

CHILD WELL-BEING: THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHILDREN  
AND THEIR MOTHERS

İPEK ELMİRA ARSLAN

BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY

2020

CHILD WELL-BEING: THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHILDREN  
AND THEIR MOTHERS

Thesis submitted to the  
Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
Clinical Psychology

by  
İpek Elmira Arslan

Boğaziçi University

2020

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, İpek Elmira Arslan, certify that

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

Signature.....

Date 27. 8. 2020.....

## ABSTRACT

### Child Well-Being: The Perspectives of Children and Their Mothers

The primary aim of this study is to listen to children's conceptualizations of their well-being and to explore the commonalities and differences of subjective themes that they revealed. Secondly, this study investigates the wishes and expectations of the mothers from their children to understand how children are positioned in their minds and how they define well-being for their children in relation their own identities and experiences. 15 mother and children pairs from three different socio-economic groups were interviewed for these goals. Predetermined themes of the previous studies of child well-being were not asked directly in this study. Instead, children were interviewed with much less guidance. The method was to ask for “who what where” makes children feel good, has importance for them, and gives pleasure. Interviews continued according to the content participants brought. Children were motivated to enrich their expressions by drawing optionally. Mothers were asked separately what they prioritize for their children, what kind of gains they aim in their lives, and what was carried to their motherhood from their own childhood. Results showed that children of 10-12 ages have well-being experiences, significantly shaped by their relational space. Moreover, their relationality is impacted by maternal relational skills and experiences through the efforts mothers chose to invest during child rearing. Findings were discussed to show how the subjective standpoint of children has been developed in the axis of the transmission of maternal relational structure in the understanding of children’s well-being.

## ÖZET

### Çocukların ve Annelerin Gözünden Çocuğun İyi Olma Hali

Bu çalışmanın öncelikli amacı çocuğun iyi olma haline dair düşüncelerini çocukların kendi dilinden dinlemeyi ve onların ortaya çıkaracakları ortak temaları keşfetmektir. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma annelerin de çocuklarına dair düşüncelerini, ideallerini duymayı ve annelerin zihninde çocuklarının nasıl konumlandığını, kendi kimlikleriyle ve deneyimleriyle nasıl ilişkilendiğini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu iki amaç bağlamında, üç farklı sosyo-ekonomik düzeyden anne çocuk ikilileri ile görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Görüşmelerde çocuğun iyi olma haline yönelik daha önceki çalışmalarda ortaya konmuş olan belli temalar doğrudan sorulmayarak onlarla iyi olma hali üzerine yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bunun için izlenen yöntem çocuklara hayatlarında iyi hissettiren, önemli gelen, keyif veren “nereler”, “kimler” ve “neler” olduğunun sorulmasıyla bundan sonra çocukların kendi getirdikleri malzemelerle devam edilmesi olmuştur. Çocuklar isteklerine bağlı olarak sözel anlatımlarının haricinde resim çizerek de anlatımlarını zenginleştirmeye motive edilmiştir. Annelerle görüşmelerde annelere çocukları için neleri değerli, önemli gördükleri, hayatta ne tür kazanımları amaçladıkları, çocuklarının iyi olma haline yönelik düşünceleri ve kendi çocukluklarından anneliklerine neler taşıdığı üzerine paylaşmak istedikleri konuşulmuştur. Sonuçlar, 10-12 yaş arasındaki çocukların iyi olma hali deneyimlerinin önemli ölçüde ilişkisel alanlarıyla şekillendiğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca bu ilişkiselliğin, annelerin yatırım yapmayı seçtiği alanlar ve gösterdikleri çabalar aracılığıyla annelerin ilişkisel beceri ve deneyimlerinin etkisinde geliştiği görülmüştür. Annelerinden aktarılan ilişkisel yapının çocukların

öznel bakış açısının şekillenmesindeki ve iyi olma halini deneyimleyişindeki etkileri tartışılmıştır.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Serra Müderrisoğlu for introducing me to the literature studied here years ago. That was a period of time that gave me a wider understanding of different perspectives and a wider vision for accepting me at first and then other opinions. I would also like to thank my dear professor for leading me to do a study that allowed participants free expression so that I was able to take all my observations and feelings into account.

I would like to thank Assist. Prof. Yasemin Sohtorik for accepting to be part of this journey, which had so many fluctuations.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Pınar Uyan Semerci for accepting to join into the jury, making it possible for me to present this study to experts in the field.

It was a privilege to have Nur Yeniçeri as one of my clinical psychology supervisors. Her understanding ear and insightful perspective will be kept alive all my life. The time we spent together developed my interview skills a lot, which was quite helpful for me in the clinical settings and during the data gathering process.

I would like to express my endless gratitude to Sibel Tümer for her clinical supervision and encouragement. I am grateful to have her being there for me with her understanding, accompaniment, and warm heart.

I would like to thank Pınar Serbest Günay for her supportive attitude. She was there when I had encountered difficulties dealing with massive data.

I would like to thank Nalan Özdemir, who helped in many difficult times. I am grateful for her efforts and her precious friendship in expanding my experience.

I have many reasons to thank Dr. M. Ziya Türkseven for his unconditional generosity, help, and positivity regarding my stressful times. He made a huge

contribution to my deepest encounters. I will always carry all these experiences in my heart, remembering his wisdom.

I would like to thank TÜBİTAK for allocating their resources for the better continuation of studentship and contribution to scientific disciplines.

I am grateful to my family, who encouraged me and supported all my decisions. I owe my thanks to them for offering an understanding and warm environment during this challenging journey. Also, I'm more than thankful to all my friends who have endured me during the hard times. We will be together more than ever. Special thanks to Burcu Arslan and Musab Bilal Gencer for helping me learn rules and regulations in the world. Without their presence, I'm sure that I wouldn't have survived. I would like to thank Merve Şen, my Spinoza, for her limitless patience, helpfulness, and love of organic living with the least harm possible. I am grateful for having Romina Markaroğlu in my life, I would like to thank her just for staying with me in all good and all bad conditions. Last but not least, I would like to thank Refik Yıldız, who has a shining talent for making meaning out of any incomprehensible language. I will always remember sharing songs and dreams that brought me joyful moments.

Above all, I would like to thank most of all the children and mothers who participated in this study. Their willingness to share their perspectives transformed this thesis into a treasury. I owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their contribution.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1. Conceptualization of well-being.....	1
1.2. Subjective well-being and quality of life.....	3
1.3. Introduction of children’s well-being into research with subjective methodology .....	5
1.4. Literature review of children’s well-being research.....	13
1.5. Theoretical framework of parenting .....	23
1.6. Intergenerational transmission of relationality .....	39
1.7. The present study .....	43
CHAPTER 2: METHOD .....	46
2.1. Qualitative research .....	46
2.2. Participants .....	46
2.3. Procedure .....	48
2.4. Qualitative analysis of the data.....	49
CHAPTER 3: RESULTS .....	51
3.1. Interviews with children .....	52
3.2. Interviews with mothers .....	67
3.3. Towards a classification of relationality and well-being.....	87
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION.....	118
APPENDIX A: SCRIPT FOR CHILDREN’S INTERVIEWS .....	125

APPENDIX B: SCRIPT FOR MOTHERS' INTERVIEWS .....	127
APPENDIX C: CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS.....	129
REFERENCES.....	138

## LIST OF APPENDIX FIGURES

Figure C1. Drawing by T (10, boy, high SES) .....	129
Figure C2. Drawing by T (10, boy, low SES).....	130
Figure C3. Drawing by S (11, boy, mid SES).....	131
Figure C4. Drawing by K (11, boy, high SES) .....	132
Figure C5. Drawing by U (10, girl, low SES) .....	133
Figure C6. Drawing by K (10, girl, middle SES).....	134
Figure C7. Drawing by H (11, girl, low SES).....	135
Figure C8. Drawing by A (12, boy, middle SES) .....	136
Figure C9. Drawing by M (12, girl, high SES).....	137

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Conceptualization of well-being

#### 1.1.1 What is well-being?

Even though its history goes back to early Greek and Eastern philosophies (Fattore, Mason & Watson, 2016), well-being has been defined by some derivations of the two main approaches within these philosophical roots. Ryan and Deci (2001) referred to them as the hedonic and the eudemonic approaches, which have also shaped the current debates around the concept of well-being. Hedonic approach emphasizes seeking pleasure while avoiding pain. On the other hand, eudemonic approach is about self-realization and well-functioning of a person with the evaluations of behaviors worthy of pursuing or morally significant (Thoillez, 2011). Stoll (2014) proposes that while analyzing the history of well-being concept, it is inevitable to encounter the components of early Greek philosophy since the writings are abundant on happiness and having a good life. The idea is that well-being is a complex phenomenon which is different than a mere feeling of happiness regardless of the philosophical interpretation one prioritizes (Fattore et al., 2016). Therefore, the concept of well-being cannot be defined with a restricted range of feelings of happiness, contentment, or pleasure. It can rather be defined as a concept with multifarious feelings and capabilities that influence one's sense of agency, competence, health, and recognition in relationships (Fattore et al., 2016).

### 1.1.2 The conceptual history of well-being

The conditions that emerged after the Second World War created an understanding of well-being as keeping the nations away from financial collapses (Fattore et al., 2016). This led to an increase in materialistic values in the understanding of well-being as well as individualism. Moreover, well-being clearly became a discourse that pertained more to psychologists and economists, rather than just philosophers (Fattore et al., 2016). Then, it became clear that well-being cannot be reduced to the attainment of basic living standards since it also includes quality of life, mental and physical health, social cohesion, policy development, and quality of education (Ben-Arieh, 2008, Fattore et al., 2016). Therefore, social indicators have been developed for national assessments of well-being and welfare (Fattore et al., 2016), and the term social indicators became popular among social scientists (Land, 1971). Even though this term has prior roots, its first use goes back to the 1960s (Noll, 2004). According to Bauer (1966), social indicators were statistical measures to assess the current standpoint and further route of people, together with their values and goals. Eventually, social indicators became a source of help for the progression of policy programs and the development of political decision-making (Land, 1971).

Ryan and Deci (2008) mentioned basic needs regarding people's experiences of well-being. These basic needs are relatedness, autonomy, and competence. According to Self-Determination Theory they proposed, people's aspirations are influenced by the fulfillment of these basic needs. When these needs are satisfied, people gain more internal aspirations such as personal growth or self-awareness. When these needs are not satisfied, however, they resort to the external resources for fulfilling aspirations like fame or attractiveness (Ryan & Deci, 2008). As a result, the fulfillment of these basic needs (relatedness, competence, and autonomy) is

extremely important on the way to humans' well-being. A study by Miquelon and Vallerand (2008) demonstrates the significance of autonomy for well-being. People experience more happiness and self-realization when they act based on autonomous goals. Conversely, when the goals are controlled, both happiness and self-realization are diminished. They developed their argument even further by proposing that the experience of self-realization leads to better physical health by reducing stress due to more skilled coping mechanisms.

## 1.2 Subjective well-being and quality of life

The search for subjective well-being and happiness has remained one-sided for a long time in such a way that researchers had studied the correlates of happiness with the question of “how” to the state of happiness rather than asking “what” makes people happy (Chaplin, 2009). Therefore, the reasons behind happiness and the sources that lead to better subjective well-being remained unclear.

Today, well-being is conceptualized binarily, as objective and subjective well-being (Fattore et al., 2016). Objective well-being is measured by material conditions such as life expectancy, economic potential, education, or health indicators (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2002). Subjective well-being is measured by self-reports because the importance of experiences lies in the feelings and meanings attached to them (Fattore et al., 2016). It was around the same time when social indicators were developed, the concept of quality of life was born as a new instrument of assessment and it is interwoven with the research field of subjective well-being (Casas, 2010).

Casas (2010) argues that research on the quality of life includes non-material qualities rather than just material qualities. This is why subjective measures were

needed as well as objective ones. As a result, subjective measures were required to complement objective measures, not to overrule them (Casas, 2010). In addition, drawing a sharp distinction between objective quality of life and subjective quality of life is an artificial effort (Cummins, 2000). These two sets actually represent an integrated quality of life (Cummins, 2000). In the quality of life concept, there are both the traditional objective measures and psychosocial indicators that are supposed to be subjective. However, these terms have been interchangeably used. For example, personal well-being was directly called subjective well-being, psychological well-being, subjective quality of life, and so on (Casas, 2010).

When it comes to measurements, subjective well-being was not measured by just the absence of negative aspects, but it also looked for the presence of positive aspects in one's life (Cummins, 2000). According to Bradburn (1969), the absence of negative emotions does not mean the presence of positive emotions because these emotions are not corresponding opposites of each other. As a result, the search for the presence of positive aspects altered the conventional understanding that intervention takes place when there are negative factors. Conversely, the new challenge became the promotion of quality of life by prior interventions to prevent one's life from worsening (Casas, 2010). Therefore, the framework of understanding well-being changed from the absence of negative aspects to a search for the presence of positive aspects (Ben-Arieh, 2008). Likewise, Deci & Ryan (2008) stated that the absence of negative conditions does not guarantee well-being. An emphasis on the evaluation of deficits leaves us one-sided as Pollard and Lee suggested (2003). They argued that rather than approaching well-being as a one-sided concept, the promotion of child strengths can also expand the vision of policymakers and can prevent researchers from focusing merely on deficit interventions. This promotion may

prevent ignorance or underestimation of children's potentials. As a result, the prior focus on the negative aspects to make assessments and interventions of well-being evolved into constructing a frame of positive aspects and strengths (Pollard & Lee, 2003).

### 1.3 Introduction of children's well-being into research with subjective methodology

Children's well-being is a multidimensional phenomenon including the child in different domains of life, with their opportunities for self-realization and the development of abilities and capabilities (Semerci Uyan & Erdoğan, 2017).

Childhood in well-being and children as subjects of well-being have not been encountered until the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. When we look at the history of childhood, we see that children were overburdened by adult responsibilities and undesirable working conditions until some protective steps were taken in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by constitutionalizing nurseries, expanding primary schools for everyone, and bringing legal terms to women's labor and child labor (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012).

When the social equality approach as an extension of enlightenment thinking came into the picture, the position of children, as adults-in-deficit, started to change (Fattore et al., 2016). It is certain that child development had also been a research interest previously. However, researchers were conducting studies with child participants without taking their concerns, beliefs, or experiences into account. Therefore, those studies were just answering adults' questions rather than being responsive to children's life processes (Christensen & James, 2008).

### 1.3.1 Transition into the involvement of children as active contributors in research

In the 1900s, a shift occurred towards the point of looking at the inner dynamics of families, listening to children's evaluations of their lives, education, and considering relationships (Christensen & James, 2008). Ben-Arieh (2008) described this transition period with five key points that added to the birth of the child indicators movement. The first point is the recognition of children's rights with the approval of the United Nations Convention in 1989. It is the most serious step towards full comprehension and protection of children's rights in a global context (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012). Moreover, it emphasizes the significance of the participation of children (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012), which is a great improvement on the way to considering children as active members of society.

The new sociology of childhood is another turning point. It changed the ordinary political understanding that was focusing on the well-becoming of children, surrounded by the concerns on children's future since they will become the adults of the next generation (Ben-Arieh, 2008). When we only care about the well-becoming of children, we risk missing their current well-being or even damaging it. This is the reason why the new sociology of childhood is essential. It emphasizes the need to evaluate childhood on its own as a sociological phenomenon, focusing on well-being rather than well-becoming (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012).

The third key point is seeing children from an ecological perspective which states that children are in constant interaction with various systems directly and indirectly. According to Bronfenbrenner (1974), the ecology of the child is defined by two main layers surrounding them. The first one is the immediate settings that directly include the child with primary encounters such as the family, home, or school (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). The second layer is more distal and includes these

immediate settings and defines what can take place within these immediate settings such as geography, social systems, class (Bronfenbrenner, 1974) or the childhood conditions of the mother (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The whole environment starting from the immediate to very distal must be considered together because any change or conflict in one of these layers will have an effect on the others (Ryan, 2001). Thanks to the methodological developments in social sciences, immediate and distal measures are addressed together within this perspective (McAuley & Layte, 2012).

The ecological model explained the significance of the interaction between inborn qualities and various environmental influences during the developmental process. The ecological systems theory takes the body of the child as the first environment and it is surrounded by the environment. The first environmental surrounding system is microsystem including the immediate setting of the child, the people the child is in contact with, and the places where the child is included. The transitional space between these settings is called mesosystem and the settings where one is not practically included is called exosystem that still affects the immediate settings of the people (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner (1979) named the setting made up of culture, ideologies, organization of society as the macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner (1979) stated that all these settings in a society function in a similar way, interacting with each other. Therefore, it became possible to describe these interwoven, but different contexts as the environments of human development with the analyses of these particular surrounding systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In a similar vein, McAuley and Lante (2012) stated that the adoption of the ecological model took our attention to the need of considering the child together with the context of the family, community, and the wider environment. Hence, a child is always and inevitably in active interaction with these surrounding systems. As

McAuley (2018) states, children actively contribute to the environment they live in. Therefore, there is an interactional space in which children have an impact on and they balance the outer world as well as being influenced by it. As a result, we need to consider a range of factors from the simplest ones to the most complex aspects of children's lives to understand their well-being. Briefly, starting from the body integrity and physical conditions to all the interplay with the environment that takes place during the developmental process helps us comprehend well-being better by seeing how these lead to fulfill children's potentials and contribute to their relationships and lives (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012).

The fourth point is the development of the new methodological perspectives that take children's subjective evaluations into account to understand their here-and-now experiences in a deeper manner. Lastly, the fifth key point in this transition period is the emergence of policy-makers' intention to develop better regulations with the help of comprehensive data of child and adolescent lives.

This transition process of child indicators movement was accompanied by the research between 1987 and 1992 that provided a theoretical basis for this movement towards the inclusion of children as rightful citizens and active research participants as well as co-creators of our knowledge about childhood (Fattore et al., 2016 and Christensen & James, 2008). As a result, children's subjective here-and-now experiences became the most definitive part of their well-being. So, their contribution is the best source for us to comprehend the indicators of their well-being better (Fattore et al., 2016).

### 1.3.2 Subjective experience of children as a new methodological perspective

The study of subjective well-being emerged in the mid-1980s thanks to the developed scientific methods. As people have remarkably different judgments of life satisfaction (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2002), well-being cannot be reduced to a combination of certain resources and qualities. Therefore, putting the voices of the subject at the center is essential in understanding well-being rather than conceptualizing with existing definitions. This helps us understand what well-being means for individuals with all multiplicity across different lives (Thoillez, 2011). Moreover, there are also biologically driven levels of life satisfaction while drastic events can deteriorate subjective well-being (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2002). As a result, the well-being of children cannot be understood with pre-determined criteria or without taking their own perception of their lives.

Qvortrup (2015) argues that the current social order prevents us from listening to the children as a group of people and understanding their living conditions to induce long-term policy regulations and practices accordingly. Children's reality is defined under the shadow of their parents' reality such as their father's job, parental income, and educational level of the family (Qvortrup, 2015). For instance, when we talk about the socio-economic status of the child, we actually refer to the status of the parents, which is actually strange to the child in nature. This brings us to the idea that children might have their own realities that are different from those of their parents. These realities include their experiences and perceptions of their living conditions. However, it is assumed that what is good for the family must also be good for the child by ignoring the subjective reality of the child (Qvortrup, 2015). In fact, this subjective reality is filled with various expectations and demands.

Casas (2010) mentions that it has just recently been realized that views of scientific experts are not stronger or more accurate when it comes to measure and explain complex social realities. The same reality can be perceived in a drastically different way from different viewpoints that are involved together in society. Therefore, children, influenced by the adult society in which they are born, must be heard to be understood (Casas, 2010). One of our struggles in hearing children's opinions is the issue of "protective exclusion" of children as Qvortrup revealed (2015). This conception is another element in the exclusion of children's subjective views. Protection is the biggest reason why children have restricted freedom, based on the assumption that they do not have the necessary level of capability, competence, and responsibility (Qvortrup, 2015). Nevertheless, this so-called well-intended protection, which is sometimes not required by the child, almost always brings about exclusion. This helps to maintain the adult world and adult social orders, preventing their world from being interrupted by the presence and demands of the children (Qvortrup, 2015).

Casas (2010) stated that it is adults who insist on the differentiation of children as a distinct category. He argues that there is a differential categorization on children which contributes to adults' need of preventing children's participation. Adults strongly emphasize the differences between them and children. Ironically enough, adults are not willing to listen to the views of these different creatures. When it comes to hearing children's voices and understanding their standpoints, the minimum requirement of starting out is listening to them despite the fact that their opinions have been ignored for centuries (Casas, 2010).

Scientific taboos need to be broken down regarding the data gathered from the children (Casas, 2010). Scientists have been insisting on the invalidity and

unreliability of children's self-reports. These doubts resulted in the accumulation of abundant adult data concerning children (Casas, 2010). Even though the interest in studying children's well-being with their subjective perspectives is relatively new (Casas, 2010), we now know that children are reliable observers of their lives when they are provided with the feeling of security and free space they need (Garbarino et al., 1989).

With the new methodological understandings, it is accepted that parental reports can be sufficient or even superior than those of children when we ask about household economy or school grades of the child. However, the subjective perspective is important for unveiling a child's own mental well-being and the meaning of the network of social relations in which the children are taking part. Therefore, as it is the child that forms the unit of observation, the life they live is emphasized rather than the resources they have according to Sen's approach (1999). As a result, personal choices, concerns, abilities, and constraints need to be accounted for (Ben-Arieh, 2008). Brooks (2006) suggested that childhood is part of each adult's life since all adults had gone through childhood. Yet, this can only be helpful if the voices of children are heard in the processes of developing opinions, their thoughts are highlighted, and policymaking practically enhance the conditions of childhood (Adams, 2013). In understanding children's wellbeing, children are invited as active contributors in measuring their well-being, rather than being objectified by the adults' studies (Ben-Arieh, 2005).

### 1.3.3 Use of drawings in child research

Even though there is a group of people who have doubts about using drawings in research, there are many advocates of this phenomenon who believe that drawing is a

rich area representing children's worlds (Knoff, 2002). Because of the complexity and richness of drawings, it is hard to assess them with quantitative measures (Palmer et al., 2000). According to Koppitz (1983), children can convey much more in this way than they could with their language skills since drawing is a natural way of expressing themselves especially between the ages of 5-11. The affective and informative content of drawings let children express their experience visually and motorically (Burgess & Hartman, 1993). The projective quality of drawings helps children convey what is in their minds without linguistic barriers (Merriman & Guerin, 2006). Drawings help us understand the representations in children's minds in a profound way. For example, Machover (1949) stated that when a person is drawn, it shows the representation of self-image and the context where the person is placed into shows the representation of the environment. Therefore, children's drawings can be quite useful for those who are eager to get a glimpse of their worlds. Still, it is better to combine them with the verbal content obtained from the interviews conducted to understand the subjective standpoint of children (Greig, Taylor, & Mackay, 2007).

There are two conventional ways of analyzing children's drawings. One is approaching them as a projective field of the mind and the other is focusing on the mere content (Merriman & Guerin, 2006). In both ways, drawings manifest the intellectual, social/emotional, and physical development of children. Therefore, they can give insight into what they convey to the world since papers and pencils are among the first means of their communication with the world (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011). From the day children become capable of using a pencil, they start to draw things, and whether a scrawl or an intended representation, it is their way to communicate (Brittain & Lowenfeld, 1987). Hence, drawing is a tool that provides

them an opportunity for the expression of their experiences on a surface (Schildkrout & Schenker, 1972). This is why using drawings alongside child interviews can provide another room for children's free expression and can create an important source of knowledge.

#### 1.4 Literature review of children's well-being research

##### 1.4.1 Domains and dimensions of children's subjective well-being

Fattore, Mason, and Watson (2016) suggested that there are some particular domains and dimensions of well-being from children's standpoint. These domains are safety and security, self and identity, and agency and autonomy while emotional/relational well-being forms the background of these. These domains overlap with each other and they are also connected with the dimensions. The dimensions are the objective conditions of well-being, namely health, economic well-being, and leisure. Safety and security were indicated to be significant in children's well-being. Children associated well-being with their safety and ability to trust their environment and relationships. Agency and autonomy were shown to be a part of well-being, pointing out the importance of intergenerational practices. Identity and self were emphasized to be important in the development of a unique sense of self and symmetrical relationships gave way to mutual recognition of difference. Leisure was emphasized to provide freedom and competence as mastery or social action that leads to internalization of socially acknowledged properties such as self-worth or self-esteem. Holder, Coleman, and Sehn (2009) found that children's well-being is positively correlated with active leisure while negatively correlated with passive leisure activity among leisure activities. They define active leisure as physical activities and passive leisure as reading, watching TV, or playing video games alone. They stated that well-

being is not supported by playing video games and spending time watching television. However, they also stated that the positive correlation between active leisure and well-being is consistent with parents' reports. From the interviews with 375 children aged from 8 to 12, they found that active leisure is correlated with physical health, self-concept, happiness/satisfaction measures while they did not find significant correlations between these and passive leisure (Holder, Coleman, & Sehn, 2009).

#### 1.4.2 Economic conditions and experience of well-being

The effects of economic conditions on well-being are crucial as family income places children within a certain frame of opportunities. However, children attach great importance to the sense of obtained resources and the distribution of them in the family since they relate it to the sense of being cared about (Fattore, et al., 2016). Children included health in their understanding of well-being in a broader way that was influenced by ongoing health discussions such as healthism and their daily practices related to material aspects of health (Fattore, et al., 2016). It was indicated that the perspective of children on their health depends on their feelings of safety, agency, and a positive sense of self. For example, they mentioned physical activity as a means of having fun, socializing and moving together. Therefore, it contributed to the feelings of joy and esteem as well as health (Fattore, et al., 2016).

Adams (2013) conducted a study with 56 children, aged from 7 to 11, living in an economically deprived region of the UK. With semi-structured group interviews, children made comparisons between their conceptions of childhood and adulthood. They reported play as the most essential part of childhood and they mentioned that playfulness is often lost in adulthood. They talked about outside

spaces of play such as home gardens, fields around home, and residential streets, which could have been important for them due to the less threatening environment of the area. In the same interview, family and friends came out to be another key component of childhood. Shared activities in family such as spending time together, going out for a meal, or walking a dog are deemed significant. Shared activities with friends were focused on playing together. When children compared childhood to adulthood, 63% showed a preference for childhood since they think adult life is full of stress factors such as paying bills, making big decisions, and doing housework. Ten percent of children preferred adulthood due to the opportunity of having money, and Adams (2013) suggested that this might be showing children's aspirations to get rid of the financial problems of their family. Some children were indecisive, appreciating the advantages and disadvantages of both. In their less-preferred experiences of childhood, children mostly reported restrictions and some other children of older age that cause trouble for them. The restriction examples they gave were not being able to go out, being repressed, or lack of freedom. Other children were mentioned as a source of distress, in the sense that they patronize, bully or act in a bossy manner towards them. Considering these interviews, Adams (2013) discussed that children generally prefer childhood to adulthood since they perceive adulthood as a burden of responsibilities. Adams (2013) also pointed out that school is a fundamental factor in shaping children's conceptions of childhood since a good childhood is defined within the concept of school. Besides, the meaning of play for children is at such a significant level that their transition to adulthood may be easier if they have a chance to learn with play rather than losing the capacity to play with further education and age (Adams, 2013).

### 1.4.3 Meaning of happiness and well-being for children

Navarro, Lee, Jiménez, and Canamares (2017) studied children under 9 years of age in Spain, South Korea, and Mexico on the subjective perspectives of well-being. They collected and compared what children prioritize for their well-being, and what themes emerge around the information and communication technology. These themes include their judgments of digital games, cyberbullying, and their preferences over traditional activities such as reading. According to their findings, the most important theme defining well-being was relationships with family and friends. The second important theme was playing and technology occupied an important place as it is a source of play. On the other hand, comments on technology were ambivalent because children also emphasized its negative aspects such as adverse effects on health. As Navarro et al. (2017) noted, children did not see reading as a source of pleasure for sure, but they sometimes raised reading as a spare-time activity rather than a means of engaging with technology, proposing that reading was much more fun than that. Navarro et al. (2017) argued that these might be the signs of internalized adult discourse that shapes children's explanations regarding their subjective preferences.

Thoillez (2011) studied children between 6 to 12 years of age on the meaning of happiness from their own perspectives. According to her findings, happiness is embedded in the relationships. Children's perception showed that happiness is not experienced in a merely personal way. On the contrary, it is an inter-subjective experience. This inter-subjectivity is experienced within the family in early childhood. In pre-adolescence, however, it is defined by peer acknowledgment. Children's report of positive affect did not change significantly across different sexes while it changed with age. At earlier ages, children report more positive affect and

more satisfaction with their lives. As they grow up, happiness becomes something to be obtained. While happiness is experienced as something given in the earlier years, it is understood as an outcome of doing what one should do towards adolescence. When it comes to adult happiness, children perceive it as something depending on having a job one desires.

Chaplin (2009) designed a research study to understand the reasons for children's happiness. This study has found five domains with content analysis: people and pets, achievements, material things, hobbies, and sports. When children were asked what makes them happy, "people and pets" category is the most mentioned one between the ages of 8-18 for both sexes. While people and pets continued to be one of the sources of happiness, the second domain varied. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, it was hobbies while for the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders, it was material things, and for the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> graders, it was achievements. Therefore, people and pets category seems to be the only source of happiness that remains to be significant in children's happiness between the ages of 8-18. On gender differences, Chaplin (2009) found that girls report people and pets more than boys and boys report sports more than girls as a source of happiness overall.

The first national child well-being study of Ireland, Growing Up in Ireland (GUI), included qualitative interviews of 9-year-old participants (McAuley, McKeown, & Merriman, 2012). They found that spending time and sharing activities with family and friends were central factors in children's well-being. Trust was the reason behind close relationships with family members. When children talked about their familial relationships, they emphasized what they do together rather than what they think of or feel about them (McAuley et al., 2012). While shopping was the most common activity with mothers, sports category found to be the most common

one with fathers. One of the interesting findings of the study was that the family notion of children included not only parents but also extended family members, deceased family members, and pets. Moreover, they found that children are open to creating new relational bonds with stepparents or stepsiblings for instance.

Therefore, they concluded that the availability of the family members to spend time with children is particularly crucial for their well-being. Moreover, the unavailability of parents due to extensive workload deteriorated the feelings of closeness, especially with fathers.

Children spend a lot of time with their friends as they reported in their activity calendar. They also see differences between best friends who constitute a smaller group with a stronger sense of companionship and emotional support. Among many activities, unstructured activities are strongly associated with spending time with friends. Going for a walk, playing in the neighborhood, sharing toys and equipment are among their unstructured activities. As to structured activities, sports are mostly preferred by the children. In addition, the most common motivation of children to choose an activity was found to be peer relations again. They found that this motivation to meet with friends through structured activities is more common for children living in lower economic conditions. For the children coming from higher economic conditions, the influence of an older sibling or parental permission seemed to have a larger role in participating in activities. In addition to activities with friends, children are impacted by their negative peer relations. For instance, being exposed to bullying is not that rare and children feel embarrassment, anger, and fear when they are bullied. They give different reactions such as talking with a parent or teacher, standing against bullying, or sometimes making friends with the bullying

children. However, children pay attention to the danger of being bullied even if they never experienced it (McAuley et al., 2012).

McAuley and Layte (2012) focused on the effect of familial stressors and socio-economic situation on the happiness and well-being of children. Family stressors identified in their study were conflictual parent-child relationships, the child with emotional problems, parental depression, parental low self-efficacy, or feeling of isolation. They found that families having these problems were influenced by socio-economic disadvantage seriously, but these stressors themselves explained much more variance in the self-assessed happiness of children. Therefore, they concluded that family stressors are twice as impactful as the socio-economic situation of the family on children's self-assessed well-being.

#### 1.4.4 Children's well-being research in Turkey

Turkey had been lacking integrated research about childhood that is supposed to take all the fields of life into account because transitions between fields are essential for a growing being (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012). There were two main grounds on which child studies were based: studies including all children on the aspects of education, health, media, culture, and law and those grew out of the need for reporting children with disadvantaged conditions such as drug addiction, abuse, working, disabilities, or economic deprivation (Semerci Uyan et al., 2012). Semerci Uyan and colleagues (2011) conducted the first study of child well-being in Turkey with a sample from İstanbul. They used international indexes, well-being related to relationships, material conditions, subjective well-being, education, health, participation, housing and environment, and risk and safety as guidelines since it was the first study conducted in Turkey. They founded each domain to be significant and useful to

explore child well-being in Turkey. According to their findings, the material well-being seemed to be of utmost importance because it has a direct impact on all other domains. Strikingly, when the family is materially deprived, all indicators of other domains in the child's life were found to be affected negatively. Therefore, material well-being constituted a ground for child well-being. For example, they found that material well-being influences a child's feeling of security and access to allocations according to neighborhood conditions as well as the child's access to satisfactory health and housing conditions. There were differences in the degree of reported happiness across different sexes, ages, material, and schooling conditions. Their sample showed that children feel happier when they are together with their families. These children are especially those who are younger girls, who attend school and do not have to work, or who have better economic conditions.

Semerci Uyan and Erdoğan ran a UNICEF project on Children's Well-Being in Turkey under the Country Programme of 2011-2015. Children's well-being was studied through their own points of view by including 562 child interviews and 40 focus groups, particularly from disadvantaged groups. They looked into children's evaluations of the aforementioned domains of well-being and considered whether there were new domains or indicators proposed by children. In their study, they reduced the eight predetermined domains of well-being to five domains, namely health, material well-being, education, risk, and relationship (Semerci Uyan & Erdoğan, 2017). They conducted research with these five domains to explore what determines children's happiness in Turkey. Children were asked to share their ideas of happy and unhappy children within these domains. Results showed that, when age, gender, and SES was controlled, a child's happiness depends on feeling fit and strong, being able to go to vacations and trips, having a positive mood, not wearing

old clothes, having good grades in a school with a clean and big garden, living with their family without risk factors, having a hobby, spending time with family and friends, and being loved by friends (Semerci Uyan & Erdoğan, 2017). This study also demonstrated important differences across different ages, genders, and SES levels. Therefore, this study including both objective and subjective criteria considered the perspectives and priorities of children with different conditions.

In another study, both similarities and differences between the findings of Turkey and prior research in the domains of well-being were discussed. Semerci Uyan et al. (2017) questioned whether these differences might be related to the context of countries. They compared the subjective well-being of children in each domain with different contexts of welfare. Their results showed that high and medium levels of welfare provided better subjective well-being in the domains of material and risk and safety when age and gender were controlled. Moreover, girls had lower subjective well-being in the low-safety welfare condition compared to boys whereas they had higher subjective well-being in the domains of relations and education regardless of the welfare condition (Semerci Uyan et al., 2017). Therefore, Semerci Uyan et al. (2017) pointed out the need for an alteration from mere welfare politics to well-being policies to achieve progress in the subjective experiences of children.

A more related study aimed to explore children's subjective well-being through the relationship between well-being evaluations and spaces such as home, school, or neighborhood (Akkan et al., 2019). The striking results of this study showed the influence of spatial conditions on the construction of children's subjective well-being with constraints and opportunities embedded in their neighborhood (Akkan et al., 2019). Despite living in the same metropolitan city of

Turkey, being located in a more disadvantaged district led children to face crucial difficulties, which illustrates the unequal distribution of governmental services.

Following the relationship between disadvantaged conditions and well-being, Akkan et al. (in press) investigated the difference socio-economic status brings into children's experiences of well-being, particularly at the spaces such as home and school. They mentioned that home is a special space for children where they can feel secure while school is a place that enables them to socialize (Akkan et al., in press). In addition, the economic conditions of the family play a critical role in shaping the children's experiences in these spaces due to material limitations for lower SES and higher parental expectations with an abundance of opportunities for higher SES families. They have suggested that children's relational experiences with their family and their friends have a significant effect on the connection between material conditions and well-being. For example, children from high SES do not experience a limitation in the material opportunities, but they have a program shaped by parental expectations of high levels of achievement and competition. On the other hand, there are many limitations to the opportunities available for children from lower SES. However, these children could spend much more time with their families and they could practice more agency at home due to the lack of a restricted program endorsed by parents (Akkan et al., in press). As a result, while economic conditions create the atmosphere children live in, relational experiences of children impact their experiences in life.

## 1.5 Theoretical framework of parenting

### 1.5.1 Interplay between the familial context and children's adjustment

The most important environmental context of the children is seen as their family since family relationships and parental behaviors always influence child's development most strongly (McAuley & Layte, 2012). They state that children are born with their own characteristics that will elicit certain behaviors and they will become sensitive to different parental influences. Moreover, children's happiness is profoundly influenced by their relationships with parents as they firstly report the family relations to represent their happy or unhappy states (Thoillez, 2011). Children report that family is a phenomenon providing them with stability, safety, and peace (Thoillez, 2011). In addition, daily interactions within the family have a pillar influence on shaping children's development (McAuley & Layte, 2012). Also, not only children but also parents are impacted by their wider context such as neighborhood, work environment, and external socio-economic conditions (McAuley & Layte, 2012). So, these contextual factors can improve or discourage the relationship between parents and children. For example, the availability of support or the degree of isolation of the family impacts parental practices (Webster-Stratton, 1990). Moreover, the total adjustment of the child is also shaped by parental self-efficacy (PSE) (Jones & Prinz, 2005).

Parental self-efficacy is claimed to be the central cognitive element of parental competence and defined as parents' estimations about their parental role and self-perceived abilities in influencing their children's development (Coleman & Karraker, 2000). They state that children are provided a better adjustment and stimulating environment when they are reared by parents with high self-efficacy. According to the review of Jones and Prinz (2005), parents with low PSE have more

difficulty in handling challenging situations with their children. In addition, socioeconomic conditions and neighborhood disadvantages limit PSE. They claim that PSE influences children's views about their own abilities and it is found to be linked to children's academic success. For some parents with high PSE, environmental and economic difficulty leads to more proactive behaviors to prevent the child from risky conditions. In general, PSE shapes parental beliefs, competence, frustration tolerance and it is related to children's socio-emotional functioning both directly and indirectly (Jones and Prinz, 2005).

#### 1.5.2 Economic status and investment capacity of the family

The economic situation of the family shapes the more proximal context of the child (McAuley & Layte, 2012). When parents have higher income, they are able to fulfill material needs in a better way and offer more pleasant experiences and more playful time without reflecting economic stressors to their children with the opportunities of support they have (Coleman & Karraker, 2000). Therefore, the environmental conditions of parents' life must be considered at a deeper level in understanding the parental effect on children's well-being. In a study conducted with parents under economic pressure, Elder, Eccles, Ardel, and Lord (1995) found that insufficiency or inconsistency of the income or job opportunities lead parents to feel ineffective and magnify their emotional distress.

The ability of parents to invest in their children's welfare is also affected when they are in disadvantaged conditions (Cobb-Clark, Salamanca & Zhu, 2019). They categorized parental investment in children by three major indicators as follows: time, market goods, attention / cognitive effort. Attention / cognitive effort includes paying attention, engagement, monitoring, and supervising. The cognitive

effort of parents is mentioned to be needed at a greater level in discipline, constructing routines, paying attention, monitoring, and so on. They claimed that this parental investment quality is aggravated with additional harmful conditions. Therefore, the style of parenting is in a strong relationship with socio-economic conditions. They concluded that negative socio-economic conditions impair some parental skills such as monitoring but not the capability to become respectful parents. When parents address the understanding and perception of their children with a friendly attitude and in a respectful way, the outcome of this for the young becomes much more positive and this is independent of the impairment caused by the disadvantage (Cobb-Clark, Salamanca & Zhu, 2019).

Similarly, Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, and Walker (1993) studied parental disciplinary practices among working to middle-income mothers. They mentioned that maternal education is significant in using a child-oriented discipline rather than a parent-oriented discipline. However, mothers used more coercive discipline methods when they are younger, with less experience and more reluctant towards the role of motherhood if there is an absent father or when families reside in more rural areas with a higher fear of child victimization (Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, and Walker, 1993).

Elder, et al. (1995) reported that, especially with Black parents, a sense of efficacy has a significant role in child-rearing practices and parents use promotive or preventive strategies that are in relation to the sufficiency of their income. These management styles can be summarized as follows (Elder, et al., 1995): Promotive strategies are to help the child by assisting in their schoolwork, enrolling in various programs, and encouraging the child's development with positive experiences, and gathering others to help the child. Preventive strategies are actively monitoring the

child, discussing the negative role-models, and leading the child to more protective activities such as church membership. They argued that Black inner-city parents do not have environmental support and reliable neighborhood conditions as much as White inner-city parents, which leads the first to engage more actively and feel more responsibility in the child-rearing process. Therefore, they had an interesting result that Black parents who feel more efficacy engage in more promotive and also preventive strategies than White parents because White parents have more opportunity to get support from their neighborhood (Elder, et al., 1995).

### 1.5.3 Feelings of security and parenting practices

Parental fears are activated in relation to neighborhood conditions when children go outside for play or free-time activities. According to a study investigating the association between neighborhood safety and children's physical activity, it was found that children were driven to school with a private car more frequently than before while their use of public transport declined. (Carver, Timperio, & Crawford, 2008). Potential harm from strangers and dangerous road conditions are the most frequently mentioned parental concerns. Due to these concerns, parents feel obliged to limit their children's active use of transportation and outdoor play. These parental views are more impactful than the personal views of children, especially until adolescence. In the same study, it was found that lower levels of active transportation and outdoor physical activity among children are associated with the lack of perceived neighborhood safety. Even though it is more accessible for children to play in their neighborhood without needing any means of transportation, the safety perception of parents matters in the use of this outdoor play opportunity. Moreover, it is argued that parents might be the victim of a social trap such as being willing to

become “responsible parents” by conforming to the norms of other parents who believe that driving children or making sure they are accompanied by another adult is critical for children’s safety (Carver, et al., 2008).

The safety of the child is crucial because it is one of the major factors that influence parenting orientation. Fear of child victimization was assessed among the mothers who live in urban areas and it was reported that these mothers have concerns about environmental dangers (Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, & Walker, 1993). They might be feeling that they have little control over these environmental conditions; therefore, they become more likely to utilize material-social consequence techniques (Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, & Walker, 1993). When we evaluate disciplinary practices, there are two broad categories: child-oriented and parent-oriented approach. Fear of child victimization has a predictive value in determining material-social control practices that are certainly parent-oriented. In addition to the fear of child victimization, family composition and maternal characteristics influence this parenting orientation. The presence of the father, maternal age, and maternal education can serve as an example to these. However, the potential dangers that will lead a child to become kidnapped, molested, included in antisocial behaviors, exposed to drug abuse, or drop out of school shape parental orientation in disciplinary practices (Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, & Walker, 1993).

Another study that was conducted by Singer, Singer, D'Agostino, & DeLong (2009) collected reports of mothers from sixteen different countries to understand children’s spare-time activities. According to their findings, nearly half of all mothers were worried that their children do not have sufficient opportunity for outdoor activities and mothers from developing and newly developed countries reported more safety fears than those from developed countries. Mothers were

thinking that children grow up too fast compared to their own childhood and they doubt that children have adequate experience of social play that would help them develop better socialization skills. Mostly, mothers from Africa and Turkey reported that their children become more unhappy and more difficult to deal with if they do not have time to play sufficiently. Overall, mothers reported that children are rushed into the adult world so fast and they lack safety and access opportunities for outdoor play with peers and nature that would bring them more exploration, experiential learning, and joyful social interactions (Singer et al., 2009). When children have more independent mobility, they can be in contact with their peers from school and neighborhood more often and they can play with them indoors and outdoors in a more frequent manner (Prezza, Pilloni, Morabito, Sersante, Alparone, & Giuliani, 2001). On the other hand, when children play more with children of their parents' friends and those of their relatives, they may have a harder time developing autonomy and independence (Prezza et al., 2001). This kind of relational independence develops better if children are older males and if mothers have stronger relations in a neighborhood with parks and courtyards. The environmental factor mostly mentioned by parents is the availability of a garden in the form of a gradual passage to the city where everybody knows each other. Parents more easily allow their children to go and play outside when they can have diffused social control via neighborhood conditions (Prezza et al., 2001). In addition, parents have less fear about their children playing outside if they do not live in high poverty areas of the city (Kimbrow & Schachter, 2011). As Kimbro and Schachter (2011) found in their study that mothers are more fearful if they live in public houses and when their neighborhood is lacking collective effectiveness with higher poverty rates.

#### 1.5.4 Parenting in the identity of mothers

When adults have children, parental identity becomes essential for their identity and their sense of self (Hegar, Orme & Greif, 1993). According to Mesman and her colleagues (2016), there is a consensus on the ideal mothering as being responsive across 751 mothers from 26 different cultural groups. Responsive mothers are tuned in to the child, more sensitive with better abilities to read to them, and show higher interpretation skills with positive affect (Mesman et al., 2016). However, the ideas, evaluations, and judgments about parenting can create a burden for women. There is a stronger social pressure on mothers to have skills for good childbearing and if they feel they have failed in this sense, their self-esteem is threatened (Greif & Pabst, 1988). Moreover, it was found that the self-esteem of parents is influenced by their marital status, employment, and level of education (Hegar, Orme & Greif, 1993). Therefore, characteristics of parents such as gender, socio-economic status, and marital status can be investigated to see if they influence the adults' evaluation of their roles as parents.

As women are under a greater level of social pressure about providing good parenting, women in the workforce face great stressors between their roles as a worker, a woman, a wife, and a mother. Raskin (2006) conducted a study to evaluate role and identity conflicts of working mothers and she found in her sample that the majority of the working mothers had working mothers themselves. So, these mothers could be supported by a role model to mentalize how to combine a career and motherhood. However, the more educated the mothers, the less they reported having role models. She reported that some of the women prioritize career over family obligations, some of them look for ways to achieve a good career while fulfilling the traditional mothering roles. In addition, she observed in her sample that most of the

women preferred working for financial benefits and some of them committed to their work with personal motivations besides aiming to be a better mother than theirs. Moreover, she reported that the level of education did not predict the career salience of those mothers even though women who had more education became mothers at a later stage in their lives. Lastly, it was seen that when women have supportive working environments that encourage their needs and conditions as mothers, they are not willing to quit their jobs, regardless of the other individual differences (Raskin, 2006).

An older study investigated the relationship between mothers' demographics, personality, and roles and their psychological well-being in terms of their level of happiness and distress (Noor, 1996). For mothers who have multiple roles such as a mother and an employee, it is not the number of the roles that they think they should fulfill but the experience of each specific role that impacts their well-being (Noor, 1996). Therefore, being a working mother is not a stressor in itself as an extra role to be carried out alongside the role of motherhood. Rather, when women are comfortable in one role, it can provide a balance to negative experiences in another role (Noor, 1996).

As Hays (1998) mentioned in her account of intensive mothering as an ideology, mothers carry the responsibility of being the central caregivers. Hays (1998) combined this with the new womanism that proposes women are completed when they have children (Ennis, 2014). This ideology leads employed mothers to experience feelings of guilt, being under time pressure, inadequacy, and ambivalence about their role. She explained that mothers put their children's needs over their own and their reason behind being employed is mostly the financial benefit it will bring to their children. Nevertheless, Christophier (2012), in a more recent study, observed

differences in these previous findings such that mothers justified employment with personal benefits in addition to the benefits for children. Therefore, personal fulfillment, success at work, and self-confidence became more prominent. This study questioned the employed women's conceptions of good motherhood and the meanings they attribute to caregiving and working. It was found that there is a reframing of motherhood and employment among mothers which is in relation to the material conditions of the family. Hence, there is a probable alteration of meanings attached to good mothering from intensive to extensive mothering among employed mothers. Likewise, they show a preference for arranging their jobs, spending fun time with their children after work and at weekends and, being in charge of taking care of the child, generally with the help of nannies. As Christophier (2012) mentioned, employment responds more to mothers' needs and leads less to feelings of guilt or ambivalence in extensive mothering. Still, she also claimed that despite a rejection of intensive mothering, married mothers may maintain some of their beliefs about intensive mothering. To illustrate, they reported feeling embarrassed about not wanting to be the primary caregiver of their children or feeling sadness due to the close relationship of their children to the nannies. Alternatively, they became more defensive telling why they have not become intensive mothers (Christophier, 2012).

#### 1.5.5 Parental aspirations for their children

When it comes to evaluations about their children, parents generally are not aware of the uniqueness and importance of the children's own perspectives and feelings (McAuley & Layte, 2012). So, the parents are unaware of the differently developing perception and mind of the child that is actually majorly impacted by their parents. In the research history of childhood, parents' thoughts on child development and wishes

about their child drew attention more previously (Palacios, 1992). Yet, parental conceptions on their children became a deeper interest in research as of the 1980s (Palacios, 1992).

Diener and Lucas (2004) examined adult aspirations for their children's emotional qualities, particularly hoping to install happiness, fearlessness, and anger suppression in their children. Their participants were 10,175 college students from 48 countries, and they included the factors of sex, income, and wealth both individually and nation-wide as well as taking into account the stance of the particular society towards individualism or collectivism. According to their findings, happiness is the most desired emotion of parents for their children, but parents of more individualistic societies reported higher levels of desire for their children's happiness. Therefore, this might be driving from the fact that collectivist cultures give more weight to group well-being while individualist ones emphasize individual emotions more frequently. Moreover, the desire for children's happiness showed little variability while fearlessness and anger suppression showed more variability across the sex of children among the three emotions. Fearlessness is desired mostly for boys and particularly in nations where worry is seen as more inappropriate but usually experienced. Anger suppression is also desired more for boys, especially where both individuals and nations experience more negative affect (Diener & Lucas, 2004).

When it comes to parents' approach to the education of their children, Gorman (1998) examined the differences between the meanings attached to child's education between working-class and middle-class families. He claimed that parents' appreciation of higher education can influence children's approach to higher education, children's opportunities to receive education, and parent's own chances of

returning to education. Besides, education as a means of upward mobility must be considered in understanding families' motivations for child education. In this study, he found that working-class parents value education due to the applicability of school content and they generally have fewer college aspirations. However, there are some families among them who value the joy of learning and studying. Those families themselves attended college or returned to education to capture the economic power of education in society. On the other hand, middle-class parents have a direct assumption that their children will continue to college without taking the child's thoughts into account. Moreover, they question the sufficiency of a bachelor's degree. They allocate a lot of money and time for their children's college degree and the main motivation behind it is to guarantee the same lifestyle for their children. Working-class parents prioritize the achievement of gaining self-confidence, common sense, and good social skills as much as having an academic degree. Nevertheless, middle-class parents expect their children to be more skillful in business with qualities of being communicative, quantitative, and interpersonal, so that they will have the necessary requirements of the business life besides the college degree (Gorman, 1998).

Ng, Pomerantz, and Lam (2007) explored the cultural differences between Chinese and American mothers in response to children's success and failure. They claimed that the way parents react may be shaping children's own way of responding to themselves. A cultural transmission may occur through these interactions between parent and child. They conducted a study with late elementary school children and their parents hypothesizing that this age is the time when children develop their own attitudes towards their performance. They found parallel results with the past research on cultural transmission in the sense that Chinese parents made more

negative and less positive comments after both success and failure. Consistently, Chinese children reported fewer positive emotions after success than American children as Chinese parents emphasize failure more while American parents do the opposite. Moreover, they found that the performance of Chinese children showed stronger improvement after success when they receive negative statements from their parents more frequently.

Studies in Turkey on parental expectations and preferences showed that there have been changes in parental preferences during the last 30 years by the influence of socio-economic development (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005) They suggested that the utilitarian value attributed to children that is to expect economic support and old age security from children has decreased when findings of 2003 were compared to 1975. With the increase in urban life and general socio-economic development, children's autonomy gained an importance to provide a better adaptation to urban life and school success (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005). Therefore, while the utilitarian value of children decreased, the psychological value increased. Parents started to prompt more autonomy development that could be perceived as a threat previously (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Still, parental expectations of connectedness to family continued, so that the developing self of the child has been named as autonomous-related self (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca, 2005).

#### 1.5.6 Transmission of family values

When it comes to what children value in life, the transmission from parent to child becomes an important issue since this transmission defines the developmental trajectory of children's moral and social values (Tam & Lee, 2010). Parents have a desire for transmitting their value systems to their children according to the fax

model of Strauss (1992). According to Rohan and Zanna (1996), parents expect their children to share their own values in life and this is generally what happens exactly. Therefore, children often carry the values of their parents. They examined the similarity of values between parents and their adult children and between couples. Husbands and wives were found to share similar value profiles as well as adult children and their parents (Rohan & Zanna, 1996). They conducted a study to examine the authoritarianism of parents and the similarity of their value profiles with their adult children. According to the comparison of right-wing and non-right-wing authoritarianism of parents, adult children share less similarity of values if their parents are right-wing authoritarians, unless the children perceive their parents to be responsive (Rohan & Zanna, 1996).

Despite the suggestion of fax model (Strauss, 1992), Tam and Lee (2010) suggested that parents do not just want to transmit their value systems, they also check the outer world and try to see the differences between the current time and the time of their childhood in terms of new social norms. According to their study conducted with mothers and daughters, assessing the future adjustment of their children, mothers take both their personal values and the perceived normative values into account. This means that they rely on their own thoughts and normative knowledge at the same time. These personal and perceived normative values make up socialization values, so that mothers want their daughters to have them. For example, they reported endorsing benevolence, universality, power, achievement, stimulation, tradition, conformity, self-direction, and security. Mothers reported that they have these values at a personal level, but they also believe that these values are socially endorsed. Therefore, they want their daughters to share these values (Tam & Lee, 2010).

Schönpflug (2001) designed a study with Turkish fathers and sons who live in Germany and Turkey. It is reported that collectivist values are better transmitted when the education level of fathers is middle-to-high level rather than low level, regardless of the country they live in. Moreover, the share of the collectivist values was higher when the children were in the first half of their adolescence while later in adolescence, more individualistic values were transmitted (Schönpflug, 2001). Therefore, cultural value transmission is started and accomplished earlier and better with higher levels of education that bring more skillful communication and the use of empathetic parenting (Schönpflug, 2001). Better communication helps parents transmit what they value in life, which shapes the characteristic development of the child. In more collectivist cultures, parents attach more importance to the transmission of conformity and achievement goals (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001).

Following the transmission and promotion of specific values, mothers who live in poverty described a competent imaginary child as being respectful and obedient to family, having good friendships, and being successful at school (Durbrow, Pen, Masten, Sesma, & Williamson, 2001). Mothers from disadvantaged conditions are expected to be more concerned with their children's survival and success while it is also found that these mothers prioritize parenting as the pillar factor for a child to become competent (Durbrow, Pen, Masten, Sesma, & Williamson, 2001).

Value transmission from parents to children is assumed to be selective and transmission belt is the assistive realm for selective values such as parents' aspirations and education that make up a transmission belt of achievement values (Schönpflug, 2001). As a result, concerns, preferences, and conditions of parents need to be taken into consideration alongside the culture. In parallel with the

intergenerational transmission, Knafo and Schwartz (2012) argued that identification with parents increases the internalization of perceived parental values. Furthermore, if these values are perceived more accurately, the identification strengthens in addition to affecting the parental warmth. Therefore, they claimed that relational identification leads to a motivation to accept parental values and identify with them. They also found that acceptance and identification are related to parental warmth and responsiveness. Therefore, parental perspectives and children's perception of their parents must be considered together to understand children's subjective experiences and what children value in their lives. In particular, the level of education, financial status, and gender seem to be the most important factors among the parental characteristics in determining the selection of values and priorities to be transmitted.

#### 1.5.7 Transmission of parenting

Besides the transmission of parental thoughts, values, and ideals, there is also a transmission of parenting through culture as suggested by parental ethnotheories. Parental ethnotheories represent ideas about child development and child-rearing, parenting, and children (Lamm, Keller, Yovsi, & Chaudhary, 2008). The research on the relationship between culture and parenting has its origin in the early 1950s (Harkness & Super, 2002). As their study suggests, cultural belief systems have a major role in shaping parental behaviors. These belief systems that come with culture brings about certain understandings of good parenting, effective child-rearing, and parental goals (Keller, Lamm, Abels, Yovsi, Borke, Jensen, ... & Su, 2006). However, they are not always explicitly verbalized. They generally remain implicit and show themselves through behaviors and shared beliefs (Trommsdorff, Cole, & Heikamp, 2012). Bornstein (2012) argued that genetic heritage and culture are the

two sources of transmission with parents as the final transmitters. There are culture-specific expectations in an accepted parenting style and it creates an attunement between mothers and infants. For instance, when mothers pay more attention to physical development, infants become more developed. When mothers prioritize didactic information, infants become more attracted to objects, properties, and environmental events (Bornstein, 2012). However, there are also common factors in the understanding of parenting such as nurturing, rearing, and protecting across cultures.

The study realized by Lamm, et al. (2008) also has remarkable results concerning the transmission and differentiation of the ideas on parenting between mothers and grandmothers. It points out a general trend towards an independent model of parenting. This reveals itself in the discourse of mothers and the significant differences between parenting ideas of mothers and grandmothers (Lamm, et al., 2008). Despite the similarity in the style of discourse, mothers encouraged autonomy more with their parenting strategies. The biggest difference between the parenting ideas of mothers and grandmothers is seen among the ones who lived in urban areas of NSO Cameroon. On the other hand, the difference in Delhi and Berlin was lower. They hypothesized that the lower difference might be reflecting the adoption of mothers' discourse by the grandmothers, alongside the fact that most of them are still working and facing the change actively (Lamm, et al., 2008).

When it comes to parenting and family research in Turkey, there is a positive development in families thanks to the increased knowledge of the importance of child development (Şahin & Cevher, 2007). In a study conducted by Nacak et al. (2011), the mothers' expectations from the children and environmental conditions of the family were compared across three groups. The first group was families with

mothers who live in rural areas. The second and third were families who live in urban areas with mothers having higher education and mothers having lower education. All of the mothers have been residents of Turkey. Mothers who live in rural areas formed their expectations of development much earlier when it comes to complying with the conventional rules and morals. However, mothers with higher education from urban areas also have expectations of earlier child development overall, but they do not use punishment- or obedience-inducing strategies. On the environmental conditions, it was reported that families in rural areas had better neighborhoods and more healthy environmental conditions while families in urban areas with lower education had the worst neighborhood conditions (Nacak et al., 2011).

#### 1.6 Intergenerational transmission of relationality

As the literature of child well-being suggested, the relational context has a significant place in the experiences of children. Children define their well-being in relational context. In addition, parents have expectations from their children based on their relationality and self-development. For example, the most common themes parents raised centered upon the commitment to family, living according to the family values, developing agency, and having personal areas of competence. Yet, there is still a need to search for the connections between this parental impact and child's subjective experience. These two different areas of research will be linked to each other to see how maternal relationality shapes child's development of relationality. Therefore, experiences of well-being and intergenerational transmission of relational experiences will be discussed here.

Koblinsky, Kuvalanka, and Randolph (2006) designed a study with structured interviews with African-American mothers with low levels of income and their preschooler children to investigate the relationship between parenting and children's socio-emotional development. They argued that parental strategies become models for the social behaviors of children. They defined potential protective and risk factors as parenting strategies. The protective factors were having more positive parenting practice and having more family routines. The risk factors were maternal depression and family conflict. They have found that more positive parenting strategies like warmth, responsiveness, consistency, less reaction to negativity, and sensitivity in monitoring the child's emotions led to the development of higher prosocial skills in the child. When mothers used these positive strategies, they model socially desirable behaviors that bring positive peer relationships and academic success as well as a lower level of externalizing problems. They also mentioned that more maternal depression leads to more negative parenting practices like a greater level of withdrawal from parenting, perception of parenting as a burden, disappointment, showing hostility, and relying on aversive discipline (Koblinsky, Kuvalanka & Randolph, 2006). According to their study, these negative parental practices lead to a decrease in the self-control capacity of the child and an increase in externalizing problems. Moreover, when children witnessed more conflict in the family, they showed more aggression and hostility to their parents and peers (Koblinsky, Kuvalanka & Randolph, 2006). As a result, children's social behaviors are profoundly impacted by what they witness in their family, and especially the parenting practices they have been exposed to (Koblinsky, Kuvalanka & Randolph, 2006).

Another study aimed to link maternal attachment and social learning of children to parent and child psychosocial profile investigated how social skills of the child and their self-esteem are impacted by maternal attachment style (Curran, Meter, Janovec, Brown & Caban, 2019). In this study with 229 mother and child pairs, Curran et al. (2019) discovered that when maternal attachment included low anxiety in relationships and low avoidance from relationships, mothers' social skills were higher. This led to better development of the child's social skills and higher self-esteem. Yet, when mothers' attachment style included more fear and avoidance, they had lower social skills and self-esteem that had a negative impact on child's social skills and self-esteem. Therefore, Curran et al. (2019) indicated that maternal attachment style influences the child's attachment through modeling of maternal social skills even when the children's individual attachment styles were controlled. Mothers' social skills played a mediating role between the maternal attachment and child's social attachment.

Moreover, parental attachment and conflict behavior between mother and fathers have been found to predict the children's relationship satisfaction through discomfort with closeness, loneliness, and anxiety (Feeney, 2006). Parents perceived themselves as less offensive and more problem-solving despite the fact that children perceived their parents as more offensive and less problem-solving. In addition, children's relationship anxiety has been directly affected by parental attachment security (Feeney, 2006). Therefore, Feeney (2006) concluded that difficulties in relationality are transmitted from the relationship of parents to the relationship between adult children and their partners.

Similarly, Burke (2013) mentioned that psychosocial problems are transmitted from parents to children in the family and family members show

similarity in the relational difficulties they have. For example, if mothers report more loneliness, their adult children also experience more loneliness and if parental anxiety is higher, the anxiety of adult children is also higher. Burke (2013) argued that when parents have psychosocial difficulties with less developed social skills, there is an exhibition of negative communication and children develop consistent relationality patterns with lower development of sociability. Following the feeling of loneliness, Curran (2019) mentioned that when maternal feeling of loneliness impacts the child's feelings of loneliness through the communication constructed in the family such as decreased support or conflict management. Feeling lonely leads people to perceive their environment as more threatful and uncertain, so that the capacity to provide a supportive family environment is impacted (Curran, 2019). It is detrimental in child psychology when children escape from having conflicts with their mothers and when they perceive lower levels of family support (Curran, 2019). If children perceive their family environment as supportive, they have less feeling of loneliness (Curran, 2019).

When the empathy skills of adolescents were measured through perspective taking and friendship quality, maternal capacity of taking perspectives has been found to play a major role through maternal support given to the child (Soenens, Duriez, Vansteenkiste & Goossens, 2007). Soenens et al. (2007) mentioned that when parenting is supportive with sensitivity to children's negative emotions and capacity to help reduce them, children get the message of parental ability and willingness to understand and sympathize with their feelings. This empathic relationship between the mother and the child modeled an empathic capacity. Therefore, maternal ability to take different perspectives influenced the development

of perspective taking in their adolescent children and the development of better friendships quality indirectly through maternal supportiveness (Soenens et al., 2007).

As a result, the relationality of mothers had an impact on the social development of children through different variables such as the supportiveness of the mother, positive parenting practices, maternal capacity to take perspectives, maternal attachment, and maternal sociability. These factors played a role in the development of social skills, quality of peer relationships, self-control mechanisms, and satisfaction with the relationships of the children. As Lavenda and Kestler-Peleg (2018) mentioned that mothers' perception of their own social network, the support they received from their friends, and the extent of their own relationality defines the range of the children's willingness and tendency for social engagements and the capacity of using peer relationships as a support in their lives. In their study, Lavenda and Kestler-Peleg (2018) found that when mothers perceived their friendships as more supportive, their maternal competence and valuation of sociability increase. In this way, children experience more appreciation of social relationships and their sociability develops better (Lavenda & Kestler-Peleg, 2018).

### 1.7 The present study

This study evaluated children's perceptions of their well-being through semi-structured interviews. Children were not asked about the specific fields that have already shown to define child well-being such as family, friends, school, or health. On the other hand, they were asked to share their ideas and feelings about the important people, places, and things in their life in an open-ended fashion. The narratives were enriched by optional drawings; therefore, the participants were free to draw the things that they indicated to be crucial in their lives. Papers and colorful

crayons were provided for their free use. Therefore, there have been various possible aspects to get insights into the children's perspectives. Drawings were evaluated both within the personal interview context and the similarities and differences across all participants. They were assumed to help us understand the children's sources of aspiration and pleasure through these drawings in a deeper way. Children were asked to tell what, where, and who makes them happy and why. Therefore, this research design tried to prevent structuring the children by asking questions of the specific predetermined domains.

At the second stage of the study, the mothers of the participating children were interviewed. The procedure of these interviews conducted with mothers was asking them what they see as important and worthy for their children, what they want their children to be like, to gain, or to achieve both in the future and at the child's current age. Mothers were also asked about their conceptualizations of success in a very general sense. Moreover, their evaluation of being a mother and woman as part of their identity was investigated. Both the children and the parents were required to assume having a magic wand that can change something in their lives, which was part of the termination question of the interviews, asked about what they would have wanted to change or make better. Besides being the terminal signal of interviews, this question aimed to enable the participants to maintain a more peaceful and relieved state of mind after the interview.

While exploring the emerging themes that children themselves actively illuminate, parental views were also gathered to understand how parental priorities and perceptions are manifested and practiced in the child's life. Therefore, comparisons of how they conceptualized well-being and how parental wishes,

expectations, and experiences have shaped children's understandings and experiences became possible, taking socio-economic differences into account.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### 2.1 Qualitative research

The methodology of this study derives from the grounded theory for an in-depth understanding of what constitutes well-being from the children's and the mother's standpoint.

Qualitative analysis allows researchers to discover the underlying richness of the data apart from the visible discourse of the participants. The birth of the analysis is the data itself and theories are constructed through these data added with observations and interactions of the researcher (Charmaz, 2006). The focus of a qualitative study is to understand how participants explanations are shaped and what analytic senses are hidden in these statements (Charmaz, 2006).

Constructing theories from data begins from the time of sampling and data collection and continues with the analysis. Analysis of qualitative data is done by coding the raw data to reach a conceptual understanding (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Coding is a way of sorting the data into pieces which leads to thinking, asking, and comparing of different bits of the data (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, qualitative analysis includes the thinking function of the researcher with intuition and a close interaction with the data, taking each time a different perspective (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

#### 2.2 Participants

Participants in this study were 15 children (6 girls and 9 boys) and their mothers who were Turkish and lived in İstanbul. All children were normally developing children

and their age ranged from 10 to 12 years with an average of 10.87. Families were recruited from three different social conditions, low, middle, and high socio-economic status. The socio-economic status has been categorized according to the parental education and parental job type. The average family size was 4. Average child number in the family was 2 for all SES types. All children lived with their both parents and siblings.

In the low-income families ( $n = 5$ ), children attended to public schools and fathers had blue collar jobs. Mothers from lower income families had primary school education and four of them were housewives. One of them worked as unskilled laborer.

In the high-income families ( $n = 5$ ) both mothers and fathers had at least university degree education and children attend to private schools with highest tuition fees in İstanbul. Three of the mothers from high-income families had white-collar jobs and two of them were housewives. All the families with high socio-economic status had someone in charge of helping mothers babysit during the children's infancy.

In the middle-income families ( $n = 5$ ), the education of the mothers varied from primary school to university. Three of the mothers had jobs, one white collar job with university degree, one blue-collar job, and one worked as a babysitter. Remaining two mothers from middle-income were housewives. Other than two of the fathers, men had blue collar jobs. Only one of the children from middle class families attended to a private school since his father had scholarship, being the deputy principal in that school. Table 1 shows the list of children, their mothers, age, gender, and SES of the family.

Table 1. Children, Their Age, Gender, Mothers, and SES of the Family

Children	Age of children	Gender of children	SES of the family	Mothers
C	11	girl	Low	Mother of C
H	11	girl	Low	Mother of H
M	11	boy	Low	Mother of M
T	10	boy	Low	Mother of T
U	10	girl	Low	Mother of U
A	12	boy	Mid	Mother of A
Ç	12	girl	Mid	Mother of Ç
K	10	girl	Mid	Mother of K
S	11	boy	Mid	Mother of S
Y	10	boy	Mid	Mother of Y
K	11	boy	High	Mother of K
M	12	girl	High	Mother of M
M	10	boy	High	Mother of M
T	10	boy	High	Mother of T
Y	12	boy	High	Mother of Y

### 2.3 Procedure

Data collection took place during the 8 months of the academic year of 2018-2019.

Families were selected by convenience sampling and mothers were contacted by phone to make an appointment for both mother and child interviews. After a mother had been contacted from each socio-economic level, four other families were reached by snowball technique. Interviews have been done individually with mothers and children alone and all interviews were conducted by the author. In total, 30 interviews have been completed.

Interviews with children were semi-structured and included drawing pictures optionally. Children were asked about the places, people, and things that are important to them and make them happy in life (see Appendix A for questions). Nine of 15 children drew pictures, adding up to 60%. Child interviews ranged from 22 to 54 minutes including the time of drawings, the average is 37 minutes.

Interviews with mothers were also semi-structured. Mothers were asked about their expectations from their children, conceptions about what they value in life, evaluations of success, and experience of being mother (see Appendix B for questions). Interviews with mothers ranged from 17 minutes to 74 minutes with an average of 41 minutes.

The main questions in the mother interviews was asking them what they see as important and worthy for their children, what they want their children to be like, to gain, or to achieve both in the future and today at the child's current age. Mothers were also asked about their conceptualizations of success in a very general way. Moreover, their evaluation of being a mother and woman as part of their identity was explored.

Both the children and the parents were asked to imagine having a magic wand that can change something in their lives, which was the termination question of the interviews. Thus, they were asked to reflect on what they would have wanted to change or make better.

#### 2.4 Qualitative analysis of the data

These interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim by the author for the remaining analyses. After the transcription of interviews, audio-records were immediately removed, and personal information was changed in the written version of the data. Written versions of the interviews in Microsoft Word were uploaded into QSR International's NVivo 12 qualitative data analysis software. All the interviews were coded line by line to be able to go further into focused coding. Therefore, themes were emerged through the way from coding to concepts.

In addition to analyses with interviews, a projective evaluation of children's drawings provided an insight into their experiences (See Appendix C for child drawings). Interviewing with mothers as well as children helped understand deeper mothers' wishes for their children, mothers' own childhood experiences, and child in the mind of mother. This method allowed to explore the correspondence between what children raise as important aspects of their well-being and what mothers tell as their expectations and wishes about their children. Hence, subjective methodology was chosen at the heart of this explorative and qualitative study in the search of what children raise as defining their well-being and how their definitions are at interplay with the maternal wishes, expectations and commitments.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

Results will be given under three interrelated sections which attempt to relate children's and their mothers' narratives on well-being to trace elements that correspond to current functioning of the children. The first part will focus on the findings that echo the subjective well-being literature in terms of the importance children place on relationality and sense of competence. Therefore, the first part will delineate responses given by the children as they define the sources of happiness and well-being to the question of "*who, what, and where makes them feel good*". The second part of the results will focus on the mothers' narratives, searching for potential parental factors that surround the children's subjective experience of well-being. This surrounding frame of children's subjective understanding of well-being will be reported through three main areas: i. the mothers' wishes and expectations for their children, ii. mothers' forms of investment for raising this imagined child and current relationship with the child, and iii. connection between mothers' own childhood with their current parenting roles and their identity. The third part will be exploring how these 15 children develop their relational world, whether positive, conflictual, or negative, in the frame of what mothers provide or restrain in their relationality with their children. Ultimately, by using mother and child interviews together, exploring the potential maternal effects on the children's well-being in terms of their subjective experiences of relationality will be attempted.

### 3.1 Interviews with children

In light of the open-ended interviews with children, it was seen that the most important domain children mentioned as making them happy had a hint of relationality. Whether they started with spaces, people, or activities, they mentioned it in a relational context either positively or negatively. Similar to what Thoillez (2011) mentioned, children felt happy mainly in an inter-subjective experience rather than a complete personal experience. Most of all, the things that make children feel good had their meanings with important people attached.

#### 3.1.1 Relationality

Responses to “who, what, where is important for you and makes you happy” mainly were grouped under two themes: relationality and sense of competence. While the two themes were at times intertwined, it made heuristic sense to explore them in separate headings. Relationality combines children’s discourses related to the importance they give to family and friends, while their narratives around relationality in the school context and in carrying out their favorite activities were also included under this theme to illustrate the relational aspect of these spaces and activities.

##### 3.1.1.1 Family

Family was the firstly mentioned important relational field in children’s narratives regardless of the SES differences. Opportunity to feel secure with family was important for children. The sense of security and being in a trusted environment was possible when they were with their family or in the familial environment. Moreover, children mentioned the comfortable environment that comes with being at home, with family. They emphasized that it is possible to behave in whatever way they

liked without any embarrassment at home. Home particularly was mentioned as a space to feel relaxed in as well as bringing family together along with their precious belongings such as toys, and technological devices.

Being with my family gives me happiness and peace and I feel that I am safe with them because the family is your life, your blood. Being with them is living (H, 11, girl, low SES)

First, I feel safe because I know that they won't do anything to me since I'm with my family. I feel safe and the source of this happiness is having fun with my friends. But this situation is better since there is trust or someone I know on my family's side and I feel comfortable because it's my home. (A, 11, girl, low SES)

I like doing anything with my mother and father. It is enough that they are there (K, 10, boy, high SES)

I: What do you like with them, what does their presence make you feel?

K: Trust and a great happiness (10, boy, high SES)

Being with my family is very good for me. Let me summarize, for example, you are sitting with your family and chatting with them. This makes me happy (K, 10, girl, mid SES)

First of all, it is a very nice feeling, for example, we take a train together at the mall, and then we buy something together (T, 10, boy, low SES)

Not only the nuclear family but also extended family members were among the people children felt good to be with. There were mostly cousins in their narratives as they can play games together. Grandmothers and aunts were also mentioned as they provide another space to go to trips, learn new things, and share experiences. If the members of extended family lived in different cities, those places were among desired destinations of children.

The daughter of my aunt, my cousins. They are very good too, I spend time with them too. Sometimes I go to their house, sometimes I can go to their workplaces (H, 11, girl, low SES)

I like to share my troubles with my aunts too and also with my grandmothers. I travel with my grandmothers. (M, 10, boy, high SES)

The places I want to go are usually the hometown of my mother and father. I want to see my cousins, my grandmothers and my grandfather ... I chat with all of them in the evenings and we play with tablets. There is a stadium in my father's hometown, he takes us there with my cousins, and leaves us there. We play matches and then we sit together (Y, 11, boy, mid SES)

Even when children had negative feelings about their families, they brought this affect replying to what-where-who feels good questions. For example, one of the children started telling why she feels better with her friends rather than with her family. Another child mentioned how happy he would be if his father had more time to spend together. Therefore, family has a significant role in how children felt about their happiness opportunities.

My cat and my friends because my mom and dad sometimes don't understand me. Sometimes my stomach hurts in the evening and my family says it will be okay. However, my friend Irmak says if I want, we can go to the infirmary. She understands me better. (M, 12, girl, high SES)

For example, when it comes to food, I do not like food much, but my father always tells me to eat. When I eat half the plate, he wants me to eat the whole plate as it is a religious tradition and I have a little trouble about eating... I can stay hungry, so food is not a problem for me. But I do not like to eat too much, because when I do, there is no space left in the small area of my stomach... Sometimes I say that there is no more space in my stomach, but nobody understands. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.1.1.2 Friends

The second relational field children mostly mentioned was being with friends. Most common activities mentioned were playing, talking, doing structured or unstructured activities with friends. Children talked about their friends as they are the people they feel good together. After family, there was joy of being together with friends.

Playing with my friends both strengthens the friendship and makes me happy (T, 11, boy, low SES)

Playing in the yard is good and spending time there with my friends really makes me happy (K, 10, girl, mid SES)  
For example, when I am with them, I do not feel alone, we are together. We make friendship, it makes me happy. (M, 10, boy low SES)

When relationships with friends were negative, this was a problem for children especially in the school. They stressed the importance of not being bullied, or embarrassed. When children were asked the reverse of what makes them happy, they talked about the things that they wish they could change. Most frequently mentioned issue that seemed to make them unhappy was conflictual experiences with friends or with other children in the school. For example, being bullied by others, being excluded, arguments with peers were frequently noted problems that make children unhappy.

M: I have been in the class D since grade four, then I changed it to B at five, then I changed to C at six

I: How did you make this decision to change, what was the problem?

M: They were always making fun of me because my exams were also bad. I moved to a middle-achiever class. (12, girl, high SES)

Some of my friends are hypocrites and they can do some things behind my back without my knowledge. So now that I have started 5th grade, I don't have so many friends I know. There are a few people and they send me away by saying we are talking something private. So I really make friends with the ones who love me really or play with me. They make me feel better (C, 11, girl, low SES)

Going towards lower SES conditions, there were more complaints of restrictions on the opportunities children wish to have with their friends. For example, there were more parental restrictions on playing outside, more insufficiency of game areas in the school, lack of tablets for play, and loneliness in terms of not being understood or heard by the adults. Children from high SES families had a clear easiness in accessing to opportunities to be with their friends like going to house of a friends, playing together, structuring free time according to their desires. Therefore, family, neighborhood, and physical conditions were more included in children's experiences with their friends when SES conditions were lower.

First of all, I have to do what my mother wants. Sometimes I don't do what she wants and I go out by getting permission. My mother says if I can pray and study, I can go out. And this is what I do. Sometimes I do so, but

sometimes I get permission from her and go out immediately. Weekends are easier because my mother does not give me permission to go out during the week. It's harder for me to go out when it is not weekend. (T, 10, boy, low SES)

Well, I also have friends that I am not so close as my family and these friends sometimes invite me to their home. Now they see a lot of things such as abducting the children or making them beggars... Yes, I get anxious because if we went to a place where I could call my mother lest something happens. There are some dangers on the street anyway. For example, there are more young people here and we do not get close to them. We generally play in our neighborhood and we don't go out of the neighborhood. (A, 11, girl, low SES)

I always go to stay with my friends. For example, I used to go to the summer house with them. I: With whom? K: I have a very close friend named Arda. I go to their house or something I stay with him. Let me tell you how close I am with my friend. The first is my mother's house, the second is İstinye Park, the third is the house of my grandmothers, and the fourth is my friend's house. I call him to ask if I can stay with them when I get bored and Arda says, "Sure, dude. Come over." (K, 11, boy, high SES)

I enjoy playing a game I like with my friends at their house. If my friend has a sibling, I also enjoy taking care of them with my friends. Then visiting my friend's house and creating and playing a new game with toys at my friend's house are also fun. Doing different activities at my relatives' house like watering a garden... (T, 10, boy, high SES)

### 3.1.1.3 School

School was seen as a place to meet with friends. When children mentioned school as a desired place to be in, this was mainly because of friends. School was a social place where they can play together and share their daily experiences.

You can also come together with your friends, attend some classes, you can do things during the break, so it is good (Y, 12, boy, high SES)

I: How is your relationship with school, what kind of a place is it?

M: So I like it but I get bored. Because I love my friends, I like school because I love my friends (10, boy, high SES)

What I like most about the school is the longest recess. It is 40 minutes, we have fun, we play ball. Sometimes when we get bored, we play ball between classes. We play ball in the physical education lesson (T, 10, boy, low SES) I like school so much, not exams, but lessons too. I like friends and the environment. I generally like school (Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

I think it is a very nice place, especially when you have a friend, you will be happy even if you have only one (S, 10, boy, mid SES)

When children were asked what they would like to change in their schools, there were a lot of comments they made. In the narratives of children from lower and middle SES families, school was mentioned more as a space with lacking physical conditions, overcrowded, and bad maintenance.

Then I would do more dressing rooms. I would make the physical conditions the classes better. Let's say the chairs wouldn't be so bad, it would be nice, I would do it (Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

In general, there is not enough place in school. I would like it to be bigger. If there were more space, we could have more opportunities, we could do more, we could improve ourselves. ... There are fights every day, 8<sup>th</sup> graders jump on each other. For example, I want to double the teachers on duty. Also, for the back side of the school. Because when a teacher struggles with so many people, they also attack teachers when they try to separate the students (M, 11, boy, low SES).

C: The stairs of our schools are very narrow and there are 360-365 students

I: Crowded

C: Yes, crowded. So, if it were bigger (11, girl, low SES)

We want a smart board, but they don't send it. I want to go back to my older school because it was better with regular clean rules, we could even go with free clothes there (H, 11, girl, low SES)

In the higher SES conditions, when children were asked what they would change in the school, their focus was more on the regulations and boredom in lessons. They did not mention lack of material conditions, but they wanted more free space to play and more fun.

One of the things that I want to be improved at school is the easing of the rules a little more. For example, when we play football in the garden... Here is the department of the vice principal... Now sometimes the ball goes to the vice principal's window and can even open it... We get complaints from the vice principal and we change place of the goalie, we take it to the other side. This time, the ball goes to the foreign department and we get complaints from them. That is, sometimes such things are difficult. (Y, 12, boy, high SES)

I think the recess should last 40 minutes. (T, 10, boy, high SES)

Sometimes I get bored during the math class, but my approach towards it is a little better than before. Now I get bored in a mind games lesson and also in a social studies lesson... It would have been better if the meals had changed, but I heard that they will be changed in the second term. (M, 10, boy, high SES)

#### 3.1.1.4 Activities

When children talked about the activities that give them pleasure or that constitute an important part of their lives, these were generally under four main brands. One of them was how they spend their time on their own. This type of activity was mostly mentioned by children from families with lower and middle SES. Reading books, watching films, drawing, social media, using tablets, building collections, knitting, learning to code, and idling around are the examples that children spoke of among their favorite activities that make them happy. Children from families with lower and middle SES conditions also talked about their activities with family as a joyful area of their lives. Having talks, going out, having picnics, helping their mothers to cook are exemplar activities that children mentioned feeling good with their family. Moreover, there were specific examples showing one member of the family or extended family teaching something to the child. For instance, learning how to swim from the father, how to knit from the cousin, how to play tennis from an older brother or just to be able to go somewhere in presence of an older sibling. Therefore, activities that are done with family were like enablers of children to discover something new, learn a skill, or just enjoy doing otherwise could not be done alone. There were similar examples in the narratives of children high SES too, yet the portion of being learnt from a family member was much less among their activities. This narrative of familial transmission of an activity was more spread in the narratives of children from lower and middle SES.

We go to my aunts and my mothers, I play tennis there. My brother taught me how to play tennis, we played at my aunts... My father taught me how to swim, he used to lift me up, throw me into the water. I learned that way. Sometimes I would throw myself under the water and try to swim... The waves make me happy while swimming as they come towards me, which I like more. (T, 10, boy, low SES)

S: Painting.

I: You said painting, yes. Did you learn painting in school?

S: No, my father taught me when I was little.

I: Your father taught you.

S: Yes, my father taught it all. (11, boy, mid SES)

Second type of activity mentioned, daily activities with friends, was mostly reported by the children of families with middle SES conditions. Playing football, cycling, dancing, singing was among the examples they gave. In the higher SES conditions, activities with friends were more like going to shopping malls, swimming in the pool of building complex, going to cinema, or school trips. Yet, these were not mentioned as the main domains creating happiness for the high SES. Having activities with friends was a discourse more of the children from middle SES conditions as a source to happiness.

Thirdly, structured activities were mentioned a lot by the children as things that feel important to them. Playing one or two instruments, doing at least two sports constituted extracurricular program of children from high SES. However, these activities mentioned were not involving friends. This was a competitive area, despite being all group activities, children mostly mentioned them as a personal activity. In addition, the motivation was not always genuinely owned by the children. Sometimes it was parents who chose an activity for a desired, better health or mind condition of the child. The competitive meaning these activities carry was not dominant when it came to the leisure time activities of children from middle and lower SES conditions. They mentioned these activities as sources of joy and

learning. Mostly, these were opportunities offered additionally by their schools, thus not requiring joining private clubs or taking private classes.

My mother said, I am clubfooted. How many times have we gone to orthopedics, and sometimes the doctors said that I won't be taller than one or three centimeters after puberty. My mom said, "I am tall, my husband is tall, how come she will not be tall" and the doctor said we do not know. Then my mother said, "I'll send her to volleyball immediately." (M, 12, girl, high SES)

Since there is a pool in our school, we go swimming once in 2 weeks. We do 1 week of sports, 1 week of swimming (Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

Fourthly, additional academic courses or special programs were among the activities children mentioned in their daily lives. Children from higher SES conditions all had a program for supporting school lessons. Some of these children mentioned attending to academic camps in another city with their friends either completed or planned for a near future. This was a source of learning from experience and a very exciting possibility to stay with friends. Participating in school study groups, and academic clubs were more among the academic activities of children from lower and middle SES conditions.

It was an incredible thing, you sleep with your friends for 15 days, you get up, it is an incredibly beautiful thing. I never knew them before, these were the best friends I have ever had in my life. For example, I will meet with them two or three days later. (K, 10, boy, high SES)

For example, when I participate in a project, I am currently in science and technology group at school. We are doing an activity with friends in that group there, so I enjoy it... I attended this group because I chose this club when I was in elementary school, so that I had experience. So, we do experiments in that group, I like doing experiment, so I discover something new and I have fun. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

... I usually go to the after-school academic courses, there are those courses of the schools. When we finish the lesson, I stay in the course... Five days a week, but the course for physical education is over now. I attend others, for English, Turkish, mathematics and informatics on Fridays (Y, 11, boy, mid SES)

### 3.1.1.5 Play

The place of play in the children's narrative was comprised of four main areas, play with family at home, with friends outside of home, with technological devices, and in the school. Most of the children mentioned play while talking about the good times with their family. For some of them, play was an option for spare time to spend with their sibling, while for some, parents were included in the play. However, there was not a great deal of time dedicated to play in the families.

I love games with my mother, father and brother, playing hide and seek and that kind of games (S, 11, boy, mid SES)

Play in the neighborhood had a significant meaning in children's daily lives. They mentioned the times they were out with friends with excitement. While outdoors play was an option in closed-building yards for children from high SES, there was a sense of insecurity or difficulty to get permission to spend time outdoors for children from lower SES. Street was mentioned to be a secure play space for children from middle SES, that included activities to be shared with friends. These games were opportunities to be physically active like running, cycling, which was mostly mentioned by the children from families with middle SES conditions. These families from middle SES generally had relatively secure neighborhood conditions and were not living in closed-building settlements.

Playing in the yard is good and spending time there with my friends really makes me happy (K, 10, girl, mid SES)

In the summer, we play together with the children from the whole building in the neighborhood, as there is a closed indoor area, we can play together (Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

I play football with my friends, go places, we ride bicycles. (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

Technology had a part in both meeting with friends online and playing alone. Most of the children indicated technological devices as a source of fun but talked

about its negative effects at the same time. The children who talked about technological games for a longer time in the interviews were children from high and mid SES conditions. Going from higher to lower SES conditions, children reported that the time they spent on online games decreased.

Playing with my brother, and I sometimes watch TV. So most of the time I play games on mobile phone. I rarely read books before going to bed in the evening (M, 10, boy, high SES)

So now that we are at home, my friend cannot come home anyway, so you can be together virtually, for example, you can play while talking on the phone too. (Y, 12, boy, high SES)

For example, I said to my mother yesterday. The charge of my brain decreases when I play with the tablet, then it increases when I think of something (shows his brain here)... I regain the tablet on weekends, then I play with it every day (S, 11, boy, mid SES)

Now, I don't want to talk a lot about the game. I can say this, I usually give 2 hours a day at most for a game that I like most. But not for nonstop 2 hours, with breaks each half an hour (K, 10, boy, high SES)

I like every game more, and I love the games that I can feel myself in it. For example, I feel more like being in the game on the tablet. But I know they kill my brain cells (M, 11, boy, low SES)

One of the most mentioned places of play was schools mostly for children from all SES conditions. It was a place to see friends and have fun times together in recess or sports activities. However, there were differences in experiencing school as a play area. For children from middle and lower SES groups, there were apparent deficiencies physically as opposed to the conditions of high SES schools. Yet, children from middle and lower SES families mentioned school more frequently as a place to be with friends and to play. Therefore, school carried a more loaded meaning in the play world of children from low and mid SES, despite the conditions.

There is more active entertainment at school, being at school is more like a game. (U, 10, girl, low SES)

I normally play during short breaks between classes, we play wall-to-wall or hide and seek. Sometimes, there are games like twister in our school, in other

words, sometimes we play with them, we play puss- in-the corner in the garden. We spend such times (C, 11, girl, low SES)

So I think about school as a place to learn and have some fun. You go out to the garden at the breaks (K, 10, girl, mid SES)

Actually, during the days of physical education, teachers give the ball of the school or we take our own ball to play. If we do not have one, we make paper balls like this. Sometimes I buy a bottle of water even if I have water. I drink it immediately and when I finish it, I close its cap and we play football matches. (A, 11, boy, mid SES)

We can... No, we cannot attend during the physical classes. This is because, let's say (we have groups, for example) if one party goes to the football field, one side to the volleyball and the other to basketball the teacher cannot take care of all of them at the same time. Others can escape when the teacher goes to check on a group. For example, I go to a physical education course too. We can also go there in the physical education course, so I can play on the football field. (M, 11, boy, mid SES)

We prefer to play horror games during recess. We choose an object to find in the horror game, we find that object during the game and the break ends (T, 10, boy, high SES)

### 3.1.2 Sense of competence

The fields in which children felt themselves to be competent appeared to provide them a source of happiness. When children were asked what makes them happy, they mentioned the activities they felt they are good at, the opportunities where they can assert themselves and the activities they enjoy.

#### 3.1.2.1 Feeling competent through activities

Children experienced these areas of competence through two ways, alone by themselves, or socially with their families or with their friends. When it is an activity that children do alone and feel competent, it provided spending a joyful time rather than having boredom. When it was an activity that children felt that their talents were evident, there was a sense of recognition they received from others. For example, for

a child who feels very successful in football, he felt accepted by his friends on the team. In both conditions, the positive reactions children received from their family or friends provided them the feeling of capability.

I usually play as a goalkeeper. I think I'm good at this because my classmates get surprised when I save most of the balls... We already played a match once. We attend physical education classes as two classes... I saved all the balls in that match. (M, 10, boy, high SES)

I was already playing the piano at school... My primary school music teacher was saying that I was good at it. My mother also met this teacher once, and they recommended me to take lessons. I was studying myself, but I took private lessons in 3rd grade. From there, I am still continuing in the 6th grade now... I was playing well, so I am interested in this because my brother was playing the piano at our house. (A, 12, boy, high SES)

I enjoy painting and singing music the most... My primary school teacher was already fond of my paintings because I was making good progress... Such that, one of my paintings was exhibited, so I received a book for this. (H, 11, girl, low SES)

Technology... We do experiments and we exhibit them at school... I have made a lot of experiments and one of them is at home... I joined this club when I was in primary school because I had experience... We do experiments in that group. I like experiments. I am discovering something and having fun... For example, coding is also related to technology. I also love coding and I have a certificate. Where there is coding, I get immersed in coding more. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

I'm into kitchen tasks. My mother had a little difficulty getting up on Saturdays while she woke up earlier than us all mornings. Sometimes my father is gone on Saturdays and my mother falls asleep... Since I cannot stay asleep, I get up for my mother and prepare breakfast and I set the table. There is practically nothing left for my mother since sometimes I remove the plates from the table and wash the dishes... It comes as a surprise to her and I want to improve myself in the kitchen. I don't want to grow up knowing nothing about the kitchen. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

S: Painting... I'm painting cars and I think of inventing something similar in the future.

I: So, you like to produce different things by drawing?

S: Yes, I will design a car that detects mine from afar and it will help the soldiers. (11 boy, mid SES)

Another example was having the leadership roles in the school where children can practice participation in decision making and the feelings of agency.

When children had leading roles in regulations and decision-making in the school context, it created fun and brought a sense of self-sufficiency.

When the teacher is not present, I am also the president as the heads of sports... Since I am a top student amongst them, my grades are usually over 80 or 90 anyway. They offered me such a presidential thing for the physical education. We also have locker rooms. When everybody leaves I lock their doors. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

... I was the head of school last year. This year, I came third in school. I was the first last year, I hope I will be the first next year. That's why I like to be successful. Since I am more social, they usually assign me a task here together with a few of my friends. (Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

### 3.1.2.2 Feeling competent through access

Going to shopping malls was a great activity that children enjoy. For children from high SES families, this was a reachable and regular activity. However, for the children from middle and lower SES conditions, this was a desired and more rarely obtained opportunity as it was observed from either mother or child interviews.

Let me tell you how close I am with my friend. The first is my mother's house, the second is İstinye Park, the third is the house of my grandmothers. (K, 10, boy, high SES)

Malls, parks, nature parks... And also toy stores such as D&R, Toyz Shop, Lego Store or Nezh... Or technology products. (M, 10, boy high SES)

Going to playlands was included in this opportunity almost for all of them. In addition, eating food there meant a lot. Even though these were easy and fun activities for children from high SES, the narration had a much more different profile towards middle and lower SES. In middle class conditions, these activities were named as desired and joyful, but also compared with more traditional sources of happiness like eating organic food, walking around, doing sports in forests, being with relatives at home, or shopping from bazaars.

In lower SES conditions, it was much clear that children had a longed desire to go to malls, but they rarely had opportunities to do so. In their narratives, there was even a denial of the happiness such trips brought to them as a reversal of pending desire.

I like visiting İstinye Park with my mother the most... It has a very nice environment and there are many places with technological equipment. (K, 10, boy, high SES)

It is better to eat outside with my friends. At home, I like to eat organic food and things like vegetables. And when my mother prepare food that has been brought from the village, I like it very much... We don't go to many famous places, but I like eating çığ köfte (steak tartar a la turca) and wraps. (Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

We mostly meet on report card days because we are together on these days. We have had plans and even went to a shopping mall on report card day in the first period of the semester break. We played games, ate a lot, and then I got a little sick because my stomach gets a little disturbed by pastry and coke. I think I was poisoned. I don't know either, but my stomachache lasted 2-4 days. (H, 11, girl, low SES)

For example, we examined the sessions of a movie today. If my father doesn't really have work to do and he can come, we will go to the cinema today. So, I am happy for this too. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

Having holidays and going to different cities were among the most mentioned adventures. Using winter breaks as school trips, having vacations in summers were among favorite holiday activities of children from high SES families. Going to middle and lower SES families, holiday discourse was established more on going to villages or going to summer house of a family friend. Village had a special meaning in the lives of children from lower SES families. Village was a facilitator for better access conditions. For instance, children had opportunities of seeing family relatives, playing outside freely, eating natural goods, enjoying safe environment with more freedom when they go to their villages. Therefore, they indicated a desire and joy of going there.

By virtue of these fields where children felt their individual selves to be more competent, they had opportunity to reflect on their individual interests and strengths. These experiences provided children the feeling of being capable to create and to achieve things, developing their talents and skills, contributing to their happiness. These feelings of competence, agency, and self-sufficiency supported the subjective well-being of children.

### 3.2 Interviews with mothers

Semi-structured interviews with parents helped explore what they wish for their child, what they give importance for their child to achieve, and who is the imagined child in their minds. These were discussed during the interviews together with the mothers' own childhood experiences, the parenting they received from their mothers, along with their self-experiences of being a mother and their identity besides motherhood. The goal was to understand what they value for their children in light of their own personal experiences, how they invest in those values and goals that comes through their current relationship with the children, and what kind of a structure all these bring to the children's experiences of well-being.

#### 3.2.1 Expectations from the child

When mothers were asked about their expectations and desires regarding their children, there were mainly two segments; an ideal picture of the child and the child in the future.

Almost all mothers indicated that they want their children to be honest, well-behaved, respectful, and polite. Most mothers also indicated that they give importance to loyalty to family and respect in family relationships.

My daughter, knows how to listen, knows how to approach someone. To be able to help, to greet, to say good morning to a person, to say hello, humanity is gained liked that. I think the worst thing is to ignore a person. (Mother of Ç,12, girl, mid SES)

I want him to be respectful, for example, I want him to never hurt his friends, I care about this very much. I do not want to have a complaint about him, I care very much about it, it makes me very sad if there is a problem about that (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

First of all, what I want my kids to have more is human emotions. Being understanding, and kind to people, not losing these emotions. What I want most for them is being a good person, so these are the most important values we want to give. I want them to be good people with morality, after having that, they are already aware of their responsibilities and everything continues from there (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

Prioritizing family values, being respectful and knowing the religion are the priorities for me. It is very important for me to have her listen to her parents' words, to respect, to love her elders (Mother of K, 10, girl, mid SES)

Because I care about my own family, I want my children to care about their families first and to value them. Whether it is his uncle or aunt or a relative, I think they should not dismiss them (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

And he definitely has to learn the thing that he should respect the elders. He should learn that he should help them (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

The second most mentioned theme was self-confidence and self-sufficiency as prioritized quality of character for an ideal child. Mothers mentioned it in two different ways. One of them was being strong enough to be able to say no when they have an unfair condition. They wanted their children to assert themselves and fight for their rights.

I don't want them to be timid, I want them to stand on their own legs with confidence. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

Another way in which mothers talked about self-confidence was more in line with competence. For example, being able to stand on their own two legs and believing in their power to succeed.

I want her to be self-confident, to be able to say that I can achieve this, I can do anything. I want her to be able to say that even if I cannot do it now, I can

do it tomorrow. Not necessarily doing it that day (Mother of C, 10, girl, low SES)

We want him to stand on his own feet with a good education, both financially and characteristically. He must earn his own living and be a strong child. Since he is the only child, we want him to be a strong child. If he achieves a good education, if he has a good business life, he will stand on his own feet. We think he will not need anyone then (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

Among the parents with lower SES conditions, there was a conception of desired life for child in the future. They mentioned it as their desire for their children to have an occupation that is achieved by education. However, the desire for children to succeed what parents could not do was not limited to the discourse of families from lower SES only. For lower SES, mothers clearly indicated that they want their children to be educated and to have economic power in contrast to their own experiences. However, this desire was also mentioned by some mothers from high SES conditions. The points they mentioned were to be able to use the opportunities that were not available in their own childhood such as going abroad for education, choosing activities and jobs according to their talents and wishes.

First of all, I say, I want them to have education and a profession. I want it so much for them to have a job (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

I have never insisted on my children to have a certain job. As long as you have a profession, it is enough, have a skill to use for yourself (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

We want her to have education, to have a job in the future this is my effort. I did not go to school and I regret it. If you have education, you can get what you want. Look at me, I always ask your father if he has his salary, you don't have this condition with education. You can do the things you want; you can go travel as you want, you do not need to ask anyone. (Mother of C, 10, girl, low SES)

I really want them to progress wherever they will be happy because I am not working in a job I am happy with. So, as you see, I want to support them in that direction, so they can do anything in that direction wherever they will be happy. It is not like be a doctor or something (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

For example, we could not go to other countries. I want them to go abroad, to see the whole world, now children have so many facilities. In Turkey, there

were no possibilities like that. We were going to the schools in our neighborhood. But children are different now. I want them to develop by adapting to this age. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

Most mothers evidenced concern over their children's development vis a vis peers. While, it can be seen as a natural aspect of parenting, mothers also showed different tendencies in talking about their children in comparison to other children of same age. Some mothers were more anxious about the possibility of their children's falling behind their peer group. Some of them completely rejected a comparative look. Yet, some mothers considered their children as slower in some domains of development compared to their peers.

### 3.2.2 The relational space between mothers and children

In the narratives of mothers, there were different versions of current relationality with their children. Some of them mentioned rather positive aspects of the relationship while for some relatively negative aspects were salient. There were also some mixed statements including both positivity and conflict.

#### 3.2.2.1 Positive relationship between mother and child

When mothers told a positive relationality with their children, different aspects of the relationship were mentioned. Feeling like friends, being a support to the child, enjoying the praises coming from the child, and personal pleasure of having children were the main aspects.

Some of the mothers told a positive relationship with their child, as in a friendship. They mentioned that they go places together, share ideas, and play. This was also a way to be able to understand their children and know them more closely.

He likes going to cinema with me, we do it a lot. We go to cinema together, he likes going to Starbucks and drinking coffee together, we read books there,

T likes this a lot. I think he likes spending time with us now (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

I tell her by talking, we also give our love, they even play with their father, even with a daughter of her age, they even play hide and seek. We played hide and seek the other day, even me, old woman (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

Being like friends, you know everything inside your child. For example, rather than giving her secrets to different people, she tells you. For clothes she wears, a friend says it is good, this is okay she can ask them, talk with them, call them too. If you can think like a child of her age, you can understand her (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

Mothers also expressed a positive relationship by telling how they encourage, look after, and support their children. They told that they are in charge of guiding and being with them all the time. That way, they kept an eye on the children, encouraged by giving responsibilities, and provided emotional regulation in the daily life.

I am behind them; I am following each minute. So, I am always with them, both making jokes like being a friend and like knowing them psychologically. In other words, of course there are things that I was wrong about, but I think about them and see these mistakes myself. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

On one hand, I put effort, I play chess, we read books together. Even if their homework is done, I still check it, because they should not be out of sight. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

I always read, there is a pedagogue on Instagram, I follow his things. For example, to calm an angry child depends on the calmness of the mother, so that a calm mother can soothe. I always check myself, calm myself down and then when his anger ends, I talk to him. I say you did it like this, but I wish you could do it that way, it would have been better. So he can understand and he will get over it with time (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

There was also a personal satisfaction of having children through which mothers implied a positive relationship with their children. This was mostly coming from two points. One of these points was having children in accordance with their desires in the sense that their children grow up and behave as the mothers wanted. The other was merely being thankful and content for having children.

Life is like this for me, I mean, I always look at the bright side. I don't let myself be pessimistic. Two children are my source of joy ... especially, the laughter of C when I make jokes. I say to her that you are growing up so fast, grow slowly so that I can enjoy it. I have such a small world, but I have a world that is full (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

They have a certain place in my mind, and there are also comments of other people. For example, they say that he is not angry in the school, he is a very happy child. There were even some mothers asking me what I did, how I raised this child. I was very pleased with that (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

When it is about money, when you say that okay, take this pocket money, he doesn't spend without asking me. He doesn't think like anyway they gave this money to me. He asks our opinions. Therefore, there is power of the family, family attachment behind. I think there is a family force (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

#### 3.2.2.2 Negative comments on the current relationship

Mothers also had some negative feelings in their interactions with children. For instance, some of the mothers were angry about the dissatisfaction of their children. They felt like their children were not fulfilling the mothers' desires and sometimes they saw their children as whimsical. There were also complaints of mothers on the academic or extracurricular performance of the child despite all efforts taken. For some mothers there were feelings of insufficiency of rearing the child as they wanted. Mothers also had difficulty due to incompatibility, stubbornness, or jealousy of the children towards other siblings.

If he wants to play basketball, we take him to the basketball court and if he wants to go swimming, we take him for swimming. But you know, I think my child is a bit whimsical regarding that issue. He plays basketball and says he should go swimming after a while, but he does not want to leave playing basketball and wants to continue both of them. Then he says, "I want to play football too". However, you cannot keep up with this materially and spiritually. (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

She does not want to study at all and goes to a course for 3, 6 and 10 hours in 4 days. She goes there Tuesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. She says she's very bored right now, she says he doesn't want to go. But I say, "Irmak, you're not doing anything anyway, just go there and listen." I mean, we

usually get along well with Irmak. You know, that old grudging and stubborn child disappeared and became milder. (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

My child says, “Mom, let's go, let's buy headphones. This model is very cheap.” and I say “No, we don't have money, or we can't buy it right now”. Then there is the same reaction. “You don't do what I say. You don't buy what I want” he says. Sometimes I say “Look, you wanted this. You wanted headphones. Didn't we get it?” “Okay, you got it, but I want this”, he repeats. But these requests never end. I wonder how far this will go. My child can be unhappy at a time but is quite happy before such a conversation. When playing outside or video games and playing with his friends, he is quite happy. These activities make them happy, that is, they make my child happier. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

The child should think in a childish way. So why would a child who wants crampons prefer a brand? If it is not going to slip, if the floor on which it will be used is a suitable, all shoes should be fine. The child is paying attention to the brand. We can't make them wear the shoes we bought from Decathlon, so this is ugly and not nice to us. But we could not get rid of it, we are in it again. It has such negative aspects that capitalism is very effective. (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

I want my child to be respectful because MS behaves differently to me than he actually does outside. We cannot get along with M too well. He gets along better with his father. For instance, when he has a problem, he does not tell me, but he tells his father. For example, he takes exams at school, but he does not tell me the exam results, he calls his father directly and tells him about it. He doesn't establish a dialogue with me, so he makes me very sad. I am wondering where I did wrong... I can never make him happy. For example, I wouldn't be able to make him happy even if I brought a gift. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.2.3 Investment to personality and skill development

#### 3.2.3.1 Self-confidence

Mothers indicated their efforts in the development of their children's self-confidence as they mentioned their expectation from their children to become self-confident.

They gave importance to that in mainly two different categories. The first meaning of self-confidence for mothers was being strong enough to be able to say no when there is an unfair situation. They wanted their children to assert themselves and keep their rights. Another meaning of self-confidence was in the sense that believing in oneself

and being assertive to use and show the talents. For example, being able to stand on their own legs and believing in their power to success. They told about their efforts to gain to their children self-confidence. For example, they were letting their children have part in house chores, attend to school trips, join extracurricular activities and they were telling the importance of self-confidence with the examples of their own experiences.

Well, the thing is... I mean, you may have noticed that my child is very introverted. I want him to participate in social activities and open up... It may be sports or something, I do not know how it is, I do not know how. Thanks to the municipality, there are such events and he can go there... Sometimes I tell them to take the little one and play together on the street. I want them to take responsibility. I constantly observe them from behind the curtain. I just want them to gain confidence. (Mother of T, 10, boy, low SES)

My older child is in good mood. I care about sociality. I let him meet with his friends and go to the camp in the summer to stand on his own legs. And when he reaches that age, I intend to give permission to the little one to the extent the conditions are suitable. But I am planning to do it in a controlled way, of course. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

"Do some favors. Share your food with those who do not have much in their lunchbox, give water to those who do not have water. But don't be foolish by giving away what is in your pocket." I say... I advise my son to stay silent to get out of troublesome situations. "You seem to be guilty while trying to express yourself." I say. Cut it off by saying, "I have no idea." I recommend him. (Mother of S, 11, boy, mid SES)

### 3.2.3.2 Tidiness and self-sufficiency

Mostly mothers from lower and middle SES conditions pointed out the importance they gave to be orderly, neat, and self-sufficient in domestic responsibilities.

How can I say, I say that you can arrange your room and make your bed. I want them slowly, for example, I do not want her to leave clothes around. I care a lot about this, for example, my son immediately picks up his dirty clothes (Mother of U, 10, girl, low SES)

I want them to do their personal cleaning as much as they can. I give responsibilities at home like tidy your room. Sometimes I say to T, go take a shower, do something, maybe it will not happen, but for example, I say do

this and that. I give you little things to gain responsibility (Mother of T, 10, boy, low SES)

Actually, we don't want him to be a child who waits his parents to bring him water even until he is 20 years old. He should serve his personal needs (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

### 3.2.3.3 Being determined and effortful

From all SES groups, mothers mentioned that they want their children to be effortful.

They defined success as capability to take on endeavors. Regardless of their preferences and activities, they wanted their children to take responsibility and proceed with a determined mind rather than expecting things to be prepared for them.

Work is success, work, success from work, and you need to have determination. The person who loves to work will never stop short or hard or be hungry. But, unless you say I wish I would succeed without working. If you want to be an officer, you will work for the lesson, if you are going to prefer to be laborer, you will start in the streets, factories, textile, wherever possible, after 12-13 years of age. (Mother of S, 11, boy, mid SES)

There is always laziness without responsibility. Now the children are always waiting things to be ready for them and I am against that. I always say that when you do it yourself, it will be more valuable for you. For example, it is more precious when you have your own car rather than a father giving a car to the child ready. Happiness is actually a little bit important in the things you do yourself, of course, if they are done properly (Mother of T, 10, boy, low SES)

Success is trying to do something, putting in the effort. It can be drawing, dancing, or mathematics but trying to do something with effort (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

### 3.2.3.4 Relational skills

Mothers talked about how it is important to develop communicative skills and to have a positive relationality. This subject had different examples like the relationship with siblings, with older people, with other relatives, with peers, and even with

strangers. After all, mothers paid attention to sociability of their children and skillfulness to recognize and respond to others properly.

I don't want her to ignore the people around her or humiliate them. Both me and my husband, we are always like that, we say that you should approach to people and to works by careful attention... I say to her, my daughter, know how to listen, how to approach. To be able to help, to greet, to say good morning to a person gains you human kindness. It is bad if you don't give importance to these (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

Kinship relations degenerate in a city like Istanbul, whether you want it or not. But it shouldn't be like that, so we care about them. Here we live in the same apartment with his grandmother, we care about visiting her. Being respectful and helpful to her and he is a really sensitive child (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

Now, I want him to be respectful, for example, he should stay well ... I want him to not hurt his friends, not break hearts, I want him to be able to talk and get along (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.2.3.5 Constructive and regulative time use

Mothers put some demands on the daily lives of children and wanted them to rely on these regulations. This was visible mostly in the narrative of high and middle SES families. They approached a day of the child in a more constructive way with clear limits. For instance, they programmed a week including study time at home, going to extracurricular courses, participating in study groups. They had daily conversations to communicate and control and made a deal on the play and study hours. This was especially to limit the time devoted to technological games.

There is this phone thing, I am sure he is very happy with it. I think there should be a limit. As long as he doesn't go beyond that limit and he does not play games inappropriate for his age, there is no problem. We are not that strict (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

Here, we set the limit on weekdays. Very rarely, if he does his homework, and sometimes he does and asks me, if I do my homework can I play a little bit? Sometimes we decide that it will not be open on weekdays and they make me very angry. I say no, neither for you nor for your brother. Now it is different, his brother is not like that, he is someone who knows the responsibilities, uses his time according to his homework etc. However, A is

not yet aware of it. He only focuses his mind on games. Sometimes, we let him play for 1-2 hours by saying okay if you do your homework. And it happens like that, but sometimes there is no chance to play (Mother of A, 12, boy, middle SES)

As she wants. Let's say she does not want to study at that moment and going out makes her happy. There is a certain order, I set a certain limit, for example, I say go walk for half an hour and then come back and continue to study (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

Now it's because of the winter season. Even if it is summer, when my child is playing in the street, I am constantly looking from the windows, or when they are playing together with a neighbor's son, we check them to see everything is okay. There is no such thing for me as giving permission to my child to play 2-3 hours without supervision. It is not possible, I cannot allow this. (Mother of S, 11, boy, mid SES)

When mothers paid attention to time use of the children, they also cared for the momentary needs and feelings of the children. They tried to constantly monitor their children and follow their needs. One of the mothers mentioned her failure in recognizing her child as a child and expecting him to behave as an adult. Yet, she was also trying to repair and telling that she became aware of her own tendency that negatively affects the child.

There is no such thing as studying all the time. If the child doesn't want to do it anyway, he doesn't do it even if there is an open book before him. There are things he wants too. For example, he wants to watch television. He says that he will not study immediately after coming home but will study after dinner or close to bedtime. So, I respect them too. I do not think that he can live the way I want all the time. We also have mandatory rules. For example, the child gets up at seven in the morning. So, he will definitely go to school. I also have to lay him down at nine or ten at night. According to this, I have to feed him and choose a suitable time to study. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

Of course, there are reading programs at school, for example. Teachers make them buy 2 books each month. I offer 1 hour of play in exchange for reading 15-20 pages from his book. Because when he's thinking about playing games, he can concentrate on neither lesson nor can he understand anything from a book. This is because his mind is there. Sometimes pedagogues or some other people tell us on TV: If the kid wants to play on the computer, let him do it first. Thus, he both rests and finishes that task in his mind. Sometimes I do it. I say "OK, play for 1 hour or 2 hours". Sometimes we allow him to take a break from studying or reading a book. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

I put a lot of pressure. In the first grade, I put a lot of pressure by saying, “Do your homework, study.” and so on. I'm doing the same for on K now. I can't put pressure on K as much as I did on M, because I don't want K to be like him or get distant towards me. Actually, the teachers say he's a smart kid so there is no need to worry. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

#### 3.2.3.6 Importance of school

School was one of the most mentioned investment areas for the current lives of the children. All mothers from high SES talked about the importance they gave to education and their struggles in choosing the right school. All of them has chosen private schools rather than public schools and they emphasized both current and further gains they want from a school. Mothers from lower SES conditions mentioned the importance of school because it was seen as a resource promising to get out of difficult life conditions. Rather than concentrating on the current gains school brings, they mentioned it as a future maker. These differences were reflected in the daily requirements from children as well. For example, mothers from high SES put much attention to developing skills and socialization in the school and they wanted their children to achieve those aspects of education besides following basic academic curriculum. For low SES families, daily requirements from children regarding school was more like accomplishing homework and studying. Mothers from middle SES conditions mentioned school both as an investment for the child's future and as something among daily activities like helping them during exam periods or structuring study and play times.

Now, nothing happens without education. I do not even want a university for 2 years. I say you will do it for 4 years. So now we have nothing, they can save themselves when they have education (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

Now, of course, in our country, the greatest importance is attached to education. We want an education like in Finland in our hearts, since this is not valid in our country, there is is always a fondness for private schools. I do not say that you have to go to private school, children can go to public

schools as well. But we say my child, we don't have the heart to do it. If you have a chance, you prefer the private school. (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

This year, all of his friends are gone, there is no child left, there is nobody in the neighborhood. My son is alone. But he doesn't prefer a hardworking child as friend. He does not approach that child. He doesn't play with him. His father wants them to be friends and study together (Mother of S, 11, boy, mid SES)

### 3.2.3.7 Investment in special qualities through extracurricular activities

Mothers from high SES mentioned their loaded investment in a pressure to develop their wished qualifications. They mentioned their own anxieties around the qualities they wished their children to gain. For example, one of the mothers was very doubtful if her daughter will be short. Another mother was always looking for extracurricular activities that will make her son more privileged among other children. Another mother was aware of the fact that her own anxiety led her son to attend to swimming classes despite the fact that the child was really unwilling. It was felt during the interviews that these areas were continuing by the desires imposed by the mothers despite the unwillingness of the children. In the other SES groups, it was not prevalent to search for an activity as a special effort to develop a quality in the child.

I: So why are you prioritizing sports?

A: She eats a lot of junk food. There is also a gene from the father's side, the gene of being overweight. I do not want her to be short and fat, so I guess I encourage her to play volleyball to make her taller. Father and I are tall, but you know, she is still looking more like her aunt's side... She looks like them anyway so I was a little obsessed fearing she would be overweight and short. (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

I: Is there any other thing you can think of as valuable to them?

T: It can be doing something as a team by sharing, producing, and ultimately getting congratulations and being accustomed to being applauded. Because sometimes there can be fear about this. The fear of public-speaking... I thought sometimes there are such presentations or something in their school and they choose the presenters among the children. There are some of his

peers who participate. My child is a good speaker and relaxed, which supports his self-confidence. I took him to tennis for a while, but he didn't want to play. "Why do I swing a racket in pursuit of the ball? It is so meaningless" he said. Unfortunately it did not work. Other than that, he didn't want basketball. He is actually very talented in painting, but he continued painting for a while, then stopped. I don't know if we should have forced him or should have waited for him to ask for something... For example, he is not doing anything other than going out or studying during the weekends. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

I directed my child towards swimming because there was a problem with spine in our family. For example, he wanted to play football, but the doctor said, "Football can affect him adversely". When I'm trying to explain this to him, sometimes it can be perceived like: "Mom, you make me do what you want." However, I have him done this because I think it is good in terms of health. Otherwise, if he wants to play football, I want him to play football. But when we had such a problem, we had to go swimming, we had a lot of trouble... I don't know how much benefit it will be for him if you force him to do something he doesn't like. You know, then the money goes to waste too... It is as if we had such a problem with swimming. "I don't want it. I'm going because you want it." he went crying like that. But then I tell him about it again and again and now we are going for a swim as a fun activity. I mean, we experienced something troublesome, but then we recovered... Let's say X person's child may be going to tennis and going to painting/caricature classes. They can do 5 different things for the child maybe because the child wants it. If my child does not want something, I do not force him. So there is no point in forcing. I never had any intention of sending that boy to a course to satisfy my own ambitions. But if there is something he wants, I try to make it possible within our means. (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

### 3.2.4 Motherhood comparison

When mothers talked about their own mothers, they made comparisons of motherhood between themselves and their mothers. These comparisons included transmissions and transformations.

There were mainly four types of comparison mothers did in their comments. The first one was having a positive transmission of motherhood. Most of the mothers happily mentioned that they are happy having their mothers and they learnt mothering with what they experienced in their family during their childhood. The second one was being content of the transformation from negative experiences to

positive practices. A group of mothers mentioned that they had difficulty in their own childhood. These negative experiences they had with their mothers led them develop a better understanding in their own mothering. Third way of comparing was having a negative environment in childhood and having negative practices today due to this repetition. The last one was not being able to be as good mother as their own mothers.

Most of the comments were centered on positive to positive transmission and negative to positive transformation. Likewise, there were much less statements about self-explanation with negative mothering. Mothers drew more attention to the positive side of motherhood both for themselves and for their own mothers.

#### 3.2.4.1 Positive experiences in childhood and positive motherhood today

Nearly half of the mothers were content with their own mothering as a positive transmission from their own mothers. There were statements like being content of the mothering they received in their childhood. Mothers mentioned having learnt a lot from their own mothers in not in a didactic way, but in an experiential way. They thought that this is reflected in their motherhood.

Actually, I didn't do anything. I did the things I know. I did what I saw from my mother. You know, this is actually ignorance. My grandmother was also an ignorant woman, a woman who had studied until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, but wisdom is something else. Actually, she had very good wise sayings, my grandmother had advice and stuff. I am grateful that we were able to get them. I think we could apply them to ourselves and I gave a little bit of them to my child... I sometimes get such feedbacks from the outside. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

I think I grew up like that too. I think this is something that comes from parents. It was the same with us, be it father, partner or neighbor, we had to respect everyone. I grew up in the village and came here, but it was like that there, too. We are taught to put on a smiling face for a person who comes to visit us, which is about respect. We grew up like that, so I wanted to transfer it. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

There were inferences from negative childhood experiences to positive motherhood mothers developed. They mentioned that they developed this out of a transformation with the help of their own negative experiences with their mothers. They tried not to repeat the same mistakes that were hurtful to them or the inadequacy they felt in their own childhood.

There is a thing for safety in my family and their upbringing. Since they are the children of working people, that is, people who do not open their own businesses, they advise you to get a profession that is well-demanded. Now it's not that era, but you can't get angry with your family. Sometimes I think: "I did very well in spite of you". Of course, I've learned not to blame my family anymore... But frankly, I don't want my child to blame me in the future either. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

My mother was working too and it was really really bad for me because she was working hard. In that sense, I also worked for a while, but then maybe my mother had an impact on my decision. I never thought that way, but when I consider the situation now, maybe it is because my mother worked. My father was a teacher... He was a little oppressive about our success. And he did not have any tolerance for us to get a low grade... Sometimes I think if I was forcing T too. Then when my father comes to my mind, I try to stop myself. We are doing our best already, he is a successful child, so he is really successful in his lessons. I want him to continue his education comfortably without putting too much pressure on him. (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

The child should be compared with himself, it is enough to compare how much he got in the previous exam... This is the thing I feel most uncomfortable with because I experienced it myself... My friend studied physics. I was studying verbal courses in M and I studied pre-school in M... So this affected me very much in my childhood. My mother used to say, "You are missing, you are missing, you are missing." So, she was trying to fly a fish. So this comparison is the biggest mistake and should not be done, and I am careful not to repeat this mistake with my child. (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

My mother was also affected by my father to a great extent. So did my reflect this upon us? My mother just did not leave us. So we have already experienced this behavior of my father. Maybe my mother should have taken care of us more. My mother was a very quiet woman and could not defend her rights very well. She stood up for us... We learned from my mother to be very patient. We really learned patience from my mother. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

For example, I don't have any memory of my mom holding me by the hand and taking me to school. However, village life and city life are very different. Especially since the present times are bad, it is a challenge. Otherwise, we

would not be afraid of something, we would go to school by ourselves. We have a school 200 meters away and we are waiting for our child... We wonder when he will come and how he will come. But we didn't see anything like that from my own mother. Back then, there was no such thing. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

One of the narratives contained comments comparing their own motherhood in a negative light to that they received from their mother. Besides having positive experiences, this mother had a negative self-view about her mothering. She mentioned that she is not as patient as her mother despite the fact that this same mother also told how difficult her childhood was.

After I became a mother, I realized the value of my own mother more. So when I was single, I would fight a lot with my mother. I sometimes tell about my son to my mother, my mother says to me it is because I tormented her so much. I guess she can't say much, but our acquaintances tell us, so I shouldn't be upset... You know, if she got angry with us or beat us, we wouldn't have said a thing. For example, let's say he brought cooked rice today, I say, "I don't eat this. Bring me yogurt or make tea, I want to have breakfast." and my mother would get up and prepare what I want. For example, I am not as patient as my mother. I am not like that. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

Another one of the mothers mentioned a continuation of negative interactions with children. She told this negativity as a replication of her own relationship with their mother. Other than positive transformations from her own negative experiences, she told about the feeling of carrying her own issue to her motherhood.

For example, I think of my situation in the following manner: I try not to do the things that I consider should not be done in my own family. But you know what? I think, "This was done to me". Sometimes I even get greed for them because I am a child. Because at that time I ask myself, "Why did I experience this?" since I also have a child inside of me. What would I do with it? Sometimes, I get angry with the behaviors of my children towards my own mother and say to the children that "Don't raise the expectations of this woman". It's nonsense. I mean their actions also affect my acceptance. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

### 3.2.5 Self experiences of the mothers

When mothers talked about their thoughts, personal lives and self-reflections, they had different approaches to the place of being mother in their identity. Their responses were grouped under two categories. One of them was all their reflections about being a mother and the other one was what they mentioned personally other than motherhood.

#### 3.2.5.1 Mothers' reflections on motherhood

When mothers were asked how they experience being a mother, they reported many concerns about the time they could devote to children and resources they need to provide. Moreover, they mentioned feelings of guilt, insufficiency, regret if they see something as a mistake like forcing the child to study, not concentrating on what the child is saying, inability to behave well and help according to the needs of the child.

For the mothers from high SES, there was a clear conflict due to work hours and the insufficient energy left for their children. They compensated it with availability of housekeeper so that they did not prefer being busy with housework.

I wish I had taken care of one first and then the other. It feels like I'm doing something missing when I'm dealing with both at the same time. I think something is not complete. A little for the other, a little bit this one... The current situation is whoever can get more benefit gets it. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

Well... When there is an event at school and I can't go, I feel sorry then... I can't always take time off because there is a busy work life... I feel sorry that I can't be with my child. I fear that he will be alone there. Sometimes I send grandmother to grandmother or something, I do such things. Somehow, our life is constantly about organization. I always try to organize something like this in my mind. (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

It is difficult because you are already tired. No matter how comfortable you have a job outside, you become stressed. You are tired, but at the same time you feel remorse because you left the child at home. You feel sorry. It's really hard to deal with those emotions. You have to do it, you have to go, but there is someone at home who wants to be with you. It is very difficult to leave that

little child anyway. You do feel it too, but you get stuck in between. (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

For the mothers from middle SES, there was a similar concern about the adequacy of time and attention given to the child as well as feeling an intense responsibility. Responsibility was one of the mostly mentioned dimensions of motherhood that was inevitable, and pertinent.

I love him in a different way. So now it feels like I betrayed my son after I gave birth to my second baby. (Mother of S, 11, boy, mid SES)

I can say that there really is a huge difference between being a mother and being single. When you become a mother, you get responsibilities. Your thoughts when you are single are not the same as your thoughts as a mother. I can say that there is more responsibility... I corrected my own behavior. I mean, sometimes because it's a responsibility brought by the fact that you grew up that way. I feel sorry when I reflect this on my child and I say that I would not do this... I would show more respect to my daughter... As the child grows up, they say their problems grow too. Of course, I think about and fear the future. If my child cannot do the things she wants, if I cannot afford them, these thoughts scare me of course. I am worried if my child is not happy. I would like my child to be with me. These are some scary thoughts. (Mother of K, 11, girl, mid SES)

They say that motherhood can only be experienced at first hand. It is really such a thing, motherhood is a big responsibility. Motherhood is a duty(!) that you bear its responsibility from the moment you give birth to your child, or from the moment you had conceived, until you die. A being that you can never give up on because you can't let go, your son. Motherhood is the bond between child and mother. Motherhood is something that is hard to describe, one needs to experience it. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

For the mothers from lower SES conditions, motherhood included difficulty of raising a child in terms of both financial restrictions and intolerance to further emotional load. Therefore, despite enjoying and being grateful, these mothers indicated a lot of heavy thoughts and feelings in their experiences of motherhood.

For example, my elder sister shouts, I shout, and then my sister shouts. Oh, I would regret it. I never asked them, but someday I will ask, "I shout at you too, but I regret it. Do you regret it?" I am very curious about this. I mean, for example, I beat M up or I shout at him. Then I'll go inside and ask myself, "Why did I do this to this kid?" I sleep at night and it comes to my mind. I cannot hold myself. I know the things I do are wrong, but I can't help myself at that moment. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

Psychologically, I dealt with everything about children. Whether it is in their social circle or meetings... Their father also helps. But help from a man ends somewhere. Look, I can't even go to work. I mean even my work situation is adjusted according to their school time, so they don't stay alone at home. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

I do not think that I am a perfect mother. Nobody is perfect, so I try to do as much as I can. Sometimes I get angry and I shout. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

### 3.2.5.2 Personal spaces other than motherhood

Mothers from high SES could make an easier differentiation between being a woman, having a place in business life, being a partner in relationship, and being a mother. They mentioned the spaces they could give themselves privately, or at least the desire to do so.

I need to have my own time frame before the transition to my mother identity from my worker identity. And since I want to go home after a little reset or neutralization of energy, that time period in between is important to me. I have a book with me now. Sometimes I read it, for example, it is good on the subway or something. Or sometimes I have a coffee somewhere and then go home (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

For mothers from middle SES, all of the different aspects of identity were rather melted in the same pot. They mentioned carrying the identity of being a mother in all other areas of life, but it was rather like a choice they made. They indicated being mother as something that applies to all aspects of life and something more preferable.

I'm happy when I am with them. Actually, what I am doing is not good. For example, my daughters cannot be happy without me. For example, they always want me too when they go somewhere. For example, when they go to their uncle, cousin, a simple thing, but say you come too, mum. I say that it is okay you are going, but they say we are happier with you, you come too (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

My motherhood, my job, me as a child, I have responsibilities towards my elders too. Apart from that, I also have a social life and I can go to social facilities with my friends. I'm not just a working mother. In other words, I am

trying to fulfill more or less every aspect of my life as much as I need  
(Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

For the mothers from lower SES conditions, there was no such thing as having private activities, personal spaces, or choices. It was more like an obligatory job to fulfill child's needs, housework, and requirements of daily life. Some of them were clearer in mentioning that motherhood became the all identity they had, and all other parts were left in the past.

I am very confused, there are many things on my mind so cannot do something social with someone, for example. Friendship is important, of course, but you cannot make friends anymore because of the children  
(Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.3 Towards a classification of relationality and well-being

The first two sections of the results mainly focused on the findings that came out of child and parent interviews separately. In this section, we will be focusing on how the understandings of these two groups are combined together. Therefore, what parental perspectives and priorities contribute to or aggravate the children's perception and how the discourse of these two groups are echoed in each other will be explored.

Mothers were asked to define their expectations for their children in their mind. What they wished for their child, which skills and values they wanted their children to gain, and what are efforts mothers put forth to provide their child with these qualities. Their values and efforts to actualize these values were discussed with their own childhood, their past experiences, and current conditions. Thus, it was possible to evaluate how such maternal factors are shaping the children's expressions of their own lives and their understandings of well-being. This way, the goal of this

third section is to better understand the impact parents have on the subjective experiences of children.

It came out that there were mainly two different, but complementary aspects in the mothers' wishes for their children. The first one centered around the importance mothers gave for their children to show commitment to the family, which is a more relational expectation from the child. The second focuses on the child to be self-confident and gain more competence across different domains. We will be exploring how these two main agendas of the mothers were perceived and realized by the children which is reflected in children's understandings of well-being.

When we look at the interaction between parental conceptions and children's expressions, it was seen that everything is in a relational context in children's experiences. Most of the data were centered on the effects on the relational field that reflected the children's experiences of well-being. Moreover, there was a variation in their interpersonal experiences so that it was possible to see the differentiating effects of what mothers provide or withhold. Overall, in the discourse of the children, well-being was expressed showing the importance of relationships. It was also relational spaces out of which children developed their agency. Therefore, the significant area in children's experiences of well-being, was relationships. It was primarily the relationships with parents and relatives in the family and secondly the relationships with peers in the school. When the quality of these relational fields was positive, it provided a positive experience of well-being. In contrast, when these fields lacked off dependability, it brought negative experiences.

Overall, there were three categories of the relational experiences that characterize children's experiences well-being. This relational categorization of children was much in parallel with the maternal parenting practices and perspectives.

It can be claimed that parenting can bring both strengths and vulnerabilities to the interpersonal area of the children. Therefore, what mothers provide to children can influence their well-being both positively by enriching and negatively by limiting the development of child's relational experiences. Here, 9 of the 15 children had their relational areas as a good fit with the evidence of more sturdy parenting practices. These children had more positive relational experiences not only with their family but also with their friends. Yet, the remaining 6 children had rather negative relational experiences, with two different subgroups. One was replication of their mothers' relationality by 3 children and the other was a pseudo positive representation of their peer relationships as a runoff area. As a result, especially for the children, aged from 10 to 12, the experience of well-being is heavily influenced by the relationality mothers provide or hinder.

### 3.3.1 The first group: more positive relational experiences both with family and with peers

Nine of fifteen children were in this group, having positive relationality. 4 of them were from high SES, 3 of them were from middle SES, and 2 of them were from lower SES families. Table 2 shows the children in this group, their mothers, age, gender, and SES of the family.

Table 2. Children in the First Group

Children	Age of children	Gender of children	SES of the family	Mothers
T	10	boy	Low	Mother of T
U	10	girl	Low	Mother of U
Ç	12	girl	Mid	Mother of Ç
S	11	boy	Mid	Mother of S
Y	10	boy	Mid	Mother of Y
K	11	boy	High	Mother of K
M	10	boy	High	Mother of M
T	10	boy	High	Mother of T
Y	12	boy	High	Mother of Y

This group of children brought both personal areas and relational values into the picture. They enjoyed having their loved ones around, independent of the external factors. In addition, they conceptualized individually their own interests and separate feelings with a personal language. Therefore, they gave a picture of developing agency of self that is embedded in a relational context. During the interviews, they had a positive way of communicating in the sense that they felt secure and could talk about their ideas and feelings. They communicated non-defensively that was felt by their willingness and openness in sharing their subjective experiences.

Experience of a positive relationality was also visible the drawings of these children. They included people and colors more than the groups in the other 2 groups. Regardless of the drawing capacity, it was apparent that they were inclined to draw the spaces they felt good with more colors and mostly with the people included like their family or friends, even if it is in the form of a stick figure. Since children felt some anxiety about their performance of drawing, all of them did not draw. Yet, among the ones who drew pictures, this first group included their friends spending time together (see Appendix C, Figure C1), playing together (see Appendix C, Figure C2), their family playing and eating together in an imagined picnic (see

Appendix C, Figure C3), areas of personal interest and pet (see Appendix C, Figure C4), the outside space that brings happiness (see Appendix C, Figure C5).

It is good to be in a family and school environment. This is because of some friends at school. Since there are parents in the family, you can have fun in a normal home environment and do something with your family, for example. You attend some classes with your friends at school too, you can do something during recess, so it's nice... What matters to me is of course my family. My friends at school are also important to me, whether the second or first generations. This is the case from relationship to other things. (Y, 12, boy, high SES)

I love school very much. I mean, not the exams, but I like the lessons and the environment of friends. I generally like school. I love home when I'm tired... I like being in the same environment with my friends and playing football, doing sports, and similar things... I would like to do quiet activities where we play such games. I mean, I like things that we can share things together, not just rush around... I enjoy traveling with my family. I enjoy going on a picnic or some other activity with all the relatives, not just parents. (Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

My parents are the first priority in my life. After that, my brothers and sisters and my friends come... Our relatives are good, we get along very well. We play games with my cousins. We also play games with my brothers. For example, I sometimes take my little brother out when the weather is good. We play hide-and-seek together with a younger one, and play football with my brother... Sometimes we joke around with my friends, we play together. And sometimes we are being a little mischievous. We take something and run away for fun. (T, 10, boy, low SES)

The aspects that sustain positive relationality will be discussed under five sections. The first section will focus on mothers' efforts for children's interpersonal development. The second section will be on the differentiation of children's wishes from mothers' own wishes and using positive control as a parental strategy. The third part will be on the capacity of mothers for self-evaluation. The fourth part will include discussion about mothers' personal spaces that they can have various experiences other than motherhood. The fifth section will focus on the transmission of mothering from grandmothers to mothers and the impact of childhood experiences of mothers in their own motherhood.

### 3.3.1.1 Maternal investment in children's interpersonal development

Mothers of these children invested in both the commitment to the family and the ability to construct individual areas with the children's peers or alone spaces. There was a recognition of children's psychological needs to feel happy, to develop relationships with peers, and to have a social space. The mothers of these children gave importance to have warmth and happiness in the family context of being together. They were accepting of their children and being together with the family was a source of happiness for both these mothers and their children. Therefore, these children enjoyed the accepting and warm family environment while also developing their personal skills and their own social world with their friends.

He needs education and groups of friends. What can I do better with caring for him? I was interested in the development of the soul and body so that he can develop in a healthy way... The child has a need for a friend or development... I care about sociality and let him meet with his friends. In the summer, he goes to a camp or something to learn how to stand on his own legs... Right now, having a nice day with my family is obviously a success for me. I have a job right now, I am working and my children are growing up. Somehow their meals are prepared and so on, but the time spent with them is happiness and success for me. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

"My daughter, learn how to listen and how to approach a person." I say. You know, to be able to help someone, to say hello, to say good morning means humanity. So, ignoring a person is the worst thing for me. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

Children are happiest on the playground. When their cousins come, they become happy as they are the same age. What can children be happy with anyway? Playing games makes them happy, for example. We cannot go everywhere actively. When we went, we went to somewhere, they became very happy there, they played there... I said, we went to the shopping center, the playground... They are happy there, I try to take them to such places. Even though I can't go often, I try to do so, so that they can play and be happy. (Mother of T, 10, boy, low SES)

### 3.3.1.2 Positive control and differentiation of child's wishes

A positive control was another common point of the mothers in this group of children. They paid attention to watch the child closely, while trying not to be dominating or restrictive. They were connected with the perception and needs of the child besides putting certain limits and regulations to the children's play times, requirements, and boundaries.

Mothers of these children could make a differentiation between their own expectations from the child and personal choices of the child. They were able to see the need of the child and their own expectations. An adjustment between the two was possible when mothers provided a free space for the child to spend time on their individual needs or interests and limit this at the same time. Therefore, there was both positive control and warmth these mothers brought to the development of children.

Within this balance mothers tried to keep, a special importance was given to happiness of the children more obviously in this group. Therefore, these children enjoyed the relational space both with their family and with their peers in a more structured way, added to their personal feelings and interests. As a result, a supportive environment was offered to these children so that their own needs and perspectives were taken into consideration by their mothers with a structured monitoring.

... But I am planning to do give them permittance in a controlled way, of course. I learned to love. From the very beginning, I thought it was important to set the rules and ensure that he got a good education. But when the child didn't like these activities, I saw that his psychology wasn't going well, and I thought none of them would matter too much... You can take a child to do workout every day. But you know, when he has no motivation, he doesn't have that emotion in it, he doesn't run. For example, I can take him to similar places, but I thought love was a driver force for him to run... My little boy wants to go to such good places, he wants to make good friends... If he can get into a good school, he will have a better environment. However, if it

makes him unhappy and pushes him too hard, I don't want him to go to such a place. Actually, I want a healthy child with a healthy mind and brain. I think this brings both happiness and education. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

He visits some places with us. I let him spend time with my group of friends... Once he is with a certain friend, he can go out to the streets a lot. You know, I allow it, but I still keep an eye on them... After we do our best, everyone has to accept what comes out after they do their best. But the most important thing is to be happy while doing these. Because success doesn't mean much when he is not being happy. I want him to be happy and be healthy, of course, get a solid place in society. But when you come to a certain place, it is better to take happiness with you. (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

I'm like friends with my kids, so that's how... But they know when to stop very well. You know, we are like friends, but without losing respect... For example, let's say he doesn't want to do lessons at that moment, going out makes him happy. I mean, there is a certain order, I set a certain limit such as "Go out for an hour and then continue studying." There is no such thing as studying all the time. If the child doesn't want to do it anyway, he doesn't do it even if there is an open book before him. There are things he wants too. For example, he wants to watch television. I do not think that he can live the way I want all the time. We also have mandatory rules. For example, the child gets up at seven in the morning. So, he will definitely go to school. I also have to lay him down at nine or ten at night. According to this, I have to feed him and choose a suitable time to study. He always gets up in the morning with a smiling face. If he sleeps happy in the evening, the child can get up the same way in the morning. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

### 3.3.1.3 Maternal capacity for self-evaluation

One of the significant differences of these mothers were being able to see their own mistakes, to think about their conflictual behaviors, to apologize and talk to the child when they need. These mothers did not talk about their children in a criticizing manner. Rather, they showed a better perspective taking that was felt by their own non-defensive comments about their thoughts and expectations that can sometimes affect the child negatively. The communication between the mothers and the children was also warmer, more supportive, and more open since mothers could think about their own inclinations and different perception of the child. This openness was reflected in the children's relationships with their friends. Different than the other 2

patterns, the children in this group mentioned more about the positive feelings with their friends that felt trust, enjoy, and consistency of relationships.

I am an outgoing person, not a very political type. That's why I am a person who lives her emotions such as love and anger in a deeper way. So, for example, sometimes I feel like I use a loud voice towards children or say something that will hurt them. And this time I go and apologize. (Mother of K, 11, boy, high SES)

I always use the following logic: What if something happens to you when you get there? I do not give my child that comfort... Actually, I have mistakes, so I try to be a little more flexible... I am happy with them. Actually, I'm not doing the right thing for my daughter. For example, she can't be happy without me. When I ask them to go somewhere, they want me to come too... I say, "You are leaving, what's the point of me coming too?" and they reply, "We are happier with you. You should come too." Actually, they get used to it too much, the mistake is there. I know they need to get away a little, but I don't know how to do it. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

I get impatient very quickly. Sometimes I offend people around me by asking them to do the work to be done immediately, without noticing. Then I wonder why I am so hasty. Then I also hurt myself... I have a lot of stress, I stress myself... Children sometimes panic too... When you think about it, it is reflected on them because I am a hasty person. (Mother of T, 10, boy, low SES)

I want him to buy a beautiful car, I want him to raise his children in a beautiful environment. I want this as a mother. In order to achieve this, he has to get into this life of exams already. At this point, I contradict with myself... My child says, for example, that the older one says that he wants to get into a sports academy... When he says this, the child actually sets a goal for himself. However, we become very unhappy about it, which may be very wrong. (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

#### 3.3.1.4 Personal spaces of mothers

The mothers of these children also had their own personal interests even if they cannot have enough time to spend on them. Their identity was not merely composed of motherhood. Similar to their recognition of their children's needs for developing individual areas and self-interests, they had a perception of their own needs to rest, to spend time alone with an activity, to go out with their friends, to balance the personal

life and work life. It helped children have a more structured way of living, more free space for feelings, better understanding, balancing the internal and the external.

I respect that. She wanted a guitar, she likes to play it, she fancies it. Of course, she should do that. Life is not just about school, working, earning money, or studying. I respect what she likes to do; it is also important that she can do what she wants to do. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

My motherhood, my job, me as a child, I have responsibilities towards my elders too. Apart from that, I also have a social life and I can go to social facilities with my friends. I'm not just a working mother. In other words, I am trying to fulfill more or less every aspect of my life as much as I need (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

I think it is the parents' fault. We didn't go out; we stayed in to spend time with him as if it is a bad thing to leave him alone, our consciousness didn't allow us to do that... Then we said, "Okay, we love our kids, but we have our own lives as well." Eventually, you have to share something as husband and wife. It is not the same thing even if you try to have a cup of coffee after he goes to sleep. So we decided to make time for ourselves. As I said, T didn't like this at the beginning, but he started enjoying it in time. And we decided that this is the right thing to do. (Mother of T, 10, boy, high SES)

When I come back home I spend time with my kids; they have homework, sometimes they want to play. In this way, I can only make time for myself. When I say socializing I mean I have a group of friends, and when necessary I go out with my friends for dinner or go somewhere so that I can have a break. That is really a different type of social environment. (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

I love prime time news; I wish he didn't have homework or I wish he goes to his room because it is available. I wish he asked his father and I wish he took responsibility and knew what he had to do. (Mother of Y, 11, boy, mid SES)

### 3.3.1.5 Childhood experience of mothers and its reflections on their own

#### motherhood

Mothers of these children were mostly grateful about the values they got from their own families. They mentioned that they learnt a lot about parenting from their parents. They thought that what their parents gave during their childhood helped them develop their values and skills. For example, they happily mentioned that the importance they give to better relational skills was coming from their childhood.

What did I do? I actually didn't do anything; I did what I know. I did what I've seen from my mother. This is actually ignorance; my grandmother was an ignorant woman. She went to primary school only until third grade. But wisdom is something different; my grandmother used to give wise advice. I am grateful that I was there to pick up on those and apply them to my child, even if it is just a piece of it. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

I think I was raised like that as well; I think it comes from my parents. This is how I grew up around my father, family and friends; I was raised to respect all of them. I grew up in a village and came here, but the same was true there. We were taught to be welcoming to whoever visits us, to treat them with respect and care for them. We were raised like that, and that's what I wanted as well. (Mother of Ç, 12, girl, mid SES)

When there were negativities they faced during their childhood, they had a thoughtful stand. They all had a goal to use them as tools to transform into a more positive mothering. They were trying to figure out how to not repeat the same unhappy scenarios with their children. Therefore, there was a certain level of thinking about motherhood and a comparison of their own mothering including many anxieties around being a good mother with their childhood experiences they had with their mothers. They paid attention to not making the same mistakes and to offering an emotionally healthy environment. They were also regarding their own contradictory expectations and conflictual feelings inside.

There are a lot of habits you got from your mother... You eliminate some of them because they are wrong and she only knew that much... You adopt the positive behaviour and blend them with your education and the environment you live in to educate your child... For example, we grew up as kids who always listen to their mother. But nowadays kids listen to what their friends say and try to do what society cares about instead of what we say... If I had treated my kid as my mom treated me, his friends would have thought he was from another planet. You need to keep up; you should not fall behind much... Because other people may call me "a guardian mom". We tried to keep this in mind as well. (Mother of Y, 12, boy, high SES)

Now, my family, the way they were raised... They wish that you get a relevant profession, that you study; they just wish you to grow up in one way or another. Now the times have changed, but you cannot go back and get mad at your parents.... I am aware that I have had a few wrong experiences, and what I need to do for them is not to blame my mother for this. I need to accept her the way she is. What I should do is to refine my experiences and

transfer these to my kids in the best way possible. This is not that easy.  
(Mother of K, 10, boy, high SES)

I didn't like it when people did that to me as a kid either. I never compare my kids in that way... When I unintentionally say something like that, they warn me. M warns me and says "Mom, you compare me to that person." And I say "Yes, oh my God, I did the same thing." Sometimes some words like that pop out... You shouldn't compare them but say "this is the right way, let's do it this way" or "let's act in this manner from now on". I try to say what feels right for me to them directly. (Mother of M, 10, boy, high SES)

Comparing is the biggest mistake... You should only compare the kids with themselves. What was his score from his last test? That's it. This is the most disturbing thing for me because I have experienced it. It affected me a lot in my childhood. It feels like someone telling you that "you are inadequate, you are inadequate." Of course, my mom didn't do this on purpose, she was trying to make me a better person in her own way, but I was inadequate for her in that matter. What my mom did was like trying to make a fish fly. That type of comparison is the biggest mistake, and it shouldn't be done. I am very careful about this with my kids. (Mother of Y, 10, boy, mid SES)

Consequently, how mothers develop their parenting strategies and relate to their children on behalf of their wishes and expectations from their children have a significant impact on the experiences of children. How these mothers elaborated on their own background helped them define their parenting strategies in a more constructive way. Since they were more likely to transform their own feelings in the sense that what they gained from their families and what made them more vulnerable, these mothers used their background as a tool to create a supportive environment for their children. They had an inside eye, evaluating themselves while also having a mixed identity that is not merely composed of motherhood. Therefore, they had the opportunity for transitional activities and special time for their personal relationships. As a result of all these efforts and wishes of mothers, the relationship they have with their children played a major role in positively shaping the relational experiences of their children. It reflected both on the family environment and on the peer space these children had. The parenting practices these mothers chose, for example, offering a structure, a monitoring strategy of the needs of the child, might

have opened a free space for the children to reflect on their needs and experiences so that they gain the ability to carry their own feelings in a non-defensive way.

Moreover, it might have helped these children to develop a better relationality that brought them a more positive experience of well-being.

### 3.3.2 The second group: relation replication between the mothers and the children

There were three children in this group, all of them were females. Two of them were from lower SES families while one of them was from a middle SES family. Table 3 shows the children in this group with their age, gender, mothers, and SES of the family.

Table 3. Children in the Second Group

Children	Age of children	Gender of children	SES of the family	Mothers
C	11	girl	Low	Mother of C
H	11	girl	Low	Mother of H
K	10	girl	Mid	Mother of K

This group of children had conflicts in their friendships. Even though they raised their needs and interests to be with their friends, they had a history of discontent, fights, being excluded, and heartbreaking experiences. They rather mentioned their family to be a safe place, including positive relationships with acceptance. It was apparent that they had difficulties of relationality that is represented especially in peer space. Family created a more secure environment for them.

These children had very lonely profiles other than having a limited number of friends and time spent together with their family. However, their relationality patterns were the exact copies of their mothers' relationality that is to be discussed

further. Therefore, there was a lack of relational richness both for the mothers and for the children.

A: I don't socialize anymore... Although I take the first step and work hard, I have realized that this is being abused.... My goodwill, nice words and reasoning are always abused. Where are those people now? I took a step back... I thought those who really love me come to my door and find me; those are the real friends. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

Some people that I have recently met are not like the people that I really know. Some people really love me, but some people who know that they love me leave me alone, that's why they create a problem. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

Drawings also showed a lack of relational richness for this group. Two of the three children drew pictures based on what they had in mind while talking who-what-where make them feel good in their lives and these drawings included more of their imagined pictures or an object they liked (see Appendix C, Figure C6). One of the children drew her little sister too, but that was because of the hair color of her sister that she liked (see Appendix C, Figure C7).

Some of my hypocrite friends may do some stuff behind my back. My friends at school – because I am in the fifth grade now, I don't have many friends. There are a few people, and they go to talk with some of my friends and tell me to go away because they were talking about something private. That's why friends who really love me or play with me make me feel better. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

My cousin A sometimes hide my stuff and I hide her/his stuff to take revenge. That's why there becomes a fight. Everyone tells A that "C'mon, you can do it" instead of breaking up the fight... Then I take her/his stuff and she/he cannot get it back from me... She/he says "I'll come and beat you up" and I say "Come on and do it". She/he can't do it.... Then I can only hang out with my friends in 5A, 5C and 5D classes, I cannot hang out with other people... Because some of them swear a lot and sometimes they try to write a petition against me... They don't like me, they don't want me in the class. This is because I tell on them when they do something because they do nasty things in front of girls. (H, 11, girl, low SES)

The aspects that lead to a replication of relationality will be discussed under four sections. The first section will focus on how mothers perceive the relational space of their children. The second part will focus on how children are positioned as

friends to their mothers in the current relationship between the mothers and children. The third part will focus on how maternal expectations centered on academic success of their children, mothers' attributions to school success that create a lack of childhood experience, but a pressure of to transform into a more mature child. The fourth part will include the childhood experiences of mothers in this group that impact their relationship with their own children.

### 3.3.2.1 Maternal perception of children's relational space

Still, these children mentioned their yearning for relationships, maternal beliefs seemed to set a barrier to construct secure relationships with peers. Personal peer space of these children was perceived by these mothers as a threatening environment due to which their children could get hurt, could be the victim of unfair approach from others or could waste their time with the children who are not successful. Therefore, these mothers were not supportive of developing of their children's relationality. Rather, they created a social perception implying friendship has not much importance, can create danger, or can cause possible betrayal.

I want them to socialize of course, I want them to know everything – good or bad- so that they can do the right thing when necessary. I don't want them to carry coals. Because I was like that, I was humiliated a lot. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

I say "When you get to know your friends, it doesn't matter, you do it first." If they don't have a pencil, you give them. If they don't have crayons, you share. But test them after a while and see if they do the same thing for you when you are in trouble...Because I don't want them to be like me, I want them to have a conscious, but there are a lot of people who lacks conscious. I don't want them to deal with that kind of people; I want them to know about themselves... Sometimes you do a favor without expecting anything in return, but sometimes you need to get a reward for that favor. You need to share to see if they are really your friends. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

My daughter thinks that she will never have any friends. I tell her this to keep her occupied. She just started to fifth grade now, I told her that she would meet new people. "This will be a new thing, now forget about the past. This

will be over after only a month.” She still complains and asks “Why don’t they like me? What am I doing to them?” (Mother of K, 10, girl, mid SES)

### 3.3.2.2 Child as mother’s friend

All of these daughters were kept very close by their mothers, and these mothers talked about their relationships with their children as more of a friendship. They did not have a supportive stand for their children’s developing friendships as a separate social area. Moreover, there were times they seemed to be overly included in the life of the children. There were clear repetitions between the conflicts children had with their friends and the conflicts their mothers had in their personal relationships. Even though these children did not talk about their relationships with their mothers as a friendship, their lives were filled with maternal aspects and expectations.

My kid is very happy when she is with her friends, she is very fond of her friends. She wants to love and to be loved. I mean she wants to love herself, care about herself, because she likes to care, she is a candid person... I tell her “I’ll be your friend, I’ll be your everything”. She says “That’s different from being friends, I want to have friends.” She always talks about friends. My kid is very happy when she is with her friends, when she makes friends. (Mother of K, 10, girl, mid SES)

She doesn’t have any friends, and in a way, I wanted this for her. Now she is in middle school, she goes to 5C class. I thought we would have a clash at some point. She will come to me and say “Mom, I don’t have any friends”. Because in her class, everyone came along with their friend from primary school. C also has friends but they are all boys. C also wants to have girl friends. She has a friend named B, but she is in 5A class. Even B’s mother told me to bring my girl to their class... I didn’t want to take my daughter to their class... B’s attitude doesn’t fit anyway. Then we met someone called S. She looked very lovable... I said “Honey, you are in the same class.” I didn’t even know that they were in the same class... I told her to become friends with S, I thought of inviting her and her mother for a cup of tea someday and they can share things they like. She is a cute and warm girl... She won’t break my daughter’s heart. I got along well with her mother, as well. We are trying to make new friends. (Mother of C, 11, girl, mid SES)

Sometimes, my father brings some things the next day after my birthday. My mom says that there is no need for a gift, you are our little gift. I tell the same thing, there is no need for a gift. But there is a fee for the exam I am going to take. We are already struggling and my sibling asks for things. If I pass that

exam, I will buy my sibling what she wants and I will put some money on the savings of my mother for a car. (H, 11, girl, low SES)

### 3.3.2.3 Maternal expectations focused on academic success

Similar to their expectations for their children to be strong and self-confident, these mothers are occupied with academic success rather than social skills. Their focus for relational space was more of being self-confident and protecting one's rights. There was not adequate space for children's subjective experiences. Rather, there was a desire for these children to be well-behaved and mature by their mothers.

Mothers had an expectation of having children who are busy more with schoolwork and less with play. This was mainly coming from their own experiences of difficulty in their jobs and in their schooling. Since they had blue-collar jobs and felt themselves under the academic standards, they wished their daughters to not experience the same difficulty. Therefore, there was an insufficiency of recognition of the play and social relations as significant development areas for a child.

Moreover, in the discourses of these children, the importance given to school success was apparent. They told about their friendships very differently than the children from other 2 groups. For the children in this group, the achievement of their friends was an important factor in defining their relationships and they talked more about the system and conditions of their schools and education.

Mother:

... I only wish that they have a profession, they have a skill that brings money to them. I wish this both for my son and my daughters. I never discriminate between them. "My daughter, please continue your education, I will support you... If you don't study you will end up going to cleaning to other people's houses like me, I do that sometimes... Study whatever you want." I don't push them for anything. But you need to study, of course you will go out and have fun but make time for studying. Make time for playing and studying. Use your time for studying, it's time you do that. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

Child:

When I come home, first my mom tells me to study. But sometimes I don't listen to her because I get sick of it after 7 hours at school... Two people got a certificate of high achievement, one of them is E. E has a score of 86, and B has a score of 93. They have very high points and she has been receiving this certificate since the fourth grade... She is one of my favorite friends... I like hanging out with her and telling her about my problems, I have one more friend but I don't even want to see her/him. But we talk sometimes, that's only because B wants us to talk, B likes her/him a lot. (H, 11, girl, low SES)

Mother:

Their education is very important, I couldn't go to school. The fifth... I am the first child of my family and thankfully, I completed the primary school... Even before my kids started school, our home was like a classroom. I bought pencils, erasers, I taught them to hold a pencil and prepared them for school... I had lots of fights with my husband, I told him that my child is the first child of the family. I had a hard time when I went to school for the first time. I didn't know about teachers or school. I asked him to send my child to the kindergarten... I am thinking of going back to my hometown. I would have a big and great house for the money my husband makes there. Then I think of the difference between the schools there and here in Istanbul. The schools must be better here (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

Child:

Because my grades are high, I play with kids who won't affect my performance for the worse. I play with kids who would make my grades higher. (C, 11, girl, low SES)

Mother:

When I say she should play less, I mean she should play when necessary. Of course, she still has that childish spirit in her, she should play... But she should gain the things she needs along with that. I don't want her to miss the right time, I want her to learn everything bit by bit. I want her to learn things even when playing, I want her to be with the right people.... I want her to be with role models, but you cannot find them everywhere. (Mother of K, 10, girl, mid SES)

Child:

I am with my friends at school, and I learn in classes. I feel happy when I can answer the questions in class. (K, 10, girl, mid SES)

#### 3.3.2.4 Childhood experience of mothers and its reflections on their motherhood

Mothers of these children had a discourse of being alone, but strong. They had the feeling of being left with unsolved problems beginning from their childhood. They did not have personal spaces other than motherhood where they can develop and

assert their interests or talents. Even though they talked in a self-confident manner, they mentioned that they had to be self-sufficient. That was an obligation in their lives since they did not have family support starting from their childhood. They mentioned their own childhood with negative experiences. They talked about the effects of living in rural areas, difficulty of economic conditions, and the lifestyle that was inevitable due to the village conditions.

... I mean I had a hard time in primary school. My mother didn't know how to read and write, my father was inadequate. We used to put on ribbons and wear black school uniforms. The teacher was giving out ribbons to those who learn how to read and write in a 60-student-classroom. There were only 5 people left who didn't learn how to read and write yet, and I was one of them. I was a lazy student. I tell these to my kids as well, I had a hard life... I had four siblings in my family and my parents were not enough for any of us... I got married with the support I got from my environment, I didn't have a dowry. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

My mother used to work hard in the village. My mother was humiliated and silenced a lot by my father. Did my mother allow the same thing happening to us? My mother didn't leave us, that was the only thing she did. We went through the same things anyway, maybe if she had looked after us a little more... She was a quiet woman; she wouldn't say boo to a goose... My mother's fault was her goodwill... I remember wishing that I wasn't the daughter of my father... I used to wish that my father was someone else. It would have been better if I hadn't gone through all of this. (Mother of H, 11, girl, low SES)

Moreover, these mothers had similar experiences of neglect in the sense that their parents did not recognize them as children. Rather, they carried an adult role in their families, starting from their childhood. They mentioned the atmosphere of home in their childhood as unpeaceful that is occupied with difficult living conditions. In their own motherhood with their children, they talked about what they pay attention to not repeat.

It goes like that in a way. As I just said, you raise your kid in the same way you were raised. We had conflicts with my mother, my ideas and her ideas... I reflected what I wanted to see in myself on my daughter... I didn't allow my daughter to be unhappy about the things I was unhappy about. I mean I corrected my behaviour so that I wouldn't see them in her... Because we were raised like that... You got a lot from your mother and sometimes those

behaviors stay with you, they become permanent. I feel sad when I reflect those to my kid, I say to myself “I shouldn’t have done that in that way, I should have taken care of my daughter more, I should have respected her more”.... (Mother of K, 10, girl, mid SES)

... Life is so cruel. That’s why I am telling you that I don’t want to see the mistakes I saw in my parents. I hope that my children will also see my mistakes. I tell them to see my mistakes and learn for themselves. But they have nothing for their father even though they don’t see him... very high. (Mother of C, 11, girl, low SES)

Despite the fact that the mothers of these children tried to offer a parental warmth as a compensation of friendship too, they might have led their children to be more vulnerable in the peer space. These mothers had a hindering effect on the development of their children’s relational skills. Since these mothers were quite close with their children as if they are their friends, most of the relational themes were repeated in the children’s lives and understandings too. Moreover, the difficulties these mothers had starting from their childhood were very vivid in their memories and standpoint so that they were busy with educating their children with their own reality to prevent similar experiences they had. Ironically, they transmitted a certain replication of their own relationality rather than opening a new space for different experiences and developing skills. Therefore, it can be tentatively hypothesized that relational well-being of parents is in close touch with that of the children. It can have deteriorating effects on the well-being of their children by the constraints they directly brought to their children’s relational perception.

### 3.3.3 The third group: negative relational experiences

There were three children in this group. There was a child from each SES category, one from high, one from middle, and one from lower SES. Table 4 shows the children in this group, their age, gender, mothers and SES of the family.

Table 4. Children in the Third Group

Children	Age of children	Gender of children	SES of the family	Mothers
M	11	boy	Low	Mother of M
A	12	boy	Mid	Mother of A
M	12	girl	High	Mother of M

In the discourse of these children, there were no relationships that are joyful, rich, or sustainable. They were either in a search for the ones with whom a sharing could be possible or in a superficial satisfaction with peer relations. These children clearly indicated their needs to be understood by their family and there was a lack of positive and holding family environment that can read the child's needs and wishes. Different than the children in the other two groups, these children did not mention being with their family in home as a warm and happy environment. For example, one of them talked about feeling good at home due to the possibility of playing with technological gadgets. "I like it here better because this is where there is a computer and daily activities take place." (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

Two of the three children in this group drew pictures that were also reflective of their difficulty in relationships. One of them drew just the places without any human figure as the places he felt good (see Appendix C, Figure C8). He drew his school, the street, a tree, and house as building drawings. Another child drew her cat as the only source of warmth and soothing in the house (see Appendix C, Figure C9). They did not include colorful or dynamic content and they clearly reflected the relational joy that was lacking in their lives.

Nobody understands me. I am looking for someone who will understand me. If I find them that's a good thing. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

I love animals, I love my friends too. Sometimes those who understand me the best are my friends... my cat and my friends because my mom and dad do not understand me sometimes. Sometimes my belly hurts in the evenings and they say "don't worry, it will go away." But my friend M says "Are you

okay? I will take you to the infirmary if you like.” She/he understands me better. (M, 12, girl, high SES)

I like spending time with my family too, but sometimes I hate it... They annoy me sometimes, that’s why I don’t like it... I wish I could go to places only with my elder brother... We go out to buy some stuff... I go with my brother for that all the time... Sometimes our friends become tightfisted, I mean they become tightfisted so that we can play the game they want and it annoys me. For example, when we are playing with guns, someone comes along and says “let’s play something else”. Then everyone goes away... I directly step aside then. (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

The aspects that aggravate the relational experiences of children will be discussed under five sections. The first section will focus on maternal factors that impact children’s relational experiences both in family and in peer context. The second part will focus on school as a place where the children in this group have been searching for a positive relational space. The third part will focus on the impact of maternal insufficiency to read the children’s feelings and subjective perception. The fourth part will be on the expectations of mothers and idealization of the other siblings by the mothers since the participating children were not the favored ones. The fifth part will include the childhood experiences of mothers that have been reflected on their motherhood today.

#### 3.3.3.1 Maternal understanding of children’s relationality

Children in this group had more negative relationality both with their family and with their friends in terms of a difficulty to tolerate frustration, to construct a stable closeness and to take part in problem-solving. They mentioned peer space, playing, and school as areas with the function of escaping from the conflictual feelings they had with their families. Yet, these were not reflective of satisfactory relationships where they can find enjoy, warmth, sharing, closeness, and support. It was rather a

pseudo space for them that felt insufficient and artificial during the interviews with these children.

Mothers of these children were not inclusive of the child's feelings, helpful in meaning making and developing a constructive and agreeable communication skills. They rather had a one-sided perspective of their children's social space, shaped by the experiences children had there. For example, one of the mothers was intrusive to solve the problems her daughter had with friends in the school and she was underestimating her daughter's capacity to cope with challenging events she had. She denied her daughter's efforts, difficulty, and need to be accepted by her friends.

... She said "Mom, please change my class."... I asked why. She said that they made fun of her. Some of the kids wrote that "M, I saved your number to my phone as 'liar', you are an idiot"... I took the phone and asked who were writing those words... I sent a voice message to the kids and said: "obviously you guys have nothing else to do, you are messing up with the Internet we have in our house." I said, "go to your desk and study math or science." They all went silent... I told my daughter "M, if something else comes up later, don't deal with them. Go directly to the principal. Have the principal call me." I told her "Look M, I am on it. Don't bother yourself with these. Bring the phone to me, and I will solve everything with a message." (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

Another mother was wanting her son to be very social despite the fact that the child had apparent difficulties in the interpersonal area. She was talking about her son as easily offended who cannot tolerate the frustration he had with their friends and she was criticizing when the child leaves the friends and turns to home with anger.

A is very emotional. He storms out and gets offended even by the tiniest things. A is an angry character. I ask him why he does that. He says that they make him mad and angry... He cries and comes back home, he has this type of character. I tell him "Okay, if you get mad, go get mad at the person in front of you... Speak up for yourself." He comes home, he yells, or sometimes he punches the door or walls. He has that anger, he cannot get over it. I tell him that instead of punching the walls, do something, ask your friend why he did that. I want him... Once in a while, he speaks up for himself, but sometimes he is so passive that he comes back home. I don't

want this to happen. I want him to get over this, but we haven't been able to do that yet... (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

Another one the mothers did not give any example of the friendships of her son. During the interview, she did not mention any social space as a developmental place of the child where he can learn how to construct relationships, experience different feelings and share them. She just told about her wish for her son to be respectful and not to be unfair. This mother had an expectation for her son to have a good relationality, but she did not have a guidance or help in this sense. She did not give any impression of the awareness of her son's social needs or feelings. Rather, she mentioned her wish to have a well-behaved son without problems so that there will be no complaints about the child in school.

He should respect his friends, he should respect the environment... I want him to be respectful, I want him to stay strong and I don't want him to be unfair to anybody... I don't want him to hurt his friends, I want him to talk to them, get along with them. I care about this a lot, I don't want anyone to complain about him to me. I will get upset if they do. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.3.3.2 School as a pseudo-compensatory place

For these children, school and external places where friends can be found drew the context for being understood, finding support, and having joyful time. However, this positively mentioned peer space was not the same as mentioned by the first group. Outside of the family, there was a hope to find the understanding and attuned environment that was lacking in the family context.

Especially two of the children in this group had obviously problematic relationships with their family. They were alone in the sense that they were left with their own difficulties and feelings. They did not have a supportive, warm, and understanding parenting that would help them develop meaning making of their

experiences. Therefore, there was no sources for better socialization skills and emotional regulation that is to be reflected on the peer relations from the family environment. Therefore, for these children, relational space was weak both in the family and in the friendship area.

For example, the places I can socialize. If you ask who, I would say, my peers, those who I get along with, those who understand me... I like to play with my friends mostly... I don't feel alone when I am with them, we stay together and we become friends. I feel happy then. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

My cat and my friends, because my mom and dad do not understand me sometimes... I have a friend called N, we have been friends for 2 years... Because I change classes all the time... I had problems in classes... I met someone called N, she/he is an optimist, very nice friend... Playing, volleyball, going to the pool. Or going to shopping... I had two friends that I trusted; then they said things behind my back. Then I heard them and left them... First I got sad and cried. Then I said "nevermind Irmak, they are useless" to myself and found other friends. (M, 12, girl, high SES)

I play soccer with my friends, go to some places, we ride bicycle... At school, I feel like I am on the street. There I talk to friends who I cannot talk on the street. (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

### 3.3.3.3 Lack of maternal ability to read the child's needs and perception

Mothers of these children were in need of their children to accommodate to their expectations. These mothers were not involved in the subjective reality of children. Even more, they sometimes had a misunderstanding of their children's feelings and preferences. For example, one of the mothers had a false notion as if her daughter was a very happy child while the child mentioned her unhappiness with her family, starting from the beginning of the interview.

Mother:

M is already a happy child, she doesn't have depression or psychological problems. She has her own world. She is always happy there, I hope she goes on like this. (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

Child:

M: Remember, I said that my belly hurts sometimes. My mom always says that it will go away. But one day I threw up and she said "why didn't you tell

me that?" I said "Mom, I have been telling you this for many days and you said it was okay."

I: So when you had pain, they didn't care about it much.

M: Actually, they didn't care.

...

M: My grades are low. My mom gets mad sometimes. She enrolled me for a private course, I go there.

I: What do you do when your mother gets mad?

M: I feel sad. I think "Why am I like this? Why can't I be like other people?"  
(M, 12, girl, high SES)

Another mother prioritized the commitment to family above everything and she told that she was raised with this value too. One of her wishes was to be able to live in the past time so that her sons could live a time period when families came first with a higher connectedness. With the son of this mother, it was felt during the interview that the personal wishes and needs of the child were not heard. Even though this mother had an accepting manner of her son, it was apparent that there was not a great importance given to subjective experience of the child.

Mother:

Of course, I always tell my children. My eldest is 18 now, I tell him that of course, they will think about themselves first. But when they discuss something or for anything good or bad, they should think a little bit about what their family would say. When other people ask them about their parents, they should realize that something is going on there. They should think about this a little. I always give this as an example to my children. I think family comes first, and the individual comes second. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

Child:

A: They annoy me, that's why I don't like it sometimes.

I: What do you do then?

A: I stop and try to erase that from my mind.

I: You try to think. What do you think about the most?

A: I go even though they don't allow me to. But they are taking me somewhere on purpose even though I don't want to.

I: Taking you somewhere. (Yes) Where?

A: Sometimes, I don't want to go with my mother, but they make me go. (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

Another one of the mothers in this group had a more violent approach to her children and she was aware of the fact that she cannot stay attuned their children's

needs. She had difficulty in being patient and perceiving their children as children who were not as old as she would want. Moreover, she mentioned her expectations and wishes without taking an active part to put effort and help the child develop. Rather, she was in need of her children to be attuned to her needs as felt during the interview. She was overwhelmed with child rearing, perceiving it to be a very demanding task.

Mother:

I beat him up, then I regret it. I treat him as if he is 15. He is only a child. I know that it is my fault... I don't have the patience though. Then I regret and think that they are only children. I think of them as 15-year-old kids, although they are little. But I cannot control myself and yell at them. When I go to the kitchen or when everything settles down, I think to myself "What am I doing? They are not 15. One is 6, the other is 10". (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

Child:

M: ... My teachers. They treat us not as grown-ups but as kids. They see kids a lot and they understand the way we are because they are experienced... For example, because the grown-ups are grown-ups, they forget their childhood memories. That's why they forget how children think. For example when a kid becomes friend with someone, he/she go and tell their parents that. The family asks about material things instead of moral things. Things like "Where does your friend live? How much money does your friend's father make?" etc. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

#### 3.3.3.4 Maternal expectations and idealization of the other sibling

Even if these mothers mentioned positive comments, it was clear that their children were below their expectations and wishes. Therefore, they were in a position of expecting their children to realize their wishes. Moreover, they had a more destructive range of using control. They were more intrusive, more judging, and more violent. In the narratives of these children, it showed up that they had more difficulty to find spaces where they can feel understood and encouraged without conflict.

First, I want A to have confidence. Sometimes he has a lot of confidence, sometimes he lacks it. Sometimes he asks me to say even minor things, he

says “Mom, can you ask for it?” or “Mom, can you say it?”... They have 3-4 friends outside and I try to make them spend time outside as much as possible. Sometimes he asks to come inside with his friends. I say “No, what are you going to do inside? You are going to play computer games or look at your phones. No. You have your ball outside.” Or they ride their bicycles or they play a soccer match. You are always at home, you come back in the evening and I can take care of them in the evening. Our kids have the chance to be outside. A lot of children aspire the kids who can play outside, that’s why we are lucky... (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

I put a lot of pressure on him since the first grade... For example, I yell at K (sister of M) now, I yell her to do that... I know that I yell too much... I don’t have the patience though. Then I regret and think that they are only children. I think of them as 15-year-old kids, although they are little. But I cannot control myself and yell at them. When I go to the kitchen or when everything settles down I think to myself “What am I doing? They are not 15. One is 6, the other is 10”... For example, I give their homework to them and yell at them to do it quickly. But they are kids. Then I regret it... (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

I: Why do you prioritize sports?

C: She eats snacks a lot... There is a genetic predisposition on the father’s side, they are fat. I don’t want her to be short and fat, that’s why I make her play volleyball so that she can grow tall. Her father and I are tall, but it is not in our genes, she resembles to her aunt (sister of the father) more... She looks like her, I think that’s why I became a little obsessed about her being fat and short... Her father is 1.90 cm and I am about 1.73 cm... If only she looked more like us... Because she cannot help eating, she wants to go and buy chips with every money she gets. We cut down on her allowance, but then she starves at school, she doesn’t eat. (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

For these children, it took a longer time to tolerate their frustration and to have more constructive relationality. Even though they talked about their self-interests and desires in a personal talk, they had poorer areas to feed these interests socially. Despite having time spent with peers, it was felt during the interviews that these children were lonelier and more distant inside. After all, these children mentioned their need to be heard as children, to be understood with their own perspectives. They had a longing for children’s voice to be taken into consideration seriously.

A: I wish that they bring children forward. Because they don’t pay regard to everyone.

I: Can you give me an example so that I can understand better?

A: Let me put it like this. All around the world, people don't pay regard to kids much, they don't respect them enough, and this is true for us as well. I think people need to consider children more, pay regard to them more. (A, 12, boy, mid SES)

... Remember I said that the grown-ups forget about their childhood. I take notes because I know this. For example, I take notes of what I used to like as a child so that I can treat kids accordingly... For example, when you are a kid, you exaggerate things more, you think more details, but grown-ups think simply. (M, 11, boy, low SES)

My mom told me that I had a clubfoot. We went to orthopedists a couple of times. Sometimes doctors said... They said I would grow one or three centimeters after adolescence. My mom said "I am tall and my husband is tall... How come she is not tall?" They said they don't know about that. She said that she would send me to play volleyball immediately... I wish that volleyball would change... Sometimes I get more tired than other people... They make use run about 20 rounds in the volleyball practice. I get tired a lot again. I bring water with me in case I sweat or get tired. (M, 12, girl, high SES)

All of these three children had one sibling. Mothers of these children were very comparative of their two children. An interesting common point of these mothers was the idealization of the other sibling who was not the participant of this study. They mentioned that the other child behaved more properly and more favorably according to their expectations. For one of the mothers, the main comparison was on the academic achievement while for the other two, it was more on the behavioral and personality issues like being committed to family or being in line with the mothers' wishes and expectations.

I want her to do sports a lot, I prioritize it... and I want her to like it. Of course, I expect academic success, but I have been waiting for that since first grade and it doesn't happen. My son showed his ability immediately in the first grade. The teachers called me to say that he is brilliant... They said he is very good at math and asked about how he learned that, how he learned how to read and write. They said he makes calculations in his head very easily... I believe that he was born like this, I believe that kids are born with it... It is not something that happens after... M is jealous of her brother and his success. Although she says that "You love him more, you take care of him more", of course, it is not true. One of them is my right hand and the other is my left hand, there is no difference between them. I try to treat them equally as much as possible. (Mother of M, 12, girl, high SES)

Very rarely, if he is doing his homework. And he asks “Mom, if I do my homework, can I play a little?” If we make certain rules sometimes we do not turn it on weekdays, they make me angry sometimes. I say no to both the brother and the sister. The brother is not like that, he knows his responsibilities. He does his homework, he makes time for it... A does not have that understanding yet. That’s why he is just focused on that. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

We cannot make M happy no matter what, but you can make K (sister of M) happy even with the tiniest thing. M is not satisfied at all, he goes out with his father but he is never happy. He cries and complains about the places they go to. K is not like that, K is happy everywhere. We take K to the playground, she plays there all day. M is not like that, he is a little different. He is obsessed with brands these days. He wants things from good brands... He has nothing to do with me, I cannot make him happy in any way. Even if I bring in gifts or stuff, it doesn’t matter. But K is not like that, it is so easy with her. People talk about having daughters. The difference between boys and girls is huge. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

### 3.3.3.5 Childhood experiences of the mothers in this group

Mothers of the children in this group had childhood memories as being not understood as children and being exposed to a time period during which childhood was not understood as today. Two of the three mothers gave explicit explanations about their childhood conditions in which they were not supported enough. Overall, there was a lack of warm and understanding environment that could be attuned to their needs and perceptions as children. Despite giving details of uninterested family environments, they were thankful to their familial values and to their mothers with an acceptance of the difficult conditions their mothers could not change. Still, during the interviews with children of these mothers, it was clearly felt that these children experience not being heard and understood too.

My mom got sick and I had to drop out of school. My mom had a serious operation, she almost died and I had to take care of her when I was little. She was lying in bed and she used to tell me to make tea. She used to tell me how much tea and water I should put in it. I used to go back and forth. I used to do bulghur or pasta, the simplest things. She would tell me how much to put in it. I was silenced and humiliated a lot... I had to drop out of school... They didn’t let me go to school. My sister went to middle school, and I didn’t

because my mom was sick. The school used to start at 08:00 or 07:00. When I was like M, I was dealing with the house and the cows. Now I see them living a life of ease, they have their food right in front of them. It wasn't like that for us... That's why I always wish that I had gone to school. I see a purse for example... When I see an educated woman like you, I admire her so much. (Mother of M, 11, boy, low SES)

My mom never took my hand and walked me to school, never... I haven't seen anything like that from my mother. Because she didn't have time to take care of me, I brushed my own hair. I have nieces, I tell them this as an example. I tell them not to make this their mother's job all the time, tell them to do it on their own. Maybe you cannot tie your own hair but you can brush it. I tell them that I used to brush my hair myself and try so hard to tie my ribbon on my own. Because my mom never did anything like that. But, of course, it is your mother... Even if she didn't do anything she is my mother; I was born with things from her in my genes... There is no need to teach everything one-on-one... As far as I have seen, the way she did things, the way she cooks. (Mother of A, 12, boy, mid SES)

As a result, for the children in these group, there was a lack of relational richness with the absence of a supportive and improving family environment. These children were not provided with feasible experiences in which they could be understood; therefore, improve their skills of social understanding. This was parallel with the narratives of the children that brought peer conflicts. Parenting tools mothers used were inadequate in the development of their children's socio-emotional skills. Moreover, they had a negative impact with the absence of relational guidance or with the wrong signals they gave about relationality. When they suggested relational mechanisms, they implicitly conveyed that relational space is not a place to invest in, to find support, to enjoy mutual loving friendships. They were rather busy with what they think of as necessary or ideal so that they were loading their children with their perspective that has not place to internalize individual relationships with friends. Therefore, children. were much in need to be heard, to be understood with their own standpoint. During the interviews, it was felt by their attitudes that these children were lonely and the connection between the maternal impact was evident.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to understand children's subjective well-being by exploring their experiences and to understand how their subjective perspectives have been shaped by maternal transmissions.

Children indicated the people they are happy to be with, the places they like to be in, and all the activities they enjoy doing. They freely talked about what they wanted to say as participants in this study. With open-ended interviews, this study aimed to have a deeper look at what is important and what provides positive feelings in children's lives. To be able to capture the transitions, expansions, and limitations in children's lives, there were also interviews with the mothers of these children. Therefore, mothers were also participants in this study. Both groups of participants had separate semi-structured interviews. These interviews constituted the data of this study and have been analyzed qualitatively, with grounded theory.

Findings of this study were classified mainly under three sections. The first section was on the findings of the child interviews. These interviews showed that these children mentioned two areas as significant in their definition of well-being. The first one was about their relational experiences. They mentioned the importance of their relational experiences through the time spent with family and friends, school, activities, and play. The second one was the sense of competence that was a source of feeling good for these children. They mentioned the feeling of competent through the activities in which they could receive positive reactions with their skills and through the access conditions.

The second section of findings was on the interviews with mothers. Mothers talked about the ideal child in their minds such as being honest, self-confident, respectful to family. Their current expectations from their children such as gaining self-confidence and having a good relationality, so that they had expectations from their child in relational development and in the development of agency. These mothers also had efforts for their children to develop according to their expectations such as putting importance to confidence, self-sufficiency, tidiness, being determined, having school and extracurricular success, and having good relationships. When these mothers compared their experiences of motherhood to their own experiences with their mothers in their childhood, they mostly mentioned the positive experiences they had. When they talked about negativities in their childhood environment, they also mentioned that they had an effort to change them in their own motherhood. Motherhood was one of the roles to be carried in the identity of mothers from high SES. Yet, going toward lower SES mothers in this sample, motherhood was covering all the identity, leaving no place for other personal areas after being married and having children.

The third part of the findings was to explore the possible maternal effects on children's experiences of well-being. There were mainly three different groups that had different experiences of relationality and well-being with common maternal strategies in each. The first group included nine children from different SES groups, who had more positive relationships with their family and friends by developing personal spaces and better relational skills. The second group included three children, one from middle SES and two from lower SES, who had very repetitive experiences with their mothers in relational spaces. They had negative experiences with their peers and they felt closer to family as a place to find acceptance. Yet, there

were repetitions of mothers' approach to relationality and over-inclusiveness. The third group included three children from each SES group who were lacking relational experiences. They had limited resources to develop socio-emotional regulation and relational skills since the mothers in this group were much more violent, judging, and expecting their children to reach to their own wishes without taking their subjectivity into account.

Thoillez (2011) mentioned that children perceived happiness as a feeling experienced intersubjectively. As Navarro et al. (2017) suggested, relational experiences with family and friends is the most defining theme in children's well-being. McAuley et al. (2012) mentioned that relationships with family and friends have significant impact on children's well-being. The former brings trust and the latter brings companionship and support. Similar to the previous findings, it was explored in this study that the most precious and nutritious experiences of children come with the positive relationships. A supportive, understanding, and warm-hearted social environment provides them happiness. The spaces that they mentioned where they feel good gained their meanings with the relationships they included. The people they talked about was mostly their families, close friends, and relatives if they can share pleasant moments and behave freely in an accepting atmosphere.

When it comes to parental wishes, Diener and Lucas (2004) stated that adults want their children to have happiness, fearlessness and anger suppression most frequently. Moreover, they want their children to carry on their values and family is a place of value transmission from parents to children (Rohan & Zanna, 1996). According to Durbrow et al. (2001) obedience and respect to family, success at school, having good friendships are desired by parents for their children especially in disadvantaged conditions. Interviews with mothers in this study showed that there is

both gratitude and anxiety of having children. Mothers put a lot of importance on the future gains of their children. They were preoccupied with the future life of them not only about personality development in terms of being a good person with agency and competence but also about commitment to family and carrying the family values. They mentioned their efforts to provide the conditions for these developments to their children. However, there were differences in conceptualizing these needs, responding to child's demands, and expectations from the children.

When children have parents with lower economic conditions, they are exposed to parental stress more frequently (Coleman & Karraker, 2000). As the income of the family increases, the pleasant activities and support children receive increases (Coleman & Karraker, 2000). As Elder et al. (1995) mentioned, higher economic pressure leads parents to experience more stress and feelings of ineffectiveness. Similarly, it came out in this study that socio-economic status had a great impact on the approaches of the mothers to the lives of children. As the conditions get better, mothers were more capable of structuring the daily life and keeping track of the current experiences of the child. However, when these conditions were more difficult, they had to be more occupied with the daily struggles and there was not much place to attend to the current situation of the child. The focus was more on the requirements and completing daily tasks at a minimum while attributing more meaning to the future.

As values and perspectives are transmitted from parents to children, there is also transmission of parenting. As represented by parental ethnotheories, there are beliefs about good child-care (Lamm et al., 2008). Transmission of parenting brings parental ideals and aspirations through culture. Research on the relationship between culture and parenting dates back to early 1950s (Harkness & Super, 2002). Among

the Turkish family studies, it was seen that the family model of psychological interdependence brings both the parental expectation of connectedness and support for child's autonomy development (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). For the mothers in this study, it was also evident that they expected their children to develop their personal areas that they can assert their agency while also the mothers expected the loyalty and respect to family as well as developing a respectful and good relationality.

When all the narratives were explored together, it was relationality that has the most significant impact on the children's subjective experiences. Koblinsky et al. (2006) stated that what they children witness in their families is reflected in their social behaviors. Therefore, the relational atmosphere and parenting strategies children are exposed to impact their social development. Moreover, relational problems are transmitted in family as Burke (2013) suggested. Relational difficulties parents have are reflected in relational experiences of their adult children such as feelings of loneliness or anxiety (Burke, 2013). Similarly, in this study, it came out that the quality of the relationality has a major influence in children's experiences of well-being and this is not independent of maternal experiences, efforts, and constraints. It became possible to investigate what is transmitted to the relational field of the child. It was seen that the discourse of the children is majorly shaped by the discourse of the mothers. Therefore, the relational perception and its reflection on the parenting of mothers has been felt in the understandings of children too. This is not to say that maternal relationality defines children's well-being, but there is an inevitable impact in the forming of children's understandings. Richness or absence of relationships, positive or negative feelings, social conceptualizations and meaning-making mechanisms in the relational area were under the impact of maternal relational factors.

Ultimately, children's well-being experiences seem to develop in the axis of maternal relationality at least between the ages from 10 to 12 within the scope of this study. What comes from the family infuses the child, either positively or negatively, impacts the development of subjective perception of the child. Children's relational experiences were in line with what they are provided with maternally in terms their mothers' efforts, expectations, and priorities. When relational skills of mothers are higher with a positive parenting, children develop higher psychosocial skills and their interpersonal fields become richer and supportive. When mothers have more problematic relational patterns, these are either replicated in the lives of the children or led a more drastic deprivation of relational experiences. Therefore, children's subjective well-being experiences are open to be influenced by the relationality of their mothers. It became clear that in the understanding of well-being, what children are exposed to in terms of the psychological structure in the family can be considered for a better understanding of the origins of children's standpoint.

With regard to the findings of this study, it can be claimed that to be able to hear children's voices, perspective taking for a better understanding of their internal worlds and providing them a secure social environment have an enormous effect on their subjective well-being. Moreover, parental wishes, expectations, and relational skills constitute the background of children's subjective experiences. As a result, to be able to capture children's perceptions, maternal experiences can be helpful to understand how they are reflected in the child's mindset with all other surrounding environmental factors.

Among several limitations of this study, children from different age groups would be reflective of how maternal effects are echoed, dismissed, or transformed in the subjective well-being experiences of their children. Secondly, gender differences

would be analyzed in more detail with a sample better representing the gender differences. Thirdly, fathers can be included for a better understanding of transmission of values, relational atmosphere of the family, interactions that can be directly or indirectly impactful in the forming of children's standpoints. Despite having many limitations, this study shows once again that children's well-being is essentially shaped by their relational experiences. Therefore, transmission of maternal relational experiences across different socio-economic conditions can be considered together with children's perceptions of their well-being since these factors are interwoven with each other, constituting the current picture of children's experiences. Moreover, future research regarding maternal effects on children's subjective experiences can help us develop better preventative strategies in order to provide children and mothers better conditions of relational atmosphere that can in turn lead to an increase in children's well-being experiences.

## APPENDIX A

### SCRIPT FOR CHILDREN'S INTERVIEWS

Hello,

First of all, I thank you so much for participating in my study. I am working on a project that tries to understand the ideas of the children from 10 to 12 ages about their lives, what makes them happy, and what makes them feel good. I make interviews with both children and their mothers. I talk to mothers on similar things like what makes them happy and what they find valuable in life. Since it is difficult to write fast all our talk, I will be recording during the interview if it is okay for you too. If there is anything else that you don't want to be recorded, feel free to tell me to stop the record. Moreover, we can finish the interview if you don't want to continue at any time. If you are ready, we can start. I have just three questions and there are also written versions of them so that you can look if you forget. There is no right or wrong answer or any order. You can tell whatever comes to your mind in the order you would like to share. Here they are.

-Where is it good to be, where you feel good?

-Who is good for you, with whom you would feel good?

-What is good for you, what do you like doing?

If nothing comes out in regard to school:

-What do you think about the school?

-Do you wish something might be better in the school?

(Prompts: Do you have the opportunity to share your ideas or complaints in the school? Do the staff in the school listen to your opinions?)

-We talked about the things that make us feel better until now. Is there anything that makes reverse like makes you sad or does not make you comfortable?

-Imagine that you had a magic wand. What would you have changed in your life, what would you want to change?

If there were no drawings or any comments about it:

-Would you like to draw anything about the things we have talked?

Thank you so much for participating. You helped me a lot in understanding your opinions and completing my study. This is very precious for me since you share your ideas and feelings. If you have any questions, you can ask me now. Moreover, if something comes to your mind about this study, you can always reach me via my contact information.

## APPENDIX B

### SCRIPT FOR MOTHERS' INTERVIEWS

Hello,

First of all, I thank you so much for participating in my study. I am working on a project that tries to understand the ideas of the children from 10 to 12 ages about their lives, what makes them happy, and what makes them feel good and also the ideas of the mothers about their children. I make interviews with both children and their mothers. I am curious of your, mothers' perspectives about childhood and motherhood. Since it is difficult to write fast all our talk, I will be recording during the interview if it is okay for you too. If there is anything else that you don't want to be recorded, feel free to tell me to stop the record. Moreover, we can finish the interview if you don't want to continue at any time. If you are ready, we can start.

- Every parent makes a lot of effort from the first day of the child's life. Great efforts are taken for both the present life and the future of the child. What I would like to understand is what parents care about and value for their children. What are your priorities in your efforts and decisions for the life, school, and after-school time of your child? What are the values and features that you want your child to gain?

Prompts: The things that you want your child to achieve because you see them as values, you attribute meanings in life. It can also be personality traits, occupations, and skills.

-What do you prioritize especially in this day and age of your child? What do you especially wish your child to achieve now for the future?

-What do you think about the stance of your child relative to her/his agemates? Do you observe how s/he is going among others?

-What is success for you?

Prompts: It can be both in your life and your child's life. What is it to be successful in your opinion? What makes someone successful?

-What do you think it is like to be a mother?

Prompt: Are there other things that define you besides being a mother?

-When you think about your relationship with your mother, are there things that you get as a mother or change in your relationship with your child?

Prompt: Do you do similar things as your mother did in the past because it feels good for you? Do you think some behaviors of your mother did not go well for you and you changed them in your mothering to your child?

-What would you have changed in your life if you had had a magic wand?

Thank you so much for participating. You helped me a lot in understanding your opinions and completing my study. This is very precious for me since you share your ideas and feelings. If you have any questions, you can ask me now. Moreover, if something comes to your mind about this study, you can always reach me via my contact information.



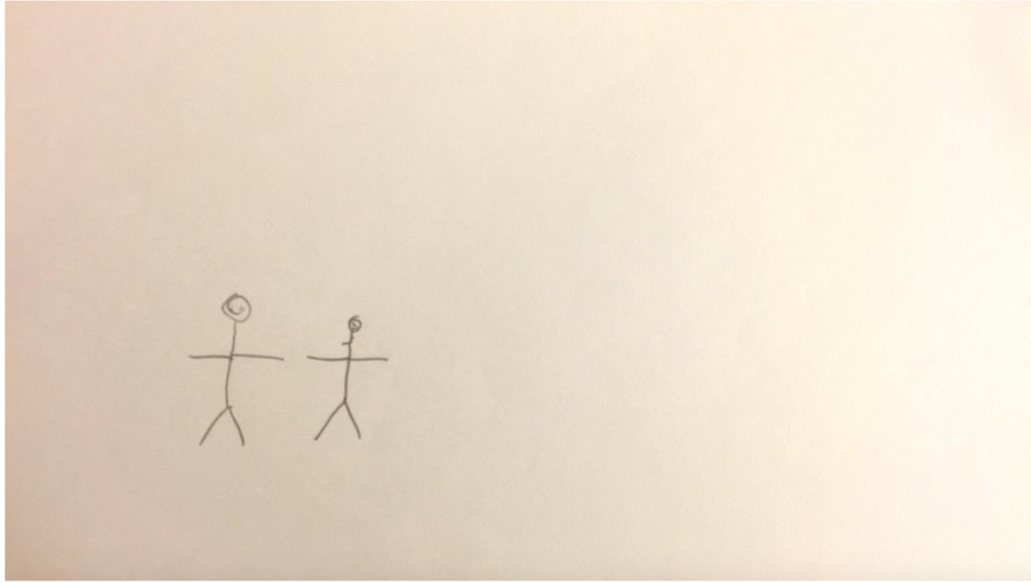


Fig. C2 Drawing by T (10, boy, low SES)



Fig. C3 Drawing by S (11, boy, middle SES)

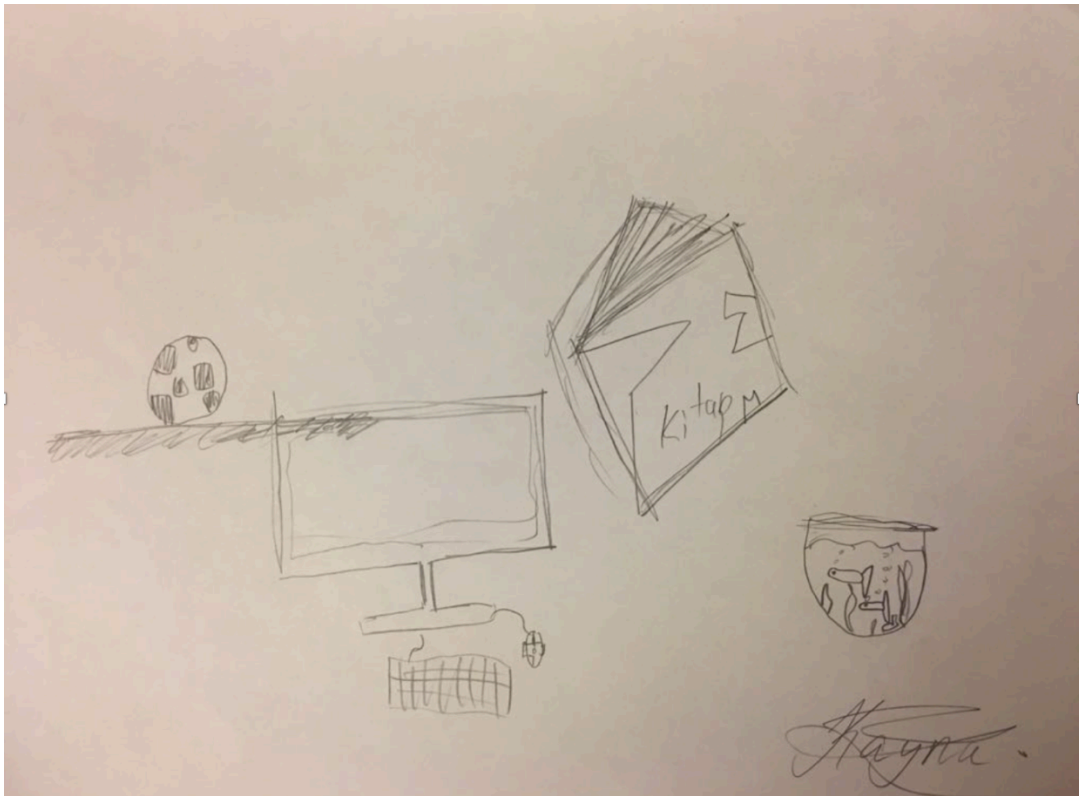


Fig. C4 Drawing by K (11, boy, high SES)



Fig. C5 Drawing by U (10, girl, low SES)

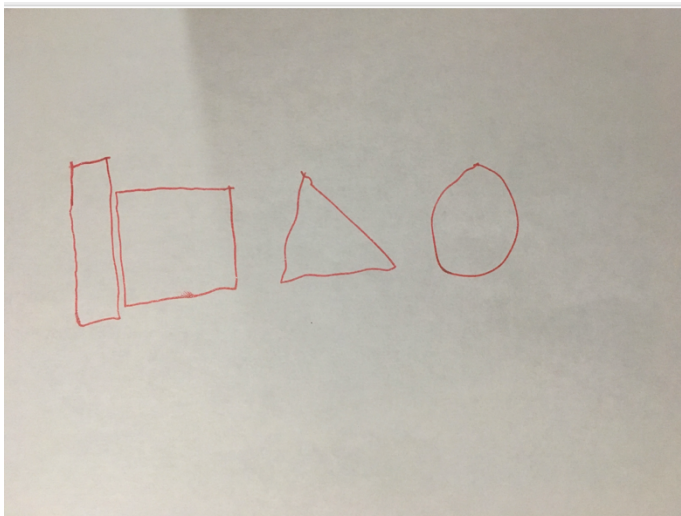
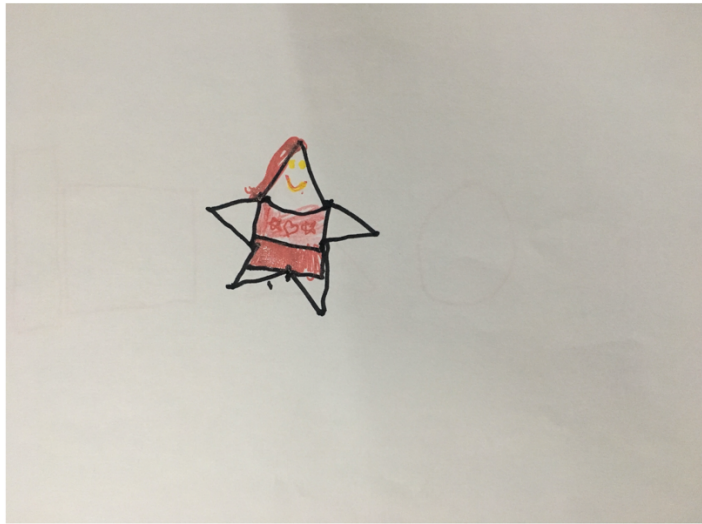


Fig. C6 Drawing by K (10, girl, middle SES)

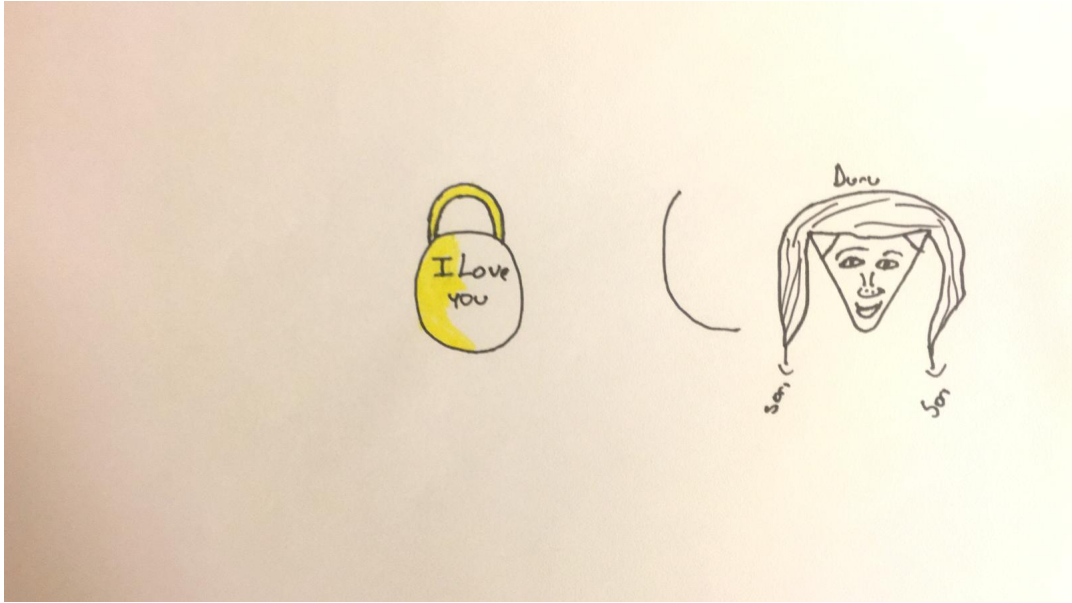


Fig. C7 Drawing by H (11, girl, low SES)

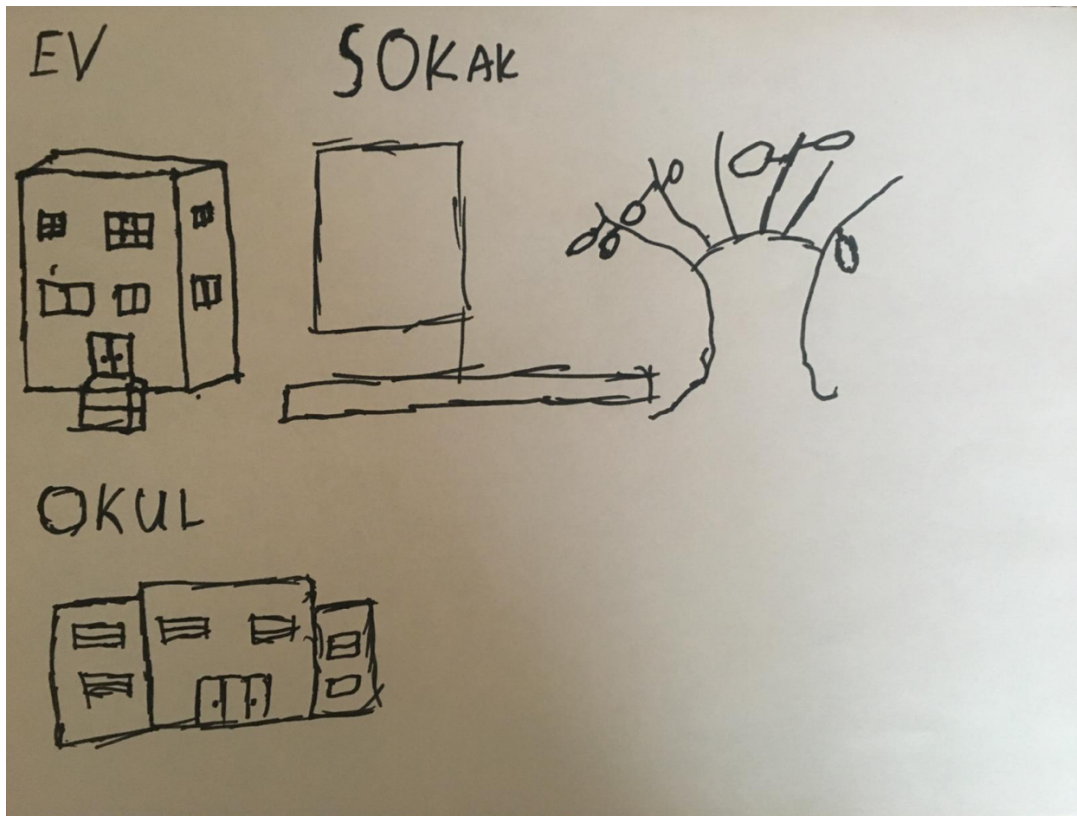


Fig. C8 Drawing by A (12, boy, middle SES)



Fig. C9 Drawing by M (12, girl, high SES)

## REFERENCES

- Adams, K. (2013). Childhood in crisis? Perceptions of 7–11-year-olds on being a child and the implications for education's well-being agenda. *Education 3-13*, 41(5), 523-537.
- Akkan, B., Müderrisoglu, S., Semerci, Uyan P., & Erdogan, E. (2019). How do children contextualize their well-being? Methodological insights from a neighborhood based qualitative study in Istanbul. *Child Indicators Research*, 12, 443–460.
- Akkan, B., Müderrisoğlu, S., Semerci Uyan, P., & Erdoğan E. (in press). Does socioeconomic status matter? Exploring commonalities and differences in the construction of subjective well-being of children in the relational spaces of home and school in Istanbul. In T. Fattore, S. Fegter & C. Hunner-Kreisel (Eds.) *Children's concepts of well-being - Challenges in international comparative qualitative research*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
- Anand, P., Hunter, G., & Smith, R. (2005). Capabilities and well-being: evidence based on the Sen–Nussbaum approach to welfare. *Social Indicators Research*, 74(1), 9-55.
- Ashton-James, C. E., Kushlev, K., & Dunn, E. W. (2013). Parents reap what they sow: Child-centrism and parental well-being. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 4(6), 635-642.
- Bauer, R. A. (1966). Social indicators and sample surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 30(3), 339-352.
- Ben-Arieh, A. (2005). Where are the children? Children's role in measuring and monitoring their well-being. *Social Indicators Research*, 74(3), 573-596.
- Ben-Arieh, A. (2008). The child indicators movement: Past, present, and future. *Child Indicators Research*, 1(1), 3-16.
- Bradburn, N. M. (1969). *The structure of psychological well-being*. Aldine.
- Bornstein, M. H. (2012). Cultural approaches to parenting. *Parenting*, 12(2-3), 212-221.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974). Developmental research, public policy, and the ecology of childhood. *Child Development*, 45(1), 1-5.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, England: Harvard University Press.
- Brooks, L. (2006). *The story of childhood: Growing up in modern Britain*. London, England: Bloomsbury.

- Burgess, A. W., & Hartman, C. R. (1993). Children's drawings. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 17*(1), 161-168.
- Burke, T. J., Woszidlo, A., & Segrin, C. (2013). The intergenerational transmission of social skills and psychosocial problems among parents and their young adult children. *Journal of Family Communication, 13*(2), 77-91.
- Casas, F. (2011). Subjective social indicators and child and adolescent well being. *Child Indicators Research, 4*(4), 555-575.
- Carver, A., Timperio, A., & Crawford, D. (2008). Playing it safe: The influence of neighbourhood safety on children's physical activity—A review. *Health & Place, 14*(2), 217-227.
- Chaplin, L. N. (2009). Please may I have a bike? Better yet, may I have a hug? An examination of children's and adolescents' happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10*(5), 541-562.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Christensen, P., & James, A. (Eds.). (2008). *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. New York: Routledge.
- Christopher, K. (2012). Extensive mothering: Employed mothers' constructions of the good mother. *Gender & Society, 26*(1), 73-96.
- Clark, D. A. (2005). The capability approach: its development, critiques and recent advances.
- Cobb-Clark, D. A., Salamanca, N., & Zhu, A. (2019). Parenting style as an investment in human development. *Journal of Population Economics, 32*(4), 1315-1352.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cummins, R. A. (2000). Objective and subjective quality of life: An interactive model. *Social Indicators Research, 52*(1), 55-72.
- Curran, T. (2019). Intergenerational transmissions of mother-child loneliness: A moderated mediation model of familial social support and conflict avoidance. *Health Communication, 34*(10), 1166-1172.
- Curran, T., Meter, D., Janovec, A., Brown, E., & Caban, S. (2019). Maternal adult attachment styles and mother-child transmissions of social skills and self-esteem. *Journal of Family Studies, 1-15*.

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 49(3), 182.
- Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 276.
- Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2009). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and life satisfaction. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford library of psychology. Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (p. 187–194). London, England: Oxford University Press.
- Diener, M. L., & Lucas, R. E. (2004). Adults desires for childrens emotions across 48 countries: Associations with individual and national characteristics. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35(5), 525-547.
- Durbrow, E. H., Pen, L. F., Masten, A., Sesma, A., & Williamson, I. (2001). Mothers' conceptions of child competence in contexts of poverty: The Philippines, St Vincent, and the United States. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 25(5), 438-443.
- Elder Jr, G. H., Eccles, J. S., Ardelt, M., & Lord, S. (1995). Inner-city parents under economic pressure: Perspectives on the strategies of parenting. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 771-784.
- Ennis, L. R. (2014). *Intensive mothering: The cultural contradictions of modern motherhood*. Ontario, Canada: Demeter Press.
- Farokhi, M., & Hashemi, M. (2011). The analysis of children's drawings: social, emotional, physical, and psychological aspects. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 2219-2224.
- Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2016). *Children's understandings of well being: Towards a child standpoint* (Vol. 14). Berlin, Germany: Springer.
- Feeney, J. A. (2006). Parental attachment and conflict behavior: Implications for offspring's attachment, loneliness, and relationship satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 13(1), 19-36.
- Garbarino, J., & Stott, F. M. (1989). *What children can tell us: Eliciting, interpreting, and evaluating information from children*. Jossey-Bass.
- Greif, G. L., & Pabst, M. S. (1988). *Mothers Without Custody*. New York: Free Press.
- Greif, G. L., & Hegar, R. L. (1992). Impact on children of abduction by a parent: A review of the literature. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 62(4), 599-604.

- Greig, A. D., Taylor, M. J., & MacKay, T. (2007). *Doing research with children*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Gorman, T. J. (1998). Paths to success: The meaning of schooling to working-class and middle-class parents. *The Journal of Educational Foundations*, 12(3), 35.
- Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (2001). Culture and parenting. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Hays, S. (1998). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hegar, R. L., Orme, J. G., & Greif, G. L. (1993). Self-esteem in parents of children abducted by the other parent. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 15(1), 9-26.
- Holder, M. D., Coleman, B., & Sehn, Z. L. (2009). The contribution of active and passive leisure to children's well-being. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 14(3), 378-386.
- Jack, G. (2008). Place matters: The significance of place attachments for children's wellbeing. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(3), 755-771.
- Jacobs, J. E., & Eccles, J. S. (1992). The impact of mothers' gender-role stereotypic beliefs on mothers' and children's ability perceptions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(6), 932.
- James, A., & Prout, A. (1990). *Constructing and deconstructing childhood*. London, England: Falmer Press.
- Jones, T. L., & Prinz, R. J. (2005). Potential roles of parental self-efficacy in parent and child adjustment: A review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25(3), 341-363.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Autonomy and relatedness in cultural context: Implications for self and family. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(4), 403-422.
- Kagitcibasi, C., & Ataca, B. (2005). Value of children and family change: A three-decade portrait from Turkey. *Applied Psychology*, 54(3), 317-337.
- Keller, H., Lamm, B., Abels, M., Yovsi, R., Borke, J., Jensen, H., ... & Su, Y. (2006). Cultural models, socialization goals, and parenting ethnotheories: A multicultural analysis. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 37(2), 155-172.
- Kelley, M., Sanchez-Hucles, J., & Walker, R. (1993). Correlates of disciplinary practices in working- to middle-class African-American mothers. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 39(2), 252-264.
- Kimbro, R. T., & Schachter, A. (2011). Neighborhood poverty and maternal fears of children's outdoor play. *Family Relations*, 60(4), 461-475.

- Knafo, A., & Schwartz, S. H. (2012). Relational identification with parents, parenting, and parent-child value similarity among adolescents. *Family Science*, 3(1), 13-21.
- Knoff, H. M. (Ed.). (2002). *The assessment of child and adolescent personality*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Koblinsky, S. A., Kuvalanka, K. A., & Randolph, S. M. (2006). Social skills and behavior problems of urban, African American preschoolers: Role of parenting practices, family conflict, and maternal depression. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(4), 554-563.
- Koppitz, E. M. (1983). Projective drawings with children and adolescents. *School Psychology Review*, 12(4), 421-427.
- Lamm, B., Keller, H., Yovsi, R. D., & Chaudhary, N. (2008). Grandmaternal and maternal ethnotheories about early child care. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22(1), 80.
- Land, K. (1971). On the definition of social indicators. *The American Sociologist*, 6(4), 322-325.
- Lavenda, O., & Kestler-Peleg, M. (2018). Intergenerational transmission of sociability: The mediating role of maternal competence and maternal child-centrism. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(6), 1664-1684.
- Lowenfeld, V., & Brittain, W. L. (1987). *Creative and mental growth*. 8th ed. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Machover, K. (1949). *American lectures in psychology: Vol. 25. Personality projection in the drawing of the human figure: A method of personality investigation*. Charles C Thomas Publisher.
- McAuley, C. (2018). Exploring eleven year old children's understanding of well-being using well-being maps: Commonalities and divergences across areas of varying levels of deprivation and ethnic diversity in an English Qualitative Study. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 97, 22-29.
- McAuley, C., & Layte, R. (2012). Exploring the relative influence of family stressors and socio-economic context on children's happiness and well-being. *Child Indicators Research*, 5(3), 523-545.
- McAuley, C., McKeown, C., & Merriman, B. (2012). Spending time with family and friends: Children's views on relationships and shared activities. *Child Indicators Research*, 5(3), 449-467.
- Merriman, B., & Guerin, S. (2006). Using children's drawings as data in child centred research. *The Irish Journal of Psychology*, 27(1-2), 48-57.

- Mesman, J., Van IJzendoorn, M., Behrens, K., Carbonell, O. A., Cárcamo, R., Cohen-Paraira, I., ... & Kondo-Ikemura, K. (2016). Is the ideal mother a sensitive mother? Beliefs about early childhood parenting in mothers across the globe. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 40(5), 385-397.
- Miquelon, P., & Vallerand, R. J. (2008). Goal motives, well-being, and physical health: an integrative model. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 49(3), 241.
- Müderrişođlu, S. ve diđerleri (2010). Türkiye’de ocuđun iyi olma hali gstergelerinin belirlenmesi: İstanbul rneđi. Ankara: T.C. Kalkınma Bakanlıđı ve Unicef Trkiye Temsilciliđi (2013). ocuk Refahı Belgesi.
- Navarro, R., Lee, S. H., Jimenez, A., & Cañamares, C. (2017). Cross-cultural children’s subjective perceptions of well-being: Insights from focus group discussions with children aged under 9 years in Spain, South Korea and Mexico. *Child Indicators Research*, 1-26.
- Ng, F. F. Y., Pomerantz, E. M., & Lam, S. F. (2007). European American and Chinese parents' responses to children's success and failure: Implications for children's responses. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(5), 1239.
- Noll, H. H. (2004). Social indicators and quality of life research: Background, achievements and current trends. In Nicolai Genov (Ed.), *Advances in Sociological Knowledge* (pp. 151-181). Paris, France: Springer.
- Noor, N. M. (1996). Some demographic, personality, and role variables as correlates of women's well-being. *Sex Roles*, 34(9-10), 603-620.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2001). *Women and human development: The capabilities approach* (Vol. 3). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities*. London, England: Harvard University Press.
- Palmer, L., Farrar, A. R., Valle, M., Ghahary, N., Panella, M., & DeGraw, D. (2000). An investigation of the clinical use of the house-tree-person projective drawings in the psychological evaluation of child sexual abuse. *Child Maltreatment*, 5(2), 169-175.
- Phalet, K., & Schnpflug, U. (2001). Intergenerational transmission of collectivism and achievement values in two acculturation contexts: The case of Turkish families in Germany and Turkish and Moroccan families in the Netherlands. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(2), 186-201.
- Pressman, S., & Summerfield, G. (2002). Sen and capabilities. *Review of Political Economy*, 14(4), 429-434.

- Prezza, M., Pilloni, S., Morabito, C., Sersante, C., Alparone, F. R., & Giuliani, M. V. (2001). The influence of psychosocial and environmental factors on children's independent mobility and relationship to peer frequentation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 11*(6), 435-450.
- Qizilbash, M. (1996). Capabilities, well-being and human development: A survey. *The Journal of Development Studies, 33*(2), 143-162.
- Qvortrup, J. (2015). A voice for children in statistical and social accounting: A plea for children's right to be heard. In A. James & A. Prout (Eds.) *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood* (74-93). London, England: Routledge.
- Rohan, M. J., & Zanna, M. P. (1996). Value transmission in families. In C. Seligman, J. M. Olson, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.) *The psychology of values: The Ontario symposium on personality* (Vol. 8, pp. 253-276). New York: Erlbaum.
- Ryan, D. P. J. (2001). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Retrieved Oct 30, 2015 from [http://www.floridahealth.gov/alternatesites/cms%20%20kids/providers/early\\_steps/training/documents/bronfenbrenners\\_ecological.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/alternatesites/cms%20%20kids/providers/early_steps/training/documents/bronfenbrenners_ecological.pdf).
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*(1), 141-166.
- Schönplflug, U. (2001). Intergenerational transmission of values: The role of transmission belts. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 32*(2), 174-185.
- Semerci Uyan, P., Müderrisoğlu, S., Karatay, A., Ekim Akkan, B., Kılıç, Z., Oy, B., & Uran, Ş. (2012). Eşitsiz bir toplumda çocukluk: çocuğun "iyi olma hali" ni anlamak: İstanbul örneği.
- Semerci, P. U. & Erdoğan E. (2015). *Defining and Evaluating Child Well-Being Domains and Indicators through the Eyes of Children in Turkey*. Turkey, UNICEF. Retrieved from <http://www.unicef.org.tr/files/bilgimerkezi/doc/CWB%20Indicators%20through%20the%20Eyes%20of%20the%20Children%20-%20EN%20-%20Published%20Version.pdf>
- Semerci Uyan, P., & Erdoğan, E. (2017). Child well-being indicators through the eyes of children in Turkey: A happy child would be one who.... *Child Indicators Research, 10*(1), 267-295.
- Semerci Uyan, P., Erdoğan, E., Akkan, B., Müderrisoğlu, S., & Karatay, A. (2017). Contextualizing subjective well-being of children in different domains: Does higher safety provide higher subjective well-being for child citizens? *Children and Youth Services Review, 80*, 52-62.

- Sen, A. (1985). Well-being, agency and freedom: The Dewey lectures 1984. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 82(4), 169-221.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Commodities and capabilities*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press.
- Sen, A. (2004). Capabilities, lists, and public reason: Continuing the conversation. *Feminist Economics*, 10(3), 77-80.
- Singer, D. G., Singer, J. L., D'Agostino, H., & DeLong, R. (2009). Children's pastimes and play in sixteen nations: Is free-play declining? *American Journal of Play*, 1(3), 283-312.
- Soenens, B., Duriez, B., Vansteenkiste, M., & Goossens, L. (2007). The intergenerational transmission of empathy-related responding in adolescence: The role of maternal support. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33(3), 299-311.
- Stoll, L. (2014). A short history of wellbeing research. In D. McDaid & C. Cooper (Eds.), *Economics of wellbeing*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Strauss, C. (1992). Models and motives. In R. D'Andrade & C. Strauss (Eds.), *Human motives and cultural models* (pp. 1-21). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tam, K. P., & Lee, S. L. (2010). What values do parents want to socialize in their children? The role of perceived normative values. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 41(2), 175-181.
- Thoilliez, B. (2011). How to grow up happy: An exploratory study on the meaning of happiness from children's voices. *Child Indicators Research*, 4(2), 323-351.
- Trommsdorff, G., Cole, P. M., & Heikamp, T. (2012). Cultural variations in mothers' intuitive theories: A preliminary report on interviewing mothers from five nations about their socialization of children's emotions. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 2(2), 158-169.
- Waller, T. (2007). 'The trampoline tree and the swamp monster with 18 heads': Outdoor play in the foundation stage and foundation phase. *Education 3-13*, 35(4), 393-407.
- Webster-Stratton, C. (1990). Stress: A potential disruptor of parent perceptions and family interactions. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 19(4), 302-312.
- Winefield, H. R., Gill, T. K., Taylor, A. W., & Pilkington, R. M. (2012). Psychological well-being and psychological distress: is it necessary to measure both? *Psychology of Well-Being: Theory, Research and Practice*, 2(1), 3.