed women also defined their experiences of marriage and cohabitation along the same line. They often used the phrase of "bearing the burden"[22] to describe their reluctant sexual relationships with ex-husbands or cohabitating partners and emphasized that they would not have to open

[21] *"kadınlık bekleyecek",* as stated in original.

[22] *"katlanılması gereken külfet"*

doors for men “if the state helped them”. That is, for those women marriage and “marriage-like” relationships were some kind of economic protection just as the cohabitation rule means but; nevertheless, they highlighted that they would choose state support instead of being trapped in such patronage relationships if they had such an “alternative”. Of course, not all cohabitations are deprived of mutual satisfaction but neither the “mutually love-based” ones correspond to social workers’ assumption of equal burden sharing due to the disproportionate allocation of resources and the very gendered division of labor subordinating women’s position within the relationship. For instance, one interviewed woman (Yağmur, 34, 2 children, 2 and a half years) told that she had maintained a “madly in love” relationship despite the risk of losing her benefit but now greatly regrets that she has “lost time by serving him” instead of looking for a job and “guaranteeing a future for her and her child”. She added that “that relationship has costed me one-and-a-half-year social security contribution” since her partner did not allow her to work outside on the grounds that “she did not need to work because he met her all needs”.

As the women who lost and encountered with the risk of losing their benefits due to cohabitation noted in interviews, it is a flexible form of relationship blurring where it converges on marriage or diverges from it in contrast to the absolute definition of “marriage-like relationship” social workers often mentioned. For instance, there were some women among the interviewees who cohabitated with their ex-husbands or male partners from time to time but these short-term and unstructured forms of living together generally did not promise a marriage-like distribution of roles:

> I was so anxious about our neighbors’ denouncement of our relationship to the Ministry. He was regarding here as his second

> home. He always preferred his wife. He was coming and going at his sweet will. I could not ask him the question of why. He used our home just as a hotel. He did neither husbandhood to me, nor fatherhood to my children. He just took me hostage for years. (see Appendix A, 5)

Even if she aspired to construct a truly "marriage-like relationship", her partner chose to sustain a non-binding, flexible cohabitation while assuming responsibility only for his "primary home" under civil marriage. It is significant to note that majority of the cohabitations are led under religious marriages and interviewed women often talked about their sense of "secondariness". For instance, one interviewee complained about her partner's "not regarding her as a wife in real terms". Reversely, he also was not behaving "like a husband in real terms". However, if cohabitation is detected by social workers or the Ministry receives a tip about it, women cannot prove their non-economic and secondary relationships and lose not only the present benefit but also their right to apply to the SED again due to the label of "cheating the state" ("*devleti aldatmak*") with false statements, although the result will not change when they make a true statement. In either case, they lose the benefit on the basis of the breadwinner model.

As Lordoğlu (2018) also revealed, the stigma of being single woman is challenging to its bearers especially under the gaze of neighborhood. Some of the women I interviewed were trying to conceal their singlehood -for instance, by putting male shoes at the doorstep or lying that their husbands are on the night shift- but social workers' inquiry by applying to the information of neighbors disrupt these strategies of avoiding the insecurity of being single woman. Reversely, women's strategies to conceal their being "women without men" can result in the loss of benefit since fake evidences such as male shoes in the wardrobe or rumors about a male partner guide social worker to estimate cohabitation easily. Moreover, when

women do not have the freedom not to accept ex-husbands' entry to their homes, it becomes harder to explain the signs of cohabitation. For instance, Esra (32, two children, 2 years) had lost her benefit when her ex-husband's coat was found in the wardrobe. He was occasionally visiting the home in order to control and force Esra to have a sexual intercourse. Moreover, he was getting suspicious about the existence of possible boyfriends when he noticed "better living standards" in her home; therefore, she could not accept support from her family and not alter her standards visibly. That is, the assumption of "when a man enters the home, money also enters there" is not peculiar to social workers. As another example, Randa is a Syrian woman who is married to a Turkish citizen but she is separated from her husband for 3 years. She could not divorce because of her husband's death threat but she succeeded to prove her de facto singlehood to the social workers in uninformed periodical home visits. However, she is in a continuous risk of losing her benefit due to the involuntary cohabitation:

> They (social workers) said me that do not allow your husband in your home. Do not share your money with him. If we receive any denunciation about this, your aid will be cut, they said, as if I had the option not to allow him. He sees the color of money. He comes here very rarely but makes me pray until he goes. He consumes whatever I save for my child. He consumes me. (see Appendix A, 6)

In contrast to the widespread pre-admission of cohabitation as an additional income source, women I interviewed told their realities about what usually enters the home along with men: exploitation, violence and dependency. Far from providing economic support, those men who often cause the loss of benefit with their existence or estimated existence appropriate women's earnings, use physical, psychological and sexual violence on them, control their continuity of "singlehood" by hindering

the possibility of a new relationship, and isolating them from informal support mechanisms; that is, leaving them without alternative except themselves. Of course, there were other narratives except impoverishing cohabitation but these neither correspond to social workers' assumption of well-functioning male breadwinner. For instance, some male partners or ex-husbands come to the joint home with expensive toys in order to impress the children either against or for the sake of women. If there is a tension between women and their ex-husbands, men often apply to "win children round through wasteful shows", as Çiğdem (38, 3 children, 3 years) stated. Or, men attempt to affect women through "stealing their children's heart" without assuming any responsibility for the; for instance, rent and bills which are the cornerstones of maintaining a household. That is, such spending does not contribute to the material conditions of women and children. Rather, when these expensive gifts draw the attention of social workers in home visits, women are under the risk of losing their benefit as well.

Cohabitating men generally have at least two "families" one of which is under civil marriage while the other one is under religious marriage and they are assumed as being able to maintain these two separate households successfully since bureaucratically constructed breadwinners are generous and well-functioning. However, especially for the beneficiary profile of the SED –low-educated, with little human capital and no paid work experience and social security premium- neither marriage nor cohabitation was such an elevatory experience since love, marriage and cohabitation do not happen randomly but rather they are largely framed by the class structure. As Elwert (2018) also revealed, they usually happen between individuals who have more or less similar positions in terms of class and race. I listened only one story of "getting married into a wealthy family" but she stated that her husband went

bankrupt and felt into depression so they could not maintain their marriage. Even if she lived well until her husband's bankrupt, her economic vulnerability within the marriage was unfolded with the divorce. She is primary school graduate and has no work experience and social security premium; so she does not hope to be retired in her old-age while being extremely uneasy about her necessity to work until death. On the other side of the coin, if her husband did not go bankrupt and they continued to "live well", she would be again exempt from retirement which is "a time of freedom and independence for most older women across all socio-economic groups" (Everingham et al., 2007, p.519) and be constantly dependent on the returns of the rise and fall of her husband's career.

Likewise, those women who cohabitate with their parents are also evaluated within the framework of breadwinner model by social workers. For instance, one interviewed woman told that she returned to her "family home"[23] but she could not claim the needs of her children from her father under the psychological pressure of "being a burden on him". She clearly expressed that her family did nothing except "providing somewhere to hang their hat", then she applied to the SED. However, in the home visit, social workers had a brief interview with the father who was accepted as the head of the household and listened his narrative of "magnanimity" for the family members who are "under his responsibility". As a result, her application was refused due to the supposed support of her father. When she objected to the decision, she received the answer of "The conditions of the house look well and your father takes care of you". However, as Korpi (2000) points out to the difference between "inequality in terms of manifest achievements of well-being" and "inequality in terms of freedom to achieve" (p.1); even if all family members live in the same home

[23] *" baba ocağı"* as stated in original.

with the same conditions such as the quality of furniture or sit down to the same meal in everyday, there can be always latent aspects of intra-family inequality especially manifested in differentiated capabilities to choose. In the above case, as the sole breadwinner of the household, the father not only controls the distribution of resources but also draws the boundaries of the agency of the "protected woman". As she stated, he does not allow her to work and go out on the ground that these are not proper for a "divorced woman". He also does not give cash to the woman, rather he just provides the basic needs for her and her children such as shelter and nutrition. She claimed that she does not have credit in her phone approximately for 3 months because her father thinks that it is not a need "for someone who spends the whole day in home". She also added that she could not fulfil the special demands and needs of her children such as sanitary pad for her 13-year-old daughter or stationery expenses of the son who is a primary school student. That is, she suffers from a huge inequality of agency in addition to various latent dimensions of material deprivation. In this context, SED would be an agency-enhancing mechanism since having her own money would create a realm of freedom outside the patronage relationships. However, cohabitation rule assigned a false generosity to the male-breadwinner and neglected the power relations between the protector and the protected.

As the social workers I interviewed explained, they report the cohabitation under the 6-month periodical follow-up form's "Security of the Child" title. It is evaluated as negligent motherhood to welcome the regular visits of men "who do not have biological bonds with the children in home". Although this explanation implies that cohabitation with children's biological father is acceptable, they told several stories of cutting the benefit on the ground of this kind of cohabitation. As a striking example, Esen (31), a social worker, mentioned a woman who was thrown off the

window by her husband from the fifth floor due to her want to divorce. She applied to the SED secretly from her husband while living together with him compulsorily. In an uninformed home visit, Ebru (27) encountered with the husband and she decided on the refusal of her application. I listened this story from another social worker in the same SHM with a different perspective. While Fatma (48), the other social worker, strongly opposed Ebru's decision with reference to the woman's involuntary cohabitation and the potential results of their refusal of her "request for help", Ebru insisted on the "false statement" of the woman and the "existence of the husband at home" as legitimate basis of losing the benefit. Fatma expressed that she could not forget this case since she approved the woman's reasons for lying – the woman had stated that she was living with her children alone- but "the officer of the file has the last word" as Fatma added.

These two different perspectives to the case of false statement about cohabitation exemplifies the non-standardized implementation of the SED and the gender-blind construction of the procedures neglecting the dynamics forcing women to make false statement. As another social worker summarized; if SED is for improving the living standards of children within vulnerable households, that is, to prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty, means-testing will be enough to determine entitlement. She accepted that they are trained to determine cohabitation in home visits but emphasized her rejection to incorporate the clues about mothers' "private lives" into the needs assessment of children. I should remark that this position was marginal among the social workers I interviewed and the main tendency was to attach a large importance to the determination of cohabitation for the sake of "child's best interest". As several social workers explained, they usually have a separate interview with children in home visits and ask them whether "someone"

come and go to their home or whether their father visits them in order to report a "security vulnerability". However, it is considerably hard to reveal child abuse through such questions intended to learn just the sex of the guests and micro-moral investigation methods such as wardrobe digging without obtaining any clue about maltreatment or sexual violence on children.

6.1.2 Gender outcome: "Not like single in its full sense"

Even if the legal basis of the male-breadwinner was removed from the Constitution in 2001 and in practice even marriage does not ensure that men provide for women's subsistence; women's "marriage-like relationships" are supposed to save them from poverty. However, first of all, women's romantic relationships do not always turn into economic protection of men. Contrary, some of these bureaucratically constructed male-breadwinners periodically demand money from women for cigarette or contour, as the women I interviewed told recurrently. For instance, Gülay's (34, two children, 1 year) ex-husband often visits their previously joint home on the pretext that he wants to "pull his weight for the children" but, as she stated, "he constantly disappoints children by appearing at the door empty handedly". Moreover, he vandalizes household goods he supposed to be the gifts of other men and appropriates all her money. That is, she becomes impoverished whenever she cohabitates in contrast to the widespread assumption of cohabitation as an additional source of income. Secondly, even if they in some cases can buy groceries or repair broken things while cohabitating, men do not assume responsibility for the child or children who are not joint. That is, women continue to parent singly despite cohabitation. Social workers generally do not know whether the cohabitating man is the father of child/children in the household or not; they just question the existence

of any man in the home. Lastly, some male partners exploit the cohabitation rule and threaten women to report the concealment of the relationship to the Ministry when women want to break up. As Çiğdem (31, one child, 2 years) impressively expressed, this secret arouses "a feeling of cheating on the state". Once these women become beneficiaries, they are expected to show loyalty to the state and grant their singlehood to the "best interest of their children". Otherwise, they may be charged with making false statements and sentenced to repay what they receive from it. As several interviewed women stated, they "can no longer behave as single in its full sense".

Just as Sennet (1972) defines class as a matter of emotions beyond material conditions, I clearly saw in my fieldwork that marital status not only affects women's poverty risk through the life-cycle but also shapes their world of emotions and sense of self immensely. For instance, in addition to the self-monitoring – as one interviewed woman affectingly summarized, "constantly being on the alert so that getting into bed with muscle pains"- and the gaze of neighborhood due to the stigma of being single women, women complained about the psychological pressure the cohabitation rule creates on them while at the same time ambivalently questioning their right to complain about it since they receive the benefit for the sake of their "proper motherhood". Accordingly, almost all compromised on the indignity of wardrobe-digging techniques to determine cohabitation in home visits but just few women expressed that they objected to be exposed to such a humiliating inquiry. The main tendency, as they stated, was usually trying to prove that their family life is legitimate; that is, there is no "foreign matter" threatening its "purity". Although they necessarily "took it on the chin" in order to receive child benefit they needed, they insistently spoke of in interviews either their "chastity" and undeservingness of

such a treatment or a strong feeling of guilt due to their "secret relationship" along with a hesitant questioning of state's right to restrain their "private lives":

> You cannot question, if I am a single woman, whom I take my home, with whom I share my bed. This is none of your business. But they may say that do whatever you want after you leave the money we give. They are also right. The state wants to protect your children. But, I can make the right choice for my children. (see Appendix A, 7)

Further, most women told that in the process of "searching in every nook and cranny" ("*evi didik didik aramak*") in order to trace the signs of cohabitation, social workers undermine their security in the neighborhood while the depth of the inquiry differs according to whether the appearance of women creates the impression of "chastity" or not:

> I think they were doubtful of me because I always look after myself. Hmm, this woman puts on makeup, wears tights, has her hair dyed, then she could not be alone. Because of their barging in my private life, my upstairs neighbor still hits on me. How can the officials have asked my male neighbors whether any man comes and goes to my home? (see Appendix A, 8)

The interviewed social workers often associated being a "well-groomed" woman with cohabitation and "being well off" interrelatedly. They attributed this "luxury to take good care of oneself" to the time, money and enthusiasm possible male partners gift to those women. As a striking example, one woman told that she went to apply to the SED by taking off her nose ring and wearing rags in accordance with her neighbor's –she was also beneficiary- warning. She added that "I had had to do such things for the first time since I divorced". Some women also mentioned they had to hide their cosmetics during the periods they were waiting for home-visits. This kind of "tricks" to deserve the benefit reminded some women their relationships with

"jealous, oppressive, controller men". Almost all the interviewed women had similar stories of recasting themselves –their appearance, domestic order, or social relations- to deserve and highlighted that their sense of "being dredged up"[24] in home-visits are largely reinforced by the very imbalanced power relations between the social workers and them:

> It is easy to forage our homes, our wardrobes. Can they do the same thing to the rich? Can they put children of the rich on the spot as they do our children? Can they ask a rich woman 'do you take a man home?', such a crass question? These are humiliating but who cares? They (social workers) came here just as visiting a primitive tribe. I saw the disdain in their eyes. They ambled (*"salına salına yürüdüler"*, as stated in original) in my home and foraged my private life in front of my children. This is what they deem proper for us because they know that we have to take what they do lying down. (see Appendix A, 9)

As Özkan-Kerestecioğlu (2014) inspiringly explained, it is significant to unfold "whose lives are untouchable and valuable or worthless and disclosable; who has the right to make a choice in accordance with its desires and feelings or who has not" (p.11) in order to grasp the politicization of the personal through ideal family constructions. It is not surprising that cohabitation rule, such an intervention to the most private spheres of life, is implemented to a means-tested social assistance program from which women without men benefit at the most. Here, the moral politics of regulating intimate by framing "sexuality, reproduction, family and partnership" (Acar, & Altunok, 2013, p.15) is integrated with the economic policy of regulating poverty through informal support mechanisms by which the very gendered patronage relationships ensure the translation of welfare beneficiary women into grants to the budget.

[24] "*Eşelenmek, didiklenmek*" as stated in original.

6.1.3 State outcome: More women married to the state

In face of the cohabitation rule which creates a trade-off between the false generosity of men and the state support, women generally choose the later ensuring more stability, sustainability and agency. Accordingly, there was just one woman among my interviewees who thinks to give chance to a new relationship while the rest expressed that they "closed the subject of marriage"[25]. These women were the ones who "could not find what they expected from men" and what they expected was mostly a "sheltering relationship" ("*sığınılacak bir liman*", as they mostly stated) in which they feel secure, valuable, and "woman in a real sense". I should note that the woman who opens the doors to a new relationship told that she wants nobody except her ex-husband (under religious marriage) since their relationship was "left half finished" because of his family's "mischief-making" (*"ailenin arabozuculuğu"*). She attributed both their separation and her present problems of poverty, dependency and "futurelessness" to this external factor while other women narrated their relationships with men including marriage as cutting their lives shatteringly. Those women emphasized their self-power while talking about their struggle to handle the double burden of being a single mother; however, they conversely presented themselves as helpless, powerless, dependent and incompetent when they spoke of their relationships with men. They appreciated their being "both mother and father; woman and man" of the family and success in time management and resiliency which allow to fulfil these roles by "standing on their own legs" whereas power is relational and can only be understood "by taking into account both partners' levels of resources, authority and dependence in relation to each other" (Kim et al., 2019, p.194). Thus, women's sense of self-power is to a large extent affected negatively

[25] *"evlilik defterini kapattım"*

when they face with the unbalanced authority in the family and its lasting effects after divorce or, in some cases, in the process of struggling to get divorced. Nevertheless, if this imbalanced authority disguised in economic protection successfully, women's sense of self would most probably not be disrupted equally.

As the majority of the interviewed women stated, they rationally chose not to run the risk of losing the opportunity of maintaining a life outside such disempowering relationships; so they regulate their relationships with men in a way not to disturb their status of welfare beneficiary. Even if they pursued "sheltering relationships" from time to time which would alleviate their double burden by relieving them from "being the men of the house"; some were recurrently disappointed by the false-generosity of men –that is, remaining unprotected due to the economically dysfunctional male partners- while some found easier to rely on just state support than maintaining such "out-of-pocket relationships" *("cepten yiyen ilişkiler").* Despite it generally results in, as the women defined, disappointment, cohabitation can be seen as a buffer institution for women which mediate the destructive effects of transition from marriage, which is relatively secured and stable under a male-breadwinner but systematically undermining women's capacities to survive outside itself, to singlehood with an increased poverty risk, imbricated double burden and injured sense of security and stability. Nevertheless, when they face with the trade-off between cohabitation and social assistance, women generally choose the later or attempt to combine both by concealing the former. That is, when they are obliged to decide between men's economic patronage and public support, what they consent to leave is very rarely the latter:

> For a second marriage, he must be pretty rich. I cannot put up with another child on my shoulder, too little too late. Because such a man

> will not find me, a widowed woman having 2 children, at a loose end[26] unhappy and lonely, I closed the subject of love. What I wanted from the life is just that my salary[27] will not be cut and I can find a job to mother my children. (see Appendix A, 10)

As Korkman (2016) highlighted, President Erdoğan's comments about "illegitimate relationships" such as mixed-sex student houses are not "mere discursive maneuvers intended to change the political agenda" (p.1), rather they crystallize the politics of intimacy which is "central to the economic and political governance of the country". Thus, it is not a coincidence that prevention of child abuse and undeserved gain are integrated in SED's design of eligibility criteria, it reflects the ideal of single mother who is more or less asexual or sacrifices her womanhood to her motherhood on the one hand; the ideal of male-breadwinner who leaves no room for state intervention on the other. As I mentioned before, cohabitation rule highlights the "legitimate domain for experiencing sexual and reproductive capabilities" (Acar, & Altuok, 2013, p.20) and the women who are expected to reproduce future generations of workers –through a wide range of incentives as part of the "dynamic population" agenda of government- are not welfare beneficiary ones who are not able to support themselves so posing a risk to transmit their disadvantage to the next generations. These women are the ones whose sexuality must be controlled until they re-marry.

I saw that the immense pressure unwritten cohabitation rule creates on women largely prevents them from engaging in "illegitimate relationships" and this serves the "desired moral order" which is "crucial to the functioning of the neo-conservative mentality" (Acar, & Altuok, 2013). However, in these cases, women usually feel married to the state through the child benefit they receive so they

[26] "*parasız-pulsuz, işsiz güçsüz",* as she stated.

[27] She means the child benefit.

stabilize their status of welfare beneficiary. They tend to welcome public dependency against the private one and this "being at peace with being beneficiary" outside the male-breadwinner model undermines government's policy priority of promoting self-sufficiency. As a result, the state has to support more and more women whose economic vulnerability was invisible under the veil of male-breadwinner which is losing power day by day. The residualist policy of targeting just the void the well-functioning breadwinners leave does not truly promote self-sufficiency of female-headed households, rather it seems to substitute for the false generosity of men by creating a trade-off between previously approved –since all women have the experiences of dysfunctional male-breadwinner- disappointment and a relatively more secure future.

To sum up, while conforming to the neo-conservative agenda regarding the politics of intimacy, cohabitation rule undermines the neoliberal construction of the SED since it increases the relative profitability of being welfare beneficiary.

6.2 Intention: "To stand on their own feet"

As I elaborated in the previous chapter, it is a rising policy priority to integrate social assistance with employment in order to activate the masses of beneficiaries in the labor market. In this context, applicants to the SED are firstly expected to apply to İşkur. Even if İşkur is presented as the land of opportunities with its vocational training courses and job references, majority of the women I interviewed stated that they were even not called by İşkur but were strictly warned about the temporariness of the SED and the significance of "standing on two feet" by social workers. As Bolat (2016) revealed relying on İşkur's database, only approximately 12% of the applicants to İşkur are employed within the scope of integrating social assistance

with employment (p.81). Further, just 30% of the welfare beneficiaries who are referred to vocational training courses participate in those courses, as the same data indicate. However, İşkur's dysfunction is welcomed by beneficiaries since they would lose the cash benefit if they are employed by reference of İşkur while at the same time they will spend approximately one third of their salaries for procuring private child care services in a context where activation policies are not supported by the provision of adequate public childcare services. In practice, both social workers and beneficiary women know that İşkur does not directly promise employment and women's application to İşkur works mainly as the proof of their willingness to work.

Fraser and Gordon (1992) speak of liberal regimes' "tendency to dissociate political participation from social provision" (p.3) which creates differentiated rights frameworks for "clients as opposed to citizens" (p.38). While citizens correspond mostly to men who are "relatively privileged members of the working class" (p.18) relying on contributory social insurance programs, clients of non-contributory public assistance are disproportionately women and they are stigmatized as dependents and passive receivers (p.38). For instance, a bureaucrat said that "when others do the same thing, its name would be grace[28]; but, when the state does it, it turns into a right. The beneficiary does not feel indebted." That is, even if SED is given to the caregiver in exchange for nurturing future generations in better conditions for the sake of "common good" –as the issue of care is increasingly politicized, especially since the "Family Package" of 2015- this exchange relationship would be uncompleted until the beneficiary reciprocate with alleviating state's budget burden "by immediately being adopted to its new life and standing on its own feet", as he added. In other words, even if motherhood is exalted within the gender justice

[28] *"lütuf",* as he said.

framework –which is the dominant gender ideology of the government- and as Orloff (2006) expressed, maternalism as a political configuration promotes that "women should be recognized and compensated by the state for their unique service to society through maternity and childbearing as men for their service in war and industry" (p.9); neoliberal budget concerns and dynamic population agenda dominate the responsibility mix in a way to individualize the cost of the care.

As all the interviewed bureaucrats emphasized, except the mothers whose children are under two, the Ministry ultimately aims to promote worker-parent status of single mothers by keeping the temporary cash transfer under the minimum wage and necessitating their application to İşkur prior to SED. For those who have children under two, they compromised on the developmental significance of "togetherness of mother and child" in accordance with the institutional design of early childhood care where the rate of professional care for those children is less than one percent (OECD, 2018). For the rest, who are "healthy enough to work" as most bureaucrats and social workers emphasized, the ideal of worker-parent is associated with both good citizenship and motherhood. While being a full-time housewife dependent on a well-functioning male-breadwinner is regarded as a "personal preference", welfare recipients pose a moral risk of dependency and are expected to prove their willingness to be freed from it for the sake of good citizenship and motherhood. For instance, one bureaucrat highlighted that children take their mothers as role model and "mothers should set a good example by their industriousness and productivity"; in other words, intergenerational transmission of "dependency syndrome" should be prevented. However, solely modelling a "hardworking" mother brings neither a future with job security nor a decent work life. This individualistic approach neglects the borders between "willingness to work", employability, and employment. Further,

none of the bureaucrats I interviewed talked about the issue of the working poor. Their emphasis remained limited to equal opportunities for children –through access to education and health services- and self-sufficiency for mothers via any kind of employment.

A bureaucrat clearly explained the set of rights and duties allocated between the state and citizens and underlying the acute design of the SED: state intervenes in crisis periods temporarily, citizens utilize this service, they "rise from the ashes" and "contribute to the production actively" rather than "regarding social assistance as a regular salary to earn a living". Accordingly, he added that social assistance currently aims not only to change material conditions of the recipients but also to "bring behavioral change" towards self-sufficiency with its design of eligibility. Almost all bureaucrats talked about more or less a progressive route: beneficiary relies on SED temporarily in order to recover itself during a crisis period, then she participates in vocational training courses of İşkur, and upon the completion of the course, she finds a job which would make public support unnecessary. However, my questions about contradictory realities of beneficiary women with this typically social investment formula were remained unanswered by the ideal-oriented bureaucrats. It was striking to see that they were not necessarily interested in what is actually happening in the field and whether the formula they envisioned is working or not. They were feeling responsible not for enabling beneficiary women to "stand on their own feet" on its own, but only for managing institutional collaborations and procedural arrangements which delegitimize the SED as a means of livelihood.

Consequently, SED is designed as an "acute" –that is, temporary and residual with the aim of "minimizing the potential damages in crisis periods", as one bureaucrat summarized- and "activating" benefit through its eligibility criteria and

limited generosity. It also individualizes the cost of care responsibilities, even if care as a public good has increasingly being politicized within the scope of development plans. Further, it also constantly triggers new crises in the form of unsupported activation, as I will expand on below.

6.2.1 Implementation: Unsupported activation

In addition to İşkur's dysfunctionality –largely due to the accumulation of applications after the integration of social assistance and employment within the scope of the 10th Development Plan (2014-2018) and National Employment Strategy Action Plans (2017-2019), as I elaborated in the previous chapter; in case women find a job independently of İşkur, Soybis identifies insured employment. Then, application to the SED is rejected even if the applicant works for the minimum wage which is below the poverty line (Türk-İş, 2020). There was no insured worker among the women I interviewed and they were talking about jobs with social security benefits as nearly "forbidden" for them as social assistance beneficiaries. However, it is apparent that SED's cash transfer -which is deliberately kept below the minimum wage - is alone not sufficient to make ends meet, especially for female-headed households when the child expenses and the absence of the opportunity of dual earning are taken into account. Here, there seems to be a silent contract between the beneficiary women and the social workers. Women solve to a large extent their problem of surviving through informal work and social workers usually choose not to question thoroughly how these women earn a living in their home visits. Some of the interviewed women use vouchers the district governorship provides -100 TL for one child and 200 TL for more than one child monthly- and almost all of them engage in a wide range of informal works the most common ones of which are

charring and taking in piecework. None of them receive alimony and demand it in order not to get in contact with ex-husbands. Moreover, only the lucky ones are supported by neighbors or family members but this support is generally provided in an in-kind form such as sharing infants' wear, sending a plate of meal, or allowing to run a tab in groceries. Although these informal mechanisms of charity serve the fulfilment of some urgent needs, they do not reinforce women's freedom of choice since in-kind aids are usually framed by their givers and also not commit durable solutions while paving the way for patronage relationships:

> They give you a half-assed heater or rags, for instance. Then, they want all get-out gratitude from you. Do they not come in handy? Of course, they do but they create pressure on me. Once, for instance, my next-door neighbor called me to clean her armchairs. I do such works as long as I can find. I cleaned literally for three hours non-stop, then we had a cup of tea together and she saw me off without paying. I could never ask her why she did not pay me but I think she tried to get the return of her aiding me from time to time. (see Appendix A, 11)

In comparison with the women who char, women who take in piecework are more open to be involved in such networks of exploitative solidarity since for them the boundary between work and home is blurred in a way to allow everyone in the apartment, for instance, to be part of the work. Additionally, pieceworker women have to do the same thing countlessly in order to earn an appreciable amount of money. One interviewed woman said that she puts together 300 pendants in a day –it takes 10 hours- and earns 30 TL in return. While the supplier who manages the relationship between those women and the employer gains "the real profit", as women expressed; even the children in home participate in the work in order to earn some amount of money which is "worth to do such a work". Another common form of working from home for those women is selling homemade foods through

Instagram and as one interviewed woman summarized, the internet liberates them from the "quagmire of neighbourhood" *("mahalle batağı")* by creating a relatively autonomous space in which the language of exchange between an anonymous seller and client relieves women from the exploitative solidarity of charitable relationships. For instance, there was a woman among interviewees who was selling handmade foods in her neighborhood through a verbal contract with the baker on receiving certain amount of the profit when her products are sold. Another woman told that she sells foods to her neighbors in special invitations such as gold days. However, these women's business connections remain limited to their physical environment since they do not have the specific knowledge of using online networks properly in a way to enlarge the potential returns of their income-generating activities or the infrastructural requirements such as smart phone and internet connectivity. On the other hand, most women who take the advantage of internet access to sell their handmade products stated that they are dependent on their children's support while carrying out their online entrepreneurship. They spoke of this experience as "making them feel like businesswoman" while at the same time complaining about clients' indifference to their "struggle for life" and the intolerance for the "failures arising from their being unaided". Of course, they need solidarity to a certain extent which is different from what neighbors or family members provide. As Gordon and Fraser (1994) discuss, neither market relationships governed by self-interest nor individual almsgiving promises a durable solution.

It is significant to question whether SED has the potential to surpass the indifference of self-regulating market to individual stories and the reciprocity of gift giving continuously indebting the ones who have less to share with others. Since SED does not have a strict, well-defined legislation regarding its implementation,

social workers' opportunity to take initiative for certain cases and to "listen to their intuitions", as one of them expressed, allow women's individual stories to become visible to some extent. However, it also indebts its receivers by expecting them to reciprocate with regulating their private lives in accordance with the accepted "proper motherhood" –as I gave its details under the title of cohabitation rule- and re-creating themselves as self-sufficient worker-parents.

Several women stated that they felt "cross-examined" when social workers questioned their ability to work in home visits. For most social workers I interviewed, being "healthy enough to work" was the only criterion to detect the dependency syndrome and remind the temporariness of the SED. Almost all took the availability of informal support as a work and family reconciliation mechanism for granted. They recurrently told that the women in question can work "if they really wanted" by entrusting their children to their mothers, sisters, or other female relatives and neighbors:

> These women are generally housewives previously. They are not used to work. They are getting lazy much more with this aid. Do not you have any relative or friend? They take the easy way out. Especially Romans, Syrians. There is not such a word –to work- in their vocabulary. (see Appendix A, 12)

Although they often talked about a hierarchy of "willingness to work" between citizens and non-citizens or primary-class citizens and secondary-class ones, what all rely on while delegitimizing "not to work" was the assumed access to informal support for childcare. However, since SED beneficiary women are generally divorced or deserted, they actually do not have intimate relationships with their families. Most of them highlighted that they decided to divorce despite their families' oppression so they were left unsupported during that demanding process. Further,

some women were concealing their singleness from the neighborhood in order to feel themselves secured as being under the protection of an "imagined man". These broken relationships cannot be expected to function as a work and family reconciliation mechanism and interviewed women who have children in preschool age (0-5) choose to work from home much more since they do not have alternatives such as affordable or publicly-funded childcare.

When I question the care deficit side of employment in such conditions, interviewed social workers emphasized that they acquaint applicants to the SED with their right to apply to publicly funded kindergartens. However, the number of single-parent children who benefit from the day care centers (for the ages from 2 to 5) supported by the AÇSHB is 1292 (AÇSHB, 2018, p.102). It is highly insufficient in comparison with the increasing number of female-headed households. Moreover, the quota set for children whose families are entitled on the basis of means-testing is 3% while approximately 163.000 children are supported within their families by SED only. That is, SED is implemented just as an additional income for single mothers without considerable improvement in the provision of public care services. Further, since it is a means-tested benefit –that is, targeting low-income families- the payment given to the caregiver is most probably not used to buy care service from the private sector, rather it is generally used to supplement other sources of income or relied on as the only means of subsistence. On the other hand, as most interviewed women talked about, those women who are passing through a crisis period after the dissolution of a more or less secured household –at least, "the established order" as several women expressed- and trying to construct a new one in fragile conditions usually choose the cash transfer rather than the kindergarten aid since they generally do not have a job at this stage but have urgent problems such as shelter and

nourishment. Even if social workers attribute the low rates of application to the kindergarten aid to women's "unwillingness to work" and dependency syndrome, as one interviewed woman summarized, women rationally do "not want to leave what they have in hand" in exchange for "just a hope to find a job".

On the other hand, those women who benefit from this quota also do not have the opportunity to work full-time since the schedule of the childcare institutions are not compatible with standard working hours. For instance, Randa had been entitled to publicly-funded childcare last year and the cash transfer was automatically cancelled since it is not possible to benefit from both childcare services and the cash transfer under the SED. She had begun to char but she had had to leave the work at 3.00 p.m. at the latest in order to pick up her child from the kindergarten. She had been working without break for hours and completed her job but received half pay since it was assumed that she worked part time. Put differently, she had lost the cash benefit in addition to being doomed to the part-time rate. Therefore, she applied to the cash transfer again and demanded the cancellation of kindergarten aid. Currently, she is still charring while receiving the cash transfer and her sister is taking care of her daughter during working hours. According to her, this way is more profitable, though it is still not possible to get a job with social security benefits. Another woman who benefits from the kindergarten quota also complained about the incompatibility of non-standard working hours in informal sector with the schedule of kindergartens which "seem to be arranged for unemployed mothers, not even for civil servants working from 8. a.m. to 5 p.m.". She stated that she has to wait her child's getting on the shuttle bus at 9.30 a.m. and pick it up from school at 4.00 pm due to the rule of "not allowing someone except the parent to pick up the child from school". In these conditions, she failed to sustain the work she was doing in a textile

mill and has begun to baby-sit for other children in her own home. Another woman claimed that her daughter is exposed to psychological and physical violence in the kindergarten since the school management and teachers are regarding her daughter as a high-cost workload who is benefiting from their resources without paying. She hesitates on making a complaint about this issue due to her fear of losing the aid.

That is, the reality is more complex than procedural arrangements on paper and the existence of the kindergarten aid –with a low quota then again- does not correctly guarantees that women who are "able to work" can work with no problems. While bureaucrats were totally indifferent to the intervening factors widening the gap between defined rights and applicable rights, social workers' subjective positions regarding deservingness largely determines the process by which beneficiary women search for alternatives through violating the eligibility criteria.

6.2.2 Gender outcome: Informal worker/compressed mother

Erdoğdu and Kutlu (2014) refer to the concept of reserve army of the unemployed while explaining the non-surprising relationship between social assistance and employment policies. They argue that there will always be a population which is kept outside the labor market or thrown into it when needed and that social assistance contributes to its reproduction without disincentivizing others who can already stand on their own feet. Since this population is mostly composed of low-skilled people, they are also potentially the working poor when they are thrown into the labor market. For instance, as the social workers I interviewed described recurrently, the primary beneficiary profile of SED are those women who generally have married in early age by dropping out of school, then have been trapped in full-time unpaid work for years and hence whose income-generating capacities have systematically been

undermined. Not surprisingly, they are not relieved of poverty through employment. Nevertheless, they are expected to be self-sufficient worker-parents immediately after separation and at this stage, İşkur is presented as a well-functioning problem-solver by which those women with structural vulnerability graduate from vocational training courses and find a job which will relieve them of transmitting their disadvantage to their children. However, İşkur fails to respond to the accumulated applications and when women themselves find the ways of standing on their own feet through informal works, they face with the problem of work and family conflict due to the absence of adequate public childcare services.

Social investment perspective idealizes dual earner families and self-sufficient individuals, as Hemerijck (2013) summarizes, but work and family reconciliation policies in Turkey target disproportionately formal workers while majority of the welfare beneficiary single mothers – who are expected to be self-sufficient worker parents- engage in informal works. Some women said that they constantly become excited when they hear the news about "kindergarten aid" on TV but when they search the eligibility criteria they realize that the aid targets only the insured workers. The very configuration of the relationship between welfare policies and labor market policies draws the boundaries for who will maintain male-breadwinner/female-caregiver family model or who should pass to dual earning; which single mothers will manage worker/parent status with state support or which ones will be enforced to manage it by relying on "their own resources". While women with high human capital and accordingly promising high returns to the state economy are supported with a range of projects such as "Project of Supporting Formal Female Employment Through Incentivizing Educated Baby Sitters" *(Eğitimli Çocuk Bakıcılarının Teşviki Yoluyla Kayıtlı Kadın İstihdamının Desteklenmesi*

Projesi) which is the newest one, welfare beneficiary women with low employability are not supported or "incentivized", they are largely enforced to "stand on their own feet" with no other alternative and full-time unpaid care workers of well-functioning male-breadwinner households are almost out of the policy agenda.

In general, in the process of the first application to the SED, women who have just exited the male-breadwinner/female-caregiver families have urgent and purchasable needs such as rent, bills, and food –that is, needs about "constructing a new order", as several women expressed- so they choose the cash transfer rather than the kindergarten aid. Later, they usually do not find a job which is worth to take the risk of losing "the money in hand". However, since it is not possible to support themselves relying on SED only, these women still need work and family reconciliation mechanisms even if they avoid kindergarten aid which automatically appropriates considerable amount of income which is crucial to sustain their "new order". For this reason, they usually seek to combine informal support for compensating the care deficit and informal work for earning a living by "escaping from the Soybis query". However, as I said before, these women have mostly broken relationships with their families after divorce or since they made "wrong marriages" in spite of family members' opposition so they rarely find support from their families. Thus, women bring their children to work, entrust them to neighbor women, or apply to some solutions which are less secure for children such as leaving them at home alone. For instance, one woman told that her 4-year-old daughter waits approximately for two hours in the apartment alone– she is at the "infants' school"[29] till then- until she comes back home from work and she is highly anxious about her daughter's safety and security but stated that "she has no another option". Similarly,

[29] "sibyan mektebi" which has a religious curriculum.

another woman, Gözde, who works as a shop assistant, relies on her sister's support but she is also continuously anxious about her daughter since her sister has epilepsy and in case of an epileptic attack, there is not another adult at home to take care of her child.

When SED's limited generosity which requires additional sources of income to maintain a household is combined with means-testing techniques eliminating covered workers –apart from the exceptional cases under the title of "multiple assistance"[30] given maximum as three times of the standard SED payment in order to support families (generally dual-parent families) in crisis periods regardless of the working status of adults in the household- it is not surprising that beneficiary women mostly engage in informal works. However, even if such works more or less contribute to the family budget and improve material conditions both for children and mothers; the non-standard nature of such works –long working hours including the weekends, the mental and physical load under harsh working conditions, flexibility and low-skilled composition which undermine the bargaining power of women- considerably deepens time poverty for double-burdened women:

> I feel that I am in a marathon. I leave my children to their schools – each located on different streets- at 8 a.m. and then I go to my work wherever it is on that day. Sometimes I use two or three means of transportation. I finish my work nearly at 6 p.m. and I constantly calculate like a psychopath the works waiting for me at home and the time on which I must go to bed in order to run the marathon of the next day. You know the work I do (charring) is not easy, it requires energy. Within this rush I feel missing being a mother, I become just like a father. Cold, like a wall, like a robot. This is not what I want for my children but struggle for life… (see Appendix A, 13)

[30] *"katlı yardım"*

Simmel (1950) argued that the metropolis life intensifies emotional and cognitive load with “the swift and continuous shift of external and internal stimuli” (p.11) so individuals, or “calculative men” as he stated, constantly strive to adopt to the fluctuations in their environment. Similarly, almost all the women I interviewed talked about their continuous alert to manage their double burden, to calculate the money and time within the conditions of a compressed motherhood after separation. They constantly make plans for “investing in their children” through the activities with mostly an inspiration from “influencer moms” on social media after they work approximately for 12 or 14 hours in a day. Their motherhood is compressed between time and energy demanding works of informal sector, the constant rush of the metropolis life –for instance, they often mention the time they lose in the traffic while coming back from work instead of “sparing time for their children”-, and imbricated domestic responsibilities due to “being both the woman and man of the house”. They feel “compressed” in terms of time and SED neither grants “time to care” by guaranteeing a minimum income, nor allow the beneficiaries to work full-time with social security benefits. It also does not promise stability as a temporary benefit which require re-application year by year. While poverty in terms of income can be mediated by women’s combining SED with informal works, time poverty continues to be deepened and women complain about a sense of maternal guilt resulting from “failing to meet the requirements of the motherhood myth” which “depicts mothers as universally present, nurturing and kind” (Rotkirch, & Janhunen, 2010). Women told that they usually do not find enough time to “spare time of good quality” with their children, neglect their needs, and even behave aggressively and intolerant to them when they consume their whole energy, toleration and patience at

work. As a result, they feel the tension between two sacredness while trying to "stand on their own feet": motherhood and work:

> I have to work for my children, for myself, to be powerful, to prepare a future for my children, for myself. But I feel I steal from my children, from the time we can spend together. But I have no option. Maybe they will be thankful for what I am doing now. Or, they will blame me for not taking care of them good enough. I do not know. But I have to do in this way. I must stand on my own feet. For my children. (see Appendix A, 14)

Even if the Ministry intends to promote the worker-parent status of beneficiaries, when the cash transfer is not complemented with adequate public childcare services, the eligibility criteria eliminate the covered workers by neglecting the issue of working poor and the generosity of the benefit does not guarantee beneficiaries' right to care, what SED ends of promoting is largely the informal worker-guilt mother model. One interviewed woman impressively summarized what I call the compressed motherhood with the statement that "If I close my eyes for a while, let my guard down, I will not stand on my feet again. Tiredness . . . I feel I do not have such a luxury. I have 3 children. I am on my own"[31]. This woman was divorced 6 years ago and she does not receive alimony voluntarily due to the ex-husband's mental problems. She stated that she is more powerful than him so what only wants from him is "to stand on his own feet". She lives with her three children, two cats, one dog and one mouse and maintains this crowded household by charring in addition to the SED. She said that she "dressed up motherhood" ("*giydim anneliği*") after divorce and she was talking about a kind of extended identity, that is, an extended motherhood in a way to dominate her other identities and penetrate all relationships

[31] *"Gözlerimi bir anlık kapatsam, gardımı bir an düşürsem bi daha zor kalkarım. Yorgunluk…böyle bir lüksüm yok ki. 3 çocuğum var. Tek tabancayım."*

with her environment. She expressed that she feels responsible for the subsistence of "seven heads" ("*yedi boğaz*") –including the pets one of which was an "uninvited guest" as she put it, since the infrastructural conditions of the house allows mice to walk around at home- with the statement of "seven heads await my arrival in the evenings for what I bring in"[32]. Due to the life-sustaining nature of the "breadwinning" responsibility, she told that she cannot break the role of motherhood for a while and sees all individuals in her life as "somewhat her children"[33] with a deep sense of responsibility for them. Even if she regards the state also as responsible for alleviating their deprivation, she concludes that "when my children get into bed as hungry, neither the Minister nor those men (implying social workers) will be grieved so it is my struggle"[34].

To conclude, even if "cash transfers may empower women in the short run as their unpaid care-work becomes visible and alleviates poverty", these instruments "do not seem promising in maintaining gender equality in the labor market" and even limit women's "citizenship rights to the realm of social assistance" (Güneş-Ayata, & Doğangün, 2017, p.9). Construction of SED as temporary, acute, residualist and activating benefit succeeds in enforcing its beneficiaries to participate in the labor market but as the emotional, psychological and physical effects of bad working conditions for long hours in informal sector; and the time pressure of double burden in addition to the constant sense of guilt and rush overlap, sustainability of such a "standing on their own legs" is open to dispute.

[32] *"yedi baş akşamları elime bakıyor ne getirdim diye"*

[33] *"herkes bir miktar çocuğum gibi"*

[34] *"Çocuklarım yatağa aç girdiğinde ne Bakanlık ne bu adamlar…ben kahrolacağım. Yani bu benim mücadelem."*

6.2.3 State outcome: The cold family environment and intergenerational transmission of poverty

Larsen (2005) classifies four types of policies for single mothers: 1) those that aim to support lone mothers exclusively as mothers, 2) those that aim to have lone mothers choose between paid work and mothering, 3) those that aim to support lone mothers both as paid workers and as mothers, and lastly, 4) those where the family institution is the nexus of lone mothers' livelihoods. When the generosity of SED is taken into account, it cannot be said that it aims to support single mothers exclusively as mothers since it is not possible to survive as a full-caregiver solely relying on this child benefit. However, it also fails to promote worker-parent status of beneficiaries since care responsibilities and paid work may be almost mutually exclusive for low-income women when there is no adequate and publicly funded day care centers or kindergartens in workplaces. As a result, my field work showed me that women do not grant the cash benefit to the state budget even if they become able to "stand on their own feet" through informal works since they cannot predict how long they can sustain this kind of self-sufficiency on the one hand; and they can support themselves only by combining SED with informal works on the other. That is, women's self-sufficiency does not decrease the cost of "supporting children within their families". Further, promoting this way of self-sufficiency –through informal, low-paid, precarious works without social security benefits- intensifies the tendency of feminization of poverty by increasing the gap between female-headed households and male-breadwinner ones.

As a bureaucrat expressed, SED ultimately aims to "prevent children from paying the price of two adults' –mother and father- failure"; in other words, to prevent the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in single-parent families.

However, especially for this type of household which is composed of a mother who is both the breadwinner and caregiver of her child or children, the well-being of the child –as social workers and bureaucrats often mentioned in interviews as "the best interest of the child"- is largely intertwined with well-being of the mother. Therefore, as long as the construction of SED reinforces beneficiary mothers' time poverty, forces them to non-standard works and undermines their self-esteem; these mothers cannot be expected to exhibit "positive parenting" just as in the case of 4-years-old child left alone in home until its mother comes back from work. As The Council of Europe (2006) defines positive parenting as "behavior based on the best interests of the child that is nurturing, empowering, nonviolent and provides recognition and guidance which involves setting of boundaries to enable the full development of the child" (p.2) and holds member states responsible for providing childcare provision services, work and family reconciliation mechanisms, and public services for parents at risk of social exclusion in order to support positive parenting. Interviewed bureaucrats also talked about this kind of an ideal parenting which differentiates the "warm family environment" from institutional and professional care services. They often implied that even if it offers better material conditions, institutional care lacks the warmth of the family environment which has a vital significance for children's "healthy development". However, within the conditions of compressed motherhood – in terms of time and physical and mental energy- resulting from the necessity of pursuing additional income sources due to the deliberately restricted generosity of the SED, and the double burden intensified by the absence of adequate public childcare provision in addition to the non-standard schedule of informal works; the much-mentioned warmth of the family is undermined. As I have discussed above, several women told that they sometimes canalize the stress of double burden onto

their children by behaving aggressively or intolerant towards them. Some stated that they from time to time thought that their children would be happier in a child protection institution:

> Sometimes I think that I egoistically hinder my children from living in better conditions. The woman who came here (the social worker) had threatened me to divest me of them if I behave badly or make them work. I quarreled with her. I said that nobody can separate me from my children. But sometimes I think that instead of suffering here with me, in such a home, in such conditions, maybe it was better for them to be under the protection of state. But I cannot leave them. I cannot live without them. But I think so when they shiver from cold within home or when I feel unable to do anything. (see Appendix A, 15)

That is, SED is not institutionally complemented in a way to promote positive parenting and Ministry's ideal of warm family environment as "the best place of the care" is a slippery ground. On the other hand, in order to break the cycle of poverty in single-mother households, it is necessary to handle the problem of "preventing children from paying the price of two adults"; that is, preventing intergenerational transmission of disadvantage along with the problem of gender inequality. Even if the number of children in child protection institutions may decrease with child benefits as the Ministry prides on, when care as a "public good" is put on women's shoulders who strive to survive under such conditions, children will most probably continue to pay the price of their mothers' structural vulnerability. As the children of women who are informal, low-paid and precarious workers with no social security benefits, psychologically and emotionally damaged due to the time pressure of double burden, and have little hope for achieving stable and sustainable subsistence, they are far away from having "equal opportunities" to overcome their disadvantage. This kind of unsupported activation –I mean, activation which is not supported by the design of the benefit with its generosity and eligibility criteria and easy access to

publicly funded childcare services- neglects women's structural vulnerability in the labor market and has genderizing outcomes –such as increasing feminization of poverty and double burden of single women- which also undermine the very basis of "the best interest of children": the positive parenting.

Saxonberg (2013) defines genderizing policies as "policies that promote different gender roles for men and women" (p.8) and introduces the distinction between conservative policies "that explicitly support the male-breadwinner model" (p.5) and laissez-faire policies which implicitly support the male-breadwinner model by "allowing current gender inequalities to continue" (p.5), then many mothers are forced "to stay at home when they cannot find affordable day care" (p.5). However, the household in question –composed of a single mother and her child/children- has no such a luxury to choose between unpaid care work and paid work since it means choosing to survive or not. In this context, in order to achieve "the best interest of children" within single-mother households and to prevent intergenerational transmission of poverty, degenderizing policies should be integrated with family policies. Unless women compete more equally with men, children of the female-headed households cannot be expected to have "equal opportunities" with the children of male-headed or dual-earner families.

6.3 Intention: "To keep children under public watch"

Social investment state's prevention-oriented approach to child welfare has constructed a partnership between social workers and parents in line with the "good parenting" which "connects parenting styles with developmental outcomes many years later such as academic achievement or delinquency" (Vandenbroeck et al., 2011, p.72). Popkewitz (2003) defines this partnership as "pedagogicalization of

parents" by which parents are regarded as responsible for the problems and future success of their children, and hence are included in counseling and educational programs to develop positive parenting. According to him, this is a governing process "embodied in linking of the development of the rationally ordered life of the child and family with the 'political will' and progress of the nation" (p.35-36). Almost all the interviewed bureaucrats were aware of the limited generosity of SED which most probably would not relieve the beneficiary families of poverty and they emphasized that SED does not aim to alleviate poverty, rather it intends to enable children of vulnerable families to benefit from just basic rights, especially education for the sake of the future of the country. One bureaucrat stated that the most significant policy goal of SED is "to keep children under public oversight" through ensuring their continuity in the system of education and stability of place of residence. That is, with the principle of "no rights without duties", as several bureaucrats implied, SED responsibilizes caregivers for providing a stable and enabling family environment in which children are developmentally supported to be "healthy and harmonious members of society".

As the "future of the society", they require constant control and regulation. In home visits, beneficiaries are informed about the conditions of good parenting as the basis of entitlement and through periodical visits social workers monitor these conditions to decide on the continuity or abolishment of entitlement. As many social workers explained, they determine "bad parenting" when they detect dropping out, academic failure, disciplinary action, drug use or delinquency. Further, they also report when they see signs of abuse, violence, child employment or merely negligence. However, sanctions for each criterion differs on the basis of the prospects for a partnership with the caregiver; that is, whether the problem is

regarded as solvable by pedagogicalizing the parent or not. For instance, academic failure is generally regarded as possible to be improved with increased parental involvement such as doing homework together or helping children adopt habits for maintaining at least a stable school life. Drug use is also usually seen as rehabitable in collaboration with parents and does not hinder entitlement to SED while, for instance, child employment directly cuts the benefit since the caregiver primarily benefits from making his or her child work and will most probably not take the risk of losing this benefit. Moreover, as one bureaucrat explained, child employment, besides its psychological effects, is largely combined with dropping out of education; so the child completely keeps out of the public oversight beyond mechanisms of public control for his or her welfare.

Both bureaucrats and social workers I interviewed recurrently referred to the discourse of "all children". That is, all children are "equally valuable" and worthy of having "equal opportunities" regardless of the asymmetry of parental resources. They often told that children should not pay the price of parents' "choices" such as divorce; "pathologies" such as idleness, irresponsibility, or having a criminal record; and "failures" such as unemployment. Rather, they should be "equalized" in a way to compete in the educational institutions and labor market "with the same opportunities" regardless of parental inequalities among them. Within the framework of "inclusive growth", education is seen as "a driver of economic growth, social inclusion and greater equality", as OECD (2015, p.15) also promotes. Accordingly, as one bureaucrat added, "the state does not have such a luxury of leaving a group of children out" so especially children in disadvantaged families who "will most probably be involved in crime", display "deviant behaviors", cannot "stand on their own feet" and ultimately in general terms, not become individuals "beneficial to the

society" should be supported to be integrated in the system of education "first of all". For instance, one social worker stated that "children of all drug traffickers in Harmandere are cared by the state". With a similar motivation, several social workers highlighted that SED contributes to the prevention of marginalization of "children of terrorists". They admitted that they hesitate approving the applicants of "wives of terrorists" who are imprisoned but use SED as the means for reinforcing those people's, especially children's sense of belonging to the state. To sum up with the words of a bureaucrat SED is truly not a poverty alleviation mechanism, rather it is "aimed at behavioral change" by which especially children in vulnerable families sustain a relatively stable and controllable life. Some social workers called this as "a normal family life" in which children are not deprived of meeting their basic needs, not engaged in criminal or deviant behaviors, maintain their educational life at least on minimum conditions, and as one social worker said, "wake up where he or she goes to sleep". For this reason, entitlement to SED requires a permanent residential address –it is controlled by social workers in home visits-, continuing education life during the compulsory schooling period, and durable caregiving at least on minimum conditions for children-at-risk. It aims to support a "well-functioning family environment" in which children are secured in terms meeting their basic needs, do not get out of public authority's control, and governed as future citizen-workers who are harmonious and beneficial components of the inclusive growth.

6.3.1 Implementation: Compensation for de-stabilizing marriage failures

Single-parent families are more likely to "get out of control", as several bureaucrats said. They tend to frequently change their place of residence and the composition of their households since they may live with other "housemate" women or cohabitate

with male partners, move to their family homes or women's shelters for a certain period, or very often move their house due to their unstable economic conditions. This instability of the place of residence and household composition unsurprisingly affects children in these families so they generally have less stable school lives than their peers in two-parent families. For instance, one woman told that her children cannot gain the habit of planned study, going to bed early, or a range of practices for self-care such as regular bathing since they constantly "live on the move".

While SED aims to promote residential stability by providing cash transfer which will most probably be spent for the rent, there are other factors de-stabilizing women's lives which cannot be neutralized by just an additional income source. These women face with residential, social and financial insecurity and they have the immanent potential to unhinge the lives of these women and their children while at the same time renders them helpless in terms of controlling their residential, social and economic situation. For instance, one woman said that she hardly finds a home and then she is constantly faced with problems with landlords due to her singleness. Even if she pays the rent regularly, she stated that landlords attempt to "intervene in her private life" –by questioning who comes to home and the time of her comings and goings to home, or what they drink in the balcony, what her daughter wears or how she behaves so she has to change her place of residence in search for "a more peaceful place to live". In addition to this frequency of changing the place of residence, women may continue to "live on the move" by keeping their residential address stable but periodically changing the place they live in as a strategy to cope with their unstable economic conditions. For instance, women told that they move to their friends' or family members' homes in winters since they cannot afford the gas bill or due to the changes in their employment statuses.

Moreover, many women talked about their concerns for security due to the "stalking" of their ex-husbands or partners so they stated that they change their place of residence when they realize that they are "followed". Council of Europe (n.d.) defines stalking as "repeatedly engaging in threatening conduct directed at another person, causing her or him to fear for her or his safety". Stalking spreads fear to control women's lives and has a range of disturbing consequences -apart from the "death threat", as one woman expressed as "holding their lives in pledge"- such as causing job loss and mental and psychological problems, damaging social relations, and de-stabilizing women's lives by constantly enforcing them to change their places of residence, jobs, social environments and every-day routines. However, two interviewed women stated that when they applied for protection order –within the scope of the Article 52 in the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence –known as the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2017)- by which perpetrator of violence is forced to leave the residence instead of the victim the officers gave her just a paper on which emergency numbers such as 115 and the number of the nearest police station were written so they emphasized that they felt that "they have to save themselves" by "constantly running away". Besides, these men, "as penetrators of violence" according to the Convention, have the opportunity to contact the women, the "victims of violence", on the pretext of their responsibilities for and rights on the joint child/children by requesting to issue enforcement. This execution enforces women to come face to face with the men from whom they struggle to protect themselves and enable those men to continue their "husbandly" oppression and control by means of their claims to fatherhood. Further, one woman complained that she hesitates sending her child to the school due to the fear of "leaving evidence behind her" but at the same time

feeling uneasy about its undermined educational life. Despite the confidentiality order which conceals which school the child is registered to, as women told, men can find them –or women fear to be found- through "familiar" police officers or school personnel so they think that long-term living in a certain neighborhood or sending children to the same school for a long time may increase stalker men's probability of getting the information of their addresses.

Further, these women are more likely to "get out of control" in economic terms. As Gökovalı and Danışman-Işık (2010) also revealed, these single mothers who try to run an autonomous household are increasingly in danger of extreme poverty. They usually stated that social workers should "dig fridges, not wardrobes" in order to determine whether they need public support or not. Almost all women said that they cannot buy meat for their children and due to poor nutrition, they fall ill very often. Majority of them complained about the considerably high cost of heating in winters. One woman showed me in the interview the tiny and rather old heating device which has three iron pipes but only one of which is working, saying that she tries to protect her two children from cold only by this inadequate device at the same time to prevent them from burning due to the uncovered pipes. Another woman told that she is selling furniture in their home when needed –especially for bills and buying food, as she added- and I saw that there were only two beds, a TV, a fridge, cooker and wardrobe in their home. There was no carpet on the floor and partly resulting from this, the home was very cold, especially for her 3-year-old daughter. She emphasized that she avoids "seeming to sell furniture due to need" and says her neighbors that she is selling just the broken goods. In order to compensate for this enforced dispossession, especially in the eyes of her children, as she explained, she tries to change the face of their home with cheap but effectual

alternatives such as wallpapers. As their presents are prone to spinning out of control in so many different ways, they stated that they could not place reliance on their futures. In general, the beneficiary women I interviewed were truly aware of the fact that this kind of self-sufficiency – "neither living, nor dying", as one of them summarized- is not sustainable and all complained about their "futurelessness". They were considerably anxious about their old age since they will be deprived of retirement rights as informal workers, welfare benefit due to the "acute" and "temporary" construction of SED, and alimony since they avoid making contact with their ex-husbands or ex-husbands rejects to give alimony. They could not envision one move ahead of enabling their children "be out of the woods". They often repeated the sentence of "everything is for them (children)" and implied that they were "sacrificing themselves" for the sake of granting a better future for their children while almost completely despaired of their own future. In this regard, they once more again pose the risk of "getting out of control" as a futureless class which cannot predict how to survive during the life-course transitions such as from adulthood to old age, from being welfare beneficiary to "self-sufficient" wage worker, or from one kind of dependency –public dependency as welfare beneficiaries- to other forms of dependency such as debilitation in the old age. Strikingly, just one interviewed woman did not talk about such an anxiety for the future. She was deadly ill and clearly expressed that she did not hope to live until she gets old. The only future they can contemplate is through others, be this their children. Those women who had an imagination of their own old age despite its being unpredictable and unstable life phase, were largely regarding their child or children as the "architects of their future". For this reason, they were remarkably motivated to "invest in" the education of their children envisioning more or less the

same route to “save” themselves from “futurelessness”: their children will receive “good education”, find a “good job” and relieve them of poverty and dependency, especially in the old age. However, this vicarious future they envision and invest in largely depends on external factors neutralizing the impact of their individual efforts .such as the poor conditions of schools in poor neighborhoods (average class size, unequal distribution of teachers, or infrastructural problems disturbing class environment), class-based inequalities of nourishment, access to supplementary resources –such as books or courses- to increase success, and poor home conditions in terms of stimulating learning –especially within female-headed households in which single-mothers are under the pressure of double burden. Even if they, for instance, “work hard enough” to be able to send children to study groups at weekends or to undertake the whole responsibility of domestic work to create time to study for children, including the works which can be developmentally regarded as “children’s works” such as making up their beds, tidying up their rooms, or bagging the books of the tomorrow’s class; almost none of the women stated that their children are successful in school. Most associated their children’s problem of low attachment to school or academic failure with being a child in a single-mother-family and they were not believing that their children compete on an equal basis with the children of other forms of families such as dual earners or male-breadwinner/female-caregiver ones.

6.3.2 Gender outcome: Relative autonomy from private dependency

Even if SED officially does not target single-mother families as a priority, as all interviewed social workers expressed, they have a de facto priority due to the fact

that they pose a high risk of instability. When I asked the primary beneficiary profile of SED, social workers clearly referred to "women who married to wrong men":

> We are cleaning up after their husbands in some way. These women are generally those who made wrong choices. Irresponsible, lazy, criminal (men)… They were left unprotected[35]. I can understand when I talk with them that they swear off marriage. They were generally weary of marriage. When I told them that we provide assistance for them due to their being alone as a mother, they instantly assault me saying that they got their fingers burnt for once. (see Appendix A, 16)

Those women who are "weary of marriage" ("*evlilik yorgunu*") and who "did not find what they expected", as almost all highlighted, benefit from SED mainly so that it functions as a compensation for marriage failures. As Orloff (1993) argued, "men claim as worker citizens to compensate for failure in the labor market; women make claims as workers but also as members of families", that is, "to compensate for marriage failures" (p.308). The women I interviewed were –with an exception who is raped by her employer when she was a university student and now has a relatively decent work and better material conditions- generally were detached from education life and enforced to marry at early ages, then were trapped in full-time unpaid work, benefited from basic social rights only as dependents of a male-breadwinner –except those who sustained their relationships under religious marriages-, and ultimately had no future prospects for old age except being dependent on their children's caregiving or the retirement salary of their decedent[36] husbands. Unsurprisingly, in response to the deepening economic insecurity after divorce, they talked about marriage as an ideally constructed de-commodifying institution; that is, "enabling to uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation"

[35] *"sahipsiz"*

[36] *"merhum"* as stated in the law.

(Esping-Andersen, 1990, p.37). Despite their being "weary of marriage", almost all the women I interviewed told that they hoped that marriage would relieve them of "struggle to earn a living" under the protection of a male-breadwinner. As I noted before, the primary beneficiary group of SED is those women who "married with wrong men". That is, men who are unable to guarantee "a socially acceptable standard of living" for his family due to his "irresponsibility", "idleness", "clumsiness", or "criminal tendency". For this reason, these women are actually "weary of" economically dysfunctional marriages in which they become "both man and woman of the family"; so by the "right man", they largely refer to an ideal of well-functioning and generous breadwinner. Accordingly, when I asked interviewed women the ideal marriage they imagine, they portray more or less the same family model: a well-functioning female-caregiver/male-breadwinner family in which they could have time to care without concerning for subsistence:

> In my ideal marriage, I do not puzzle my brains in order to make ends meet. I want to know that I will not suffer from hunger, unpaid bills or rent, or meeting my children's needs such as stationery or winter coat, or meat, milk; even if I do not work. I want to feel comfortable. I just want to take care of my children without any concern for tomorrow. (see Appendix A, 17)

In face of the imbricated double burden and compressed motherhood; time poverty and mom guilt –resulting from the unsupported activation of SED, as I elaborated on in the previous section- they mostly imagine the ideal family environment as a sphere of autonomy for themselves to perform their motherhood freely from time pressure and mental load of double burden. Further, they imagine marriage as ideally promising a secured standard of living regardless of their status in the labor market but dependent on another person's labor market status. However, almost all had the

experiences of in-marriage poverty and also compromised on the fact that marriage neither granted them a sphere of autonomy to care "with inner peace" due to the gendered distribution of time and energy consuming domestic responsibilities. In this regard, many women complained that their income-generating capacities have been deteriorated due to the imbalanced distribution of the unpaid work during marriage and unfolded after divorce or separation. Some of them impressively forged a link between their deterioration as a child under the tutelage of the father, and as a wife under the patronage of the husband:

> My father said that daughters do not go to school in our culture. You will be a gossip topic in our environment, if you do not marry your daughter off when she reaches puberty. I got married at 14. When your breasts grow, it is enough for them. Your psychology, your future, education, readiness does not matter. I got to know my husband after marriage. We were in financial difficulties. I said to him that I wanted to find a job in a shop, for instance, as a shop assistant. Even if it does not flow, at least it drips. He said that I cannot have it said behind my back that Ertuğrul lets his wife work. Now, I am left sitting high and dry. Just because of them. (see Appendix A, 18)

This was a typical narrative for interviewed women; thus, they often emphasized the emancipating role of SED which allows them to maintain a more or less "socially acceptable standard of living" independently of their marital and labor-market statuses. Of course, they have to complement SED with other sources of income and this largely forces them to engage in informal and precarious works, but they feel that they have an alternative except a new marriage or going back to the family home.

Many of the interviewed women had the experience of residing in women's shelters for a certain period but they had left these institutions to establish "their own order". They emphasized that they could not adopt to the disciplinary conditions in

shelters about meals, sleep, entrance and exit. Especially with dependent children, they expressed their need for more flexible living conditions since it is hard to harmonize children with a range of rules in everyday flow of life. For instance, one woman said that in the shelter it was forbidden to eat separately but her child was stressed in crowd and rejected to eat completely. Several women talked about similar eating disorders their children developed in shelters. They also spoke about their own adaptation problems to communal life within a disciplinary institution such as restricted TV usage, incompatible sleeping patterns with roommates, benefiting from everything "as counted" (fruits, menstrual pads, time for going out, child care articles, as they expressed), or their unsatisfied need to "stand alone". They highlighted that this disciplinary order was infantilizing them. At this point, they suggested that SED has become the sole leg to stand on during the process of "constructing their own order" since they were rarely or never supported by their families after divorce. While some of them had already stopped communicating with their families after marriage due to their husbands' obstructiveness, some women stated that their decision to divorce disrupted their familial relationships. Especially, Kurdish interviewees emphasized that their cultural norms require that divorced women can return to their family homes only if they give up their children so they rejected such conditional support and chose to "take shelter in the state"[37], as they expressed.

As Esmer (46, two children, 3 years) stated impressively, "begging the state is easier than begging people[38]". Almost all the interviewed women were regarding their child benefit as a basic right –they often said that they "deserve" it- and talked

[37] *"devlete sığındım"*

[38] *"el âleme el açmaktansa devlete dilenirim"*

about the relative comfort of relying on this right instead of being trapped in the networks of interpersonal dependencies. In this regard, they consent to "maybe less money, but definitely more freedom"[39], as Sümeyye (36, three children, 3 years) summarized. Thus, I integrate the discussion on the generosity of the SED with the program's potential gender outcomes designing women's relationships with the state, society, men, and themselves. For instance, even if all the women I interviewed complained about the limited generosity of SED, in their narratives about forming and sustaining an autonomous household after separation, SED has a crucial significance as a regular source of income –at least for 1 year nonstop- with little conditionality. As a striking example, one woman told that she left the home in which she was living with her husband and his second wife under religious marriage when she started to receive SED. She stated that she would most probably continue her life as the "secondary wife" if SED had not guarantee a regular public support to establish her own household in which she is "not a wife, but only a mother", as she said. Another woman talked about her economic instability due to the constant disappearing of her husband who goes in and out of prison recurrently; thus, she emphasized that SED relatively stabilizes their lives at least in terms of basic needs. In general, these women can continue to be entitled unless they cohabitate with any man, abuse or use violence on their children, make them work, remove them from school or interrupt their education life with repetitive absence, and deprive them of meeting their basic needs. That is, they can receive this cash benefit without any problem as long as they maintain a "normal family life", as many social workers summarized, at least until they create the impression of "dependency syndrome" as a long-term beneficiary.

[39] *"tamam, daha az param olsun, ama kesinlikle daha özgürüm"*

As many women emphasized, if they had not been entitled to SED; they would have to return to their family homes in which they would most probably encounter with similar problems those resided in women's shelters talked about, such as need to autonomy and a flexible everyday life. For instance, one woman told that she lived in her brother's home for a short time after divorce and he was appropriating her wage, restricting her social relations especially romantic ones, and when he is at work, his wife was taking over the brother role and she had to ask for permission from her brother's wife –who is younger than the interviewed woman- to go out or make a telephone conversation. She noted that this disciplinary –and also infantilizing- home environment was highly humiliating for her so she left there with her two children by "reluctantly" making contact with her ex-husband. He "set up a home" for them within minimum conditions and visits this home from time to time to control her "sexual loyalty" in return for his "great heartedness". She receives SED secretly and sustains this new household by relying on this benefit solely –except the unstable and limited contributions of the ex-husband- since she had to leave her job after she lost the opportunity to entrust her children to her brother's wife as an informal solution to work and family conflict. Even though she is still exposed to patriarchal control such as restrictions on going out, making friends, having romantic relationships, mobile phone usage and way of dressing; she thinks that SED increases her bargaining power against the disciplinary "great heartedness" of the ex-husband. For instance, she told that he constantly threatens her to "cut the cord" if she does not comply with the rules he set but she feels not "looking to him" to sustain "her own order" and can negotiate the rules. When he rejects to add units to her account in order to prevent her from "disloyalty", for instance, she can do it by herself with the payment of SED.

O'Connor (1993) supports that the concept of de-commodification; that is, "insulation from the pressures of the market" (p. 511) must be supplemented by the concept of personal autonomy; that is, insulation from public and/or private dependence. All women I interviewed stated that they cannot maintain their autonomous households without SED and will be forced to return to their family homes or again make "wrong marriages". Although almost all of them were in agreement about the inadequacy of the payment to "make end meets" without additional incomes, they strongly expressed that it strengthens their hands for constructing "a life of their own" which is relatively autonomous from oppressive relationships, especially with ex, present and potential husbands:

> When my husband left home, some men proposed to me by saying that 'I will save you, your child. I have flats, I am doing well, so and so'. If the state did not look after me[40] maybe I would have to marry with such vultures or prostitute myself. I said to them "you can no longer do what you used to do". (see Appendix A, 19)

As Saxonberg (2013) highlighted, "while decommodified workers gain bargaining power *vis-à-vis* their prospective employers, defamilialized women also gain power *vis-à-vis* their male partners" because "they are no longer dependent on their incomes to survive" (p.3). Many women stated that they would not choose marriage if they continue to receive public support and sustain a living for themselves. However, almost all of them were under their ex partners' pressure of re-union. They were truly aware of their capabilities to survive and regarding men as "cack-handed" ("*elinden iş gelmez*") due to their deprivation of the knowledge "to paddle their own canoe" ("*kendi işini kendi görmek*"). One woman said that "loneliness is written all over

[40] *"sahip çıkmasaydı"*

some men's faces"[41]. That is, when men live alone, their loneliness can be deduced through the signs of "negligence" permeating their bodies and living spaces since they usually cannot manage domestic works including self-care. In this regard, interviewed women were regarding themselves as "competent to survive" as long as state substitutes the income-generating role of men. They clearly stated that if they lose this cash benefit, they will have to either leave their children to child protection institutions or re-marry in order not to "prostitute themselves" ("*orospuluk mu yapayım"*) or "fall in the gutter" ("*sersefil olmamak için*"). Except the woman who is a university student, women I interviewed did not believe in the capacity of the labor market to grant them a better future. However, even though they saw marriage as an alternative to the welfare benefit they receive, they insisted on their desire not to be confined to such an alternative.

6.3.3 State outcome: De-stabilization of marriage and double-burdened children

It is significant to highlight that these women are supported for the sake of their motherhood; that is, in order to mediate the destructive effects of "marriage failures" on children who are "the future of the society". On the other hand, beneficiary women I interviewed also believe that their children will undertake the responsibility of compensating for the poverty and insecurity they are trapped in after divorce; that is, these children are also "the future of their mothers". As one social worker said, when their children reach the age of 18, they will lose this benefit and they will most probably not find a decent job to maintain themselves due to their low human capital, limited work experience, and increased age.

[41] *"bazı adamın yalnızlığı yüzünden akar"*

At this point, it is significant to question what does marriage do to those women until it fails, apart from the compensation mechanisms intervening only when it fails. Moreover, as a manifestation of the institutional transition from woman to family in 2011, these mechanisms focus on decreasing the cost of marriage failures just for children by largely regarding women as equally responsible for these failures. When I asked bureaucrats that whether lifting children in disadvantaged families out of poverty is possible by excluding the problem of gender inequality from child policies, they generally told that women as "adults" are responsible for their choices but children as "unguarded" should not pay the price of "adults' choices".

In Schmid's (2006) framework, there are both individual differences and structural opportunities/barriers in determining a social risk and I strongly agree with the argument that when some individual differences overlap with structural barriers, they turn into social disadvantages and transcend the borders of individual effort. In this regard, Schmid sees social solidarity as a human right when the individual suffers from an external/structural factor or the problem is so big that s/he will most probably fail to solve it single-handedly. However, he focuses on market failures as the majority of scholars did/do, and neglects the significant effects of marriage failures on women's capabilities. While market failures are recognized as more or less structural problems worth to be publicly intervened and debated, marriage failures tend to be seen as individual clumsiness taking place outside the structure. However, marriage is a social institution embedded within the patriarchy as a system of relations subordinating women and blurs the boundaries between individual and public responsibilities especially when its effect on women's life-course transition experiences – such as divorce- is taken into account.

Firstly, individualization of marriage failures misses the mothers whose interests are remarkably intertwined with the interests of their children and dissociates the problem of gender inequality from the problem of child poverty within female-headed households. SED recognizes that children in those households are disadvantaged but does not aim to encompass the very basis –the unfolding of women's economic vulnerability after divorce- of inter-household inequalities which are directly reflected on inequalities among children. As one bureaucrat said, it is supposed that "adults find a way round, children carry the can". They neglect the imbalanced relations between these adults within a marriage. When those women whose employability was systematically deteriorated, and who were enforced to informality and compressed motherhood in order to survive are totally left unsupported when their children reach the age of 18 without a significant improvement in their conditions; children will most probably continue to be overwhelmed with the double burden of being the future of both their mothers and the society at large. That is, as long as SED miss mothers' interests, it also largely fails to attain the expected result for the children. For instance, children of the beneficiary women I interviewed generally have difficulties in school attendance and academic success due to the ongoing instability of their lives. Further, many women told that their children received disciplinary punishment and had adaptation problems and they ascribed such problems to their own "bad parenting" resulting from "being both mother and father of the home" within the conditions of compressed motherhood. They claimed that they need time to care, especially to catch up on meeting the requirements of the new form of curriculum which is more and more based on "parent involvement". As they explained, homework is currently constructed as a product of parent-child partnership so that it is highly complicated

for a child to do by him/herself. As a result, instead of promoting an "enabling family environment for learning" as UNICEF (2019, p.44) defines, this kind of responsibilization turns asymmetries among parents and households into inequalities among children.

Secondly, all the women without exception emphasized that they cannot maintain their autonomous households if they do not receive SED. Their relationship with paid work is highly fragile and inconsistent. Further, since the works they engage in are generally low-paid, insecure, flexible and unsatisfying, they do not envision and experience paid work as an emancipating activity. They all –except the woman who is a university student and hopeful for the future believing in "the power of the education"- have an image of ideal marriage in which they would be relieved of "concerns for the future", even though they emphasized that they will not "make the same mistake", a new marriage, as long as they have an alternative such as SED. They usually refer to SED as the substitute for marriage as a sphere of stability for them. Therefore, they often stated that SED prevents them from "wrong marriages" in search of financial stability. However, if their children fail to "lift" them –due to the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage or merely indifference to intergenerational solidarity- that is, they are left without alternatives to survive, they can take the chance of a new marriage. In the best-case scenario, if they marry to "well-functioning male-breadwinners", their economic vulnerability will continue to be masked under the patronage of the husband. However, they can once more "do not find what they expected from marriage" due to the intra-household inequalities. For instance, social workers told that they often reject the applications of women who are married to "well off" but "ungenerous" men. As a response, these women

rebel at social workers saying that "Must I divorce to be protected by the state?"[42]. In any case, these women's relationship with the marriage institution is highly fragile and triggers future marriage failures.

Strikingly, while bureaucrats I interviewed were totally unaware of what is happening in the field and just talking about ideals and abstractions, they all spoke of these special cases interpreting them as SED's unintended consequence of "incentivizing to divorce". They were clearly aware of the fact that women's economic dependence on men –even if they are "well-off"- directly affects their children's living standards since "women make homes".[43] As social workers told, some married women want to benefit from SED by claiming that their husbands punish them by "keeping their hands off" from the economic responsibilities of the joint household so that their children suffer from material deprivation. That is, women's dependency in male-breadwinner/female-caregiver families give initiative to men to decide on what, when, and how they provide for women so women may need to be supported publicly even if they are married. Ultimately, they may volunteer for divorce to receive this support, as many social workers and bureaucrats also stated. On the other side of the coin, for those women who are already divorced, SED contributes to the maintenance of female-headed households; that is, enables them to maintain their singlehood. For a familialist and conservative social investment state, it is also a new social risk especially while public mechanisms such as SED de-stabilizes economic function of the marriage and decreases relative cost of divorce for women who will most probably be welfare beneficiaries after divorce.

[42] *"Devletin bana sahip çıkması için illa boşanmam mı lazım?"*

[43] *"yuvayı dişi kuş yapar"*

As a result, these women, who are the primary beneficiary profile of SED as social workers expressed, continue to be a “futureless class” without any compensation for the destructive effects of marriage failures and this process is not independent of the problems about alimony rights, women’s shelters, and gendered division of labor. As long as child policies neglect that children’s interests are directly intertwined with mothers’ interests and continue to attempt to reduce the cost of divorce for children by excluding the problem of gender inequality, children of those women who are trapped in “futurelessness” regardless of their marital status will most probably continue to pose a risk for social stability.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter elaborates on three distinctive fields of divergence as new routes challenging AKP’s neoliberal familialism. Firstly, cohabitation rule draws the line between public responsibility and individual responsibility for poverty alleviation so that it eliminates potentially self-sufficient households. It aims to detect marriage-like relationships in which women are supposed to be economically supported by men and eliminate the households which may have alternative ways –such as patronage relationships and informal support- to survive except relying on welfare benefits. This rule recognizes men as additional income sources and as social workers implied, regards sex and care as female resources which are exchanged for economic protection. Thus, social workers generally associate the material with the relational during the process of needs assessment and ground their social diagnosis on everyday manifestations of cohabitation. At the intersection of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism, cohabitation rule draws the boundary between legitimate and non-legitimate relationship, controls sexuality of women who are not legally under the

responsibility of a male-breadwinner, reinforces women's financial dependency on men within patronage relationships, injures dignity of women by questioning their "chastity" explicitly, and ultimately undermines the relative autonomy of being single. Nevertheless, when these women face the trade-off between the false-generosity of men and state support; they mostly choose the state so budget concerns underlying cohabitation rule seems to be miscarried.

Secondly, SED aims to promote worker-parent status of beneficiary women within the scope of integrating social assistance into employment. For this reason, SED is designed as acute and temporary benefit kept below the minimum wage of the time in order to incentivize employment after the crisis period –divorce or separation- is overcome with minimum damage. Activating design of SED is justified on the basis of good motherhood and good citizenship. According to this, only productive, self-sufficient, hard-working and self-respecting mothers can be good role models for their children. This approach neglects the issue of working poor and the border between willingness to work and employment while de-legitimizing SED as a regular source of income. On the other hand, İşkur functions as the proof of women's willingness to work rather than an institution which creates job; but beneficiary women welcome this dysfunctionality in order not to lose their benefit and be enforced to cope with work and family conflict with a reduced amount of income. They usually combine SED and wages they earn from informal works and do not have alternatives such as public childcare facilities. Thus, they struggle with extreme time poverty, stress, and mom guilt and cannot exhibit "positive parenting" within the conditions of compressed motherhood. Further, they do not predict how long they can sustain such self-sufficiency. That is, SED's unsupported activation contributes to intergenerational transmission of poverty by throwing single mothers

into informal, low-paid and precarious works and undermines a nurturing family environment ideal.

Thirdly, SED promotes pedagogicalization of beneficiary parents with its entitlement conditions and the psychological counseling service it provides when needed. It aims to construct a partnership between parents and the state for preparing future generations as healthy and harmonious citizens. This partnership relies on the principle of "no rights without duties" and parents are expected to ensure an enabling environment to sustain "a normal family life" with stability and regularity in a way to acquire the required habits. Through the condition of education maintenance and a stable place of residence, it is supposed that children are secured in terms meeting their basic needs, do not get out of public authority's control, and governed as future citizen-workers who are harmonious and beneficial components of the inclusive growth. However, beneficiary women's residential, social and financial insecurity cannot be removed by only giving a certain amount of money them. Unless the 6284 Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence against Women is not implemented and labor market does not promise a better future with decent jobs, these women have no choice except returning to their family homes or re-marrying. For this reason, almost all the interviewed women shape their future expectations relying on their children with the expectation that their educational success will lift them out of poverty and dependency. However, asymmetries among parents and households turn into asymmetries among children as a result of the education system which is increasingly based on the parent-child partnership. Besides, exclusively child-based construction of SED miss mothers' interests which are intertwined with children's future life chances.

Even if policy goals are rooted in AKP's neoliberal familialism; SED's bureaucratic construction which opens the way for social workers to re-shape eligibility through their own discretion; institutional complementarities which disrupt consistency and linearity by overlapping with various components of SED, and women's multi-layered negotiations with their statuses of wifehood, motherhood, welfare beneficiary, and citizenship produce divergent outcomes which challenge the very basis of neoliberal familialist agenda. They make holes in both family and social policy and do it only as a survival strategy.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

First of all, I can clearly claim that SED succeeds in keeping children with their families. That is, it contributes to de-institutionalization of children by economically supporting fragile households such as single-parent families, dual-parent but in debt families, and families whose breadwinners are imprisoned or lost. All the interviewed women highlighted that they would not raise their children themselves if they had not received SED. They clearly stated that SED strengthens their hands while struggling with economic cost of divorce or separation, especially during the period of forming an autonomous household. That is, as a convergence with policy goals, SED seems to contribute to minimizing the damages of family dissolution which is a crisis period. When parents receive money through their children, it is expected that children's status also changes in the family. However, I could not observe such an increasing bargaining power for the children of mothers I interviewed. I think that it results from the fact that those mothers' attachment with their children as the motivation to struggle against financial difficulties predates children's becoming a source of income. That is, as all of them highlighted, they have endured both in-marriage difficulties and later economic cost of divorce or separation "by scarifying themselves" and prioritizing children's interests. They clearly stated that if they had divorced by leaving their children to their fathers, they would have been welcomed by their families or been able to form a new life more easily. They have passed the most difficult phase of divorce in which familiar ways of living have collapsed and new ways are in the making for the sake of their children.

However, social workers told that in case of child mothers, grandparents severely reject to adopt those children who are the results of child sexual abuse; but SED can motivate them to embrace their grandchildren as the members of their families. Since their attachment with those children begins with SED, SED changes those children's not only material conditions as it does for other children, but also their status in relation with recognition, respect, and caring. For instance, one social worker told by laughing softly that when a grandfather came to the SHM in order to re-apply to SED, she reminded him the discussion they made in the last year on his refusal of the child "who is the product of rape". As a response, the grandfather said her "Don't say it like that! She is our joy of life". Further, there are other families which are not in danger of dissolution but are economically supported to incentivize fathers to become "good fathers". For instance, one social worker told that he was responsible for a case in which father had alcohol addiction and gambling debt while refusing to work. He was also maltreating his children and wife. Social worker stated that "under normal conditions, this family cannot be entitled to SED" but he reported an affirmative vote for this family and severely warned the father about the condition of "good fathering" as an eligibility criterion. He proudly said that "SED blocked violence in that family" and that "SED may prevent maltreatment, abuse and violence when it is exclusively provided for pedagogical purposes". That is, in bureaucrats' words, it can serve the "acquisition of positive behaviors". However, we cannot know whether these parents will persist such a "good parenting" after SED ceases to support them. Besides, even if men's attachment with their children or grandchildren may be positively affected after SED, their negative attitudes towards their wives and daughters can remain untouched.

Although SED opens a third way for those women to survive apart from re-marrying or participating in the labor market "at any cost", there are other problems which cannot be solved by only giving people a certain amount of money. For instance, some women told that they give all the money coming from SED to their partners or intermittent husbands/ex-husbands in order "not to injure their manhood". They "choose", as they stated, to give men money to make them "feel as if they bring home the bread". Even if these women receive this benefit on the basis of their motherhood and they are officially not obliged to share this money with even their husbands; they "choose" not only to share but also to grant it in order "not to muddy the water" as one woman defined. The "clarity of the water" is rooted in the normative male-breadwinner and those men who are deprived of the satisfaction derived from being supplier of dependent women are supplemented by the very women. As a result, these women cannot turn an opportunity for economic recovery into autonomy and imbalanced gender relations remain untouched once more again. Women face with the same situation when intermittent husbands', ex-husbands', or partners' sexual regulation and cohabitation rule overlap. In this instance, women avoid turning the money they receive from SED into better material conditions for themselves since these men assume disloyalty when they realize new products in home.

Further, cash transfer by itself does not open a window for women to get rid of the circle of violence. Walker (1979) in her masterpiece, *The Battered Woman*, defines circle of violence as a recurrently abusive relationship which begins with "tension-building accompanied with rising sense of danger", and after a range of "acute battering incident" and comes to a deadlock as a result of "loving-contrition" (p.91). Most of these acute battering incidents occur during the period of divorce or

separation and within the circle women are exclusively open to manipulation and trapped in isolation from their social environment which would help them. Many women I interviewed told such experiences of being trapped in oppressive relationships in which they suffer from psychological, economic, and physical violence. Even if SED strengthen their hands while forming and sustaining an autonomous household after divorce or separation, they may still comply with men's manipulations and face with violence. For instance, many women told that their ex-husbands still intrude their homes, appropriate their moneys, and use violence on them in front of the children. One woman summarized her situation as "Now I do not have to sleep together with him after being beaten within an inch of my life". She continues to be exposed to violence by her ex-husband at home which is largely sustained through SED. Another woman tearfully expressed that she "constantly returns to the beginning psychologically" due to the ongoing cycle of abuse and violence.

Even if almost all the interviewed women abandon their rights to alimony in order to get rid of ex-husbands, they often talked about timeless ex-husbands who "never accept their oldness". For instance, one woman referred to her ex-husband as the only reason of her unemployment. He systematically prevents her from getting a job by claiming that "she is a sympathizer of a terrorist group". On the other side of the coin, several women tend to welcome their ex-husbands despite violence since their children reproach them about the absence of their fathers. These women are anxious about the possibility of being blamed by their children for "sending away their fathers". Further, several women stated that they endure the violence and abuse of their ex-husbands since it is s-highly difficult "to cope with boys as a lone woman" and "sons need male-authority". While women complain about their lack of

authority on their children “as an alone woman”, social workers think that even if they may, for instance, have psychological problems and not give “good care”; they have “the only thing the state cannot give those children”: “the motherly love”. However, motherhood as an affection and practice is not isolated from external conditions which stir feeling of inadequacy and constantly enforce them to sacrifice themselves for the sake of children. As many women I interviewed stated, such a love “will not feed you” not only in the material sense, but also in the sense of so-called warm family environment.

The women in this thesis are the typical examples of new poverty which can be summarized as “permanent poverty” with “the threat of social exclusion” (Buğra, & Keyder, 2003, p.14). This is an urban problem since people lose their “access to social networks” (p.23) when they migrate while they are also deprived of formal social security network due to informal work or joblessness. Almost all the interviewed women had migrated from different regions to Istanbul’s lower-class neighborhoods such as Kağıthane, Sultanbeyli, Bağcılar or Esenyurt; and divorced here. They were full-time housewives until they divorced. They lacked social support from their families due to their decision to divorce and they have become textile workers, dishwashers, cleaning workers or pieceworkers in cities where they have become “alone with the decision given”, as one woman summarized. However, for those women, this “aloneness” was not only a source of insecurity but also a window of opportunity to construct “a new life”. Even if they work in informal and low-waged jobs with bad conditions, economically sustaining their own family evoke a sense of self-management. They frequently portrayed themselves in interviews as “superwomen” who cope with multi-layered problems on their own. Their narratives of powerlessness were without exception related to their relationships with men,

generally ex-husbands, fathers and other male relatives. For instance, women cannot temp to want their brothers or fathers to turn on the combi boiler when they feel cold while sleeping in the laundry room, as one woman with tearful eyes told; whereas they can self-confidently claim their rights when social workers reject their entitlement. Citizenship status gives them a sense of "deservingness" in contrast to their familial status which locates them under male authority. They recurrently highlighted that SED is not charity saying that "social workers do not pay it out of their own pocket". It was a right, for them; whereas familial support was a gift in exchange for their voice.

Although SED is not only a cash transfer but a comprehensive program including psychological counseling and social support to restore the fragile families, as beneficiary women I interviewed expressed, it largely functions just as an additional income source rather than an overall support mechanism. Further, it was also an exchange relationship. SED responsibilizes beneficiary mothers to enter in a partnership with the Ministry "to equalize the opportunities" for their children by "preventing them to pay the price of the failure of two adults"; that is, of marriage failures. However, behind marriage failures, there is a huge social problem which appeals to policy intervention beyond short-run economic programs: gender inequality. Even if SED more or less decreases economic cost of divorce and makes easier to form an autonomous household, women still pay the price for inequality and desperately think that they will continue to pay it since "they do not have a future". When I said that I will delete the notes I took in interviews due to the confidentiality agreement, almost all the women insisted on their desire to be heard publicly so wanted me not to delete "even one word". Relying on their own claims, I can basically say that in order to grant its beneficiaries self-sufficiency, SED should be

re-designed as a more generous benefit and multidimensional program in tandem with labor market policies and care policies to increase women's employability, create decent employment, alleviate work and family conflict and ensure their entitlement to pension; judicial system –especially alimony cases- and law-enforcement officers to ease the divorce process; and lastly, psychological support services which focus on their specific needs as "women without men and with children" rather than only engaging in children's problems within single-parent families.

I elaborated on the drawbacks the design of the SED's objectives, entitlement and procedures has neglected; that is, drawbacks of just giving a certain amount of money to de-stabilize female-headed households and doing this in a way to reinforce the consensus between patriarchy and neoliberalism. However, I should finally underline the shortcomings of my own research. First of all, my sample does not truly represent all the categories of "women without men and with children". For instance, I could access to only two women whose husbands are imprisoned but one of them did not accept interviewing me due to security concerns while the other constantly censured herself during the interview due to the same reasons. I think it was because their husbands were political prisoners. As I learned from the social workers I interviewed, one of the major beneficiary groups of SED is the wives of political prisoners; as they mostly stated "the wives of terrorists". I think they are the most discriminated and silenced group of "women without men" while at the same time suffering for "men's sin" at the very most and literally. However, they are also the most inaccessible ones. As another category, Syrian and other immigrant women who are married to Turkish men also have unique problems even if they can benefit from SED relying on their Turkish citizen children. They are generally deprived of

the rights literacy due to the language barrier, lack of citizenship status and the asymmetry these two factors create between themselves and their husbands. I refer by rights literacy to the knowledge of which institution serves what, which service is provided for whom, what are the criteria for benefitting a given right, and how to apply these services. Since especially immigrant women lack rights literacy and channels to access to such a knowledge, they cannot truly benefit from SED, as social workers implied. The citizenship status which is normally equalizing factor de-stabilizes intra-familial relationships for those women; that is, lack of citizenship status undermines those women's bargaining position vis-à-vis their Turkish citizen husbands. Therefore, their unique conditions of transcending their low legal status and unbalanced familial position relying on "being the mother of a citizen of Turkey" need more exploration. Last but not least, further researches on "women without men" should specifically aim to reveal women's stories of forming autonomous households after divorce as empowering experiences since these homes are generally constructed after violence, in the shade of violence, and despite violence for all that.

APPENDIX A

QUOTATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL TURKISH

1. Sosyal Hizmet Merkezi'ne gittim yardımımı kestirmek için. Kocam eve ne zaman döner bilmiyorum. Allah'tan komşularım yardım ediyorlar. Bu incik boncuğu satıp bir şeyler de kazanıyorum. İyi yada kötü bir kocam var. Neden devlete yük olayım? (Zarife, 34, two children, SED beneficiary for 1 year)

2. Devlet kim kiminle ilişki yaşıyor ilgilenmez. Ya da kim kiminle beraber yaşıyor. İnsanların özel hayatlarıyla ilgilenmiyoruz. Ama bir evde istihdam edilebilir, sağlıklı bir birey varsa onun ailenin geçimi için sorumluluk almasını bekleriz. Biz ancak o evde çalışabilecek sağlıklı biri yoksa meseleye dahil oluruz. Bizim için aslolan kendine yetebilmektir. (Bureaucrat 1)

3. Saksı gibi bir adamla devam edebileceğimi düşünebiliyor musunuz? Bizim bugün çektiğimiz sefaletin sorumlusu o. Bize bıraktığı şey anca borç. Ben evliyken de faturalar ödenmezdi. Şimdi de durum aynı, bir şey değiştiği yok. O varken de dolap boştu, şimdi de boş. Her haltı ben yapacaksam bu herif ne işe yarar? Böyle bir kamburla yaşayamam, kusura bakmayın ama. (Yağmur, 34, two children, 2 and a half year)

4. Bir eve erkek giriyorsa para da girer. Normali budur. Zaten böyle olması lazım. Yoksa hangi kadın çeksin bir erkeğin külfetini? Bazı kadınlar diyor ki hem devletten alacağımı alayım hem adamdan. Bu mümkün değil. Devletin verdiği parayı kaybetmemek için evlenmiyorlar. Gayri-meşru birliktelik yaşıyorlar. (Kaan, 26, social worker)

5. Çok tedirgin olurdum komşular Bakanlık'a ihbar edecek ilişkimi diye. Burası onun ikinci evi gibiydi. Her zaman karısını tercih ederdi. Kafasına göre gelip giderdi. Neden diye soramazdım. Burayı otel gibi kullanırdı. Ne kocalık yaptı bana, ne de çocuklarıma babalık. Anca beni yıllarca esir aldı. (Songül, 41, three children, 2 years)

6. Dediler ki bana kocanı evine alma. Paranı onunla paylaşma. Böyle bir ihbar alırsak yardımın kesilir. Sanki benim onu eve almama şansım var. Paranın kokusunu alır o. Çok sık gelmez bana ama geldi mi de gidene kadar el açtırır Allah'a. Çocuklarım için ne biriktirdiysem yer bitirir. Beni yedi bitirdi zaten. (Randa, 36, one child, 2 years)

7. Sorgulayamazsın. Eğer ben bekar bir kadınsam, evime kimi aldığımı, yatağıma kimi aldığımı . . . Bu senin işin değil. Ama şimdi onlar da şey diyecek ne halin varsa gör ama önce bizden aldığın parayı geri ver. Onlar da haklı. Devlet çocukları korumak istiyor. Ama ben kendi çocuklarım için doğru kararı verebilirim. (Sümeyye, 36, 3 children, 3 years)

8. Ben kendime hep dikkat ederim. O yüzden herhalde şüphelendiler benden. Hmmm . . . bu kadın makyaj yapmış, tayt giymiş, saçını boyamış, o zaman yalnız olamaz. Özel hayatıma burunlarını soktukları için üst komşum musallat oldu bana. Devletin memuru benim bay komşularıma nasıl sorar ki bu kadının evine erkek girip çıkıyor mu diye?

9. Bizim evlere girmek kolay, gardroplara. Aynısını zenginlere yapabilirler mi? Zenginlerin çocuklarını bizimkilere yaptıkları gibi sorguya çekebilirler mi? Zengin bir kadına "evine erkek girip çıkıyor mu?", böyle bir soru sorabilirler mi? Böyle aşağılayıcı…ama kimin umrunda? Sanki ilkel yaban bi kabileyi ziyaret eder gibi geldiler buraya. Gözlerindeki kibri gördüm biliyor musun? Evimde salına salına yürüdüler ve özel hayatımı eşelediler çocğumun önünde. Ne yaparlarsa sineye çekeceğiz ya, bize layık gördükleri şey bu. (Gamze, 34, 3 children, 2 and a half year)

10. İkinci kez evleneceksem çok zengin olmalı. Omzumda bir başka çocuk daha taşıyamam. Böyle bir adam da beni bulmayacağına göre, iki çocuklu dul kadını, işsiz güçsüz, mutsuz, yalnız…Aşk defterini kapattım. Hayattan tek beklediğim maaşım kesilmesin, bir iş bulayım, çocuklarıma annelik yapayım. (Vildan, 28, two children, 1 year)

11. Sana kırık dökük bir ısıtıcı veriyorlar ya da eski püskü giysi mesela. Sonra inanılmaz mahcubiyet duymanı istiyorlar. İşe yaramıyor mu? Heralde yarıyor. Ama üzerimde baskıları var. Bir keresinde benim kapı komşum çağırdı. Dedi koltukları gel sil. Böyle işler buldum mu giderim. Tam tamına üç saat aralıksız sildim o koltuğu. Sonra oturduk çay içtik beraber. Sonra bana tek kuruş vermeden yolcu etti. Daha soramadım neden paramı vermedin diye. Heralde bana arada sırada yardım ediyor ya, onun karşılığını almaya çalışıyor böyle. (Randa, 36, one child, two years)

12. Bu kadınlar genelde önceden ev hanımı olanlar. Çalışmaya alışık değiller. Bu yardımla da iyice tembelleşiyorlar. Bir arkadaşın ya da akraban olmaz mı? Kolay yolu seçiyorlar, özellikle Romanlar, Suriyeliler. Onların lugatında yok çalışmak diye bir şey. (Özkan, 28, social worker)

13. Sanki varya maratondaymışım gibi hissediyorum. Çocukları okula bırakırım sabah 8'de. Hepsi de ayrı ayrı sokaklarda. Artık o gün işim neredeyse oraya giderim. Bazen 2-3 vesait. Akşam 6 gibi biter işim. Sonra psikopat gibi evde ne iş bekliyor onu hesap ederim. Işte kaçta yatmış olmalıyım, öbür gün de aynı maratonu koşacağım çünkü. Biliyorsunuz benim yaptığım iş, gündelik işi kolay değil. Enerji istiyor. Bu koşturmacada anne olduğumu unutuyorum. Sadece baba olabiliyorum. Soğuk, beton gibi. Robot gibi. Çocuklarıma böyle olmak istemem ama hayat mücadelesi . . . (Sümeyye, 36, three children, 3 years)

14. Çocuklarım için çalışmam lazım. Kendim için. Güçlü olmak için. Çocuklarıma bir gelecek sunmak için. Ama bazen çocuklarımdan çalıyorum gibi geliyor. Beraber geçirebileceğimiz zamandan kısıyorum. Başka seçeneğim yok ki. Belki ileride bana teşekkür ederler. Ya da derler ki bizimle iyi ilgilenmedin. Suçlarlar. Bilmiyorum. Ama böyle yapmak zorundayım. Kendi ayaklarım üstünde durmak zorundayım. Çocuklarım için. (Çiğdem, 38, three children, 3 years)

15. Bazen düşünüyorum da çocuklarımı daha iyi koşullarda yaşamaktan alıkoyuyorum. Bencilce. Buraya gelen kadın tehdit etti beni. Onlara kötü

davran yada işe koy el koyulur çocuklarına dedi. Tartıştım onunla. Dedim kimse çocuklarımı benden alamaz. Ama bazen de düşünüyorum burada benimle sefil olacaklarına, böyle bir evde, bu durumda, devletin koruması altında olsalar daha iyiydi. Ama ayrılamam işte. Onlar olmadan yaşayamam. Ama mesela soğuktan titredikleri zaman evin içinde ya da çaresiz hissettiğimde böyle düşünürüm. (Yağmur, 34, two children, 2 and a half year)

16. Kocalarının arkasını topluyoruz bir nevi. Bunlar genelde yanlış tercih yapmış kadınlar. Sorumsuz, tembel, suçlu (adamlar)…Sahipsiz kalıyorlar. Evliliğe sövmelerini anlıyorum onlarla konuşunca. Genelde evlilikten bezmiş oluyorlar. Ben onlara anlatıyorum, bakın bu yardım siz yalnız bir annesiniz diye veriliyor falan hani, hemen hücuma geçerler, derler hani benim ağzım yanmış bir kere. (Muhammed, 31, social worker)

17. İdeal evliliğimde iki yakamı bir araya getireceğim diye kafa patlatmıyorum. Açlık çekmeyeceğimi bilmem lazım, ödenmemiş faturalardan yada kiradan, yada çocuklarımın ihtiyaçlarından mesela kırtasiye malzemesi, mesela mont, mesela et, süt. Çalışmasam bile emin olacağım. Kafamın rahat olması lazım. Yarın için düşünmeden sadece çocuklarımla ilgilenmek istiyorum. (Zarife, 34, two children, 1 year)

18. Babam dedi bizim kültürde kızlar okula gitmez. Kızlar ergenliğe girdi mi, kızını evlendirmezsen el aleme dedikodu malzemesi olursun. 14'ümde evlendim. Memelerin çıktı mı onlara yeter. Psikolojin, geleceğin, eğitimin, hazır mısın değil misin önemli değil. Kocamı evlendikten sonra tanıdım. Maddi sıkıntılarımız vardı. Dedim bir mağazada çalışmak istiyorum. Mesela tezgahtarlık. Yağmasa da damlar. Dedi ki arkamdan Ertuğru karısını çalıştırıyor dedirtmem. Şimdi kimsesiz sersefil kalakaldım. Sadece onlar yüzünden. (Esmer, 46, two children, 3 years)

19. Kocam evi terk ettiğinde bazısı geldi evlilik teklif etmeye. Dediler ki çocuğunu kurataracağım, seni…yok dairelerim var, yok durumum çok iyi . . . falan filan. Eğer devlet bana sahip çıkmasaydı belki bu akbabalardan biriyle evlenecektim yada orospuluk yapacaktım. Dedim artık o yaptıklarınızı yapamazsınız. (Çiğdem, 38, three children, 3 years)

APPENDIX B

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Bureaucrat 1

Bureaucrat 2

Bureaucrat 3

Bureaucrat 4

Social worker 1: Esen, 31

Social worker 2: Fatma, 48

Social worker 3: Ebru, 27

Social worker 4: Özkan, 28

Social worker 5: Muhammed, 31

Social worker 6: Kaya, 25

Social worker 7: Kaan, 26

Social worker 8: Raziye, 32

Beneficiary woman 1: Zarife, 34, two children, 1 year

Beneficiary woman 2: Esra, 32, two children, 2 years

Beneficiary woman 3: Yağmur, 34, two children, 2 and a half year

Beneficiary woman 4: Songül, 41, three children, 2 years

Beneficiary woman 5: Randa, 36, one child, 2 years

Beneficiary woman 6: Çiğdem, 38, three children, 3 years

Beneficiary woman 7: Gülay, 34, two children, 1 year

Beneficiary woman 8: Sümeyye, 36, three children, 3 years

Beneficiary woman 9: Gamze, 34, three children, 2 and a half year

Beneficiary woman 10: Vildan, 28, two children, 1 year

Beneficiary woman 11: Esmer, 46, two children, 3 years

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