

WOMEN IN URBAN POVERTY:
QUALITATIVE LOOK AT COPING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Makbule Evrem Tilki, Women in Urban Poverty:

Qualitative Look at Coping Strategies

This study aimed to conduct a qualitative research on the problems and coping strategies of the women living in urban poverty. Ten Kurdish women (20-35 years old) who lived in Tarlabası; one of the inner city slums of Istanbul, were interviewed and the data was analyzed using Grounded Theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The results showed that the women were faced with emotional distress related with deep poverty conditions and adaptation problems related with involuntary migration. The emergent themes also depicted the way they fell outside the social life as a result of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as gender roles that they grow up in. Related with the lack of personal and social resources, they used emotional coping strategies; the ones who could benefit from both emotional and problem focused coping strategies were the ones who had the chance to reach support mechanisms that enriched their resilience capacities.

ÖZET

Makbule Evrem Tilki, Kent Yoksulluğunda Kadınlar:

Baş etme Stratejilerine Niteliksel Bir Bakış

Bu çalışmanın amacı kent yoksulluğu içinde yaşayan kadınların karşılaştıkları problemler ve bunlara karşı kullandıkları baş etme stratejilerini inceleyen niteliksel bir araştırma yapmaktır. İstanbul'un gecekondü bölgelerinden biri olan Tarlabası'nda yaşayan, 20–35 yaş arası on Kürt kadınla yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlar analiz edildi. Sonuçlar, yoksul ve yoksun koşulların getirdiği ağır duygusal sorunlar ile istem dışı göç sonucu yaşanan adaptasyon sorunlarını ortaya koydu. Ortaya çıkan temalar ayrıca etnik ve kültürel aidiyetlerinin ve içinde büyüdükleri toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin, kadınları sosyal hayatın dışında bıraktığını gösterdi. Kişisel ve sosyal kaynakların noksanlığı göz önüne alındığında kadınların daha çok duygusal odaklı baş etme stratejileri kullanmaları anlaşılır gözüküyor. Hem duygusal hem de problemi çözme odaklı baş etme stratejileri kullanan kadınların dayanıklılıklarının artmasının gerek kişisel kaynaklarıyla gerekse sosyal destek mekanizmalarıyla yakından ilgili olduğu ortaya çıktı.

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing rate of poverty and its profound effects in the urban context have been visible in Turkey and throughout the world for the last twenty years (Altuntaş, 2003; Karatay, 2000; Yılmaz, 2001). Families, who have migrated to Istanbul in the last 15 years due to safety concerns and economic hardships, are especially at risk to suffer from deprivation reflecting both low economic means and the pressures related to exclusion from the social, economic, and political life (Keyder, 2005; Üstel, 2004).

One segment of the society affected by the impact of urban poverty is the women. Women who migrate to big cities as a result of poverty and armed conflict come face to face with the risks of urban life (Altuntaş, 2003). The financial conditions and traumatic migration experiences result in serious physical and psychological health problems. These risk factors predict that a proportion of an at-risk population will experience adverse outcomes because they are vulnerable to these adversities (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). However, there are studies which show that some individuals exposed to adversity nevertheless achieve adaptive developmental outcomes (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Yates, Egeland, Sroufe, 2003).

Recent research has shifted its focus from people's vulnerabilities to their strengths in order to better understand how they cope with problems despite many adversities (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000; Garmezy, 1991). The aim in these studies is to identify the processes through which individuals acquire adaptive emotion regulation strategies, i.e., the resilience capacities, and coping mechanisms they use, in high risk environments (Sroufe & Egeland, 1991; as cited in Yates et al.,

2003). These resilience studies have shown protective factors such as the character traits of the individual as well as the interaction between the person and her family, community and other social support mechanisms (Bynner, 2001). Similarly, another field of research looked at coping mechanisms. They examined realistic and flexible thoughts and acts which help the individual solve problems, leading to a reduction in stress. They tried to understand the kinds of protective coping mechanism which lead to the empowerment of people at risk (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The question of how women survive in spite of adversities brings along the question of resilience in women and the coping mechanisms they use (Grady, 2003). As far as the psychological literature is concerned, there is little to be found on women at-risk in Turkey. The aim of this study is to conduct a qualitative research on the impact of urban poverty on young women who migrated to the big city, ending up in a life in the deprived city-slums of Istanbul. It also aims to look at the processes through which their resilience capacities have been enhanced along with the coping mechanism they use in order to endure the traumatic life experiences since their childhood.

Urban Poverty

The topic of urban poverty and the adversities associated with it has gained attention in Turkey as well as throughout the world. The rapid increase in the urban population and the inability of the city to integrate the newcomers into its social and economic life have resulted in an increase in risk factors for the inhabitants, especially for disadvantaged groups, such as minorities, children, and women (Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Ekim & Müderrisoğlu, 2005).

What is Urban Poverty?

The first thing to be discussed concerning urban poverty is its definition which is different from what is defined in general poverty literature. Poverty has been mostly defined via the monetary value of income or consumption, defined by the least costly food expenses (Amin, Quayes, & Rives 2004; Buğra & Keyder; 2003, Chambers, 1994; Hulme, Moore, & Shepherd 2001; Hulme & Shepherd, 2003; Parke, Coltrane, Duffy, Buriel, Dennis, Powers et al., 2004). However, this definition is based on merely economical indicators which are problematic for several reasons. First of all, it is an insufficient description of the different kinds of deprivation such as social inferiority, isolation, powerlessness, humiliation and other vulnerabilities such as physical and psychological health problems (Amin, Quayes, & Rives, 2004; Chambers, 1994). It is also not clear who uses or benefits from the income or whether it is used by all the members of the family equally. Because the income of the house is not distributed among the family members equally; women and children are more vulnerable to the adversities caused by poverty (Beneria & Bisnath, 1996; Şenses, 2003). The last but maybe the most important problem is that these definitions are made by professionals and miss key elements related to the

experience of living in poverty since they are not based on the voices of those who live in these circumstances (Chamber, 1994; Hulme & Shepherd, 2003; Ridge 2004).

As a compensation for these shortcomings, recent research have come up with a broader definition of poverty naming it “new poverty”, characterizing it with factors concerning its causes, severity and duration. As Sen (1984; as cited in Şenses, 2003) has stated, being poor is being deprived of not only income but access to public services, means of production, good nutrition, and adequate work and shelter conditions.

It is also observed that, with the globalization and neo-liberal policies that are in question especially for the last twenty years, the possibility of overcoming the poor state that is inherent in the transient poverty has declined and the gap between the rich and the poor has widened considerably (Chambers, 1994; Hulme & Shepherd, 2003). The duration of poverty can no longer be foreseen as in transient poverty. In the child poverty literature, the child is defined in “chronic poverty” if s/he is below the poverty line for six consecutive years (Hill & Jenkins, 1999; as cited in Ridge, 2004). Similarly, when one lives in deprived conditions for more than five years, s/he is said to suffer from chronic poverty which as the recent research show, reflects a condition unlikely to change (Amin, Quayes, & Rives 2004; Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Chambers, 1994; Hill & Jenkins, 1999; as cited in Ridge 2004).

A third important characteristic of new poverty is that it contains a story of migration especially from the rural to the urban. Due to the migratory push, the new kind of poverty manifests itself mostly in cities. These migrant people suffer from adaptation problems and are not accepted as a part of economic, political, social and cultural life of the community (Byrne & Anderson 1999 as cited in Keyder, 2005; Duffy, 1995; as cited in Ridge 2004).

As a consequence, the new poor suffer from social exclusion because of little access to material, cultural and emotional resources within the society¹ (Sen, 1992; as cited in Bostock, 2004). They suffer from the absence of basic needs such as food, water, shelter, clothing, they don't have access to other assets such as education, health services, credit, participation in social and political life, and social security, and they face the emotional burden of being the "outsider" (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003; Beneria & Bisnath, 1996).

Urban Poverty in Turkey

It is possible to see instances of the new poverty after the policy changes in the 1980s in Turkey as in the rest of the world. Before the 1980s it was thought that the integrating forces (such as family support) would be a compensation for poverty (Keyder, 2005). It was possible for people to find jobs, and these job opportunities would help the migrant poor to integrate into the urban population (Keyder, 2005). Again before the 1980s the import substitution model (*ithal ikamecilik*) that meant the national economy being protected against external competition, and had given the state a protective role. Before the eighties, it was possible to have social mobility, and it was easier to find jobs in the industrial sector. The system was able to create a paid, insured working class (Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Yılmaz, 2003).

After the 1980s, with the minimization of the state, the number of civil servants decreased, privatization gained speed, public services were limited and the welfare state "which was almost non-existent in practice" was even more absent (Bora, 2005; Erman, 2003; Keyder, 2005). The employment opportunities of the previous period that could help the transient poor no longer existed which resulted in

¹ The terms such as "marginality" used in Latin America, "underclass" used in U.S., and "social exclusion" in Europe all refer to the new poverty (Buğra & Keyder, 2003). The term underclass refers to the ones who are left out of the economical and social life (Şenses, 2003).

the growing inequality between the rich and the poor (Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Keyder, 2005; Yılmaz 2003).

Another important phenomenon that has affected the emergence of new poverty is the internal migration that took place after the 1990s from the east to the west. Although it is not the first flow to the urban, it is quite different from the previous ones in several respects.

The first main flow in 1950-1980s from the east to the big cities in the west such as Istanbul had economic reasons. It was the result of the modernization move in the agriculture (Özbay & Yücel, 2001; Yılmaz 2003). This flow for the most part was a migration of young male workers. However the decision was usually given by the whole family which in fact was not living in poor conditions. These families were usually from the Black sea and Central Anatolia regions, and supported the immigrant member in the city for 6 months to one year via food and money transfers from the homeland. In the meantime, the immigrants were expected to learn the city life and make arrangements concerning the health, education and legal issues for the other members to arrive later on. This was chain migration in which the first migrants from a village were followed by relatives to the same part of the city (Gökçe, 1993; as cited in Fişek, 2001). Thus the people who migrated in this period came to the cities with hopes which meant a voluntary departure from their homelands; they had support from the village and knew they had the chance to go back if they could not find what they expected. Coming from the same “*memleket*” was also a crucial element of solidarity between the newcomers (Erder 1998; Yılmaz, 2003).

For the second flow of migrants after the 1980s, this pattern of adaptation to the cities began to change. The commercialization of the squatters which was

provoked by a number of laws of amnesty for the constructions resulted in the appearance of multi-storey buildings. Thus people started to build houses not to live but to rent (Yılmaz, 2003). The new migrants after the 1980 s, had to afford to be renters and they could enjoy “hemşehrilik” only if they could provide an asset for the migrant network in economical terms (Altuntaş 2002; Erman, 2001; Erman, 2003; Ögdül, 2000; Yılmaz 2003).

The uncontrollable increase in the immigrants who were in really deprived conditions in the cities was related with the third flow of migration from the east to the western cities. Starting with 1984 and through 1990s the armed conflict between the State and the PKK resulted in the internal displacement of Kurdish people in the eastern part of Turkey (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, & Ünal, 2005). According to the Parliament report (as cited in Şahin, 2004; Yılmaz, 2003), the evacuation of the villages and the following migration started as a result of continuous military intervention, villagers becoming afraid of being stuck in cross-fire, villagers not accepting to be village guards (“*korucu*”), claims of helping PKK, fear of being kidnapped, tortured, arrested. Moreover, there was no health or work security, no educational, health or transportation facilities; there was embargo on food on some villages, and increasing economic difficulties (Kurban et al., 2005).

Although the internal migration from the east to the west after the 1990s seems like a continuation of the flow between 1950s and 80s, it is quite different because it is sudden, massive and compulsory (Erder, 1998). Because these people had to leave their homelands overnight they had nothing to take with them, there was no preparation either physically or psychologically, there was no one left behind to send money or food from the native regions until the new life in the city was settled, no “*hemşehri*” to support because no one was in a state to help another and most

importantly there was nowhere to go back to in case they could not survive in the city (Erder, 1998; Erdoğan, 2002; Yılmaz, 2003).

In terms of the aim of the people who migrate there are mainly two types of migration: voluntary and involuntary migration. In voluntary migration, the people are motivated to migrate; they have expectations about the host land and have dreams about the future (Şahin, Dağ, Önen, & Öztürk, 2004). There are many “pull factors” belonging to the host land such as job opportunities, educational opportunities, and higher life standards which make the host country attractive (İlkkaracan & İlkkaracan, 1998). Therefore the decision to leave the place of origin is a chosen one. In involuntary migration, however, “there are the persons who find themselves forced to live outside their country, they make up the large group of exiles, refugees, displaced persons, or deportees, for political, ideological, or religious reasons who have no possibility of returning to their country of origin” (1984; as cited in Quallenberg, 2000, 280). “The push factors” belonging to the motherland are so harsh that there is no choice but leave the motherland to survive, and the involuntary or forced/compulsory migration is usually the end result of the decisions of the state concerning social, economic and security issues (İlkkaracan & İlkkaracan, 1998; Şahin et al., 2004). For example in the Turkish case, these factors refer to a “series of processes covering depopulation and/or burning of villages for security reasons, or desertion of villages by the inhabitants themselves for security and/or economical reasons” (Çetin, 1999; as cited in Yılmaz 2003, 8) and that “industrial and agricultural production has stopped, stock-farming activity is hit seriously, forests are burned down, lives had been in danger and forced displacement policies made living conditions unbearable” (TMMOB, 1998: 5; as cited in Yılmaz, 2003, 8).

The involuntary migration from the village to the city contained no hope and motivation for a new life in the city and the sociopolitical changes created socially excluded groups such as Kurdish people similar to Alevi people and the gypsies (Erman & Eken, 2004). Different from the “*gecekondu*” who were trying to adapt to the city life, the new population was named “*varoşlu*” who were characterized by unemployment, gangs, mafia, “*tinerci*”, street children who have a tendency toward destruction and chaos (Erder 1995 cited in Erman, 2001; Erman & Eken, 2004). Today, these people, especially the women and children, are among the most vulnerable population to the adversities of the urban poverty and social exclusion (Erman, 2001).

The Psychological Impacts of Urban Poverty

Risk factors

The circumstances associated with negative outcomes, stemming from multiple life stressors such as poverty, unemployment, discrimination, a single traumatic event or cumulative stress are called risk factors (Grady, 2003; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). As recent research have shown, it is not the type of risk factor only, but rather the number of cumulative factors and their interactions that lead to adverse effects (Sameroff, et al. 1987; as cited in Szalacha, Erkut, Coll, Fileds, 2003). Cumulative risks are risk factors that add on to each other and increase in their interaction with negative outcomes (Grady, 2003; Sameroff, Seifer, Baldwin, & Baldwin, 1993). As can be seen in the sociopolitical background, the psychological effects of urban poverty can best be understood by looking at two main topics, namely poverty and migration. Thus the next section of the study will be on the cumulative risk factors caused by these two issues.

The effects of poverty

The literature on the effects of poverty mostly looks at the relation between poverty, mental and physical health problems (Belle, 1990; Corcoran, Duncan, Gurin, & Gurin, 1985; Shore, 1997).

Low family income, poor housing standards, unsafe living conditions, low rates of education, long term unemployment, few career options, large family size, lack of access to physical and mental health care, lack of social security, racial/ethnic discrimination associated with chronic poverty are found to be risk factors leading to both physical and mental health problems (Bynner, 2001; Coiro, 2001; Miranda & Bruce, 2002; Myers & Gill, 2004; Parke et al., 2004). Having very poor nutrition, physical illnesses such as cardiovascular and metabolic diseases and cancer, being overweight or obese due to bad nutrition, having diabetes, disability, high mortality due to illness, and high rates of birth deaths are associated with being poor (Myers & Gill, 2004).

There appears to be significant associations between poverty and psychological problems (Belle 1990; Bynner 2001; Bhui, Stansfeld, McKenzie, Karlsen, Nazroo, & Weich, 2005; Coiro, 2001; Diener, Nieavar, & Wright, 2003; Evans & Claiborn, 1974; Juby & Rycraft 2004; Myers & Gill 2004; Parke et al., 2004; Vandergriff-Avery, Anderson, & Braun, 2004). Community studies in the 1970s relying on symptom checklists have found higher levels of mental health problems among low-income groups (Belle, 1990). Neuberger, Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend (1980; as cited in Belle 1990) have found that the presence of signs of psychopathology is at least 2 ½ times more widespread in the lowest social classes than the highest. It has been found that there is a high risk of anxiety, mood

disorders, especially depression and alcohol and drug abuse related with poverty in general (Coiro, 2001; Shore, 1997). According Holzer's (1986; as cited in Belle 1990) study carried out in US, developing major depression, alcohol abuse or dependence, and schizophrenia is more likely for those in the lowest SES group compared to the highest SES. The odds respectively are 1.79 for depression, 3.59 for alcohol abuse or dependence, and 7.85 for schizophrenia. Sameroff, also talks about environmental risk factors summing up to a multiple risk score and finds a linear relation between this multiple risk score and mental health, problem behaviours and academic performance in children (Sameroff et al., 1993).

However, there have been many controversies about the direction of the causation between poverty and mental health (Belle 1990; Corcoran, Duncan, & Gurin, 1985). Looking at the causal relation between poverty and psychological well being, a vicious cycle of poverty has been identified in which the increase in poverty means an increase in life stressors that in turn triggers the onset of mental health problems which in turn is a further burden on the financial situation, leading to harsher experience of poverty (Myers & Gill, 2004).

The question of whether the poor differ from the rest of the society in some crucial psychological sense was explained by the "culture of poverty" in the 1950s and 1960s (Corcoran et al., 1985). Poverty was seen as more than a mere lack of resources: dependency, illegitimacy, instability, weak social structure, unstable family structure, low future orientation, weak personal efficacy, ambivalence toward authority, support for illegal activities were considered to be personality characteristics of the poor passed down from generation to generation (Corcoran et al., 1985). This kind of an approach puts the blame on the poor for not having

enough motivation to struggle to get out of the deprived conditions (Belle 1990; Corcoran et al., 1985; Yilmaz, 2003).

However, this approach was challenged by other researchers who brought a different perspective of motivation. This perspective called expectancy theory (as cited in Shore, 1997) explains the “hopeless state of mind”. According to this theory, taking action depends on the desirability of a goal and the expectation that the goal can be attained by one’s actions. These expectancies depend on individual’s current perceptions of opportunities and constraints and are open to change as a result of new experience (Corcoran et al., 1985; Shore 1997). Focusing on motives and incentives on one hand and expectancies on the other, this model made a distinction between not valuing achievement and the feeling that one’s efforts are useless no matter how hard s/he tries. Thus the reason why poor people don’t look for a job is because they are in no expectation or hope to find one rather than a mere lack of motivation to work or choosing to depend on the welfare system (Shore, 1997).

Locus of control is another important concept to explain motivation in relation to the experience of poverty. People with low SES tend to have an external locus of control which finds the reasons for outcomes outside of self such as luck, chance, fate or powerful persons (Shore, 1997; Juby & Rycraft, 2004). Such a perspective leads to the belief that one is not in reasonable control of the outcomes related to the events (Juby & Rycraft, 2004). People with external locus of control experience life as though an outside force controls their fate. Therefore they feel powerless over the situation they live in and blame others as the determinant of their fate. Lack of a sense of control in one’s life leads to lack of empowerment which is connected to very low degrees of self-esteem (Juby & Rycraft 2004).

A very similar explanation comes from Kane (as cited in Shore, 1997) whose emphasis is on the studies of locus of control and learned helplessness. According to Kane, there are two phases of response to uncontrollable circumstances. The first one is reactance which is an attempt “to regain control and mastery of the environment based on prior expectations of control and on the duration of loss of control” (Shore, 1997, 317). In the second phase, helplessness wins over further attempts to regain control and “repeated experiences of loss of control lead to a state of learned helplessness that interferes with the ability to seek and make use of opportunities to exercise control” (Shore, 1997, 317). This persistent motivational deficit may result in a form of chronic depression similar to dysthymia (Shore, 1997). One of the characteristics of people in poverty is their short time perspective and being fixed in the present time, as there is no emotional room for the anticipation of the future (Shore, 1997). The intense feelings of shame, humiliation accompany low self-esteem and being “stigmatized” (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003).

Hulme and Shepherd (2003) discuss the impact of high levels of demoralization. Hulme, Moore and Shepherd (2001) state that that the poor are not mostly concerned with the level of income and consumption but the high probability that their experience of poverty will suddenly or gradually reach a state with which they will be unable to cope with, leading to a catastrophe and breakdown. It is not only rapid and uncontrollable change that is an important source of stress but the persistent undesirable conditions that must be endured daily (Belle, 1990).

The debate on being “the dependent sufferer” is also meaningful when the ways in which poor struggle to survive is analyzed. As Belle (1990) points out being poor means a dependency on the welfare system, public housing, the health care system which implies repeated procedures of asking for help and repeated failures

that adds up to the stressful life conditions that can be called the “welfare culture”.

This culture leads to the onset of various mental illnesses, and substance abuse.

The effects of migration

Migration leads to socioeconomic outcomes as well as complex psychosocial outcomes involving intense losses and long-standing effects for the individual (Lijtmaer, 2001). Along with positive outcomes such as economic improvement, increase in job, education opportunities, change in social status (Cole, Espin, & Rothblum, 1992; Parke et al., 2004), it has negative outcomes such as various social and psychological problems. The immigration process brings along several changes in one’s life such as a new land, a new culture, new language; there is continuous exposure, remembrance, questioning and comparison between the old and the new life conditions (Kristel-Andersson, 2000).

This hard and long lasting psychological process is affected by several factors such as the reasons for migrations, the type of migration, age of migration and gender. One of these factors is about whether the migration is internal or external. Internal migration is to move to a new land within a state, country or continent whereas external migration takes place towards a new country. Another important factor is whether the migration takes place voluntarily or involuntarily. People who choose to leave their homelands are usually called immigrants whereas the ones who are forced to leave their homelands are called refugees (Kristal-Andersson, 2000). However, the distinction between these categories is not always clear-cut because a seemingly voluntary type of migration may mean an involuntary move on the part of the children, or internal migrants might face the same difficulties concerning

displacement, language, ethnic identity etc. as a refugee would (Gün, 2006; Kristel-Andersson, 2000).

The literature on the involuntary migration and its psychological effects seems to reflect mostly the experiences of refugees, i.e. actors of external migration. The population that this thesis is interested in does not fit in the definition of a refugee; however has many common characteristics such as becoming the minority in the big city life, change in language, social exclusion, problems related with belonging to an ethnic minority. Therefore the next section will be about how both immigrants and refugees and their children are affected by the immigration process.

Migration is a process of separation from the place and people whom one is used to live with (Cole et al., 1992; Creed, 1987; Şahin et al., 2004). The perception of historical continuity and the feeling of belonging to a geographical and cultural context is shattered (Fişek, 2001). Holmes and Rahe (1967) and Rahe (1972) talk about the stress created by moving to a new place as one of the major sources of stress (as cited in Cole et al., 1992). Similar to the impact of poverty, psychological disorders are more common in immigrants (Creed, 1987). However, this may reflect the poverty conditions and experience of social exclusion that have merged with the involuntary migration, which may trigger the onset of such disorders whose prognosis might be worse due to the effects of sustained social separation. Creed (1987) says that psychotic illnesses are common in immigrant populations as stress factors like lack of community integration, and discrimination trigger the onset of schizophrenia. General weakness, impotence, depression, nightmares, insomnia and waking memories are among other somatic complaints (Mollica 1988 as cited in Cole et al., 1992; Creed, 1987).

The migrants suffer from cultural differences that effect their adaptation to the new land. They are both affected by primary cultural differences that exist before they come into continuous contact (such as traditions, rituals, clothing etc...) with the host society and secondary cultural and language differences which appear more after the contact with the host society and are dominated by them (Ogbu, 1990). This brings along different sorts of social exclusion such as political exclusion, residential exclusion, expressive or symbolic exclusion (Ogbu, 1990). Espin (1994) talks about the feeling of confusion and frustration about the new places, people and customs, and the sense of not fully belonging in every daily detail (such as the music, the food, the idioms etc...). The unaccepting attitude of the host culture adds even more to social exclusion that brings along stigmatization as an end result of migration (Altuntaş, 2003; Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Şahin et al., 2004). User (1997) mentions the negative connotation of being an “immigrant” such that the ones who are received in the host country reluctantly, especially coming from low socioeconomic status, who have very different cultural and ethnic backgrounds carry their immigrant status as a stigma and pass this stigma on to the following generations (as cited in Özbay & Yücel, 2001). Gibson (2001) talked about the unskilled masses of immigrants who are no longer able to find a job in a factory, mostly at risk of racial discrimination. They are usually forced to settle in the most desolate sections of large cities surrounded by high rates of crime, poverty, and unemployment.

Sluszki (1979) describes the migratory experience and its emotional results looking at the preparation for the migration, the act of migration and the adaptation process. If the migration is an act of sudden escape, the migrants tend to remain attached to the past, in a state of permanent collective remembrance involved with dreadful conditions from which they escaped. The act of migration is much harder

emotionally if the migration takes place involuntarily and with no possibility to return. If there is a dissonance resulting from any mismatch between the expectations and environment the emotional burden is even more. Similarly, Espin (1987) talks about the migration process through three stages. The first is the initial decision concerning the relocation, the second is the actual geographical move into the new place and third the adaptation to the new society and its way of life. In the adaptation process the individual comes face to face with feelings of inadequacy, sorrow, disappointment and a sense of loss. Sluski states that the main issue to be resolved is to mourn for what is left behind and integrate the old and the new. Lijtmaer (2001), describes this process in two stages. The first is “stage of splitting”, which is the overvaluing the old and devaluing the new, to protect the ego from painful effect of separation. The second stage is “the nostalgia stage” which enables the mourning process for the loss. Only then can the individual live through his/her sorrow and start a healthy adaptation to the new culture. However, ignoring, avoiding or denying any stage of migration leads to psychological health risks such as idealizing the past or present leading to splits, decompensation and somatisation (Fişek, 2001).

The immigrants who move to a new place involuntarily are very open to a pathological migratory process. The “nostalgia stage” which is necessary for mourning to take place cannot evolve which may lead the individual to enter a depressed state with self-pity, resentment, envy (Lijtmaer, 2001). Another common feeling of the immigrants may be the “survivor’s guilt” for living on safer grounds leaving the relatives and friends behind in the homeland where there is continuous danger which adds to the emotional burden (Akhtar, 1995). The language problem is another factor that makes the situation even more difficult because as Mirsky (1991; as cited in Lijtmaer, 2001) has stated loss of mother tongue creates a sense of loss of

self identity and of internal objects. Learning a new language means the internalization of new object and this causes the internal process of separation to reactivate. According to Akhtar (1995) the immigrant is vulnerable to anxieties which lead to regression and the splitting of good and bad objects. One day the motherland is idealized, the new culture is devalued, the next day the reverse is also possible. The survivor's guilt and separation guilt are also an emotional burden on the immigrant. The immigrant has to find a way to bind the extreme feelings of love and hate in ambivalence, has to learn to live not in the past not in the future fantasies but today, and find a way to make an "our" culture out of "my" culture and yours. This is a much harder psychological process if it is permanent and involuntary, if there is no possibility of going back home, if there is no intrapsychic capacity for separateness prior to migration, if the host culture is not admmissive, and if there is a huge cultural difference between the cultures.

Kristel-Andersson (2000) in her extensive study on the psychology of the refugee, the immigrant and their children, makes a qualitative analysis on her experience as a therapist, with 903 refugees that have migrated to Sweden from 104 different countries. She has described 17 different states of being of the immigrants' inner world. These states of being include; the stranger, the loneliness, the missing, longing, guilt, shame, separation and loss, sorrow, language degradation, value degradation, inferiority, non-identity, rootlessness, bitterness, suspiciousness, the prejudice and being the scapegoat.

Quallenberg (2000), in her psychodynamic study with people who suffered from external migration, interviewed twenty families who arrived in Canada one month to two years ago, escaping from El-Salvador. The analyses of the interviews give very important information regarding the psychological side of immigration just

after the arrival to the host country. At the first stage of arrival, the immigrants suffer from double feeling of “not belonging” to any of the countries. Despite the idealized wish to belong to the host country, it is not possible because of their involuntary condition. What is more, the host country is full of stigmas which they have to face every time they are not accepted in a job, or perceived as criminals. At the end, the motherland which has stories of pain, loss and fear turn into an idealized utopic space of hope and possible recovery of moral and ethical values while at the same time the host country acquires a meaning of absence of moral codes, social disintegration and power. This dual wish to belong to the new land but at the same time not to belong, ends up in ego paralysis, negative personal feelings and dysfunctional social relations. Thus the host country becomes “the death-related space, a nonlife, nonfunctional space” (287).

Age of Migration

Another important factor that has a considerable effect on how the migration process is lived is the age at which the individual is exposed to the change (Akhtar, 1999). As the population in this research has migrated when they were children, it is meaningful to look at the literature concerning the mental health of children as immigrants as well.

There are three groups of risk factors for the child. The first is parental risk factors. The trauma that the parents go through, maternal depression, death or separation of or from the parents, observation of the helplessness of the parents, underestimation of stress level of children by the parents and unemployment of the parents all have negative affects on the psychology of the child (Akhtar, 1999; Fazel & Stein, 2002). Parental non existence, lack of coping abilities of the family has been

found to be the most important risk factor for how the child lives the transition (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic, 1998; Fazel & Stein, 2002; Montgomery & Foldspang, 2001). If the parents cannot handle their anxiety and mourning on leaving the place of birth and arrival in a new place, the young child may not have the ego support s/he needs and suffers unpleasant consequences (Akhtar, 1999).

The second is child risk factors. The first thing that must be kept in mind is that no matter how voluntarily the migration takes place for the parents, it is always an exile for the child as s/he is not active in the decision to move (Akhtar, 1999). There may also be a number of traumatic events, the expressive language difficulties of the child, PTSD leading to vulnerability in stressful situations, physical health problems. Child's age, child's poor coping abilities, child's perception of the parental rejection are found to be significant correlates of child's depression (Fazel & Stein, 2002). It is stated in the literature that children and adolescents seem to be better at developing adaptive behaviors for self-protection and cover up the impact of traumatic event (Jensen & Shaw, 1993; as cited in Yurtbay, Alyanak, Abalı, Kaynak, Durukan, 2003; Pumariega, Roth, & Pumariega, 2005). However that is only possible if the confusion regarding identity problems can be worked through if "a sustained peer group with whom trial identifications, increased ego autonomy and sexual freedom can be practiced" (Akhtar, 1999, 5). If there is a sudden change in the cultural background, the capacity for psychic development is at more risk (Akhtar, 1999).

The last is environmental risk factors which include number of transitions, poverty, cultural isolation, time spent in the migration process and time spent in the host land. (Fazel & Stein, 2002) The children and adolescents are at risk because of highly deprived conditions and places they have to live in (Prewitt-Diaz, Trotter, &

Rivera, 1990). For example there are cases where 3-4 families have to live for a period in one room (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1998). They are also far from reaching health and education facilities. The number of children who are homeless, work on the streets, leave school and start to work at low-paid and insecure jobs has reached very high numbers (Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Ekim & Müderrisoğlu, 2005). Even if they are able to go to school, they are unable to gain academic success and are exposed to social exclusion because of the attitudes of teachers, peers or school staff (Prewitt-Diaz et al., 1990; Pumariega et al., 2005). To sum up, physical and emotional deprivation, loss of possessions, loss of loved ones and conditions that are caused by being displaced are highly effective on the inability of the child to cope with negative outcomes (Garmezy & Rutter, 1985; as cited in Yurtbay et al., 2003).

The symptoms that are most frequently seen in the children who go through involuntary migration and displacement include; general fears, fear of being alone, withdrawal, sleep disorders, eating disorders, increased arousal, disorganized and agitated behaviour, anxiety and worry, low mood, loss of interest, decline in school performance and conduct disorders (Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1998; Montgomery & Foldspang, 2001; Stein & Fazel, 2002; Pumariega et al., 2005). It is found that with the flow of time, the stress related reactions decrease (Stein & Fazel, 2002). Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic (1998) has carried out a 4 year long study with children and their mothers in a refugee center in Croatia to understand the impact of displacement on the psychological well-being of refugee children and found that with the passage of time some of the symptoms disappear gradually with the exception of highly disturbed family conditions and children with severe pathologies showing the highest number of symptoms. However, these studies at the

same time point out to the fact that these distresses might have been repressed and still reappear in adulthood (Stein & Fazel, 2002).

Protective Factors

Risk factors predict that a proportion of an at-risk population will experience adverse outcomes because they are vulnerable to these adversities, but this does not mean that every individual who is exposed to these circumstances will suffer from these adversities.

The vast amount of research in the past on people living in deprived conditions had a deficit based perspective focusing on the risk factors. However, the recent research is based on a positive health-promoting model, focusing on the ways in which the people living in deprived conditions are still able to function efficiently (Abuzahra, 2004; Garmezy, 1991; Luthar et al., 2000; Yanicki, 2005). The study of risk and resilience is derived from the observation that some individuals exposed to adversity nevertheless achieve adaptive developmental outcomes (Yates et al., 2003).

The criteria by which positive adaptation is determined in studies of protective factors have varied considerably. Searching for protective factors may mean the ways in which maintenance of adequate functioning is provided after the traumatic experience as well as seeking to understand how individuals achieve optimal functioning, involving enhanced psychosocial resources and the development of new coping skills (Rutter, 1987). It is also important to look at the areas in which the person has made use of the protective factors because for example an individual from an impoverished childhood may demonstrate an adaptive capacity in the academic field but may be unable to maintain intimate relations (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). It is also important to note that protective factors operate to protect

those at risk from the effects of risk factors, thus positive adjustment does not necessarily mean exceptional attainment or extraordinary adaptive processes, but ordinary ones (Masten, 2001; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004).

The question of how a person makes use of protective factors requires a closer look at a variety of factors such as the characteristics of the individual and her environment. The characteristics that assist individuals to thrive in adversity include individual factors and competencies such as cognitive factors and coping strategies that one makes use of as well as environmental factors (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). The next section aims to look more closely at these coping strategies, to analyze the concept of resilience more widely, and to look at how procedurally the protective factors work in the face of adverse conditions.

Resilience

The etymological root of the word resilience refers to “jumping back” in Latin, encompassing the state of psychological growth and positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity (Abuzahra, 2004; Luthar et al., 2000; Seccombe, 2002; Walsh, 2003).

There is a large research on resilience focusing on the adaptive capacities of children. Historically the first research on resilience was about adaptation capacities of the children of mothers with schizophrenia as it was discovered that there were individual variations in response to such adversity (Luthar et al., 2000). Some of these children showed relatively adaptive patterns, managed to achieve competence at school, work and in social relations including marriage, despite their high-risk status (Masten, Best, & Garnezy, 1990).

One of the earliest research on resilient children was carried out by Werner and Smith (1982, 1992; as cited in Garmezy, 1991). In their 30 year long study they looked at 698 children on the island Kauai born to deprived conditions, analyzing the vulnerabilities of children and the way in which some turn out to be very adaptive adults. It was observed that approximately one third of the children were at risk because of prenatal stress, poverty, daily instability and serious parental mental health problems. However in the long run they observed that some of these children (72 out of 200 children who had a history of at least 4 risk factors before age two) developed into competent and caring young adults (Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992; as cited in Richardson, 2002). Another outstanding set of studies looking at the protective factors for children at risk was carried out by Rutter and his colleagues. They conducted longitudinal research on orphans and children reared in institutions investigating the experiences contributing to the emergence of resilience in adverse circumstances, laying the foundation for the study of the origins and course of individual patterns of adaptation in the face of socio-economic adversity (Rutter et al., 1970; 1975, Rutter, 1998; as cited in Schoon, 2006).

The early research used “invulnerable” to describe these children who displayed competence and resourcefulness despite stress (Luthar et al., 2000; Garmezy, 1991). Later they were identified as “resilient”. They had an active problem-solving approach that enabled them to withstand emotionally unsafe experiences, had an inclination to perceive experiences constructively, had the ability to attract positive attention, they believed in the existence of a positive and meaningful life (Abuzahra, 2004; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Rutter, 1987).

The resilient children were identified with higher intelligence, academic and social competence, easy temperament, good adaptability, positive mood, sociability,

derived competence from life events and available role models, were thought to have more inner locus of control, good social skills and humor, and also optimism which is associated with one's ability to resist feelings of defeat, resulting in better psychological health. Other attributes of the resilient children were a strong sense of self-esteem, self-understanding which enables one to make causal connections between experience in the outer world and inner feelings and high level of intelligence (Abuzahra, 2004; Klohnen, 1996; Luthar et al., 2000; Yates et al., 2003). They had greater skills at self-regulation which enabled them to plan their actions, control their emotions, focus their attention on most relevant aspects of an issue and showed flexibility in considering solutions to problems (Yates et al., 2003).

Ego-resiliency was another term that referred to general capacity for flexible and resourceful adaptation to external and internal stressors. The term first formulated by Block has been used as a variable of individual difference which combines different personality attributes such as psychological well being and optimism, autonomous productive activity, interpersonal insight and warmth and skilled expressiveness (Klohnen, 1996).

These first studies conceptualized resilience and coping strategies as rising from personality trait and fixed in-born attribute (Luthar et al., 2000). However, taking the thriving capacity of the child as a personality characteristic, or an attribute of the ego has been criticized for focusing on nature and lacking the nurture side of the problem (Luthar et al., 2000; Yates et al., 2003) At first it was the personality traits and coping strategies that were the point of interest whereas later research preferred to look at various factors both within the individual and the immediate context. This was also reflected in the change regarding the use of the term "resilient" (referring to a trait) to the use of "resilience" (referring to a process). The

aim of the resilience research has been to identify the processes through which children acquire adaptive emotion regulation strategies in high risk environments. Adaptive outcomes at given stages of development are conceptualized as being driven from exchanges between the child and his/her environment as well as from the developmental history of the child (Sroufe & Egeland, 1991; as cited in Yates et al., 2003). Therefore resilience is a developmental concept that facilitates the organization and integration of experience in functionally adaptive ways, meaning it includes more than the individual and always encompasses a process rather than a static attribute of the individual (Bucker, Hawkins, Stover, Brakefield, 2005; Luthar et al., 2000; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004; Yates et al., 2003). It is also found that resilience does not just come from rare and unique qualities of an individual, but is the result of basic human adaptation systems, suggesting that every human being is born with a potential for resilience (Masten, 2001).

Garnezy identifies three types of protective factors leading to the enhancement of resilience. The first is about the factors related to the characteristic of the child, second that of the family and lastly, that of the community in general (Bynner, 2001). The child-based characteristics are concerned with personality, autonomy, self-esteem and social orientation.

The second set of factors related to the family, includes cohesion, warmth and absence of discord within the family (Bynner, 2001). Growing attention has been paid to the construct of resilience in the family (Orthner, Jones-Sanpei, & Williamson, 2004; Patterson, 2002; Seccombe, 2002; Walsh, 2003). There seems to be two perspectives on family resilience. The first perspective takes the family members as a risk or protective factor in decreasing or enhancing the thriving capacity of the child focusing on the relation between the parent and the child. Thus

it is assumed that there is an association between childrearing practices from the nuclear or extended family members and the resilience of the child. There is an association found between the good fit between the child and parent, competent, loving, patient parents, secure attachment and the high degree of self-worth of children leading to resiliency. When parents provide affective and structural support to children and when there is high level of warmth, affection and emotional support for one another, the children become more resilient (Abuzahra, 2004; Conger & Conger, 2002; Orthner et al., 2004). Moreover, the high self-esteem of the parent is said to lead to a decrease in the use of physical punishment and an increase in being open to the needs of the child leading to a higher level of resiliency on the part of the child (Juby & Rycraft, 2004).

The second perspective seems to take family as a unit. It recognizes resilience as process taking place in a cultural context (Patterson, 2002; Seccombe, 2002; Walsh, 2003). Thus it widens the content of the first perspective which looks at the individual interacting with the family. Family resiliency can be defined as a family characteristic that help families to be resistant to crisis situations and its ability to withstand persistent stress or disruptive life challenges (Vandergriff-Avery et al., 2004, Yanicki, 2005).

One of the most outstanding models on family resilience is Resiliency Model of Family Stress, Adjustment and Adaptation by Mc Cubbin & Mc. Cubbin (McCubbin et al., 2002). According to this model, there are two phases in adjusting to the crisis situation. The first one, *adjustment* refers to established patterns facilitating the family's ability to maintain its integrity and employment in the face of risk factors. The second phase, *adaptation* refers to the functioning of new coping strategies and adaptation in family crisis situations (McCubbin et al., 2002;

McCubbin & Mc Cubbin, 1997). A list of the general resiliency factors include, family problem solving communication, equality, spirituality, flexibility, truthfulness, hope, family hardiness, family routines, financial management and social support from relatives, neighbors or institutions (McCubbin & Mc Cubbin, 1997; Patterson, 2002; Seccombe, 2002; Vandergriff-Avery et al., 2004). In times of illness for example, family integration, family support and family optimism enhance resilience.

The last domain that affects the resilience is the community. As was mentioned in the family resilience research, support from the society has been found to be a very crucial protective factor in the face of adversity (Bynner, 2001; Luthar et al., 2000; McCubbin & Mc Cubbin, 1997; Spilsbury, 2005; Wolkow & Ferguson, 2001). Children's perception of the social support of neighborhood institutions have been analyzed and it has been found that there are two main supports for the child at risk; peers and non-kin adults (Spilsbury, 2005). Not only the social service institutions, but corner stores, churches, restaurants, clinics, hospitals, pet stores, fire stations, barbers, art galleries and libraries are among places where children can run to when they are in trouble and are provided by the physical, emotional, or financial support they are in need (Spilsbury, 2005; Wolkow & Ferguson, 2001). It is indeed stated that social support is most effective when it is informal and mirrors as closely as possible the social world that the person is in (Bynner, 2001).

Coping Mechanisms

The coping literature is derived from the psychoanalytic ego psychology being defined as realistic and flexible thoughts and acts which help one solve problems leading to a reduction in stress. Menninger (1963), Haan (1969, 1977) and

Vaillant (1977) offer a hierarchy in which coping refers to the most mature ego processes, followed by defenses which refer to neurotic modes of adaptation and finally fragmentation or ego failure (as cited in Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The coping devices that Menninger talks about include self-control, humor, crying, swearing, weeping, boasting, talking it out, thinking through and working off energy. However if these are used in inappropriate degrees they are no longer coping devices but symptoms (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Likewise Vaillant talks about defense mechanisms that are most mature such as altruism, suppression, anticipation and humor and Haan “adherence to reality” as criteria for coping (as cited in Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Just like the literature in resilience, the definition of coping has come to be process oriented rather than trait oriented depicting constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage external or internal demands that exceed the resources of the person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

According to Lazarus’s view of coping, the individual makes use of coping strategies first determining the meaning of an event, for example evaluate whether it is threatening and if it possible to control. Then the individual evaluates his/her coping resources and decides on what she will use. The next step includes the actual carrying out of the coping strategy, and the final step consists of evaluating one’s coping efforts with regard to their effectiveness (Smith & Carlson, 1997). These are called primary and secondary appraisals in coping. In primary appraisal, the person evaluates the potential harm, loss, threat imposed by the stressor. In the secondary appraisal the person evaluates what can be done to overcome and prevent harm or improve benefits (Jones & Bright, 2001).

In the coping literature there are mainly two types of coping mentioned. The first is emotion-focused and the second is problem-focused coping. Emotion focused coping includes the lessening of emotional distress and the use of strategies such as avoidance, minimization, distancing, selective attention and positive comparison. A second way of using emotion focused coping is increasing emotional distress because of the need to feel worse before one feels better. The third way is reappraisal which is the decision to worry about more important things; which might lead to denial and distortion of reality. The last way includes behavioral strategies such as sports, having a drink or seeks emotional support.

Problem-focused coping defines the problem, generate alternative solutions, weigh the alternatives, choose among them and act. This might include either the changing of the environment, changing the self or both, which is usually the case. The sources used are health, positive beliefs, problem-solving skills, social skills and social support (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The way a person copes is determined by both these resources and by constraints that affect the use of these resources. These might include internalized cultural values and beliefs as well as environmental constraints such as high levels of threat (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). However as a general outcome research has shown that the effectiveness of the coping mechanisms used is increased if both emotional and problem focused coping is used together (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The Women Question

Women and Resilience

The question of how women survive in spite of the adversities brings along the question of resilience in women. Despite the vast amount of resilience studies

concerning children, there are a few studies focusing specifically on women (Grady, 2003). Some of this literature is on adult women who have had traumatic experiences in their childhood such as abuse, war, adoption, but nevertheless have succeeded to overcome adversities and recover from trauma (Eishold, 2005; Espin 1994; Grossman & Moore, 1994; Lykes, 1994). Similar to the resilience in children, the protective factors include the person's high intelligence, good communication and problem solving skills, capacity to engage in relations, capacity for self-regulation, interpersonal awareness, ability to plan, determination to be different from abusive elders, as well as the support coming from caring family members or social relations as substitutes (Eishold, 2005). Eishold (2005) gives attention to the emphasis in the recent resilience literature on the style of adaptation rather than isolated protective factors emerging from the relation between the child and the caregiver, reminding the reader of attachment theory. Relatively ongoing and open relation with an early caregiver can provide the infant with the capacity to build internal structures which become the regulator of affects (Fonagy, Target, Steele, & Steele, 1998; Schore, 2002; as cited in Eishold, 2005). These children in their adult lives have the capacity to mentalize. Mentalization, the capacity to reflect upon and understand self and other's behavior, allows us to organize the experience of one's own and other's behavior in terms of mental state constructs such as beliefs, thoughts and emotions (Fonagy et al. , 1998).

The protective factors for immigrant women in the urban context include personal and social problem solving strategies. The personal strategies are personality characteristics related to resilience whereas the social domain is related with family, community and societal resources (Grady, 2003). The personal protective factors include resourcefulness, flexibility of roles, creativity, positive

self-concept, and strong value system. Awareness of self leads to empowerment of self that helps women to see themselves in control of the situation (Jackson & Sears, 1992; as cited in Grady, 2003). The research on urban poverty have shown that resilience in women is very much related with becoming hardy, making the best of the situation, taking a positive attitude and spirituality (Leipert & Reutter, 2005).

As was emphasized in the resilience literature, social support coming from the environment is as important as the personal resources. The protective factors at the family and community level such as the social and financial support from the extended family, friends, social institutions and clergymen are just as important. Resilience is enhanced via membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of mutual needs and shared emotional connections and although social support does not decrease the risk factors, it increases the ability to cope effectively (Taylor & Chatters 1988; as cited in Grady, 2003). Qualitative research on immigrant women indicates that community support is very crucial for women although it does not seem to be so for men (Strier, 2005). Women-to-women support and adaptability are especially important resources for women (Strier, 2005; Toth, 2003).

The women's mothering role seems to be especially an important source of power for women. The women's definition of deprivation and resilience seem to be defined predominantly over their capacity to take care of their children. Men define poverty as a loss of income and status where as women define it as not having a roof over their children. Similarly children's well being and hope for the future is an important source of resilience for women (Strier, 2005).

Women and Coping Mechanisms

One of the interesting questions that is of concern in the recent coping literature is whether men and women differ in how they are affected by stressful events and how they cope with them (Day and Livingstone, 2003; Fleishman, 1984; Marotz-Baden and Colvin, 1986; Ollf et al., 2007; Patterson & Mc Cubbin, 1984). The trauma literature suggest that the level of reaction one gives to a stressful event is mostly dependent on how one perceives the event rather than the content of the stressor (Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou, & Rummens, 1999; Ollf et al., 2007; Wethington and Kessler, 1986). Women have been found to perceive the stressor as more stressful and thus report higher rates of emotional responses such as intense fear, helplessness, intrusive thoughts, panic and anxiety than men (Ollf et al., 2007). However this may not be interpreted as an in-born vulnerability on the women's side but rather a difference in the way both parties attain their gender roles and socialize (Day & Livingstone, 2003). A shake in these roles may result in a more terrifying perception of the stressor on the part of men as in the case of migratory push. For example for men, losing their authority and their breadwinning role troublesome as it is difficult to find regular jobs in the city. Women on the other hand are usually the bearers of the affective burden of migration whereas the men keep a rational, non-emotional style. At the same time, as they go through a change of role that in turn affects the dynamics of the relation between the couple, men usually perceive this process as usually a loss of status, self-confidence and self-image which leads to the emergence of depressive symptoms (Gün, 2006; Quallenberg, 2000; Sluski, 1979).

As the literature in the west shows, a similar diversification may be observed on the way men and women cope with the stressful events. Women are socialized to use more passive and emotion focused coping behaviors whereas men prefer more active and instrumental coping behaviors (Marotz-Baden & Colvin, 1986; Ollf et al.,

2007). They also appear to differ in the support they seek out from the relations they are engaged in such that women are open to utilize, provide and seek out social support where as men prefer to be independent, refraining from expressing emotions (Belle, 1987; Monnier et al., 1998; as cited in Day and Livingstone, 2003; Ollf et al., 2007). Another interesting finding is that the androgynous gender role orientations in women result in better adaptability and flexibility in traumatic life events (Ollf et al., 2007, Patterson & McCubbin, 1984).

Urban Poverty and Women in Turkey

The emergence of the women question as an important focus after the 1980s has led to a surge of research on how women exist in both the private and public space. The women, who have recently become urbanized, have attracted a particular interest (İlkkaracan and İlkkaracan, 1998; Tekeli, 1993). However, the literature on the psychological impact of urban poverty is limited. As far as the women living in urban poverty are concerned, one has to look at the outcomes concerning migratory and urban poverty experiences and their reflections on their social and familial lives. Thus, this section aims at first to explore what it means to be a woman born into the rural life and end up in the urban context and second to pinpoint the existing deprivation that the women are face to face with in urban poverty.

The women who are of interest in this study are Kurdish women who have migrated to Istanbul after the 1990s. As Çağlayan (2007) states, to talk about a homogenous “Kurdish women” is questionable since descriptive characteristics regarding women who live in a particular time and space can only be defined by looking at the culture into which they are born and the changes that it has gone throughout in time.

The Kurdish women who have arrived in Istanbul for security and poverty reasons were born into families where classical patriarchy is the rule. This kind of family life rests on interdependence between nuclear and large family members, both financially and emotionally (Sunar & Fişek, 2005). The authority is in the hands of the eldest man within the large family structure and children are expected to be obedient, loyal and grateful to the authority of the parents, especially the father (Çağlayan, 2007; Sunar & Fişek, 2005). The oldest man in the family has the last word on topics like marriage arrangements or whether girls will be sent to school or not.

Honor is a serious issue for the whole family and is defined through the women. Men in the family are responsible for the chastity of the women. Brothers are also responsible for protecting their sisters (Çağlayan, 2007). In terms of social life, the society is highly segregated, men spending most of the time with men, women with women. Girls and boys are kept away from each other, in order to prevent premarital relations (Çağlayan, 2007; Sunar, 2002).

The son is the one to carry the name of the father; he is expected to bring the bride to this household, stay in the father's home, and contribute to it economically (Sunar, 2002; Sunar & Fişek, 2005). Traditional marriages are arranged marriages. Marriage arrangements may be made even before children are born. For boys and girls, marriage establishes the passage to adulthood. The age of marriage is very young although girls' marriages are postponed when there is a labor shortage in the family. The preferred form of marriage in the Kurdish tradition is with patrilateral cousins; a man has the right to marry his paternal uncle's daughter (Bayrak, 2002; Çağlayan, 2007). Bride price is important and endogamy keeps property in the family and reinforces patriarchal and tribal solidarity (Sunar & Fişek, 2005).

Another common practice is berdel which is an exchange of daughters between two households. Direct wife and sister exchanges also eliminate the payment of bride-price in marriages (Bayrak, 2002; Çağlayan, 2007).

Since in such an arrangement, it is quite difficult to have a chosen marriage with a chosen partner, kidnapping and eloping are very common. In urban areas, some young girls negotiate to marry a young man they choose by threatening their parents with the possibility of eloping. In both rural and urban areas, kidnapping may also be considered as an attempt on the part of young people to undermine this patriarchal imposition (Bayrak, 2002; Çağlayan, 2007; Yalçın-Heckmann, 1993). Both eloping and kidnapping bring shame to families. However, kidnapping may have far more serious consequences. Since it is believed that the woman's honor is stained; she is no longer considered a virgin, and can't be returned to her family, and the restoration of the honor is often through blood (Sunar, 2002).

There is also polygamy and unofficial marriages (Sunar & Fişek, 2005). However, sometimes polygamy can be practiced only after certain arrangements are made, especially if the second wife is from a powerful family. The women can develop certain strategies such as having certain requirements from the husband (Yalçın-Heckmann, 1993). However, to bring a “*kuma*” to the family is an important means of threat used by the husband as well (Çağlayan, 2007).

Looking at the status of women from an economical standpoint, women are in quite a disadvantaged position. The study on Kurdish nomads shows that women don't have the right to own real property such as land or animals or to have a word on the decisions regarding the use, selling or subletting of the property through heritage. Women's participation in the production process is almost exploitation. Almost all the work regarding agriculture and animal husbandry is shouldered by

women (Çağlayan, 2007). The domestic work is divided among the women according to their status in the family. This means a burden on the daughters and brides who are responsible of doing house chores that are organized by the most powerful women in the family such as the mother or the mother-in-law (Çağlayan, 2007; Yalçın-Heckmann, 1993). The food consumption ratio for women is less than men, as orderliness, submission, and altruism are counted as a part of female gender roles (Yalçın-Heckmann, 1993).

Another important thing about women in the patriarchal system is the use of space among men and women. The closed spaces or the homes belong to women where as the open spaces belong to men. This does not seem to have changed a lot with the urbanization process except for the educated women and for the ones who have jobs (Çağlayan, 2007). For women work in the rural life is mostly defined through agriculture which for the lower classes means to work as seasonal workers. This in the urban context has sometimes meant very hard working conditions in the informal sector such as textile workshops or piecemeal work at home (Çağlayan, 2007).

Although the urban life has brought many changes for women, the patriarchal system described above has not changed, if anything, it got stricter (Çağlayan, 2007). Thus the adverse conditions caused by urban poverty that will now be described, must be thought along with the patriarchal culture.

It has been stated by Üstel (2004) that the experience of involuntary migration has negative effects on women and children because they are the most defenseless group in the population. İlkaracan and İlkaracan (1998) carried out an extensive study on women and migration, taking two regions, one in the east and one in the west, conducting a quantitative study with 1129 women between the ages of

15-64. The study depicts that the 75% of the sample population who have migrated for security reasons suffer from health and financial problems. The level of education seems to negatively affect the women's health problems such that the percentage of people who have health problems is 58.5 % for the women who have no education where as this percentage falls down to 24% for the women who have "secondary and higher" education. It has also been found in the recent literature that the migrants who have moved involuntarily have the highest emotional problems with partners and children (Altuntaş, 2003; İlkaracan & İlkaracan, 1998). In the same study it has been found that one fourth of the women report deterioration in their relation with their partners and one third deterioration in their relation with their children.

Another finding is that these women, who practice agriculture and animal husbandry before the migration, lose their productive role outside home, they also are excluded from the society because of language difficulties, plus the cultural and traditional pressure is doubled after the migration (Barut, 2002; as cited in Üstel, 2004). Most of these women don't work because they are not qualified, or because they don't have anyone to leave their children who need primary care (Altuntaş, 2003). Even if they have the chance to work, it is usually not accepted by the patriarchal rules which get stricter on the women in the city. At the end, these women are doomed to live in the most unhealthy, inhumane conditions in the ghettos of the cities. There are cases in which 5 families live in a flat, men living with his two wives and children in the same room (Çakmak, 1998; as cited in İlkaracan & İlkaracan 1998). It is also important to note that women are mostly affected by the poverty at home because they are the ones who stay at home and struggle with the poor conditions most of the time (Erman 2003). Some of the women do not find their husbands supportive, and complain about their wasting time in "kahvehane"s

(Altuntaş, 2003). There also seems to be violence within the household although not openly stated (Altuntaş, 2003).

In order to cope with severe poverty conditions, people are in need of public assistance, but state support and intervention is very weak. In addition, there is the belief that all the needs should be met within the family. The state also has left the entire responsibility to the family. NGOs are not sufficient and efficient in meeting the demands of the people, neither (Erder, 2002).

In such a context, intrafamilial and interfamilial solidarity networks have an essential functioning. Erder states that, regarding the intrafamilial relations, solidarity in domestic life is mostly in the domain of the female members for child care and household chores, and is limited to homes (for example between mothers and daughters) and neighborhoods. The reason is the isolation of women from public life as they are lifted out of productive agricultural activities. Interfamilial relations, on the other hand are usually closed to women. They consist of men's relation with a larger solidarity network as in the case of asking extended family members and 'hemşehri's for help to find housing or jobs (Erder, 2002).

In an extensive qualitative study, 160 people from different regions of Ankara and İstanbul, including the Tarlabası region, living in urban poverty were interviewed in-depth; Bora (2002) explains what women go through living in urban poverty and their strategies to cope. She proposes that even the informal solidarity networks are in rapid change and precarious in nature. For example solidarity between the "hemşehri" is no longer valid for the ones who live in really poor conditions. Solidarity has been at the level of "feeling pity" which puts an emotional burden on the ones who are pitied by the helpers. Yet the ones who are in really bad shape are no longer able to share or listen to each other's problems. Bora (2002)

mentions relatives who do not want any contact with their very poor relatives in order not to be chosen as a financial supporter.

These very deprived conditions seem to have left individuals all by themselves trying to survive. The dominant feelings expressed by people in such circumstances where the main concern is not to die, are rage, shame and anger. However here too, there seems to be a difference between men and women such that for men it is easier to express their rage by externalizing, blaming the outside forces, where as for women these feelings are experienced more internally as women perceive themselves not to have accomplished their role as the caregivers (Bora, 2002).

Still, the women have developed ways to cope with these adversities both emotionally and practically. One of these ways is to use “downward comparison”, looking at others who live in worse conditions and feel grateful for what they do have (Bora, 2002). Another coping strategy that they use is an anti-wealth emphasis such that they see wealthy people as another race who are not honest, sincere and pure where as the poor have a “rich heart” (Şen, 2002).

Women are not passive agents in finding practical solutions to their problems, either. For example, despite the dissolving solidarity between the neighbors, one can still talk about solidarity among women. Women are also the most active agents in their families in finding a source of assistance. Although they suffer the emotional burden of living in the welfare culture, women at the end play a crucial role in the survival of their families. They even sometimes do this without their husbands’ knowledge as the husbands don’t let them want help because for men it is the confession of failure (Bora, 2002). The fact that women cannot work outside the home because of their children, health problems and men’s prohibition has put

children in the position of financial contributors to their families. Altuntaş's (2003) field study on children working on the streets gives important clues as to the role of the women as active agents in coping with deprived conditions. Women have a more active role than men, in the organization of daily life, relations with the official institutions, and taking care of the children. Interestingly, these studies on children working on the streets point to the fact that children give their earnings to the mothers (Altuntaş, 2003). The increasing role of women in the organization of daily life, and management of income goes parallel with the loss of status on the part of the men as the authority figure at home.

Last of all, the strength to endure the hardened life conditions seems to take root from children, i.e., women cope with problems for the sake of their children. Although the highest level of helplessness is expressed when they are not able to meet the demands of their children, these children have a great importance in giving their parents energy to hold on to life and have expectations for the future. The women's main hope is to see their children live the lives that they could not live. In certain cases daughters are given even more importance when education and work is concerned as sons are believed to find their way out one way or another (Bora, 2003).

Thus it seems to be important to look at the psychological processes of these women who have gone through traumatic experiences, how they give meaning to them, in what ways their roles are changed, and the resources they use to cope with the adversities in their life.

The Present Study

The current study is about women who live in urban poverty which entails a story of forced migration and social exclusion which makes the separation and integration process even more difficult and painful. First of all, people suffer from chronic stress due to the conditions that have forced them to leave or flee such as war, violence or continuous threat to life or family safety. It is an unplanned journey to an unknown with very little or no economic, social or cultural security which brings along the stress of an unknown future (Cole et al., 1992). There is usually no support from the extended family because they are either in a similar situation or there is no family or land left behind in the homeland. There is economic shortage of affordable housing, educational opportunities and adequate access to health care in the host society (Cole et al., 1992). There may be very limited use of health services because either the newcomers don't have any insurance, or they don't have the information about accessing the possible healthcare units, which may be coupled with a language barrier further alienating them from the host society (Creed, 1987).

This study aimed to explore the resilience capacities and coping mechanism of women living in urban poverty. The women, who have lived the involuntary internal migration and arrived at Istanbul after the 1990s, have managed to survive and cope with the physical and psychological risk factors caused by the harsh experiences of migration and poverty. The study is based on qualitative research via in-depth interviews conducted with women who live in one of the inner-city slums of Istanbul; Tarlabaşı, and come up with definitions and themes concerning their resilience capacities as well as coping strategies used, from the participants' subjective experiences. The resilience capacities of the women will be explored in

terms of their perceptions of personal coping strategies as well as their perceptions of familial, social and institutional support and also how they perceive the usefulness of these strategies.

Following this discussion there are four research questions that the present study will be looking answers for:

1. How do the women describe their migratory experiences?
2. How do the women define and explain the problem areas in their life psychologically after migration, before and after marriage?
3. What kinds of coping mechanisms do they use and how do they define and explain their resilience capacities?
4. Are these mechanisms useful?

The hypothesis that the present study proposes are as follows:

1. The women who benefit from personal strengths as well as having positive experiences in their familial, marital, educational, social and institutional relations will be able to cope with their emotional lives more efficiently.
2. The women will use emotional-focused coping strategies more than problem-focused coping strategies.
3. The women with higher scores on a general health scale, SF-36 will have narratives reflecting higher resilience capacities and a more positive look regarding their potential to cope with problems.

METHOD

The Research Setting

The study was conducted in Tarlabası which is one of representative inner city slum areas of Istanbul where the new urban poor of the city live in very deprived conditions (Yılmaz, 2003). This part of the city has become a settlement for a heterogeneous group of newcomers especially after the 1980s (Yılmaz, 2005.). These people include single young men living in bachelor's rooms of the inner-city, international migrants (mostly Iraqis and West Africans), and Kurdish conflict-induced migrants from the Eastern and South-eastern parts of Turkey (Yılmaz, 2005). The Kurdish population who have arrived after the 1990s, have suffered from both the economic hardship and involuntary migration due to political unrest between the Turkish army and the PKK (Yılmaz, 2005).

Participants

The Sample

The population of the study is chosen from the families who have arrived in Istanbul after 1990s and are currently living in Tarlabası. The sample is composed of Kurdish women between the ages of 20 and 35, who are married with children. This sample is chosen because they are witnesses of both the migratory experience of internal displacement as children and have grown up in the city. Therefore it was possible to look at how they perceive themselves as women, daughters, wives. They were also fluent in Turkish as the researcher does not speak Kurdish.

Participant Demographics

Twelve Kurdish women were interviewed for the study; two of whom were excluded because one was not able to express herself in Turkish adequately, and with the other it was not possible to prevent the intervention of other family members. Thus the analysis was carried out on the interviews with 10 women. The participants were between 20 and 31 years of age (M= 25.2 years). They resided in Istanbul for the last 4 to 15 years (M=10.1 years). The ages at which they migrated to Istanbul were between 8 and 23 years (M=14.7 years). All these 10 women were currently married. Age of marriage were between 12 and 20 years (M=16.1 years). All of them, except one, had children; the exception was not a choice, but a result of a health problem. The number of children were between 3 and 5 (M=3). The years of education attained by the participants changed from none to 5 years (M=1.8).

All the participants were born into large and extended families composed of 5 to 19 siblings. Seven of them were among the elder children, while only one was among the younger child of the family. All of them were born in the eastern parts of Turkey, only one migrated to the southern part while she was a one year old.

None of the women were currently working. Four of the women had no previous work experience. One had 2 months of work experience of carpet weaving and two went to pecking up as seasonal workers while they were in the village as children. Three worked in the textile sector as part of the informal work sector in Istanbul before they were married.

Data Gathering

The data was collected through one-hour long in depth interviews. The face-to face interviews with the ten women were audio taped and transcribed verbatim. Six of the

women were reached through the Big Brother Big Sister project carried along in the Tarlabası area.² The aim was to reach the mothers of these children and ask these women to refer other women in their neighbourhood who would be interested in participating in this study by snowball method. There were also Tarlabası Toplum Merkezi and a nurse and a social service worker who had worked in Tarlabası which provided connections to some participants.

The women were asked 8 short questions concerning demographic information regarding their age, place of birth, marital status, and age of marriage, number of children, level of education, work experience, and year of arrival in Istanbul. The in-depth interview was composed of four main questions (see Appendix B). In the first question they were asked to give a short story of migration. The aim was to take background information about what they have gone through, their experiences and how they perceive the process. In the second question they were asked to tell about the difficulties they have faced in their life in Istanbul to identify which areas they perceive as the most problematic in their lives. In the third question they were asked what mechanism they use to cope with these problem areas. Regarding the third question they were specifically asked about their perception regarding the personal resources they use as well as familial, social (relatives and/or neighbourhood) and institutional (state and/or NGO) support. In the fourth question they were asked about how these coping mechanisms work, which ones they find helpful, which ones not helpful.

² This project is carried out by an NGO aiming to reach the children at risk and constitute a preventive intervention model to determine and meet the psychosocial needs of these children. Each child is paired with a voluntary elder sister or brother (usually from the university) with whom they regularly spend time together

After the interview was over, the subjects were asked to fill out SF-36 Health Survey for an overall evaluation of their state of health. As most of the women were not fluent in reading and writing, the survey was read to them by the researcher.

Data Analysis

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was used to analyze the interviews (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This is a qualitative research method which entails a process of interpretation to discover concepts via the subjects' own words and organize them into a theoretical explanatory schema through constant comparison of categories constructed from the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, Clark et al., 2006). In other words, a set of inductive strategies are used to develop more abstract categories from individual experiences or cases. These categories are then used to understand the data and figure out patterned relationships within it (Charmaz, 2003). In the first phase *open coding* is used to make a list of emergent themes, images and metaphors recurrent in the data (Strier, 2005). This is done by examining each line of data and defining the actions and events occurring in it (Charmaz, 2003). While doing this the data cases and categories are constantly compared to catch conceptual similarities and difference. Another important means to explore emerging concepts is memo-writing. This is a free writing exercise the analyzer should continuously carry out to help her elaborate on assumptions and hidden meanings under the emerging codes (Charmaz, 2003, Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003).

Then in the second phase, different categories are formulated through reducing the list to more generalized themes. This is called *focused coding* (also called axial coding). From these themes links to more abstract conceptions are

driven. This ongoing coding and making comparisons continues until no new related insights are reached (called theoretical saturation) (Charmaz, 2003, Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003).

The analyses of the interviews were carried out by two people for interrater reliability. The coding procedure was first done individually. Then the raters came together to discuss the common themes that emerged and the core categories were decided after reaching consensus. These categories are presented in Appendix A showing which mechanism is used by whom and their frequencies. List of Problem areas and coping mechanisms of the participants are given in Appendix B.

SF-36 Health Survey

Among the instruments that have been used to measure the state of complete physical, mental, and social well being of the participants Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) Short Form-36 Health Survey (SF-36) is one of the most widely used instrument. It was developed by Ware and colleagues as generic measures of health status and outcomes from the patients' point of view (Şahin et al., 1999). It is also short, practical and self-administered. It was developed during the Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) which was a 2-year observational study designed to follow how specific components of health care system affect the outcomes of care. The SF-36 measures generic health concepts relevant across age, disease, and treatment groups. It provides a comprehensive, psychometrically sound, and efficient way to measure health from the patient's point of view by scoring standardized responses to standardized questions. The SF-36 is designed for self-administration during a face-to-face interview with respondents aged 14 and older (Ware, Snow, Kosinski, & Gandek, 1993).

The SF-36 was constructed to represent eight of the most important health concepts included in the MOS and other widely used health surveys. The SF-36 includes eight multi-item scales containing two to ten items each and a single-item measure of reported health transition that is not used to score any of the eight multi-item scales. Physical Functioning (PF) refers to the extent to which health limits physical activities such as self-care, walking, climbing stairs, bending, lifting and moderate exercises, Role Functioning-physical (RP) refers to the extent to which physical health interferes with work or other daily activities, including accomplishing less than wanted, limitations in the kind of activities or difficulty in performing activities, Bodily Pain (BP) refers to the intensity of pain and effect of pain on normal work, both inside and outside the home, General Health (GH) refers to the personal evaluation of health, including current health, health outlook and resistance to illness, vitality (VT) refers to the feeling of energy versus feeling tired and worn out, Social Functioning (SF) refers to the extent to which physical health or emotional problems interfere with normal social activities, Role Functioning-emotional (RE) refers to the extent to which emotional problems interfere with work or other daily activities including decreased time spent on activities, accomplishing less, and not working as carefully as usual, and mental health (MH) refers to general mental health, including depression, anxiety, behavioral-emotional control, and general positive affect. Items 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9a, d, e, f, h, j are reversed. All SF-36 scales are transformed to a 0 to 100 range of possible scores so that a higher score indicates a better health state. It generates a profile of physical and mental health; it does not produce a single index. For example, functioning scales are scored so that a high score indicates better functioning and the pain scale is scored so that a high

score indicates freedom from pain (Ware et al., 1993, Şahin et al., 1999; Demirsoy, 1999).

The empirical studies carried out to evaluate the reliability and validity of the original measure has come up with favorable results for different age groups, different populations and different types of illnesses. To give a few examples ranges of Cronbach's α values for Sf-36 is 0.76-0.90 for a large community sample, 0.77-0.89 for anglicized version, 0.83-0.94 for elderly population in Australia, 0.62-0.90 for dialysis outpatients, and 0.77-0.91 for diabetic patients (Jenkinson et al., 1993; Mc Callum, 1995; Lyons, Perry, & Littlepage, 1994; Kurtin et al., 1992 and Anderson et al., 1997; cited in Demirsoy, 1999). The construct validity have also been demonstrated in various studies (Ware, 1995; Ware, 1987; as cited in Demirsoy, 1999).

The Turkish translation of SF-36 Health Survey was done by Fişek; tested in a pilot study and was approved by the Medical Outcomes Trust (Gandek, 1997; as cited in Demirsoy, 1999). The reliability and validity of the Turkish translation was carried out by Demirsoy (1999). The reliability assessment showed satisfactory to high Cronbach α value for all scales, ranging from .75 for RE (Role Emotional) to .90 for MH (Mental Health). The principle component analysis yielded a bi-dimensionality, i.e., the physical and mental dimensions of SF-36. The factor loadings of the scales were comparable to the results from the original Sf-36 studies in the USA and Australia (Demirsoy, 1999).

RESULTS

Initially, the results of the SF-36 will be presented. Then, each participant will be described in detail in order to provide a clearer picture of their personal histories as they relate to their current life circumstances. Next, following the research questions, the emerging categories regarding the problem areas that the participants have reported with regards to their life in Istanbul and the ways in which they cope with them will be listed. Detailed narrative information for each category will be explored through quotations from the participants. Last of all an overall evaluation of the women regarding their ways of coping with their problems will be made and discussed.

SF-36 Results

In order to complement the interviews, SF-36 was used as a self-report measure to assess the physical and mental health conditions of the participants. This section presents the descriptive statistics of the results of SF-36 Health Survey representing eight of the most important health concepts. These are Physical Functioning (PF), Role Functioning –Physical (RP), Bodily Pain (BP), General Health (GH), Vitality (VT), Social Functioning (SF), Role Functioning-Emotional (RE), and Mental Health (MH). The highest score one can get from the scales is 100 which indicates perfect health on that dimension, thus the lower the score, the lower the well-being on that dimension. The means and standard deviations of eight subscales are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for SF-36 N=10

Subscales	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Physical Functioning	25-100	65	24.49
Role Functioning-physical	0-100	35	45.95
Bodily Pain	10-90	38	26.00
General Health	5-95	53	32.42
Vitality	10-60	34.50	16.24
Social Functioning	37.5-100	63.75	17.13
Role Functioning-Emotional	0-33.33	6.67	14.05
Mental Health	16-56	35.20	13.44

The fact that there is huge variation regarding the range and standart deviations, it is not possible to make any generlizations over the mean scores. Thus the SF-subscale scores for each participant is given in Table 2.

Table 2: SF-36 subscale scores for each partipicant

	PF	RP	BP	GH	VT	SF	RE	MH
Kerime	50	0	30	35	35	62,5	33,3	56
Leman	100	100	90	65	45	75	0	52
Aytül	30	0	10	5	10	62,5	0	20
Seda	75	25	70	90	60	75	0	32
Şule	85	100	60	95	40	100	33,33	48
Feride	70	0	20	35	40	50	0	32
Aliye	75	0	20	75	40	62,5	0	36
Eser	55	0	10	10	10	37,5	0	16
Alev	25	25	30	40	20	62,5	0	24
Şirin	85	100	40	80	45	50	0	36

Although this scale was used as a complementary tool for the qualitative study on the unique stories of women, eyeballing the data on an individual base, depicts that despite relatively high scores on physical functioning, physical role functioning scores show a huge decrease for some women. Emotional role

functioning scores are strikingly low. Social functioning scores are the highest among the other subscales. SF-36 scores for each individual for the subscales are presented in separate graphs in the next section to see better how each participant evaluates her mental and physical health.

Individual Descriptions of the Participants

This section is composed of the unique stories of each woman and a brief summary of the observations made by the researcher concerning the participant's state of being during the interview as well as the general conditions of the houses where the interviews were conducted. Pseudonyms were used in order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants.

Kerime

Kerime, a young married Kurdish woman in her mid-20s, was born in a village in the eastern parts of Turkey. She was born into a crowded family of 19 siblings, 2 mothers and a father. Her mother was a *kuma* as the first wife could not give birth to any children for a long time. After her father married Kerime's mother, both wives started to give birth one after the other and ended up in a large family. She went to school until the 4th grade and was taken out of school on the insistence of her grandfather because "she was grown up and was very tall". Her family came to Istanbul because of deep poverty. She was married when she was 15 years old by arranged marriage. She has three daughters, the eldest in the first grade. Her husband, a primary school graduate, is a taxi driver who has to pay a rent for the car out of the money he makes, which makes it impossible for him to have a regular income.

She was very cooperative all throughout the interview. She was fluent in Turkish. There was only a tense feeling while she was talking about her husband and wanted to stop the recording as she did not want the familial problems to be recorded. The main theme of the interview was her thoughts on how she found her life a repetition of her mother's life. The burden of the children and the marriage was very hard on her as she felt like she has not lived enough either of her childhood or of her adolescence.

The place where she lived was a small flat with 2 rooms, a toilet and a kitchen in a very poor looking apartment building. However, the inside was quite well kept, with two couches, a rug, a desk, a television, and a lap-top which her husband uses to chat with friends. The heating was provided by one electrical heater. About their financial problems, she told me that they had a lot of debt and her husband was quite irresponsible about the expenditures.

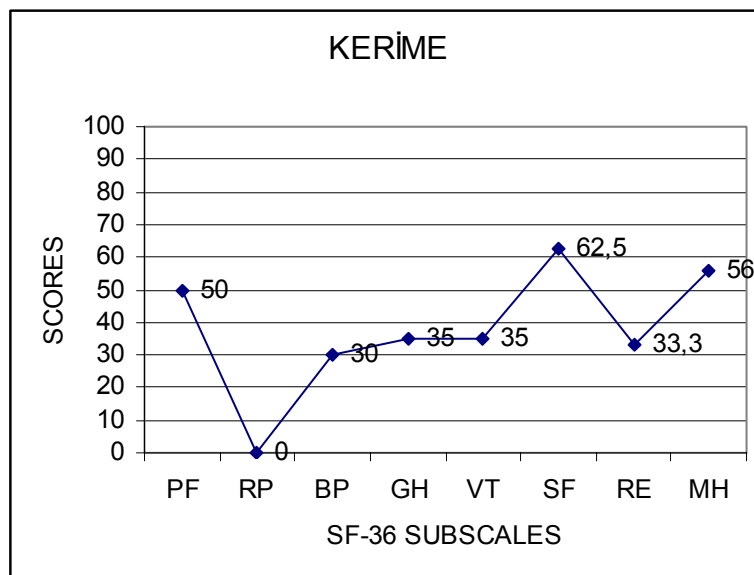


Figure 1: SF-36 subscale scores for Kerime

As can be seen from the figure, Kerime's self report of health depicts quite low scores both emotionally and physically. Role Functioning- Physical, which is the

extent to which physical health interferes with work or other daily activities, was the lowest. She got the highest scores in Social Functioning which means that although she is reporting low physical functioning; her social self seems to have been relatively less affected.

Leman

Leman, a married Kurdish woman in her 20s, was born in a village in the eastern part of Turkey. She is the step sister of Kerime, a child from the first wife, although she says there is no notion of “step mother or sister” in their family. She went to school for three years and wanted to quit despite her mother’s insistence that she continue. When she was 16 years old, by the support and insistence of her mother she received a certificate for reading and writing, which she did as payback of debt to her mother. The reason for the payback was that she had run away with a man when she was 14 years old. She is still married, and has 2 sons one 5, the other 1 years old. Her husband is working freelance with no regular income or insurance.

Her family came to Istanbul one year before her, leaving her and another sister with her brother’s family in the village, which was an important theme in the interview. The feelings of being left behind, the fear of being unwanted, and being unloved are still persistent.

She was very cooperative, very talkative, and fluent in Turkish. It seemed as if she had a lot to say that was kept inside. She seemed to be upset about her relationships with her family, with her husband, and with her friends. While she clearly spoke of not trusting anyone, she still never explained openly what really hurt her. She also seemed to feel very guilty over the fact that she had ran away without her parents’ permission.

She had just moved to a small flat in a new looking apartment where the interview was carried out. There were two small rooms, a toilet and a kitchen. There was no furniture in the living room, but a TV and 2 small toys. The elder boy was very inquisitive, and “hungry for socializing” as her mother put it, as there were very few visitors. The bedroom was even smaller with one bed and a cupboard made of cloth.

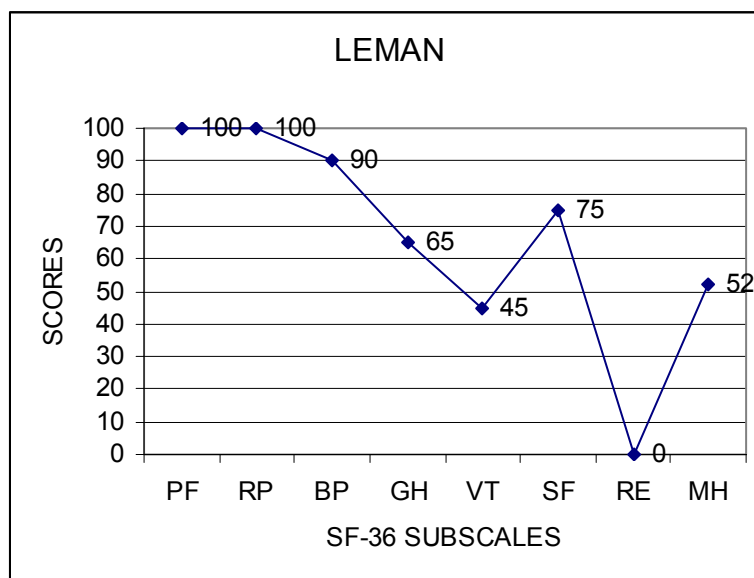


Figure 2: SF-36 subscale scores for Leman

Compared with the other women, Leman’s scores for all subscales are quite high. What is striking about her scores is the huge discrepancy between her self-assessment of her physical and emotional states. She has reported an almost excellent health state in terms of physical functioning, whereas a very poor state in terms of emotional functioning, i.e., the extent to which emotional problems interfere with work or other daily activities including decreased time spent on activities, accomplishing less, and not working as carefully as usual.

Aytül

Aytül, a married Kurdish woman in her late 20s, was born in a village in the eastern part of Turkey. She never went to school. She came to Istanbul with her father when she was 13 years old because of intense poverty, followed by her mother and other siblings after a short period of time. She had to work and marry early as the eldest child of the family. She worked in the textile sector when she was 13 years old along with her sister, which was an exhausting experience for her. She married when she was 14 years old and the heavy responsibilities of the hard work load at a very young age resulted in tuberculosis and treatment in the sanatorium for six months. She has 4 children. Her husband works in the informal sector where there is no regular income.

She was cooperative and could express herself clearly. She was very hopeless about her future, and she stated that her experiences in life were very harsh on her, damaging her health. She looked very tired and stressful. Her only hope for the future was rested on her children.

The apartment where she lived looked very ragged both from inside and outside. There were no furniture, no toys, just a TV. She said there was another room, but not in use because of cold and humidity. Her eldest daughter had a problem with her voice. Aytül also told me that this eldest daughter was extremely shy and unable to speak out loud.

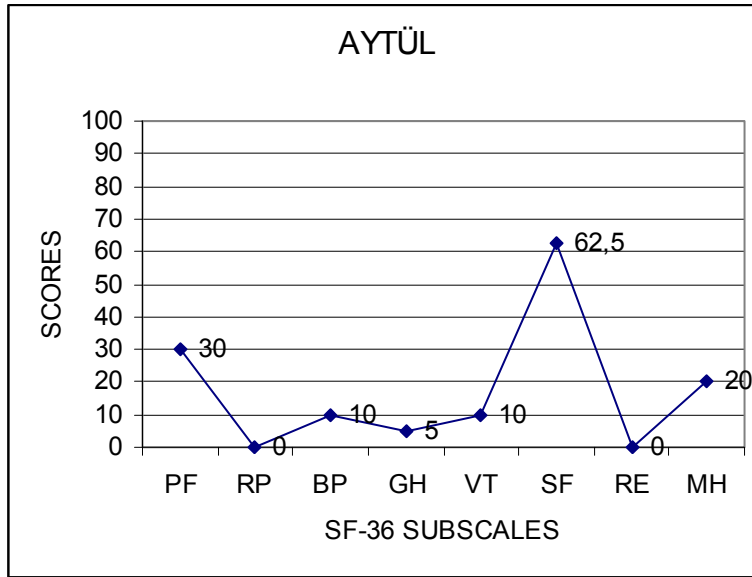


Figure 3: SF-36 subscale scores for Aytül

The SF-36 results of Aytül's self assessment reflect the way she has presented herself in the interview. The fact that she had no positive feelings regarding her past, her current life and her future, can be clearly seen in the very low scores for all the subscales. Her only high score, which is average compared to group, was on social functioning, an area which she interestingly spoke very little of in the interview.

Seda

Seda, a married Kurdish woman in her mid-20s, was born in a village in the eastern parts of Turkey, into a large family with 8 siblings. As one of the eldest children in her family she had to work in the fields as a seasonal worker when she was living in her village. She did not go to school as there were no teachers left in the village because of security reasons. When she was 17 years old, she migrated to Istanbul to marry her husband who had come to Istanbul to work. Her husband was a cousin whom she had not met until she was married. Currently, her husband works in the textile sector which provides inconsistent income. She has 3 children.

Despite the poor conditions she was living in, she looked healthy and in a good mood. She said that she was used to thinking that she had nothing to lose; she would eat if she found the food, and she would go on living one way or another. She was also very cooperative, although she was not very fluent in Turkish, she could still express herself adequately.

The place where she lived was in one of the dead-end streets of Tarlabası. There was a heavy stench from the pile of garbage in the street. It turned out that her Roman neighbors were collecting garbage to make a living. There was no furniture in the house, just one very old cupboard which her neighbors gave her. There was only a TV and one electrical heater. There was no kitchen; she said they used a small gas cylinder to cook. When I went into the room, her eldest son who was a first grade student was lying in front of the heater doing nothing. I am not sure if he or the others had any toys.

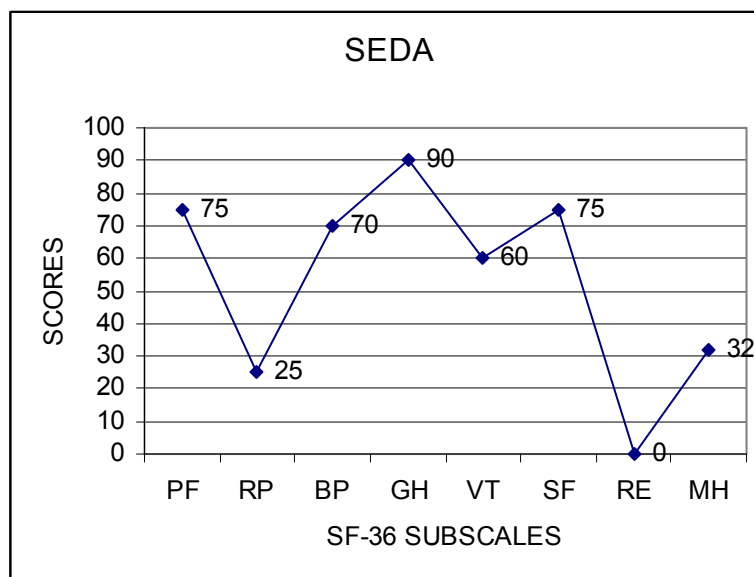


Figure 4: The SF-36 subscale scores for Seda

As can be seen from the figure, Seda's scores are quite high, above average which might be an indication of the way she depicts herself as physically doing okay

despite living in deep poverty. However, she seems to have lost this strength when it comes to emotional problems interfering with work or other daily activities.

Şule

Şule, a married Kurdish woman in her mid-20s was born into a large family with 8 siblings. She is one of the youngest children in the family. She came to Istanbul when she was 11 years old with her younger sister to stay with her older brother and his family. They could no longer live in their village because of armed conflict, so they first moved to a small town near their village, but because it was hard to survive there, the decision to migrate to Istanbul was taken. After she came to Istanbul, she worked in the textile sector where she met her husband. She quit work after she got married at the age of 20. She currently spends most of her time at home with her three children.

Şule mainly focused on having a life and space of her own, as she had to live with her in-laws for a period of time. There she was living in a room with her husband and her children. Then she managed to have her own flat. During the interview, she was very cooperative, expressed herself clearly; she was one of the better functioning women of the group in terms of physical and emotional health.

The apartment where she was living looked quite good from the outside, but very ragged from the inside. However, the flat looked very tidy; it was newly painted and decorated with flowers. There were couches, a TV, and rugs. There were two rooms, a toilet, and a kitchen. This apartment was bought by the in-laws and given to them to live with two other sister-in-laws.

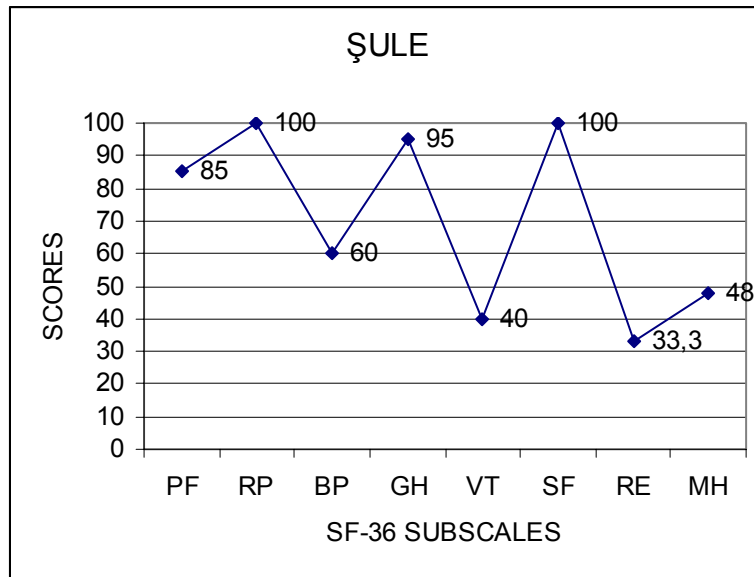


Figure 5: The Sf-36 Subscale scores for Şule

This figure presents quite high scores in terms of both physical and emotional state of health, a state that is parallel to the way Şule presented herself in the interview. Even her lowest score which is emotional functioning is the highest among the other women's scores for the same subscale.

Feride

Feride, a married Kurdish woman in her mid-20s was born into a large family with 9 siblings. Because of a blood feud, her family moved to another city when she was one. There, she went to school for five years. She came to Istanbul when she was 17 years old as a bride. It was an arranged marriage. Her husband is a taxi driver with no regular income. She has 4 children, the eldest being 7 years old.

She was very cheerful, laughed a lot during the interview even when she was talking about stressful life experiences. She was very cooperative and very fluent in Turkish, she could express herself clearly and openly.

The place where she was living was an old three-storey apartment where each floor composed of one room. The apartment belonged to her in-laws; each floor,

meaning each room belonged to a separate family. There was only one common area left for the kitchen which was used by all of them. We did the interview in the room where her mother-in-law lived. There was a TV, one couch, one washing machine, a saddlebag and a blanket in place of a rug on the floor. At the end of the interview, the son of the mother-in-law, a high school freshman, arrived and sat in one corner with nothing to do, portraying the limitations of space and activities.

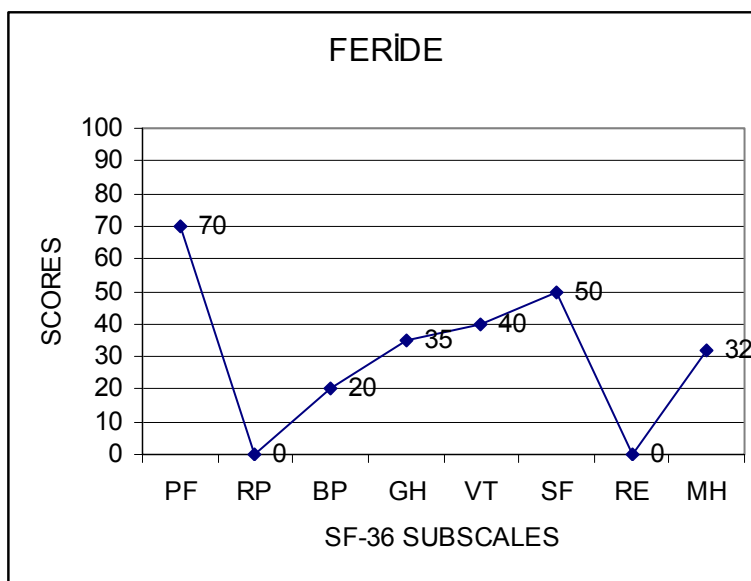


Figure 6: The SF-36 subsclae scores for Feride

Despite the cheerful picture she drew in the interview, she did not report herself as being in good health neither emotionally nor physically. All her scores were also unanimously among the lowest ones when compared with the other women. Thus her use of humor and laughter seemed to be at times defensive and at times an important mechanism of coping.

Aliye

Aliye, a married Kurdish woman in her mid-20s, was born into a large family with 10 siblings. Her family came to Istanbul because of poverty while she was left

behind in the village as a child with her brother, because she was among the elder ones who were unmarried. She and her brother were supposed to take care of the house, the field and the animals that were left in the village. She came to Istanbul when she was 8 years old. She went to school for a very short period of time in Istanbul, but was taken out because of language difficulties. She worked in textile workrooms between 10-15 years of age by her own will despite her family's opposition. She rejected an arranged marriage with a cousin because she was very young, got married when she was 15 years old with another cousin whom she met at the time of marriage that was rearranged. Her husband was a high school graduate, worked as a cook at a hotel and is currently working as a street peddler with no regular income. She has four children, the eldest being a first grade student.

Aliye, was a very cheerful, talkative young woman who was very fluent in Turkish. She seemed to be a determined, strong young woman who struggled to give her own decisions about her life.

She lived in one of the old apartment buildings of Tarlabası. The house was like a very small box. There were two small rooms, a very small place left for kitchen and a toilet. There was one heating stove. There was no couch, but pillows on the floor. There was one swing-like chair which was used both as a cradle for the baby and as a swing for the children. There were photos on the walls.

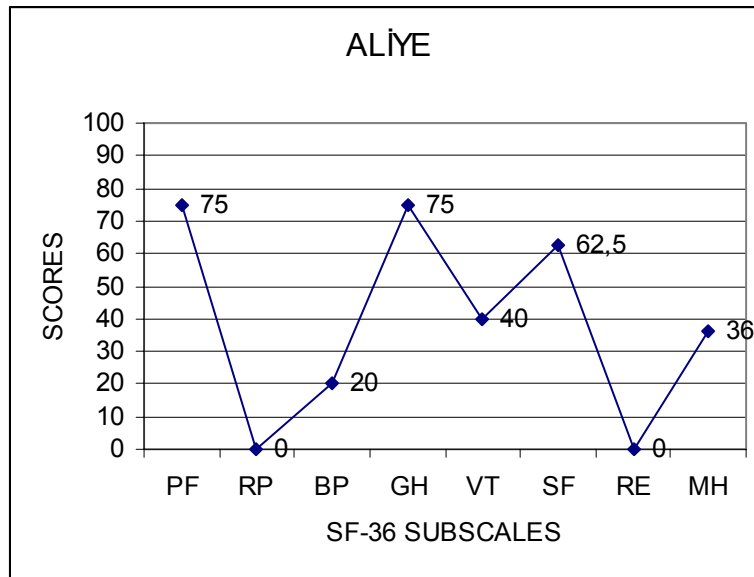


Figure 7: The SF-36 subscale scores for Aliye

It is interesting that Aliye got very low scores in both emotional and physical functioning within her own profile, because with her self-description, one would expect a better self-report of health. At any rate, her scores are among the highest when compared with other women and it is highly possible that emotionally she feels worn out despite her strengths. It must also be mentioned that she had a 2 weeks old baby at the time of the interview which might be factor in her physical and emotional burn out.

Eser

Eser, a young woman in her 30s was the eldest of 9 children. She went to school for 5 years. She was the first girl who was sent to school in the village. She was married to a cousin as a *berdel* when she was 16 years old because her father was afraid that she could be kidnapped in the war being young and unmarried. Her family migrated to a nearby town because of poverty and the evacuation of the village where she lived with her father. Her husband was working in Istanbul. She came to Istanbul to join her husband when she was 21 years old. Her husband is

currently working in another city in the construction sector, which provides regular but very insufficient income.

The main theme of the interview with Eser was that most of the time she lived alone with her children as her husband was always away working. Although she said it was very difficult for her, she seemed to manage quite well. She seemed quite strong and decisive; she said she had a strength that came from within her and made her a brave woman. She was very cooperative during the interview and also very fluent in Turkish.

The place where she lived was a very old looking apartment building in Tarlabası. However, the inside looked very tidy and clean and was decorated with flowers. There were photos on the wall. There were two small rooms, a kitchen, and a toilet. There were two couches, a TV, VCD player, a small table.

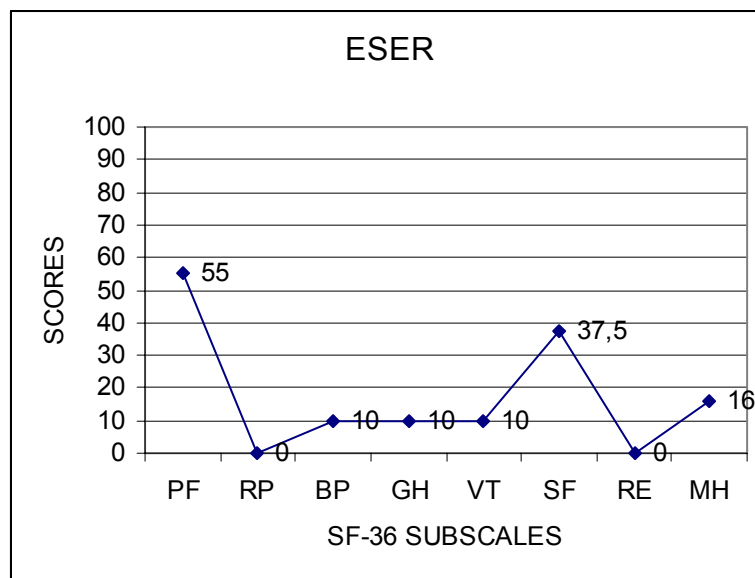


Figure 8: The SF-36 Subscale scores for Eser

Like Aliye, Eser presented herself as having managed quite well despite tough life circumstances. However, her subscale scores are among the lowest when compared with the others. In fact, her tenaciousness against very hard conditions

seems to have left her with quite a low state of health both physically and psychologically.

Alev

Alev was a woman in her late 20s. They had left their village because of displacement and poverty when she was a child; they had to move to a nearby town overnight, leaving everything behind. She could never go to school. She worked in the fields as a seasonal worker. Her marriage was a *berdel* marriage. She came to Istanbul with her husband 4 years ago because of poverty. Because of health problems she did not have any children which was a very big problem for her. She and her husband wanted treatment but could not afford it. Her husband is currently working in textile ateliers with no regular income and insurance.

Alev, was at first shy and felt uneasy about the interview because she thought she did not know how to talk about her family and she thought her Turkish was very bad. Actually, she could express herself quite openly although at times she said she could not explain herself clearly because of language problems. Her physical and mental state seemed quite low. Apart from her daily problems and the fact that she was still not very used to living in a new place, she had just received news that her two uncles had died in the construction site where they were workers.

The place where she lived was a good looking apartment from outside, but the inside was worn out. There were two small rooms and a small open area left for the kitchen. In this small house three families lived together, all being relatives of her husband.

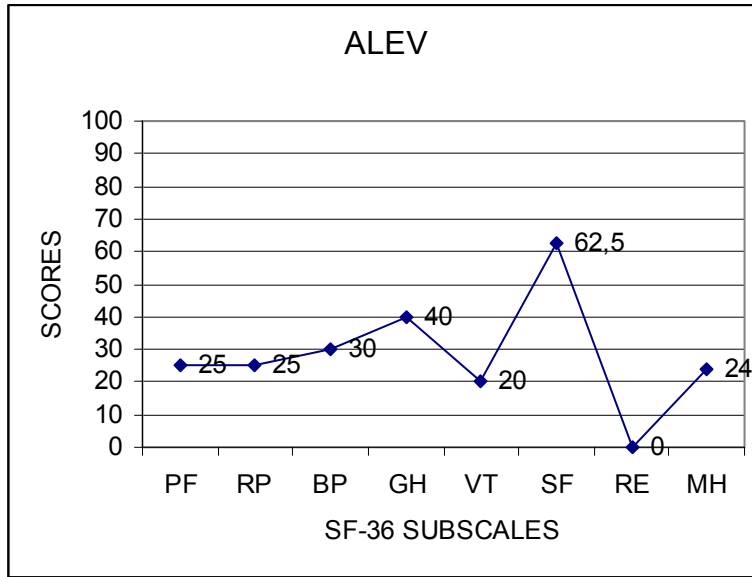


Figure 9: SF-36 Subscale scores for Alev

Alev's way of presenting herself in the interview and her self-report of health were parallel. She said that she had many health problems, that she had physical pain; she did not feel good, she cried all the time, and thought she was not feeling good psychologically. The only positive aspect of her life was her social relations. Her SF-36 scores are uniformly low except for social functioning.

Şirin

Şirin was also in her late 20s. She went to school for only one year and quit because the school was closed for security reasons. She was married when she was 12 years old by *berdel* in exchange for a bride whom his brother wanted to marry. Their village was evacuated and they had to move to a nearby town where they had to live with another family. Because it was very hard to find jobs they moved to Istanbul in 2000. Currently, she has 5 children, 2 of whom are mentally retarded. Her children were expelled from school and she was trying to enroll them in special education. Her husband is a street peddler selling fruit with no regular income or insurance.

Şirin was sleeping on the floor when I was taken to her flat by a relative. She first stated that her Turkish was not good and she did not know what to tell. After we talked about her problems with her children for a while, she decided to continue with the interview. Although she was not very fluent she could express herself quite clearly, was very intimate and open all throughout the interview. She seemed worn out both psychologically and physically. Her children were running around, shouting and hitting each other within a small room which seemed to be the only place where they spent most of the day together. The children seemed to have nothing to do, and Şirin seemed helpless about how she controlled them.

The place where she lived was very poor and old looking, both from the inside and the outside. There was one TV, two couches and nothing else in the room. As far as I understand there was one more small area where they used as the kitchen. She told me that she spent most of her time running around to find food such as going to the bakery to ask for stale bread.

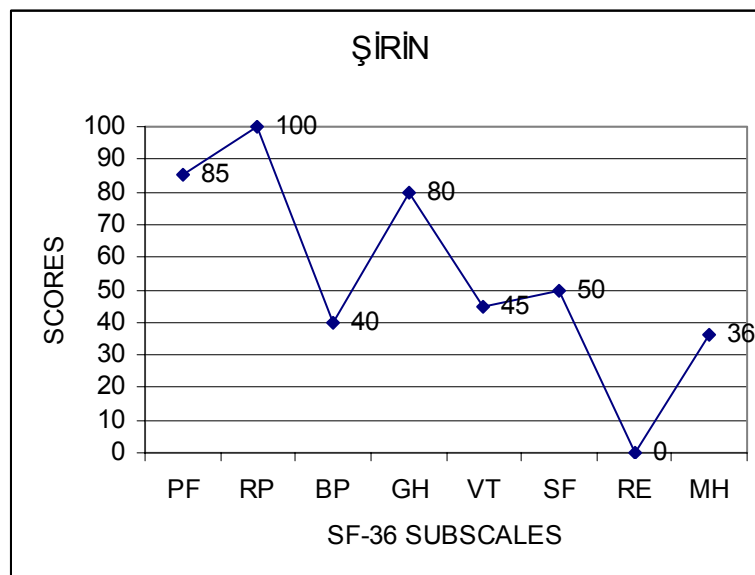


Figure 10: The SF-36 Subscale scores for Şirin

Şirin's scores were astonishingly one of the highest among the women. Her life story, her living conditions and the way she presented it was not in tune with her

SF-36 scores at all. There was also a clear discrepancy between her physical and emotional state, emotional state being much lower. If it is not a misunderstanding of the questions because she was not very fluent in Turkish, one possible explanation might be that to go on living with 5 children, 2 of them being mentally retarded and one very young child, she had to see herself as physically healthy.

Research Questions

In this section, the emerging themes from the interviews are presented. These themes were organized according to the research questions asked in the first chapter: 1) How do the women describe their migratory experiences? 2) How do the women define and explain the problem areas in their life psychologically after migration, before and after marriage? 3) What kind of coping mechanisms do they use and how do they define and explain such capacities? 4) Are these mechanisms useful? The data was analyzed using Grounded theory concepts and methodology.

Research Question 1: “How do the women describe their migratory experiences?”

Two main headings emerged from the answers to the first research question: Reasons for migration, and kinds of migration along with their emotional impacts. Although the women had unique stories of migration, there were many common points in their stories concerning both of these headings. They were all coming from rural life which did not present them with better life conditions than Istanbul did. Although not all talked about the armed conflict, it turned out that all were affected by it either directly or indirectly. The ones who arrived in Istanbul as brides were in no better condition than the others: they had the same adaptation problems, having to separate from the family and endure poverty in Istanbul. They all suffered from the

disintegration of the family during the long migration process, they had to endure the feeling of being left behind or being away from their families at a very young age.

Reasons for Migration:

There were mainly three reasons for migration, the first one was to find a job and to improve their financial conditions, the second one was about security issues and the third was marriage. Each one will be described below with examples from the interviews.

1. To find jobs and to improve financial conditions:

When they were asked to describe how they came to Istanbul, most of the women talked about how it was impossible to find jobs and how it became impossible to live in their hometowns or villages; and that they all expected to make use of the job opportunities that the big city would present to them. All women except for the ones who came to Istanbul as brides reported the deep poverty in the village as the main push factor. However even the ones that came as brides were indirectly talking about the same push factors, as their husbands were working in Istanbul for the very same reason.

I first came when I was 12 years old. We were 8 siblings in the family. Nine siblings. And my father couldn't work there. There were no jobs. We were unemployed. We were poor, too. So we came here. Then we came here and we settled. (Aytül, line 3).

There were no jobs. In fact I don't remember very well. I don't want to either. That's why I mean there were no jobs. We were a normal family I mean it was nice. We couldn't live on the money we had so we moved on and came here. (Kerime, line 12).

You know there was nothing then. I mean we had nothing in the village when we came here. My father just told us that he would work in Istanbul. He was going and coming back. (Aliye, Line 5).

Because we couldn't live on the money we had. My husband wasn't with me. I was with my mother-in-law. Then my father-in-law died and we had to come here. Because we couldn't survive. I mean we had to come. (Alev, Line 3).

There is no work there. We came here to work. And the village was evacuated... (Şirin, Line 6).

2. For security reasons:

When asked why and how they came to Istanbul, only three of them talked about the armed conflict between PKK and the State, and that they did not feel secure, there was burning and evacuation of their villages.

Now the villages... Villages... It was impossible to stay there... The reason... There were village guards. They made pressure. The soldiers the gendarme stations... people couldn't stay they came here. First my brothers came, and then they took us. Then my mother came... So we are here now. (Şule, line 2-4).

Well they burnt down the villages. I came to the nearby town. My husband was working here; he came and took me along. (Line 3) We know the times when our village was burnt down. We were scared we ran away. We saw deep poverty there. We were scared, there was fire. We ran away at nights. There were bombings. (Eser, line 15).

There was also the evacuation of the village. They wanted the men to take guns, he didn't. He was afraid... It was evacuated. Everyday came the terror came the soldier so we ran away. We went to a nearby town. There was no work there, either. We were two families I mean... Everybody came to that nearby town. (Şirin, line 6).

However, at the end of the interviews when they were asked whether they remember anything about the armed conflict, it turned out that all had some experience concerning the security problems. The ones who gave more open information were the ones who were older in age. The others stated that they did not remember it well, they had faint memories or talked about the stories that they heard from the others.

Of course there was armed conflict. But not that much I mean. Yes it was empty. Burnt down. There is no one in the village. I lived in a nearby

town. For 5-6 years. But I was young then. I was 11-12 years old. I was scared. I remember it as such. When there was fire I was scared and I cried. I remember it this way. In one night. Everybody was afraid and ran away. Some went to a near by town, some ran to big cities. (Alev, line 130-140).

No. I was young then I don't remember much. I mean those times at the village...It had been a long time since we had left the village. We were living in the town. We were not affected. But there were people who came because of that. There were people... I remember very little but of course there were those people... those times... I mean there was. There was everything those times but I don't know that much about them... because I was young then. But people use to tell... (Aytül, line 489-496).

For example we slept on the roof in the summer. There was armed conflict. There were gunshots. You know about the tents they put on the roofs so that no one sees, there were people who saw holes on those tents. So... We used to hear loud noises, noise of bullets, noise of the guns, fire...I remember my mom trailing along two of my siblings down the road. They were sleeping, she couldn't wake them up...I was 8-9 years old then. I don't remember it that much but as far as I remember there were those things... In the morning there wasn't much. The days just passed. But in the evening, at night there were explosions. Once in a while I don't remember but I have heard that they look for certain kinds of cassettes; sometimes they hide it under the beds. They were guns or I don't know cassettes I don't know I really don't really know...I've heard they were looking for guns sometimes but I don't know if there were people who killed, who shot, there were those kinds of people for sure. We didn't hear a lot, we were young then, they didn't talk much we didn't listen. And we were young and we didn't really care...But still it has traces in our memory. (Leman, line 71).

As can be seen, memory and how it is processed remains as another important issue in the migration stories of women. On the one hand, they have heard many things concerning their leaving the place, on the other, they have directly experienced very traumatic events, or lived with the fear of it, but have no clear memories concerning those days.

I was young. 11 years old. I don't remember well actually. I don't want to remember either...It is as if a long time has passed, I feel like I have always been here. It feels as if I have always lived here. (Kerime, Line 10-12, 34).

No I don't remember much. Because I was young then...I don't exactly remember the village things I was young then. You know one doesn't remember everything. But mom sometimes tells me that there were guards, they were beating up men, they were beating them up. (Şule, Line 181).

3. Marriage:

Two of the ten women stated that they came to Istanbul as brides. Two other women migrated following their husbands who came to Istanbul for reasons of security and poverty. It must be noted that they were older than the others when they arrived in Istanbul and they had very similar adaptation problems. Although it seems like that it was a voluntary migration on their part, it was actually a forced migration as they had to follow their husbands who were forced to leave their villages. They also had very similar stories of deprivation in their childhood like the other women.

I came here as a bride. And now I am happy. Thanks God there is no problem. (Seda, line 3).

When I first came to Istanbul I said how am I going to get used to this place. I was crying everyday. Now I'm a bit used to it because there are children... When I first came, I knew nobody. (Seda, line 204-207).

I came here when I got married. Before that I had never come here. They came to want my hand. They wanted they came...Well... Then it was one month that I stayed there... (Feride, line 77).

I don't know when I saw here I was shocked because I was never here before. I came here and I said "What kind of a place is this?" It was as if it were a different world. They say Istanbul Istanbul but you never see this face of Istanbul. One sees it on TV, Istanbul is beautiful there. They show the beautiful places. I'd never seen these parts ... (Feride, line 112).

Kinds of migration:

A common theme that emerged from the stories of the women was the process of migration. All of the women seemed to have lived this process as a traumatic experience because it took a long time to settle in Istanbul; some had to

leave their villages overnight, some had to run away to the nearest town and find a temporary place to live, most of them had to arrive in the new city before or after their families because of the difficulties concerning settlement arrangements. All had some idea what life in Istanbul would be like; but were very disappointed when they arrived and saw the deprived conditions of Tarlabası _ a life that was very different from what they saw on TV. At any rate, the way they lived through migration seemed to have left a huge impact on their psychology; which is discussed in detail in the part below, with examples from their own words.

1. Chain migration:

One of the most outstanding characteristics of the migration stories of the women entailed the disintegration of the family. These stories reveal the properties of “chain migration” where some family members settled in Istanbul followed by others as well as a never-ending migration process which is categorized as “migration in turns” where the members move back and forth between the city and the village or town.

We didn't come here all together anyhow. First my brother my father and my mother, then the others, then me....The explanation was we are going mom and dad said. We will go. We'll look at the situation. We stayed with my stepmother. (Kerime, Line-24).

First my mom and dad came. A few of my siblings came. Then how shall I tell you for almost a year there were comings and goings. So and so mom, a few of my siblings and me stayed there, my other mom came. We stayed there. Then slowly we came. It was 1997 when we were all here. They arrived here four years in advance. (Leman, line-2-6).

Only I and my sister came separately. Then came my mother and father. We were here working near my aunt's son. We stayed in their house. Then came my father, then my mother. Young ones... The young ones had stayed with mom. My father was here. (Aytül, line 13-20).

First my brother was here, they were working, then he got married, he came back to get married, then he took his wife and again came back to here, then he invited us... My mother came one year later than us. She

was in the village because we had some land she was working on the field. Then we called her, too, she could no longer work she was old. And since my father had passed away... She was alone...(Şule, line 8-22).

(My father) said I can't be there alone. Either we will all go or I won't go either he said. Then my mother came with him. It was only me and my brother who stayed in the village. It was me and my brother. They said in summer we will come back pack up everything and take you with us to the city. He said we will rent a house. Then we will come back to the village and you will go. We started off from the village they started off from the city. They went to the village...only mom and dad. We, I, my brother, my brother's wife, and my sister who was very young then arrived here. We arrived here, and they arrived in the village. (Aliye, Line 7-9, 19).

Consequently, the dispersion of the family leads to two main themes that caused a psychological burden on the women. The interviews show that the migration process that has been completed over a long period of time has brought along emotional difficulties which the women started facing. They had to spend a long time away from their parents, live with relatives where they felt as strangers, and were left with responsibilities concerning self-care as well as house chores at an important developmental period of their lives. These difficulties have been categorized and named as “to be left behind” and “being away from the family”. The next section will be a description of these two themes:

a. To be left behind:

One of the outstanding themes in the interviews was the feeling of being left behind because the family members moved before the children. There were two women who stated that they were left behind during the migration and suffered from it. It seemed to have quite a big emotional burden on the children although it was quite difficult to put it into words.

Because we came separately it was a bit ... For example in one year a few people were coming here, then were going back again. For example that is why, for example my brother was coming here, another brother was

going there. In one year comings and goings, sometimes my father came, my brother came...Come and go...One cannot ...I don't know one feels something like...how can I put it can't be explained. (Leman, line 18-24).

I said to myself why was it me who stayed? Why the one who was younger...why wasn't it her but me... (She smiles). (Aliye, line 57).

b. To depart from the family:

Related with being left behind, another important theme was to be away from the family especially the mother and to have to live with other family members or relatives. Three of the women had such stories. Two of the women stated that they felt imprisoned because they were away from their mothers. Their language reflected the hard feelings of being away from the family as the subject turns from "I" to "you" or "one".

Well it was difficult. I mean to depart from the mother is difficult. It is not same to live in your own place as to live in another one's house. You miss your mother so much I don't know. Your mother is like... When you are with your mother one is like... I mean it is like freer I don't know (Aytül, line 41).

Believe me one feels as if she is in prison. When one doesn't see her mother she is left something like...I don't know feels weak. (Line 45-49) My uncles were with us...But still one feels like...It is very difficult to depart from your mother and father for the first time. For instance when I got married it was not that difficult. Why? Because I was living close to my mother. If one is very far away...one felt very far away. (Aliye, line 53).

At the same time, they seemed to have conflicting feelings about having to live with family members. On one hand they felt gratitude, but on the other they felt unwanted and as a burden.

But if you are not next to your mother it is like one is like... I don't know. One feels like... You can't be comfortable....It is not good I mean they were good I mean they did not behave towards us badly but still one looks for her mother. (Aytül, line 41, 104-108).

To live with my brother was good (She laughs) it has good sides and bad sides. He is a bit... Stubborn. He is a bit rude. He behaves rudely, he doesn't behave well I mean. But still he is good. His wife was good, too. We sometimes got along, sometimes fought. Sometimes we fought a lot, sometimes we made peace. You know the women thing. She used to stay you are not doing the cleaning, we quarreled a little. (Şule, line 125-140).

I and my sister stayed there alone. My brother's wife came back to the village later on. We lived in the same house. We didn't feel like... We didn't feel alone... Then I don't know we worked, for two months there but still it was really it was such a... we for example what we ate what we drank was a problem there. We were like strangers in our own house. So it was quite... it is even now... a few days ago we sat down with my sister and talked for quite a long time I said I swear if she told that I were a thief I won't forgive...I just learned about it. We were talking about it and she told me about it. Did she I said, I will not mention it, it has been 10 years, she is my brother's wife... (When we were there) we only had dinner. Sometimes we ate it, sometimes really if I recognized a slightest sulking on the face then we either didn't eat or went downstairs. I don't know it was as if she didn't want us there. (Leman, line- 229-236).

In the case of Leman, after they arrived in Istanbul, they moved often, and the crowded family had to split once again at the time of moving out. Leman was among the members who moved later. She relived first experience of being left behind. Second time around, it was much more hurtful for her as she was older. She had quite a hard time putting it into words, using many “şey” s in her sentences.

The same people indeed. Here it was the same. First they moved out, we followed them two months later. Me and my sister. We were again left to the last minute. Well one thinks I don't know... (She laughs) I don't know there must be something to it. (line 152-154) There was resentment, really, we moved later, the second time I felt more [şey] In the first move I didn't remember I was small, for the second time it was more [şey] ... The same people, we were again left to the end. Let's call it chance anyhow (she smiles). (Leman, line 219-228).

2. Stepwise migration:

Another type of the migration was that the families usually first moved to a nearby town and lived there for sometime, especially when they had to leave their village overnight. Four of the women had such experiences.

First we came to...There is a town. We moved there. Then we came here. We stayed there for almost a year. (Şule, line 54-58).

You know they burnt down our village. I came to a nearby town. My husband was working here; he came there to take me back to Istanbul. We had arrived in a nearby town; we lived there for two months. I lived there with my father. In my uncle's house. (Eser, line-28).

There was also the evacuation of the village. They wanted him to take guns, he didn't. He was afraid... It was evacuated. Everyday came the terror, came the soldier so we ran away. We went to a near by town. There was no work there. (Şirin, line 6).

As the moving out was sudden and massive, there was no place for the new inhabitants and for some time they had to live in small places, which was quite a difficult experience.

There was no place. We two families had to live together. One family in one room, one in the other. We cooked at the same kitchen. So there was no space. (Line 6) ...What can I do? We were ashamed, two families in one house. (Şirin, Line 28).

3. Unprepared migration:

For most of them the migration process was sudden. They had no time to prepare neither psychologically nor physically. In case where there was some time for preparations, they could not take many things with them because it was financially impossible.

Nobody was hurt but people were forced out of the village and the village was burnt. Was it the guards, the police or the terror we don't know but someone burnt down the village. They shouted they said go out they emptied the place. We could not get our things. We came to Istanbul there was even not a quilt. When they burnt the village, at one moment we felt such... Where are we going to go? Where will we escape? (Eser, line 19-24).

Research Question 2: “How do the women define and explain the problem areas in their life psychologically after migration, before and after marriage?”

The second question concerned the women’s definition and explanation of the problem areas in their lives in Istanbul before and after marriage. Nine categories emerged from the answers. The focus of the study at the beginning was to look at the problems the women faced concerning their migration and poverty experiences in Istanbul; but, it turned out that the emergent themes of the women’s narratives cover more. First, some of these themes reflected their experiences back in the village such as relations with their families, education and work; and second, all the narratives had a lot to say on the issue of gender: the problems they face, as daughters, wives, mothers, etc. These were all included because they were interrelated and had many reflections on their current lives. The migration process is not included in this part as a category as it was discussed in detail in the previous part. These other categories are listed and discussed below with quotations from the interviews.

1. Financial problems:

All of the women have suffered from financial problems before and after migration, before and after marriage. Deprivation and putting up with limited resources, have always been part of their lives. It is interesting that, before marriage, they were not concerned with their own deprivation; but, that of their parents especially of their fathers. The dominant feelings have been desperation as they see their parents’ helplessness.

You feel uneasy. You are a bit sad. I did not think about it a lot either (silence) It made me sad. Inevitably. When father is in stress one is inevitably affected. (Kerime, line 95-97).

I was 10 but I knew my father was involved in debt. I felt myself a burden. He couldn’t buy us anything (line 99) ... Then all of a sudden there was a rise in dollar. The debt of the house we bought was doubled.

He complained to mom. He never said anything to us. I wanted him to tell us....what was going on in the house...For example I wanted him to be not my father but my friend. (Aliye, line 113-125).

They built a house at the backyard. Then they added another floor there was again no windows no doors. They used nylons to cover. Blanket doors. They had put blankets in place of doors. (line 46) I still know it. Because my father still suffers (line 52) They never...Look we were so needy but still neither my father nor my mother asks for anything. (Feride, line 56).

There were cases where the father was away working for as long as one year, or where a health problem left the father with no ability to work which made poverty and its impacts even deeper.

I think I was in the first grade. My father had a traffic accident. Now one of his legs is still disabled. The children were young then. We were 6 people. My father was in the hospital for one year. (Feride, line 56).

For example when we were in the village my father used to go to another city. He was away for one year. For money. We were left with mom... (Line 195-197) So we didn't see him much. Because we needed work. After we grew up, I was 10 then, my father had diabetes. Then he was paralyzed. Now he cannot talk. He has pills I guess. One injection shot costs 30 million... I don't know... (Seda, line 201).

The situation does not improve after the women get married. There is no steady work and income, no healthy conditions to live in, and no access to adequate health services; the amount of debt is in constant rise. They suffer from deep deprivation; and there is no hope and expectation that in the future there will be an improvement of the financial status. Especially after the children are born, it becomes almost impossible to guarantee that the basic needs will be met.

Then we had the children. Well..we.. We don't have...My husband has asthma. He cannot work regularly. It is hard to survive. The children get

sick, this and that...The house problem...Well I don't know...
Everything...Everything is a problem... (Aytül, line 49-51).

I swear my husband worked for 5 million liras a day. In a restaurant. In the evening he brought bread. We were trying to live...(Şirin, line 42).

For example I talked to him I said let's buy something before *bayram* comes. He said "Don't you think I want to"? I was upset, he was upset. But when we don't have it believe me the children ask for it. For example my son asks "mom they have furniture why don't we?" I say "never mind don't think about these things"... It is a problem (Line 357)... For instance I don't know if you'll believe...we now have 5-6 billion of debt...He cannot pay it, it is there. So it is... How shall I put it...He is upset, I am upset... (Leman, line 377).

When my husband works we spend it, when it is over, we owe to the grocery. That is all. (Line 384) My husband was ill he could not work for three years, he had herniated disk. The doctor said he cannot work...(line 396) ...There is a small room over there, a small one here, there is no other room, there is no kitchen...(Line 424) The electricity is expensive, there are two bills to be paid, if we don't pay it once more, they will cut the power (Seda, line 428).

The conditions that are being described puts forward the characteristics of chronic poverty where there is no hope that the financial situation will be improved. This leads to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. The word the women use to describe their struggle to live despite very deprived conditions is "*çekmek*" (to suffer) which has quite an interesting connotation of both feeling the pain and bearing it.

Now we are in Istanbul but it is not easier here. My husband doesn't have an occupation. He doesn't have any money to run a place. He works for minimum wage what will he earn what will he bring home? We have five children, the rent, the electricity, the water...How can we live on minimum wage? (Line 83)...We always suffered. There were nights which I slept hungry. Nothing, we had nothing. What can you do? (Eser, line 253-255).

Well it is very hard...We suffered...We still suffer what can we do? (Seda, line 97).

I swear I don't know I have always suffered and I guess I will always suffer.(She laughs) Until I die...Because when one doesn't have a certain standard it becomes worse. For example when I first arrived it was normal I didn't have my children I could get along. Now everything becomes worse. Because there is no accumulation. (Feride, line 233).

2. Houses: "Little houses, crowded houses, unstable houses"

When they first arrived in Istanbul, one of the most difficult things for the women was to adapt to the houses. The houses were very small especially when compared with the houses they had in their villages. Another problem was that the houses were in very bad shape, but still expensive. They also had to move often because they were kicked out, they could not fit in, or the place was not suitable to live. In other words the migration process was in a way never completed, and they were exposed to continuous displacement and spatial segregation.

Here the houses are very small. For example because the houses in the village are big one feels more comfortable. The ones here are small with only two rooms. That was another reason for stress. (Line 87)...When we first arrived we were constantly changing houses. They kicked us out. Or there was increase in the rent and we had to move. Those sorts of things...(Kerime, Line 91).

Infact in the first house...I don't know how to put it...Well it was a tiny house we were living in two rooms. Sorry three rooms.(Line 98)The whole family was there. All the girls slept in one room. We were about 20 people. At least twenty...(Leman, line 106).

We were renters meaning from here to there...He kicked you out and come on to another place...If you are a renter it is that way...We changed 4-5 houses...When we first married it was a small room where we stayed. It was difficult. (Aytül, line 244-249).

One of the women described how difficult it was to adapt both psychologically and physically to the shape of the new house. For her, the vertical kind of movement in the house was a very different and difficult experience for her after the large horizontal spaces in their houses back in the village.

I used to fall down. Everyday...(She laughs) I was not used to it. I had my slippers till the stairs and oooops I flew down three floors till the door...And I was pregnant. (She laughs)I don't know it was weird. I was shocked. I took a step and I was on the floor. That is why I no longer wear slippers. But I still slip and fall. It is not because it was narrow I just wasn't used to it. I mean you enter a normal flat. We used to live in those kinds of flats. You enter those flats you close your door and it is over, there are no stairs it is flat. Here it is stairs all around, you want to go to your room you climb up stairs, you go to kitchen you climb down stairs, the door is knocked you climb down stairs...Always up and down...It is like torture. It was like exercise (She laughs). I am always at home you know. That was a continuous sports exercise. 24 hours...up and down rolling! (She laughs). (Feride, line 190-200).

Another woman described the very bad shape of the houses in which it was impossible to feel comfortable, healthy and secure.

I mean my neighbor was sitting over there, the living room crashed!!! I swear I don't know how! It just collapsed! We could see downstairs, there was smoke everywhere! (Bursts into laughter) Everywhere! I mean like a bridge...It collapsed! There was a bachelor living downstairs, he came home from work and he said what! My house was on top of his head. He said what on earth is going on here! What could we do? (Laughs). (Alev, line 291-306).

The same problem persisted after marriage in the form of living with the extended family of the husband. It was not only because the places were very small and poor looking for the extended family, but also the lives of the extended family and the newly married couple were enmeshed leaving the women with no private space. All they could find at the end was a "room of their own".

They said we have a house with three floors. My God. I said okay it doesn't matter how many floors...I thought it was like the three floor houses in the village...How should I know? I came here and saw it was just a room! One room in one floor! (She laughs). (Feride, line 114).

I first came here, my mother-in-law was with us. She had ten children we rented a house together. It was a basement with three rooms... We were 13 people. It was not good at all...A very bad place...very humid! (Eser, line 170-177).

When my husband's brother was here it was a problem. All I wanted from him to ring the bell before he entered the house. Was it that difficult? He just opened the door and entered. Maybe it is not suitable,

maybe I am just out of the bath...I didn't ask for much; just ring the bell... (Leman, line 403-405).

Mother-in-laws of some of the women never gave up the control over the house, making the bride feel like a worker or a stranger in the house; and yet, for other women it was an issue of struggle between the women over the control of the house.

Well there was no big deal. We women were fighting (She laughs) And so I left that house. I wanted to move. My family said how are you going to afford? I said well I swear I will move no matter what! I will eat a piece of stale bread but I will move. (Seda, line 231-233).

I didn't get along with my mother-in-law. I mean I couldn't dress the way I liked. She was angry when I bought myself a new dress. My husband gave her all the money he earned...She used to give me 10 million saying I could spend it for my children. Can 10 million be enough for the child's expenses? She never said here is 5 million go buy yourself a skirt. Never...We couldn't speak up...I was just talking with my mother before you arrived. I said "look you can eat whatever you want. You can open up the fridge and take whatever you want; we couldn't do that when we were together. She said yes you are right" ...now I have a sister. I tell her when you get married the most important thing is to have a separate house... It is really the most important thing... (Şule, 229-292).

3-Problems concerning work life:

Only three out of ten women had work experience in Istanbul as children. They all worked in the textile ateliers. Despite the difficult conditions, very long work hours, and exhaustion, only one stated it as a problem. For the other women, working was an empowering experience as will be described in the following section on Research Question 3.

For the only woman whose work experience in Istanbul was a problem, work was not a personal choice; she felt her life to be out of control. She was sent to work

both in the village and the city; she was forced to marry at a young age, with no chance to object as the eldest child of the family.

Then of course my father did not earn much because he was the only one who worked. We did not have any brothers either. I was the eldest...(Line 53) We worked. It was hard but we worked. (Line 71) You went at 8 in the morning and worked till 12 at night. (Line 73) There was no insurance. We were always working afoot. (Line 77) I don't know we tried to get used to it Because we had to. There was no future for us. We worked in the village too. We worked out of necessity. (Line 85) ...My sister still works. If you saw her she is worn to a shadow. Because she still has to work. (Aytül, line 92).

To be the eldest means additional burdens on the children. They were the ones who married early, who looked after children, who were held responsible for helping out with the financial problems. In some cases the father was away working, or had health problems which imposed an obligation on the child to work in and outside the house.

I don't know we were poor. No work. There were children. We couldn't take care of them so we had to come here. I worked for a year. Then came my mother and others. (Line 35) We had no elder brothers. I was the eldest...(Line 53) To be the eldest...I don't know but it is hard (Line 131) Why is it hard? If I were the youngest I would not get married at such a young age. ...It would be...I don't know it would be easier... (Aytül, line 133).

Well my life... We went to gather cotton. We went to hoeing. My father was ill... We were four sisters. I mean there were no brothers. We went to the fields to work. (Seda, line 54-56).

As can be seen, the women who had work experience as children before the migration all described it as a very exhausting experience. It was usually the decision of the parents, they had to go and work as seasonal workers in order to help with financial problems of the family. The experience was described as "*kahır çekmek*"

(to put up with) as it was both a physical and psychological burden on the women as children as young as 10 years old.

I swear it was winter; there was rain we went to the fields. It was summer, very hot. We still were in the fields. We went to gather hazelnuts. We worked in the summer, we worked in the winter. It was so cold, we worked. I swear it was bad. How can it be good? It was bad but we had to. Otherwise who would give us money? Whose door will we go to? ... (Seda, line 119-126).

I did hoeing. For someone else. We gathered cotton and everything. We went there everyday. We worked for one or two months and we got some money. I swear it was summer...Really hot...Not good. That is all. What could we do we had to bear it. We were poor. (Alev, line 193-210).

4-Problems concerning education:

All the women had very little education. Only two could finish primary school, the others couldn't finish primary school or had less than a year of school experience. There were mainly two reasons for this: The first one was the fact that they were girls. It was usually the decision of the father or the eldest man in the large family. For example one of the women had to quit while in the fourth grade because she was very tall according to her grandfather.

Because I was tall my grandfather was angry with my father and did not let him send me to school He said what is she doing among all those boys...It was nonsense but still I couldn't get my diploma because I was tall! I felt so bad I'll never forget in my life. I hated my grandpa...well let's not call it hate but there was no love in me to tell the truth. Whenever I saw him I felt angry because he was the reason. I was very sad. I cried a lot. I wanted them to send me; I wanted to finish primary school. I wanted my father to oppose my grandpa. But over there the eldest says the last word. You can't say anything. You have to obey. (Kerime, line 151-153).

If the family could not afford sending their children to schools it was usually the sons who could go to school. Some were angry because of the fact that they were not sent, whereas for some, the education of the brothers was important.

We were in a poor financial situation. My father could not send us. Of course I wanted to go. My peers were going to school. I was asking myself why he isn't sending me. Now two of my brothers are going to school (She laughs) they go, one of them is in high school (Alev, line 180-190).

My father was in a poor financial situation. All of his children were going to school. He was the only bread winner. And he was disabled. (Line 138) He sent my brother to school for a very long time. He even went to the university...but he couldn't recover the value of it. (Line 156) Well I don't know the sons are more...He was given more attention because he was a male. He was the only son. And he was the oldest. So we were all keen about his well being. I still feel the same, if he is successful I feel very happy (Feride, line 160).

The second reason for their not going to school was security problems. There were no schools, and usually the teachers could not stand the collusions between PKK and the Turkish army and ran away.

A teacher came. Two months, three months... Then a teacher from the next village was killed. Our teacher ran away (Seda, line 86).

I don't know. They said there were no teachers...because of the armed conflict. One day we went to school, the next 10 days we didn't. We wanted to go but it wasn't God's willing what can we do? When we came here we could enroll in school but we didn't have the money, we had to work. Then came the age of marriage we were married off. (Şule, line 64-72).

The soldiers said we won't let the terror in. They came and resided at school. I used to like the school. I mean I wanted to learn to read (Şirin, line 79).

There was only one woman who was sent to school after the family migrated to Istanbul, but she was taken out because of language problems.

Believe me my father sent me to school. I went to school there were children all around...The teacher said you don't understand anything I say. Because I couldn't. I could only understand Kurdish. I didn't understand a word of Turkish. (Line 177-179)She said to me how are you going to read? She said try harder. And I said well no matter how hard I try I don't understand a thing. Then she made a complaint about me to my father. And my father said if that is so then she won't come here again. (Aliye, line 228).

The fact that they did not have education was a major problem for all the women. They had difficulties in their daily lives because they were not good at reading and writing. They could not help their children with their schoolwork.

Who wouldn't want to go to school? You go somewhere you don't know what is written on the name plate. You go to the super market you don't know the prices... (Şule, line 74).

Sometimes he comes he doesn't know the letters. He asks mom what is this and what is that. I say well my son I don't know either. I don't know... I mean he goes to school writes something in his notebook comes back home writes again I mean I have no idea as to what he is doing. (Seda, line 140).

Sometimes I go somewhere I don't know the address I mean I show the paper and I ask "where is this place?" (Şirin, Line 81).

5-Problems concerning the family:

a. Crowded families:

One of the main problems for the women was that they were born into crowded families. This meant limited care, limited space, and limited resources that the family can spare for the children.

Because if you are in a crowded family it takes time till the right to word comes to you...Not everyone's needs can be met. Something beautiful...To dress up nicely....It is financially difficult. (Kerime, line 120).

b. To be a daughter:

It was interesting that almost none of the women openly expressed any anger or feelings of neglect on the part of their parents. Two of the women for example said how their fathers were important for them, how their relations were good because they were never rebellious and conformed to their father's wishes, even when these wishes conflicted with their own wishes, such as in issues like getting married. This was paradoxical because the women's role to keep silent and abide by the rules which was based on the normalization of the problem at these very young ages seemed to have helped them bear the sorrow, but at the same time led to their acceptance of the fact that their decisions and wishes don't exist.

I would never turn my dad's word down. Never! He had such a hard time to raise us.... If he phoned me now and asked for anything, it is an order for me. (Feride, line 128).

We never thought of opposing my father. So that he won't be disgraced. Otherwise I would say I don't want to marry I'd run away. But I would not want to upset my father. Because there is an *aşiret*. If I upset my father everybody would talk about his daughter. They would say she opposed her father she answered him back...And we were just 16. But my father loved me. I have sister 14 years old he still tells her about me. He says she did not oppose me she did not let her hair be seen. She did not wear pants. (Eser, line 97).

A similar discourse can be seen in the story of Şirin who was given as a *berdel* in turn for the girl her brother loved and wanted to marry. Although she was married by force, and tried to reject, and was even threatened with murder if she did such a thing, she said she and her brother had a very good relationship today.

I accepted. But my brother never broke my heart since then. He never did. I mean he loves me. He listens to me. I mean my brother is very nice. (Şirin, line 131).

c. Alienation from the family after marriage:

Another interesting finding regarding their relations with their families was how they felt uneasy go back to the “father’s house” after marriage even if for a short visit. The main feeling that they mentioned while describing their experience was shame.

I have two children. I know that they will look after them they are my family but I won’t feel comfortable with that. When for example my son needs something I cannot tell them that he needs this and that. I don’t know. I feel like...again I feel like a stranger. I don’t know.(Line 313)...I can’t go back to my father’s house. I can only go there daily. Even then I am like ooops the children, let me hold them, what if they split something.... Even when I go there daily I don’t feel my self comfortable (Leman, line 443).

(About the 20 days that she stayed at her mother’s house when she first arrived in Istanbul with her husband) I mean I said I feel shame near my mother. One feels shameful when she lives with her mom and dad. I rented a house and I was so happy. I rented the house in the morning and moved in the evening. (Şirin, line 105-109).

Well I don’t know once you are out of your father’s home it is very hard to go back and live with them again. I don’t know for example no one has ever said sit down to my daughter except me. When my mother said sit down to my daughter I feel offended. I don’t know I feel as if I am not her daughter, I feel like I am in a stranger’s place. (Aliye, line 331-335).

d. To feel unprotected:

Although it was not openly expressed, some women seemed especially vulnerable regarding issues like not being protected enough, not being supported enough.

(About her marriage) I wish my family said we are not giving our daughter’s hand she is still young she doesn’t know anything. I wish they did not leave it to me to decide. I wish they saw how irrational I was thinking. I mean I am not that clever. I was not old enough to make logical decisions (Kerime, line 178-180).

I feel as if I am passive. I am always at home, I don’t talk to anyone, no one loves me, no one really cares about me. I feel like left out. This is true for my family, my friends, other people... I really feel they love each other but degrade me a little. (Leman, line 395).

No I mean I didn’t have anyone my husband didn’t either. I mean I had my sisters but they were young then... There was no one to talk to (Line

271-275)and sometimes I didn't want to tell either... I don't know it was not something to be told....Or I don't know...I was ashamed, I was shy... (Aytül, line 281-283).

6- Problems concerning marriage experience:

a. Decision to marry:

For most of the women, the decision for their marriage was taken by the families when they were young adolescents. The main problem for the women was their being left out of the decision-making process regarding their own marriage and being forced against their wishes. All the women except two were married to men they had not met previously. The marriages were all arranged by the families. Three of them were married by *berdel* marriage. They had no chance to oppose to the family decision which left them with no control over their lives from the very beginning.

b. Age at marriage:

The fact that they got married at a very young age seems to have left them with a feeling of being neither a child nor an adult. The responsibilities of being a wife and a mother at an age as young as 14, have put a burden on the women that is more than they can carry.

For example for Kerime, marriage had a very positive connotation at the beginning as it meant a place, affinity and love that was presented to her only. Coming from a very crowded family, marriage was turning over a new leaf, which was supposed to offer new clothes, new furniture, and a new life that belonged only to her.

If you are in a crowded family you cannot have your word, to dress nicely...I mean financially... Your own...But when you are married every thing will be for you do you understand? (Kerime, line 122).

However, soon, the financial problems, marital problems and 3 children born one after the other had broken the spell. She currently saw her marriage as an immature decision of a child and felt like she had not lived her childhood and girlhood enough, a feeling which was common to other women as well.

Because I was young I couldn't think logically...I didn't say a thing. If I said no, it wouldn't happen. I accepted it with my childish mind. (line 103) Now it seems as if I was always married. I don't remember the past. 15 years old... I was just a child! I feel as if I was always married (Line 131) Strange. Very strange. It is as if one has never lived her childhood. Maybe it seems to me that way I don't know. But I don't recommend it. I am against early marriage. It is not right at all. One regrets it afterwards (Kerime, line 135).

Maybe it was because I was too young.... I didn't live my maidenhood anyhow. I never did. I was very young then. I feel like I have not lived anything. (Aytül, line 238).

It was at the same time confusing and surprising for Kerime to see that her life was a repetition of her mother's despite her wish not to repeat the mistakes she saw in her family life.

I was against all this. I mean I would not want my father to have two wives. I would not want him to have this many children. I used to think this way. But it is so strange that after I got married I had 3 children one after the other. That is weird. And I still don't feel like an adult. I still cannot think logically. It feels uneasy. I say to myself it is as if I them as role models. Maybe because I was born into this life maybe I took their life as examples...I wouldn't want to grow up in such a crowd. 4-5 siblings would be enough. Or I wouldn't want a step mother, no matter how good she is one doesn't want it does she? I think of it that way I don't know. I don't get it. (Kerime, line 176).

It was interesting that she felt like she had lost control of her life because she was asked whether she wanted to marry or not. She preferred that her parents did not ask her, but rejected this marriage without asking her, seeing that she was not old enough to give such a decision.

A similar story can be found in other women's lives as well. The responsibilities of early marriage have been wearisome both physically and psychologically.

I was very young I mean I didn't want to marry. My father said no keep quiet, you will marry. Then I lived a lot...It was hard...I was young I couldn't endure... (Line 222) It was very hard at the beginning... Because I was young. Maybe if I were older I could endure, but I was... Infact my husband was not a bad person but still because I was young it was hard. (Line 228) My lungs were blistered, it was quite serious. I was in the hospital for 4 months, I had tuberculosis. (Line 234) I buried all these feeling in me, they became illnesses and went out. I have ulcer. I have nervous derangement. I have atherosclerosis. My arm is ill it aches a lot, I cannot feel it, I cannot use it. It is there but not there (Aytül, line 263).

As can be seen in most of the narratives the line between childhood, adolescence and adulthood is very thin and ambiguous. One of the women described how she could not comprehend that the men bringing her new clothes and sweets were in fact preparing to ask for her hand in marriage while she was playing outside.

He said why didn't you want to marry? I said what good is it to marry? I now want to go out and play I said. I remember there were men at home talking about my marriage. Then they told me I was playing with my friends on the street. You know with four stones. (line 270) He said but you knew you were going to get married they were coming and going. I said okay they were our relatives I thought they were just visiting us. They were bringing dresses sweets. They brought skirts. My mother showed them to me and I said Ah! They are so beautiful. She made me try them and put them in a bag. (She laughs) I didn't get what was going on. (Aliye, line 282).

Three of the women were married by *berdel* which was even a harder experience. That meant they were going to another family as a bride in exchange for a bride coming to their families. Apart from the fact that these marriages took place against their will, and they were usually given to the other family to help with the housework, there were some strict rules such as the reciprocity principle which

meant that whatever happened in one family, the other family had the right to do the same. For example if a bride was beaten up by her husband, the husband from the other family had the right to do the same to his wife.

My father married me off immediately. There was armed conflict. He said someone can kidnap you and take you to the mountains. That is why I was married at age 16. I did not want to marry. It was an exchange of brides. She was also very young when she was married. (Eser, line 67-71).

My sister-in-law and my brother loved each other. My mother asked for her hand. They asked for bride price. She gave her daughter. The bride was to look after the little children at home, too. (Şirin, line 119-121).

My marriage was arranged. It was exchange. *Berdel*. It is still frequent in the village. I did not want it but what can we do? My father wanted it. My mother didn't but my father did what can we do? He said well what can we do I don't have money; I have to do it this way. So they did not have to make any expenses for the marriage...So one side does something the other does the same. For example one side buys a couple of rings, the other does the same. No need to buy for gold or furniture. ...I didn't want it. Because for example if there is a fight in the other bride's house, there is a fight in mine too. For example if she is beaten up by his husband, my husband can beat me up, too.. That is why I did not want it. Everything is mutual. (Alev, line 73-87).

The active participation to the marriage decision does not seem possible which in turn leads to a feeling of fatality. The rejection of the family decision is hard and has a price. For example, Leman, who ran away with her future husband, felt guilty and indebted to her family all her life. She felt uneasy to talk about her current marital problems with her family for this very reason.

I was very sad, my baby was immature, he could not develop. Because of what my husband did to me... He came home very late...I can never forget those days. ..and I never tell anything to my family. Because...(Line 309) I deserved what I got. Because I ran away with my husband. If they married me off I could say what did you do to me, it is because of you... but here I am the one to blame. (Line 313) (Leman)

Then my father did not say anything but my mother came over me. She said "people will talk why didn't she get married"...I came home from

work, she started talking, we went downstairs. We pulled over the blankets over our heads and stayed in bed. (Aliye, line 288-290).

Once the marriage is realized, it is impossible to turn back anyhow because it is not only the woman's honor, but the honor of the remaining sisters and the family is at stake. At the end, the woman decides to make a sacrifice, keep silent, and withstand.

I said now what can I do? Can I back out? What will happen then? It wasn't possible anyway...(She laughs) If I did bad things could happen...One cannot go back to her father's house. They would think what if our daughter had a fault, they would think of different things... Then once you fall into disrepute it is easy to change it! I had sisters younger than me. They would also be labeled...one must protect her father's honor.... (Feride, line 120-130).

c. Being left alone with responsibilities:

Most of the women did not express their distress concerning their current marriage life. Although most of them were married without knowing their husbands, they stated that there were no problems. However, whether they really feel that there is no problem or a further protection of the men is a question to be asked.

There is no problem. We are married for 6-7 years maybe 8 I don't know. There is no conflict. We don't fight. We just look after our children. And days pass... (She laughs) we cook...sometimes when he is home he looks after children while I clean the house. There is nothing else... over what are we going to quarrel? I mean there is no problem. The woman cooks does the dishes... Will the man do it? We don't accept those sorts of things. Anyhow when he works he comes home at 12 at night. He comes, eats and goes to sleep. I mean there is nothing to cause a problem. (Seda, line 373-380).

Furthermore, they implied that they felt alone both at home and in life in general. They were always at home with children whereas their husbands spend most of their time outside both because of work and entertainment.

Because my husband cannot look after the children. He comes home late. Last week he went out at 5-6 came back at 12 at night. You never know when he will go. Sometimes they call at night and he goes. He has that kind of job. (Line 217) for example last year I was pregnant it was the hardest year of my life. I went to my family, my husband saw himself as a free man. He met some friends who used drugs. He did not know then. He started drinking he started to come home late, but only alcohol (Line 309)I spoke with him yesterday. I went to the supermarket, I did my shopping, and he looked after the children. I said let's do something together. He said no I am going to go to the coffee house...Then I thought where can you go with the children? In winter you have to sit indoors, there is smoke and too much noise...But I want to go out as well...I mean how shall I put it he is not interested in me as in the past...He is always outside. Always...The children cannot see him either. (Line 349) I really cannot share a lot with my husband. We cannot talk. Housework, children, this and that I have no time for myself. But one expects certain things. Really ... (Leman, line 361).

We don't go out very much. If we do we go together. ...He is a bitHe comes home eats and goes out. He says the children don't leave him alone..... We stay at home, we are house wives what can we do? He is a man isn't it? I mean everyone would want to go out but who will look after these children? There is no one. (Şule, line 322-330).

It is seen in Şule's words that there are certain gender roles which are accepted by the women themselves as acceptable and unchanging, which explains why they don't see some of their stress as emerging from the marital problems.

There was one woman whose husband was continuously working in other cities. She was left with the responsibilities of the whole house such as the bills, the shopping plus five children whose health and educational problems were all there for her to solve.

My husband is not here. He always works abroad...We got married he did not stay with me for 2 months he went to do his military work. He stayed there for 1 year and 6 months. Now he is in another city. It has always been like this. Always unhappy... (She laughs) I am always longing for my husband... (Line 113-121) ... It is very hard....My sister-in-law says look he send you money I say I don't want money, I want him with me I will eat onion and bread. There is no man no head of the children, of the house, I am scared; we live in Beyoğlu. (Line 271) ...Sometimes I phone him call him back. I tell him you turned me into both a man and a woman...Go pay the bills, go to children's schools, I take my children to school everyday... (Eser, line 312).

d. In-laws:

One of the main problem areas concerning marriage was the women's relationship with their in-laws. Having to live with them in the same house was discussed under the "crowded house" heading, so this part will be about other types of concerns such as feeling like a stranger, not having enough attention, being used as labor at home and feel like their lives are controlled by others.

Feride explains how she felt when she first came to Istanbul as a bride:

When I first came here I don't know they were all strangers. I didn't know them. I don't know their habits. I mean one cannot speak of anything. I don't know how can one share her feeling with a person whom she has just met? ...So I kept everything inside. (Feride, line 176-178).

Leman felt left out and unloved as her mother-in-law had not bothered to come and meet her.

For example I definitely don't know anything about my mother-in-law. I am married for almost 6-7 years, I saw her for two or three times. She has done me no favor and no harm . I got married she did not come, I gave birth to my first child she did not come, I had my second child; her brother had had an operation at the same time. She looked at me in the face and said " I have not come for you I came for my brother" . I mean I did not see anything from his family.(Line 329) I gave birth I was in the hospital, my mother-in-law came, looked at my face and said; I did not come for you I came for my brother.... You don't love my son... Those sorts of things....I mean I just had a baby; I am already vulnerable to stress. I mean isn't it? You become overemotional. She could have been considerate. But village people are like that they are ignorant...And my husband defended them. And my heart was broken even more (Leman, line 405).

Şule talked about how all the brides worked from early in the morning till late in the evening to serve the in-laws and yet gain no appreciation in return.

She gave orders in the house “Do this, do that! ”, we worked from morning till night. We never sat down. Eight people, 8 men plus our own children, 3 brides, work work whole day long... At the end she says “what do you do all day, you sit all day long”... (Şule, line 233).

Eser described how she had to live with her in-laws while her husband was doing his military service because her husband’s family made such a decision; and at the same how her mother-in-law maltreated her and her children, even kicking her out of her home.

At that point I said I wish I were dead! (She laughs) I mean I was so happy when I was at my father’s house. I became unhappy after I got married. I am always unhappy; I am always deprived of things. I mean pain always pain... (Line 87) My mother-in-law kicked us out, she enjoys giving pain (Line 219-221) When my husband went to do his military work, his brothers did not let me live with my own family, the decision was I stay with my mother-in-law... I again went back to her house, she again kicked us out, she beat up my children...We suffered a lot. (Eser, line 207-213).

7. Problems concerning children:

Generally the whole responsibilities of the children were undertaken by the women. Apart from the fact that financially it was very difficult to look after the children, it was emotionally wearisome to be unable to meet their needs, to be in charge of many children by themselves and to live together within the confines of a small room with no diversions for the children.

Marriage is something hard. I wish I were not married. I am still very young; I have a life to live. But I have 3 children; I wish I had only one. Rent, earning a living, everything is hard. There are the expenses of the children...We are in stress (Kerime, line 231).

My current life...I want to go out but cannot...I mean I don’t want to go out but sometimes I feel depressed because of the children. I mean really! (Leman, line 341).

I mean I am the one who usually look after the children, pay the bills ... My husband does not because he works...I wish we did them together but they are used being outside, and I have to do it ... When the children are ill, when it has something to do with school I am the one to go... (Aytül, Line 515-519).

With children...they don't leave us alone for a second. (She laughs) I run after one, then the other, then the other...till the evening. We never stop, we never sit but we don't know what we are doing either. I swear we don't know. (Feride, line 276).

Their main concern was being able to provide a good future for their children, which is only possible if they send them to school. However, they feel insufficient both financially and intellectually. Not being able to help their children with their academic problems is one of the issues that bother the women a lot.

You want to buy something you cannot... Think of it... For your children ... We don't want anything for ourselves anyway. But at least for children...But I don't know. How will it be? God knows better...Motherhood is nice but it puts too much responsibility over the person. I mean if this one is ill, I won't be able to eat for three days. How do they go to school? You think of them every moment. The worst thing is ...Financial...When we cannot buy them something that they want. That is the hardest feeling... (Aytül, line 411-415).

For example they come home they don't know their lessons. We cannot help them. If we knew we could help them... (Aytül, line 483).

His teacher told us to enroll him to the course...But we don't have the money... Sometimes he comes and says he doesn't understand. He asks mom what is this and I say I don't know either... (Seda, line 149).

Another problem for the women who live with their husband's families is the intervention of mother-in-laws in issues regarding childcare.

For instance the children are naughty they do this and that my mother (mother-in-law) shouts and shouts... (She laughs) She yells "they have broken the door! They have broken the window! Why don't you do something!" but I am always with them. I hold one, the other escapes... of course the noise goes to her flat as well. She shouts downstairs. (She

laughs) She doesn't come downstairs either. She shouts "Get hold of those children!" I say God give me patience! (Feride, line 290).

One of the women, whose husband was away for most of the year, felt the absence of an authority figure at home which led her to use violence towards her children out of helplessness.

I am angry with him. When I am angry with children I am angry with him too. They are spoiled because their father is not here. (Line 119) I mean if he were here I would not hit my children. Then he would be the authority. When he is here, I don't say a word to my children... Since he is gone I am both their mother and father. (Eser, line 310).

When the children had some chronic problems it was much more difficult for the mothers to bear. For example Şirin's life with her five children, two of whom were mentally retarded seemed to be a never ending struggle.

Who will take care of this child? It is very difficult with the children... What can I do his mind is gone. He goes out he shouts he beats the children up. I suffer thereby. (Şirin, line 151).

On the other hand, the woman who had no children because of health problems seemed in no better state emotionally as she had nothing to do at home whole day long.

I put up with a lot of troubles. I don't have any children. I don't know how I will tell you. I want to tell you but I don't have the language... I don't have the money to go to the doctor... (Line 37) Always at home. I don't have any children I mean don't have anyone. I am scared I don't go out. I am a stranger I don't know anyone here. (Line 43) I want to have children (Alev, line 229).

8-Secluded at home:

As a result of experiences described above and in connection with gender issues, these women spend most of their time indoors as daughters, wives or mothers before and after the migration. However, their lives in Istanbul put additional pressure on them not to spend time outside home especially after marriage. Even if they could go out of their homes, they had nowhere but Tarlabası to go, as their lives were isolated from the city life both economically and socially.

Everyone was working. We did not go out. We were home. I mean we were in between four walls. Our work was definite, what we did what we ate was definite (Line 170) ...I don't know I did not feel anything. The house... In the house. We knew it that way we saw it that way. For example my sister who arrived in Istanbul before us told us that they did not even go to the grocery. Until we arrived.... (Line 172) I don't know we did not know Istanbul. In fact we did not go out in our homeland either. Once in a while for a picnic maybe. Here or there; it did not make a difference. (Leman, line 174).

Before I married I mean when I was a girl I did not have any friends from strangers. I mean only relatives. I was going to work anyway. I went in the morning came back at night. We did not have anything like friends. I did not live my maidenhood you see. I don't remember much. Think of it I mean I was 14 and I was married. (Line 187) I mean to be at home always...It seems like we are used to it. But where will we go anyway? There is no place here. Sometimes we go to relatives sometimes to my mother that is all... (Line 366) I would like to work. Always at home it is stressful, suffocating...I mean everything. Sometimes I think of something and I am so stressful I feel like I am going to lose my mind. (Aytül, line 397).

I am continuously at home, 24 hours. I don't know. The first two years I was really feeling depressed. I was like crazy. Until my husband came home. I mean I had my in-laws at home but one cannot be comfortable with everyone...The neighbors...I never go to them. I mean I am not used to going to them (Feride, line 205-210).

One gets bored. Always at home, you read, you do housework, one wants to do something different. (Line 228) You are always at home struggling with children. You get bored but there is nothing you can do. That leads to additional stress. (Kerime, line 268).

I don't know. All our life it has been this way. Always at home always at home. No going out. Sometimes I go to my mother, sometimes to my mother-in-law...once in a while that is... (Şule, line 306).

Another reason why they spend most of their time at home is their worry about bothering their neighbors or relatives with their children; as they don't have anyone to leave them with.

There are children. They won't sit still. 24 hours at home. They break this they break that. You cannot take them to another one's house. (Feride, line 221).

I sit at home because of my children. I do knitting, I sit down, I cook, I do the dishes, I don't go anywhere...(Line 265) What if they harm anything in another house, what if they say anything about my children...I always sit at home. (Eser, line 269).

Thus it seems very hard to talk about an active social life, especially after marriage. Even the ones, who had a life outside because of work, were no longer able to socialize once they were married. The only way to go out was with their husbands, for practical purposes such as shopping or family visits.

No, I can't go out anymore. Because I am married. I have children. I can go out but only with my husband. I cannot go out like a young girl...It is not suitable. But my friends can come to me, but not outside. If I go outside I have to be with my husband. (Şule, line 318-320).

One other reason why they were always at home, especially when they first arrived in Istanbul was the fact that they were scared of the the big city.

I did not get out. I did not know how to go around here... It was hard I am still getting used to it. I did not know I thought I was going to get lost. I don't know all the streets look alike. I did not let my children out either. I thought I was going to get lost (Şirin, line 87-93).

9-The Neighborhood:

None of the women were happy about the district they were living in. They did not feel secure, they complained that it was always dirty, and there was burglary

and illegal drug trafficking. The problem was that it was the only place that they saw, and the only place that they can live because of their financial state which was in fact a reflection of the spatial segregation that they were exposed to.

I mean we always saw ourselves in Tarlabası and it is not a good environment indeed. We preferred not to live here. It is really bad here. Burglary, purse-snatching...We always lived here, unfortunately we could never leave. It is not good at all it is very bad. All you see is fight, gun shots, I feel scared even to go out on the street (Kerime, line 198-204).

Well we don't like it here but we have to. It is very dirty here. There is all kinds of events, burglary, drug dealers, everything...But we cannot move...Other places are expensive...There is no other place to live so we have to live here (Aytül, line 333-337).

Two of the women complained about the Romany people; they found them too dirty and too discourteous; they were afraid their children would be affected by their existence.

In our district they are all Romanies. They don't sleep till the morning. They collect garbage. You saw the street when you came here. They say we earn money out of those garbage so we cannot say anything. But the smell is unbearable. ...We don't go to their houses. They are dirty. I tell my children don't go near them. What if a lice jumps on to them...We say hello hello that is all ... (Seda, line 304-319).

There was no Kurdish no Turkish people. They were all Romanies. We did not talk to them a lot...You could not get out alone, they would pass a word to the girls. My brother never left us alone. (Şule, line 154-157).

The fact that as being excluded from the society socially, economically and spatially, they were also to a certain degree excluding another group of people was striking. However, there was also an effort to understand as to why Romany people live that way.

What can we do? We tell them but they say we earn our living this way. And we cannot say anything. (Line 312) They don't harm us anyway. They collect garbage to survive. They have to earn money this way or that way...Otherwise who will give them money? But they can take the garbage further away. They can collect garbage but I don't want them to bring it here to our neighborhood. The street is dirty. It is the same whether we do the cleaning or not. (Seda, line 326-330).

10-Institutions:

One of their problems was their unfamiliarity with any kind of establishment.

They did not know where to go, how to go and find social help.

Since we did not know... We did not get any help. No. I just asked for educational support for the children but I could not get anything. (Aytül, line 301).

No I got no institutional support. I didn't know anyone then. (Seda, line 300-302).

Another problem was that they could not get any help because they were not considered legally married up to a certain age.

Some people got papers proving your state of poverty. We never got that. Because we were married before I was 18 it was not an official marriage, and we could not get any official kind of help. (Kerime, line 248-251).

The most common problem that the women mentioned was that they could not reach the help that they needed, and that the institutions did not distribute the help to the ones who genuinely needed it.

I applied for it but nothing came. They say it is chance. Or maybe they choose. I don't know. One never knows (Kerime, line 255).

We went to the municipality. Everyone got some help. 300 million liras. When it was our turn they said n there is nothing for you. I don't know. Look the one sitting downstairs received the help. We have green card we did not, she has insurance but she did. I don't know what to think... I really felt bad. The rich receives help the poor does not. For example

there is a woman living in the basement with one child. She is really poor. She did not get anything either. (Şule, line 412-424).

I went to that place where all my neighbors received some help. I applied but I did not get anything. They told me your husband is a soldier. Your father has to look after you. There is no help for you. Well I said my husband is in the military, my father is not here who is going to look after me? I will wait for your answer but maybe you will say no too. What will happen to my children they cannot wait hungry. (Feride, line 249).

There was also a lot of bureaucracy before they could actually get access to the help.

Look I am waiting for a green card for 3-4 months. He still does not give it. I went there, I said my husband is doing his military work, I don't have any money how am I going to take these children to the hospital? I ran after a lot of paper work...everything was ready...he said we will come and look at your house. I said for God's sake come and look. There is no furniture, there is just one bed. The kitchen is one small place for 3 families. But he doesn't come. It lasted so long. He says okay I am going to come but he doesn't. (Feride, line 253).

There was only one woman who had a different relationship with the institutions because she had a child working on the streets. The social service department put her on a salary in return for not sending her child into the streets, but this salary was cut and as her daughter was caught again on the streets and they were imposed a fine of 600 YTL. She felt very offended when she received a paper from the department which said that her child was on the streets till the morning, spending the night with glue-sniffers. She also felt that her daughter was labeled because her daughter was under the constant threat of being caught whenever she was seen on the streets even if she was not selling anything.

There came a paper from the social service department. They ask for money. I said I cannot give that much money. How can I? It is 600 million. Plus it writes on the paper that my daughter sleeps with glue-sniffers till the morning. But I will go to the court. I will go and I will take her report cards with me. She is a very successful student. I will take

my children too. I can even give my fingerprints I did not do anything wrong! I did not work, I did not go out on the streets, I did not steal...(Line 348) For example there is a man there on the street who gives extra cookies for my daughter to take to her friends for them to eat. The people from the social service saw my daughter carrying those cookies and caught her for selling them! We had an extra fine of 200 million for that...(Line 352) I am not scared. I have courage. And I won't give that money. If I have to go to jail I will! My daughter comes home at 8, she never spent the night with anyone. That expression hurt me deeply! That is a lie! (Eser, line 356-360).

Research Question 3-4: “What kind of coping mechanisms do they use and how do they define and explain their resilience capacities and are these mechanisms useful?”

The third research question of this study was “What kind of coping mechanisms do the women use and how do they define and explain their resilience?” There are two parts to this question; the first is concerned with the personal coping strategies that women use, the second is concerned with a broader outlook on the personal, familial, and social resources that enhance the well being of the women despite adversities. The fourth question asked whether these strategies worked out or not. The answers to these questions are listed below.

Coping Strategies

1- To bear it, to endure (“*Çekmek/Dayanmak*”):

One of the most common themes that emerged in the interviews was enduring (“*çekmek*” / “*dayanmak*”) the hard conditions. Seven women used *çekmek* and five of these used *dayanmak* in their narratives. These words have interesting connotations in Turkish; they show both the description of the stressful condition and the resistance capacity which the women have. *Çekmek* means to endure or bear an adverse condition. However, there is “suffering” inherent in its meaning, too. *Dayanmak* has a similar meaning. It means to show patience, endurance, to bear on

the face of an adverse condition, but it is at the same time “to last, to resist, to go on, to survive, and to hold on”, thus it seems that it has a more positive connotation.

One day there is bread one day there is not... But still...I bear (*dayanmak*) it...What can we do? (Seda, line 441).

We worked in a carpet atelier with my sister. We had to bear (*çekmek*) a lot of things there too. (Leman, line 32).

I mean one can go on living by using the resources economically. I don't know I always beared (*çekmek*) and I will always do so until I die (laughs). (Feride, line 233).

I can bear (*dayanmak*) it. If it were somebody else she would not be able to look after these children without a husband. But I still can. (Eser, line 320).

There were different expressions that the women used to explain how they endured the problems. They said that they could handle a situation by “keeping it inside” (*içinde tutmak*), by thinking it is of necessity (*mecbur*), by patience (*sabır*), by persistence (*inat*), and the power or strength that came within them (*içinden gelen güç*). The common point in these expressions was that first it reflected a lack of alternatives and second it was based on trying to solve the problem within their internal world. That meant to keep silent, to cover up the problem, to show patience which seemed to solve the problem, but harmed the women at the same time. It must also be mentioned that this kind of an approach to the problems was very parallel to what was expected of them as women. In the following section, these expressions are discussed.

a. “We have to” (“*Mecbur*”):

When the women were asked how they coped with the problems they had, seven of them said they had to (*mecbur*), they had no other choice, but go on living with these conditions.

(Regarding not being sent to school) I wish they'd sent me. But in our lands the eldest has the word. You cannot say anything. You have to say yes. (*Mecbur*) You have to live according to his rules. (Kerime, line 153).

(Regarding the problems with her husband) But still I like to tolerate his actions. I mean I have no other choice. I have to (*Mecburum buna*). I don't know... (Leman, line 407).

(Regarding work life) Well... while I was working...It wasn't that bad. But still we were working...It was difficult but we had to (Line 71) (*Mecburduk*) We were standing all day long...It was hard but we had not other chance...We just had to... We worked because there was not other future we worked because we had to (Aytül, line 77-85).

(Regarding financial problems) I mean although it is very hard and there are children we go on living. Because we have we don't have any other chance. We have to (*Mecburuz*)... (Aytül, line 289).

(Regarding the district) It is very dirty here...all sorts of dangerous things ...But we have to live here...Because other places are very expensive we have to live here (*Mecburuz burda oturmaya*). (Aytül, line 337).

(Regarding the children) I am the only one who looks after children. I am the one who will run after their schools etc... What can I do? I have to (*Mecburen*) (Aytül, line 507).

(Regarding work life) Well I worked. It was winter we worked, it was summer we worked...It was so cold we worked it was so hot we worked. I swear it was very bad. It was bad but we had to. We had to work. (*Mecburduk*) Otherwise who would give us money? Whose door will we go to? (Seda, line 121-126).

(Regarding the life in Istanbul) I thought Istanbul was a nice place. I came here saw Beyoğlu and asked myself is this the real Istanbul? (Line 269) It is not nice at all. I couldn't love this place. I still don't like it. But I have to live here. I like my homeland better. But I have to stay here...Now that I have three children we have to stay here what can we do? (Seda, line 287-289).

(Regarding the life away from her husband because of his work) I was thinking about my husband. I missed him so much. But what can I do? I had to. (*Mecbur*) We had to live that way. (Eser, line 155-159).

(Regarding migration) We could not live there. We did not have money. We came here (*Mecburdur geldik*) (Alev, line 3).

(Regarding finding help) what can I do? I have to feed my children. I run here I run there. What can I do? I have to (*Napıym mecburdur yani*)(Line 135-137) what can I do? It is out of necessity. I run so fast I go look for help and then run back home. I leave my daughter at home tell her not to open the door she says okay mom. (Şirin, line 173).

(Regarding living in the same house with another family) I mean I swear we cooked together. We had to... (Şirin, line 24).

“Mecbur” is an expression which best describes a state of despair and a lack of alternatives. It was most commonly used by women who felt that they have no control over their lives. For example Aytül who was sent to work and forced to marry at a very young age felt as if she was drowned in too many responsibilities before she was ready. When she was asked how she coped with her problems she usually said “mecbur”. She used this word 14 times during the interview. To ask whether it works or not does not seem to be very meaningful because thinking this way does force the women to endure, but does not bring along a solution to the problem at all.

b. To keep it inside (“*İçinde tutmak*”):

Parallel to the mechanisms explained above, five of the women talked about keeping the problems inside. They very rarely stated that they protested or resisted what they were living or that they expressed it. Even the ones, who did it, did it when they were alone at home by “shouting and crying”. In that sense these women seem to be living their problems in telescopic boxes in which they have little chance to get out; Tarlabası, house, and themselves. When they were asked what they did in the face of a problem, they said they buried the problem in themselves; they believed that this refrained them from magnifying the stressful condition. For instance when Kerime was asked what she did to overcome problems concerning her sorrow regarding her not being sent to school, marrying at an early age, problems concerning

her family, she stated that she kept them inside, and that the daily problems did not let her think about the problems of the past.

I am so involved with the problems of today that I don't remember the problems of the past...It is not easy I mean the children, the husband... But they are in me. They are kept in a corner you cannot project them. You cannot tell...And if you ask me I'd rather keep them there (Kerime, line 137-148).

I never say things openly. I keep them inside. Yes. I keep everything inside. I don't let them out...To keep silent is I think the best way. If I said anything to my in-laws, there would be a fight. But if I keep silent we go on living (Şule, line 488-503).

When Şule was asked whether it worked out for her to keep silent about the problems with her mother-in-law, she said that it worked out and the problem was over. Otherwise it would be out of control leading to greater problems and stress in the house. At the same time, she believed that her problems with her mother-in-law were based on the fact that they lived together and she knew that they would move to their own house within two years.

Yes. It works...the problem is over. If I answered them back, it would magnify the problem. When I kept silent there was no fight...So I kept it inside... (Şule, line 497-504).

However, whether merely keeping the problem inside is a method for coping or not is a question to be asked because it is paradoxical that they act as if there is no problem, but keep living it inside. The problem seems to be repressed for some time, but comes out as somatisations. As Aytül put it, she put the problems inside her, they came out as illnesses.

Well what could I do with those feelings? I buried them inside me. But now all of them have come out as illnesses. I have ulcer...I feel nervous...Always ill, I was always ill. It was all psychological all psychological. They all went inside me...All inside inside inside. ..Then all of it turned into illnesses... (Aytül, line 263-267).

c. Patience (“*sabır*”):

Two of the women stated that they were “patient” when they were asked how they coped with problems generally. This was very parallel to keeping the problem inside, enduring the situation quietly without making a fuss over it. For example Feride said that she needed patience in order not to mistreat her children. When her mother-in-law continuously warned her to take control of her children she again asked for patience so that she would not lose her control and run into battle with her. Similarly Leman stated that she was successful in overcoming her problems with her husband by being patient.

Patience. I mean for example the children are naughty. If I shout at them like my mother-in-law does...My mother-in-law shouts all the time (She laughs) “They broke the door! They broke the windows! Why don’t you have an eye on them!” she shouts at me...She does not come down she shouts from upstairs: “Get hold of your children!” I say God give me patience. (Feride, line 288-290).

(Regarding problems with her husband) I am patient. I really am patient. I lived a lot of things but I was patient. But I won at the end. I really did. Patience patience patience. Now I am the one who won. (Leman, line 367).

Both of these women said that being patient helped them withstand the problem. Leman for example stated that because she was patient she was the one who won at the end.

d. Stubbornness/Persistence (“*inat/sebat*”):

Stubbornness / Persistence seemed to be a different coping mechanism than “*sabır*” and “*mecbur*” as it had an active struggle to attain a better state. Only one woman, Aliye used this expression to explain her way of coping with the problems. She said she never left a thing unfinished once she started doing it. She was also one

of the few who could oppose her parents' wishes and make her own decisions regarding her life.

For example if I say I want to do such and such I never leave it. Until it is realized. I never give up. If I want to do something I do it no matter what. (Aliye, line 381-383).

Her story was full of examples where her persistence helped her endure and overcome the problematic situation. For example she insisted that she will work in order to improve herself, earn money and go out of the house, and she succeeded in doing so despite her family's opposition. She was the only women among the group who said no to the arranged marriage and made her parents accept her decision. She insisted that she will go and live with her in-laws while her husband was doing his military work, so that she will be close to him physically and to meet and form a good relation with her in-laws. Thus she succeeded in bringing her children together with their grandparents, formed good relations with them herself and was even a mediator between her husband and his parents. She insisted that she will have a salary while her husband is away and got it at the end. In that sense it can be said that her persistence worked out quite well in enhancing her resilience.

e. To be strong ("*güçlü olmak*"):

Quite like persistence, "*güçlü olmak*" had much more positive connotation and put the woman using it in a more self-confident and active position. It was again only one woman, Eser who used this expression in the interview. Eser believed in the strength which came from within her. She stated that someone else would not be able to bear the life which she led, but she had the power to endure. She even stated that this power could give hand to other women who were in trouble. She found the root of this strength in her mother's teaching of what kind of a woman she should be.

I have to be strong. It comes from within me. My mother always told us to be strong. I still remember it. It is always in my mind because she said it when I was very young. Sometimes women ask me “How can you live alone, take care of your children? You don’t have your husband with you.” I have the strength. I don’t have my husband but I have the strength. I can bear it. No one else could take care of this house and these children, but I can. I take this strength from my mother’s words and it comes from within me. I have no fear. If somebody came and knocked on the door I have the courage. I trust myself. If a man comes by my door I should not let him in because I don’t have my husband, but if a woman comes and says I have nowhere to go I have the courage she can come in and stay here (Eser, line 314-321).

As can be seen in her words, the strength that she felt came from within her was so helpful for her that she thought no one except her could bear the life she was leading. Thus it would not be wrong to say that this mechanism worked out for her.

2- Downward comparison:

When the women were asked how they coped with the hard conditions they are living in two of them said that they looked at the people who were in worse conditions and felt grateful for what they had, and one said she was thankful for what she had remembering the days that were worse.

I am a patient person or... When I look at people who are in really bad conditions, I mean worse than ours you see yourself as in better condition. That is a relief. I mean you say you are at least in better shape... there are people who don’t even have a place to live (Kerime, line 278).

We have a lot of debt but still I thank God. Because we say there are people in worse condition. That way I can endure. (Leman, line 361).

It could have been worse. Sometimes there is no bread. Sometimes there are four kinds of food. Some put their food in the garbage; some don’t have anything to eat... (Seda, line 449).

They had a similar attitude towards problems concerning their families and marriages. For example when Kerime was talking about the problems she had concerning her life with her family in Istanbul before marriage, she emphasized that their problems were financial and, not other kinds such as domestic violence.

Yes those were the times when we had just moved in Istanbul. We continuously changed houses. They kicked us out. Or there was an increase in rent. Those sorts of things... We had no other kinds of problems. Violence at home for example we did not have those sorts of things. But we did not (Kerime, line 91).

As for the problems they had with their husbands they stated that despite certain issues they were content with their marriages as there was no violence within their houses.

But my husband I mean when you look at others there are people who are so bad, so bad husbands...He has never hit me for example. There is no violence. And very rarely a bad word... And when he uses bad words I can answer him back. (Leman, line 325).

When they were asked whether it was helpful for them to think this way, they approved. However, it might be again questionable whether this is really an active stance in changing the stressful condition or a reflection of a mood where there is nothing else to do. Accepting the fact that they had to be contented with limited resources became useless when they saw the people who were in better state.

But of course you can think it the other way around. When I see people who are in better conditions I envy them and that makes me feel bad (Kerime, line 278).

3- Spirituality/Religiosity:

Spiritual support was also a resource that they used to endure the adverse life circumstances. Six of the women expressed their faith in God and stated that God would know better and would help if you work for it.

Then my doctor said if you don't find milk for this baby she will starve. So I had to use formula feeding. Then one of my relatives said "How are you going to afford it?" I said "Well God is mighty. God will help..." (Line 237). One day there is bread one day there is no bread. But still we praise God. He gave us this much and we thank God. (Seda, line 447).

Well I don't know. How will it be? God knows better. I cannot work because my children are very young. I don't know. God knows it. We will survive one way or another. (Aytül, line 411).

Thus in a way, their belief in God is one of the sources that help them show patience and withstand the hardships of life.

Well whatever...So I said God is mighty. Her gave us this much he will give us more. (Feride, line 132).

However, it is again doubtful for some of the women as to how they feel about whether this is a useful strategy or not. That is, besides giving them power to endure the stressful condition, it is rather a reflection of the despair. Especially when they were in really anxiety provoking conditions, they could do nothing but pray to God for help. For example when Eser talked about their running away from the armed conflict and the evacuation of their village, she said she felt as if no one but God could help them.

We said God help us because noone helps us. Noone could help us, noone but God. It was so difficult...Now we are here but it is difficult here, too...My husband works for minimum wage. ...There are 5 children...The rent, the bills... (Eser, line 81-83).

Similarly, when Feride was talking about how difficult it was to live with her husband's relatives when she arrived in Istanbul, she stated that she endured by showing patience and her belief in God, but felt that she was in fact not doing anything to overcome the problem.

I don't know I was living with people whom I did not know... You cannot talk about your problems with strangers...I always kept them inside and I said God is mighty. I mean what could I do? I could not do anything in fact. (Feride, line 176).

One woman, Leman found relief in the fact that God is able to see the suffering and injustice that is not expressed by her openly, but will punish the guilty ones on behalf of her. Regarding the problems she had when she was living with her sister-in-law, she said rather than fighting her, she left it to God for justice to be realized.

(In my-sister-in-law's house) We were really like strangers. That is why we are sort ofFor example recently I talked with my sister about those days. O told her "well if it is true that she called me a thief I will not forgive her...I just heard it. I mean my sister told me about it recently. I said " Well she called me that? I will not talk about it anymore... It has been 10 years now. So I will not do anything, I am sure God will punish her. (Leman, line 235-237).

It was also interesting that four out of ten women did not mention spirituality or religiosity as a way to endure the hardships of life. This seems to be interesting as religion and beliefs play an important part in the population in question.

4- For the sake of the other (For children):

Eight out of ten women talked about how the existence of their children forced them to go on living. Even in the cases where there was no hope for their own future, their plans were built on the well being of their children. They were worried about their children's future, and said no one but them would think of their well

being. They also wanted to provide a life for their children so that the children can do whatever they could not do, such as going to school, living a life with few financial problems, and being strong enough to stand on their two feet. One of the women, Aytül, stated that the meaning of happiness for her was the happiness of her children.

Well I withstand. I have my children. Whatever happens I will stay with them (Line 229) I run after everything. Because if I am ill, if I don't go to the bazaar, no one will take care of these children (Eser, line 314).

Patience and children. I have two small children. It is really hard to meet their needs, really hard. I cannot fulfill their wishes neither me nor my husband. But they are my children. I think of them. And patience. I am a patient person. (Leman, line 391-393).

I mean for them...The children...I am trying to withstand for them. If we are ill no one will take care of them. Who will take care of them? The first day they will, the second day they will but the third day they won't...Motherhood is very important. No one thinks as a mother thinks. No mother would think bad things about her children. She wants the best of everything for them. We could not go to school but they will. (Aytül, line 433-439).

I think a lot... I say for example I didn't go to school, will we be able to send them to school? It is really important for me. Because I could not go to school I wan them to go (Aliye, line 376-378).

Having children was also an important reason for not being able to leave their house and go back to their fathers' houses. An important reason for not being able to go back was the worry that they would harm the good relation between their children and their husbands.

Even if I go back to my father's house I will come back for sure. I have to. Because there are children. And my children are so devoted to their father. And so is my husband. For example when lay down together he will never touch me when the children are around. They live so devoted to their father. (Leman, line 441).

In terms of receiving social help, their main concern is providing a good future for their children. For example all Seda asked from the state was to have her child go to school for free and nothing else.

What help can I ask for? I want the state to send my child to school. I don't want anything else. I just want that from them. I want nothing more. All I want is that my son goes to school. Nothing more. (Seda, line 437-439).

As for the question whether thinking this way works out as a method to enhance their resilience capacities, it seems to be one of the most effective reasons that helps them endure the problems and think positively about the future. However, one must not forget the fact that they cannot leave their husbands, and they go on suffering relational problems for the sake of children. Thus in a way the women are in fact fulfilling their traditional roles as altruistic mothers who put their children's well being before their own.

5- Humor:

Although none of the women said that they used humor, four of them laughed during the interviews even when they were talking about traumatic living conditions such as poverty or deprivation. The kind of laugh was in the form of taking a distance from the traumatic event and making fun of one's own state.

Too much money goes to the electricity...I have two bills to pay. We couldn't afford it. If we don't pay it one more time they will cut it off...Well I don't know, I don't know what we will do...We went to buy lottery tickets... (She laughs). (Seda, line 428-431).

The living room fell down. I was sitting here my husband over there, the living room collapsed! (She bursts into laughter) I was so scared and I laughed so much at the same time (She laughs). (Alev, line 296-298).

There was one woman who laughed almost all through out the interview and explained her state as follows, and she stated that this was helpful for her to withstand.

I don't know I am always like this. I guess it is my personality. Because for example we have a fight. The third moment I start to laugh (She laughs) My mother-in-law goes crazy; she says "Did you lose your mind? We just quarreled. Why are you acting this way?" I say "what else can I do? I mean will it change if I sit down and cry? Will it help? No!" So I just do it the way I want. She can say whatever she wants. (Feride, line 298-300).

However, one must not forget the fact that there is a degree of defensiveness to it as well.

6- Opposition:

Although the women usually chose to keep silent in the face of problems, five of them tried to resist the decisions given on behalf of them against their wishes and the main issue which they could oppose was marriage. However, this resistance usually did not work or helped them attain their wish. For example regarding their marriages Aytül, Şirin, Alev stated that they did not want to marry, but their wish was not considered by their families. The only case where the resistance to the families' decision worked was Aliye's story. She openly stated that she did not want to marry someone whom she did not know while she still wanted to play outside.

I resisted. That is the only time when they listened to me. The marriage thing. (Line 280) I said to myself I will say no, but I was worried about how my father would react (She laughs) Anyhow...They were all sitting in the living room. What will you say? They had brought the rings and everything. I said I will not marry! Just like that...I said "You came here but I want to play outside. You cannot expect anything from me. My aunt (the in-laws at the same time) said "Okay we know that you are still a child but we will take you and raise you like our own child". I said "Why? I want to be raised in my own father's house. You have four more brides why do you want another one? I will feel the most humiliated

among them.” Then she said “She is right” (She laughs). (Aliye, line 282).

Leman was another woman who in a way opposed her parents’ decision by running away with a man whom she chose as a husband. However it is hard to say that it was an enhancing experience for her as she felt very guilty for what she had done. In her interview, she continuously talked about how her problems with her husband was no one’s fault but her own and how she could not ask for any help from her parents because of what she had done.

There is a saying which means when one makes a wrong decision s(he) has to take the consequences. Since I ran away with my husband I deserved what I found. And there is no end to it. If they had arranged the marriage, I could say this is because of you. But here I am to blame. I have to wait until it is unbearable (Leman, line 311-313).

There was another woman, Kerime who could not oppose her parents but thought that opposing them and having the control of one’s own life was very important for their resilience. She stated that it is empowering to oppose the decisions of the parents when necessary in order to make the right decisions.

I advise the young girls not to accept everything...they should marry when they are old enough to give their own decisions about the right person. They should not accept arranged marriages either. First they should get to know each other. It is very important. I did not have the chance to go to school, to work or to make a logical marriage. But the ones who have the chance should struggle for it. They should be obstinate if necessary. They can do it. I wish I could do the same. (Kerime, line 280-284).

Ironically, another woman, Eser, made a completely opposite decision on not opposing her parents for the sake of not losing their support and love. She said that her relation with her father and the support that she got from him was very important and she achieved this love by not contravening his words.

I was happy with my father. Because my father was quiet. I am 31 years old now he has still not said a word to me. I did not say a word when he gave me to a man. I mean I love my father very much. I listen to his words. he loves me because I don't speak counter to him. I did not say a word when he wanted me to marry. We have a good relation because I have not run away with someone else. (Eser, line 91).

Thus it seems to be a hard on the part of the woman to revolt. There is a possibility that they get what they wish for, but always at the risk of losing something else.

Environmental Resources

1. Familial Support:

A general outlook at the resilience capacities of women shows that their families of origin play the most important role in their coping with the problems. In fact, for all of them, the main financial and emotional support came from their families. This part will be a description of how women perceive their childhood homes, their relations with their parents and siblings in terms of finding support in the face of adversities.

First of all despite all problems, two of the women made descriptions of their homes as very peaceful and happy. Both of these women remembered their childhood as untroubled because all the family members were together and there were no hardships of married life.

For instance I remember we all lived in a small room. It was small. But as they say...It was small but we were happy. We were peaceful. We were really happier; we were together. (Leman, line 110).

My father's house...I had five younger brothers then. It was only me...I was still happy. I was the only girl I was the eldest but still I was happy. If there was no fright I would go back to my father's home. I would take my children and go back. He would take care of both me and my children...I was happy by my father. (Eser, line 89-91).

Another woman, Alev talked about her parents' support when they had to leave their village because of armed conflict.

I had my mother, I had my father. They comforted me; they told me there was nothing to be scared of (Alev, line 162-164).

a. Mothers:

Regarding their problems, seven of the women mentioned their mothers as the main support in their lives. Only one of these woman talked about her mother's support in terms of financial support only; for the others it was emotional support. Three women described their mother as their closest friend since their childhood. Whenever they had problems in their life, they talked with their mother. Şule said it was unbearable for her to be away from her.

Sometimes I talked with my mother... We shared our problems. It is comforting. It is a relief to talk. (Line 247-249) I mean when you have a child you value you mother more... Last week my mother went to another city. I couldn't stay at home (She laughs) because we are always together here. We missed our mother so much (Line 358-360) you can openly talk about anything with her. Whenever I have problem I just run to my mother. (Şule, line 462).

I used to talk everything with my mother. Back in the village... Now... whenever I have a problem, when there is problem with my husband or my mother-in-law I tell my mother. I tell no one else, but I tell my mother. Now my mother is like a sister. I share everything with her (Eser, line 256).

I phone my mother in the village. My mother is like my sister, my best friend. (Alev, line 102-104).

It is interesting how in the last two quotes they make a resemblance between their mothers and their sisters. Sisters seem to be defined as someone whom one can be closest to, and friendship and sisterhood seems to be used interchangeably. The

meaning of sisterhood will be described in more detail in the following section concerning siblings.

In terms of whether talking helped or not, Şule stated that talking to her mother did not change the fact that she was living together with her mother-in-law, but it provided relief. Eser on the other hand said that her mother's advice was helpful for her to withstand the hard days. Leman had similar advice from her mother. It must be mentioned that these advices are in line with what the woman usually do in their lives; show patience.

It helps, my mother helps me. She says "Don't leave your children, don't leave your husband. My mother does not want bad deeds. She does not tell me to divorce or not to love him. She speaks to make things better (Eser, line 161-166).

I got a lot of support from them. My mother said "My daughter you have your children, you have to be patient when necessary." I had gone to the hospital; the doctor told me that my child was immature because of my stress. I visited my mother on the way back home. I usually don't tell them anything, I always keep it to myself. But that day I was about to explode. My mother said "You have a problem. I knew it. I was suspicious of it for a long time". (Leman, line 317).

Mothers were also seen as the only support concerning childcare as they were the only people they could leave their children to. Leman for example could go to school to learn reading and writing because her mother was very supportive and insistent, encouraging her to go and look after her children while she was at school.

My only support is my mother. I call her whenever I need to go out. Otherwise I cannot. (Şule, line 201).

b.Fathers:

Five women talked about the support that they got from their fathers, but among them only for two of them, they appeared as very important figures. What

was common in these stories was the pride they saw in their fathers. Feride and Aliye talked how their fathers worked hard not to have a bad reputation for their family.

(Regarding the complaints of the house owner about the children) He constantly complained about the noise that we caused “tell your children not to slam the door, tell them not shout” my parents could no longer tolerate. They should feel free to do anything. They can kill themselves if someone else speaks badly of them (Line 44) Never...look we were so poor but still they never asked for anything. (Feride, line 56).

(Regarding the complaints of the house owner about the children) there was a lady here, she shouted all the time. You cannot even move in your own house. She was the houseowner. She said “You have a lot of children. My mother-in-law is disturbed”. Her mother-in-law used to say “I swear I am not complaining, I don’t think you are noisy or anything” My father said we will buy a house no matter what, we will sell everything we have, but we will buy a house of our own. He said “I want my children to play freely”. (Aliye, line 89-93).

Although the mothers seem to have an important role in sharing their problems, the fathers have an important role in changing the problem situation as they have the last word. For example on important decisions regarding their lives such as school, work or marriage it is their father who decides on what will be done. The three women who did not want to marry were supported by their mothers, but it did not affect the decision of the father. Similarly regarding their current problems, a solution to the problem was possible when the father made an intervention. For example, Leman talked about how her father’s interference with her marriage problems made her husband, who was spending his time outside drinking, change his behavior.

My husband was so regretful, he was so regretful. I had told my mother about his latecomings. I told them not to tell my father. But my father understood. He went to my husband’s work and talked with him. I did not know anything about it. He told him not to do it again...It is very rare that he comes home late since that day... He cannot look at my father’s face. (Leman, line 435).

As stated at the beginning of this section on fathers, “pride” was an important factor which affected the women’s definition of resistance to hardship. However, in certain cases, women seem to be left between the prides of two men in their lives which leave no room for their own feelings; lessening the degree of support they get. For example for Leman, it was her husband’s pride on one hand and her father’s authority on the other which led her to keep quiet most of the time about her marital problems.

On the other hand there is the pride of my husband. I cannot go to my father’s house whenever I have a problem. Isn’t it so? I think of it that way. I have to think of my husband’s pride. (Leman, line 323).

c. Siblings:

Siblings provided an important support mechanism for the women. Five women spoke about the support they got from their sisters or brothers. The main reason for the importance of the siblings was their multifunctional roles. They were each other’s parents, caretakers, best friends and confidants. Among these five women, especially one, Leman, talked about the intimate relation between her sisters and their way of sharing the life in every way. This way, the heavy responsibilities of being a daughter was shared among them.

All the girls...We had organized everything, for example for two days one is responsible from the kitchen, one from the cleaning up, one from the childcare. (Leman, line 126).

Sisters were very important sources of support both as friends to socialize with and as confidants to share very intimate problems such as those related with their husbands. That was especially important when they had no chance to meet other people as they went neither to school, nor to work. For example, Leman’s sisters

were always good friends to socialize with and very important emotional supports for her. She described her days with her family and sisters with longing.

I remember. My mother would let us go out once a week. We could not go out a lot as we were girls. On the weekends we used to go out for a change (Line 110-112) but we can no longer do that. Everybody is getting married. Last week my sister was married. We still could not get used to it. I always think of her. (Line 134) I really miss those days. (Leman, line 136).

We share our problems and everyone keeps it as a secret. (Line 317) I talked with my sister. She stayed with me for ten days, I was crying all the time (about the problems with her husband) Then she went back home and she did not tell a thing to my parents. I asked her not to and she did not (Leman, line 321).

There is no one else to listen to me (Line 275) I just talk with my sisters... I did not have my children then. We mostly met in my house, everyone told about a memory that she did not forget, or a problem she had. We ate together, we smoked. We would sit together and talk. We never told anyone else (Leman, line 339).

Because we were crowded we usually spent time together, we talked we played together. Some of us studied their lessons (Kerime, line 222)

Aytül for example felt there was no one she could go to regarding her problems with marriage, as the potential friends of her life, her sisters were younger than her and thus would not understand her.

No I mean there was no one from my husband's family. I had sisters, I had my sisters but they were very young. (Aytül, Line 271).

Siblings provided an important source of support regarding the emotional burden of their migration experiences as well. The two women who were left behind as a result of chain migration found the only support in their siblings. Both Aliye and Leman talked about how they lived through the problems together with the other siblings as their families migrated to Istanbul in advance.

We were very young, at most ten years old...we went to the hills together, we sat in the balcony and we smoked. Sometimes I also smoked, sometimes I cried. (Leman, line 247).

My brother said "There is no stranger here. We are in our house. We just don't have our parents with us. I miss them as much as you do. It does not matter if I am married or not. I am not used to being away from them even if I am married" (Aliye, line 69).

It was really comforting to speak to him. One thinks "So one can share the absence of parents with your brother". (Aliye, line 71).

Similarly when they first came to Istanbul, Aliye's brother was very helpful in explaining different practices of everyday life which shocked Aliye when she first experienced them.

The house owner came while I was hanging the clothes. I ran to my brother, I said "There is someone at the door". Then I hid behind the door without making a noise. He said "Why are you hiding?" I said "well there is a big man at the door", he said "He came for the rent" I said "Why? We did not pay anything for the house when we were in the village". Then came the bill for the water. I did not let my brother pay. I was crying (She smiles) I thought they were deceiving us because my father wasn't with us. I said "They are stealing our money". When my brother asked me to bring money for the bill I said no, I will not give them our money. He was laughing at me. Then he said "look my sister, you have to pay for the electricity and the water here". (Aliye, line 83-86).

As can be seen from the quotes, sibling support seems to be one of the most crucial resources from which the resilience capacities of the women are based on. It provides both a backing in emotional terms and practical solutions to the problems such as lack of socialization and division of labor at home.

2. Spousal Support:

Another source of support for the women was their husbands. Six of them said that they talked and shared their problems with their husbands regarding several

issues. For example Feride's primal confidant about her adaptation problems in Istanbul was her husband.

I could not do anything. I just waited for my husband. He was a taxi driver. He would come home at 4 in the morning. I used to talk to him. At least he could understand me. We could share. And he never interferes with what is going on at home. He never complains about anything (Feride, line 178-188).

Three women stated that it felt good to be able to speak with their husbands concerning marital problems such as in-laws, financial problems, and relational problems. For example Şule knew that she was not going to live with her in laws for good as they had decided with her husband to separate the houses in advance.

I did not say anything because I knew it was for two years. I did not want to break their hearts. That way I could tolerate. I knew we would not stay there for good. We had decided already even before we got married. We said as soon as the youngest one gets married we will move out. (Şule, line 518-514).

Although it was very difficult for Eser to live in Istanbul alone, away from her husband, her husbands' soothing words on the phone was a relief for her which helped her endure.

My husband loves me. When he is not here he calls and comforts me on the phone. He says "Don't worry, I am here, I will find you the money you need. Don't listen to the words of my family. Just leave everything up me". (Eser, line 255-257).

In fact, for Eser, her relation with her husband was very important as she felt her husband was not loved enough by his own family, a love which she should show.

I love my husband a lot. That is why I withstand. I don't want to leave him. I said to myself he did not see any love from his father; let me show him the love he yearns for. His father does not love him, he criticizes him all the time, he has 5 children but still his father does not speak well of

him. He criticizes him in front of everybody. So that is why I want to love him, his father did not love him but I will... (Eser, line 225-228).

Aliye's main problem was her jealousy of her husband's ability to read and write. Every time her husband wanted to teach her how to read and write she felt humiliated. Thus she spoke with her husband who showed respect for her feelings.

We get along well. When there is a problem we sit down and talk about it. The only problem is that I am illiterate. I am jealous when he reads something. He tried to teach me. But I felt humiliated. I don't feel that way when I am studying with my daughter but with him I feel humiliated. I don't know why. I told my husband not to show me how to read and write. I told him I did not feel close to him anymore... He said "Okay then. I will not teach you anymore. I don't want you to get away from me. Nothing is as important as that. I am glad that you told me. If you don't feel close you won't even welcome me when I come home. You will turn your back when you bring dinner to me. Then we will not enjoy this marriage." (Aliye, line 313-319).

For Alev her marital problems are more bearable when her husband propitiates for his mistakes.

Sometimes we fight... Naturally we don't get along (She laughs) I cry. I forget (She laughs) my husband says nice things to me (She laughs) (Alev, line 264-266).

3. Support of Children:

For women children were the means of participation in social life. The women who were illiterate and had children old enough to go to school such as Seda, talked about how they started learning reading and writing through their children's school work. Another important function of the children was to be translators especially for the ones who had language problems. For example Alev talked about how her mother-in-law went to find financial help although she did not know any Turkish, by taking her daughter with her.

For example one buys a pair of shoes but does not know the measures, the numbers. But now this child goes to school, I started to learn. His teacher writes and I get used to the numbers. (Seda, line 177-179).

My mother-in-law goes out and looks for help. It is only 2 years but she can go out and does everything I don't know how (She laughs) Even I don't know but she does. She goes with her daughter. (Alev, line 256).

As stated before, only one woman, Eser, had her daughter work to help with her school expenses. She had to send her because it was impossible to afford school expenditures. Financially speaking, the money that her daughter brings was helpful in meeting her school needs, but having her child work on the streets was not easy at all.

I wanted her to work. My husband works outside of Istanbul. He gets 350 million. It is not enough. She works and spends the money for school expenses. (Eser, line 306-308).

It is not good at all. I am scared, when she is gone I look out the window until she comes. I sent her with the children from our village. Now she is not going anymore. Sometimes I went with them. I used to sit there and look after them. (Eser, line 330-332).

Apart from the fact that she was worried about her child's well being on the streets, it was very hard to struggle with the social service institutions which punished the families for sending their children to work.

They caught my daughter and took her to the institution. They made us sign a paper. Now I have to pay 600 million. I am going to go to the court. I wrote to the court I said that I sent my daughter because of poverty, my daughter is not doing anything bad. She is not stealing anything. (Eser, line 342-344).

Eser's only support in struggling with the legal problems was again her daughter.

My daughter read the papers. She said “mom you have 15 days for objection” she said “you have a right to object, don’t pay that money” (Eser, line 348).

As was already discussed in the problems section, sending her child to work brought along so many problems without bringing any solutions that it can be said that it did not really work out as a coping strategy.

4. Relatives:

Seven of the women talked about their relatives providing help. Two of these women remembered the relatives’ help when they first arrived in Istanbul. For example, Kerime stated that their relatives helped them find a place to live and provided them with food.

It was not very hard when we first arrived. We had our relatives they helped us find a house; we were living in the same neighborhood. My uncles helped a lot. They brought us food. (Kerime, line 192).
We worked near my aunt’s son. We stayed in their houses. Then my father brought my mother and my younger siblings. (Aytül, line 19).

Leman stated that she asked for financial support from the wives of her brothers for her personal needs which she could not get from her parents.

When I came to Istanbul I started to smoke a lot. I even started to buy packages. I looked for excuses to go out. It was not easy you were always at home, you don’t work, and my mother did not give us any money. I could not buy cigarettes. I used to go to my sister-in-laws and ask for money so that I could buy myself cigarette. (Leman, line 259).

However, this help seemed to be dominantly financial and temporary. None of the women talked about her relatives as important sources of current support. The only relatives that they mentioned were in-laws. The family of the husband, was the only place to ask for financial support and get in social relations. This finding seems go parallel with the women’s alienation from their original families after they got

married. It was not only financially and socially, but culturally a move from one family to the other with little chance to go back.

My brother-in-law lives next door. He works in a supermarket. He brings us tickets. We meet some of needs that way. (Kerime, line 243).

We either want from my family or from his. If we need it...My father-in-law says whenever you need anything don't go anywhere just come to me...Last week I said I had tooth ache. He said let me give you money so that you can go to a dentist. (Şule, line 390).

Well if I go I will either go to my mother-in-law or my sister-in-law. And my mother. Where else can I go? (Aytül, line 358).

For one woman, Alev, the arrival of her husband's family in Istanbul was very important as her own family was not in Istanbul, she did not have any children and she felt alone at home everyday. Three of the women talked about the help which their mother-in-laws provided in helping with the children.

She is also very helpful. I mean she helped me a lot. I mean if she weren't here I wouldn't be able to manage. Because they are very small, when both starts crying I can only look at one of them. (Feride, line 278).

In sum, although relatives provide some instrumental support, they are not perceived as a strong source of emotional support for the women. Only two mentioned the financial support that came from the husbands' relatives. It was also usually not their own relatives, but the relatives of their husbands which provided the support. In that sense, the absence of support from the immediate members of the extended family was striking. In terms of socializing and spending time together, the in-laws were the main place to go, so they did help them to socialize, but one must not forget the fact that this socialization was at least partially out of necessity.

5. Social Relations:

a. Education-teachers:

Eight women out of ten talked about the strengthening role of school and teachers. Although they had a very short period of schooling, they had vivid memories concerning school and teachers. Seda went to school for one month, but the way she described her teacher and his sister gave signs of how important they were in her childhood memories.

I went to school for one month...He was such a good teacher. He used to come to our house. Because it was dangerous at night. He had a sister, 20 years old. She was so beautiful; her cheeks were red, her skin was white. I will never forget, she was so beautiful. (Seda, line 128).

These days were recalled happily also because they represented the times when they could live their life as “children”. Eser used present tense while she was describing her school days and in her mind school days represented a place where one can play, along with helping the teacher with housework.

The school was good. We are going to school. We cook for him. We do the dishes. We carry water for him. It was so nice. We play with snow. We play at school. It was very good. (Eser, line 129).

Teachers were very important figures in two of the women’s lives because of the support and respect they showed for their wish to go to school. It was very important for example for Kerime that her teacher came and tried to persuade her family to send her back to school.

The teacher came to the house. She said let’s take her to the fifth grade let’s give her, her diploma. Let her finish school, but they would not let. Yes the teacher came to the house. (Kerime, line 151).

Aliye was taken out of school because her teacher told her father that she could not follow the lessons because of the language problem. It was very important

later on for Aliye to hear that her brother's teacher who knew both Kurdish and Turkish, to go to the school principle and say that he would be glad to work with the children who didn't know Turkish.

Here. There was a teacher. My brother's teacher. I was eight then. The teacher said he knew both Turkish and Kurdish. He went to the principle. He said "why didn't you inform me? Even if they don't know the language, they want to learn how to read and write." Then because he protested the principle he was exiled to another school. (Aliye, line 238).

Eser stated that it was not hard for her to live in Istanbul and adapt to the city life because she went to school. The fact that she knew Turkish and reading-and-writing made her feel powerful and confident in life. This was exactly the reason why her father insisted that she went to primary school.

Nobody wanted to. But my father sent me to school. He did not want me to be insulted. I am now not insulted because I went to school. I know reading and writing, I can pay my bills, I can take my children to school (Eser, line 133-135).

Eser could finish the primary school but was not sent to higher education which she did not ask for it either. She stated that there were no doctors or nurses who could be role models for the children; they did not see different types of occupations, so they did not have any concept of going to higher education to have a vocation.

I did not know then. I am now sending my daughter. I now know she can be a doctor or find another job. But then I did not think that way. There were no doctors, no nurses. We did not know what they were. If we knew we would want to have more education... (Eser, line 139).

Thus for most women, education was the most important thing to enhance standards of living and to feel more powerful in the face of adversities.

For example knowing how to read and write... We go to the hospital, there are queue numbers, but we don't know. One needs to know (Seda, line 175).

Going to school is good... Both to work and to have a job. To stand on your own two feet... (Aytül, line 169).

I don't know I want to know what is written when I go somewhere. When I am left alone, one wants to read a book not to get bored. (Aliye, line 256).

I advise the young girls to first go to school if they have the chance so that they can stand on their own two feet. (Kerime, line 280).

It was especially important for Aliye that her daughters went to school; because it was easier for men to find work afterwards.

It is very important for me. I want them to go school because I could not go. I say the sons can follow their father. Last night we talked about it with my husband. He said what is the difference between daughters and sons? I said if I knew how to read and write I would teach my daughter. Now I cannot answer her questions. (Aliye, line 378).

Thus all the women thought that education and good relations with the teachers were very helpful in enhancing the resilience capacities of the women, and, having a good education was the only way for women to overcome financial, social and emotional problems.

b. Work life:

Six out of ten women had a work experience, three of them before they came to Istanbul, three of them after they came to Istanbul, but all before they got married. For all these women, working was a way to help with the financial situation of their families. Even if they did not work themselves they had siblings who were working. Thus the meaning of work was first of all a step toward adequate means.

When we arrived in Istanbul my siblings could find work. Our financial situation improved (Line -62) one went to a restaurant; the other was a hand seller (line 70) they went to school at the same time. They could afford their school expenses. They could also support my father. (Kerime, line 72-76).

However, only two out of six women stated that work was an empowering experience. Both of these women worked in Istanbul in the textile ateliers, both quit after they got married, and both had very good memories regarding their work days. The difference between them and the others was that the others worked while they were back in the village as seasonal workers which was physically exhausting and provided little chance to socialize. Moreover, the decision to work was not given by them. These women stated that they had to work, they had to get used to working because they had no other chance and that working was still better than waiting for someone to help or asking for help.

These two women who worked in Istanbul and described it as an empowering experience were Aliye and Şule. Aliye could not go to school and she decided to work at the age of ten, despite her father's oppositions.

I'd taken my siblings to school. I saw a lady. She was in front of a door. There was a sign on the door. I could not read it. I asked her whether they were looking for a worker. She said yes. I said I had no work experience. But I terribly wanted to work. (line 95-97) [...] (My father) said no. Because he said you are very young. I said they need two workers. My sister wanted to come as well. We started the same day... (Aliye, line 101).

For both Aliye and Şule work meant spending the day producing something instead of sitting at home doing nothing; which made them feel good. .

When I worked I felt better. I was both working and learning. I did not understand how the time passed. (Aliye, line 258-261).

No we did not have any troubles. Those were beautiful days. We did not know how the days passed. But now the days don't pass. (Şule, line 486).

Work was also a place to socialize and meet new people. Şule for example had many good friends whom she is still in touch with; she met her husband at work. Aliye, similarly, stated that she got used to socializing with both women and men through spending time with the other workers. She also thought that working helped her better understand herself and her feelings.

It was very nice. Before I worked I was ashamed of going out. Whenever I saw a man I hid. When I went back to the village there were people in the room. I just went in, I didn't care. But before I worked, I would run away. When somebody came, I went to my room and locked the room. Or I would prepare some food in the kitchen and hand it in to my mother so that she would take it to the guests. We would not go near them even. When you start working you understand how to behave, how you feel. It was very important for me. Because I did not go to school I wanted to work. (Aliye, line 171-175).

According to Aliye, she could not have said no to the first marriage offer if she did not gain the courage to speak out at work.

If I had not worked I would not be able to say no. I was used to talking to men because I worked with them. So I was not ashamed, I just went in the room and said that I did not want to get married. (Aliye, line 286).

Another important function of the work for Aliye and Şule was that they learned how to speak Turkish and a bit of reading and writing. For Aliye, her boss was a teacher and a female role model in many ways. Her boss did not force her to do anything but showed her alternatives (such as the way she dressed up) and let her choose whatever she wanted. She was also helpful in making Aliye more social by asking her family's permission.

She said “If you want to get dresses like I do I can find you clothes”. My father did not let us wear certain clothes. She said “ I don’t want you to dress very openly, but if you want to dress that way you are free to” There was circumcision feast. She gave me a skirt and a sweater. They took photos of us. She gave me a copy of that photo. Then she said “we will dress up nicely and we will eat some food, we wil have some fun” She phoned my mother and told her that I would be late...We danced and had fun. (Aliye, line 191-199).

All of the women stated that they wanted to work, first, because they were bored at home, second, in order to bring in an additonal income to send their children to school, and to feel like doing something. Kerime stated that it was a way to stand on your own two feet. However, none of them currently worked because either they had no one to leave their children to or their husbands did not let them.

When I quit working I felt bad. I wanted to go on working and bring money home to help. He said “No, I won’t let you work, everyone will say that I am letting my wife work”. I was home...I was just married.I was bored at home.Then came the children and so I am at home... (Şule, line 193-195).

If I worked I would feel happier.Because one gets bored at home. If I start working, I can also go to a course to learn reading and writing on the weekends. I want it so much. (Aliye, line 397).

I would like to work to support my husband. But my children are too young now. I don’t know whether he would let me or not, but I would like to... (Aytül, line 376-378).

c. Friends:

It was only two women, Aliye and Şule, who talked about friends in Istanbul. This was understandable because it was very difficult for the women to meet new people if they did not go to school or work. Even Aytül who had work experience explained how it was impossible for her to meet “unfamiliar (*yabancı*) friends” leading a life between home and work where there was no one but relatives.

Well the friends...I could not meet unfamiliar (*yabancı*) friends because there were only relatives. I was going to work and back home. We went in the morning.. came back in the evening...came back at night. We had no such thing as friends. I mean I could not live my maidenhood. And because I was married at a young age... (Aytül, line 187).

However for Şule and Aliye work experience was a chance for them to meet new people. Şule remembered the days before marriage with joy as they could meet with friends and go out for fun.

We went out on the weekends. I mean it is really not like the villages. There was no place to go around. But here there is whatever you want. We went to Taksim, we went to Maçka...In the village everyone works, there is no time for anything else. It is not like that here. We went out with friends from work. (Şule, line 97-107).

For Aliye, her friend's support and encouragement to say no to the first marriage offer was very empowering.

There were men inside asking for my hand. I had a friend she said "If you don't want go there and say that you don't want it they cannot do anything". (Aliye, line 280).

For the others, socializing solely meant either going to close relatives or in-laws. It was also a matter of trust for the people outside the family. For example Leman spoke of how hard it was for her to trust anyone and get in social relations.

I need to be affected at first sight. But if I don't get it then I feel cold towards that person. That is my personality. I don't like to go out. I choose my friends. For example now there is no one whom I call a friend. Nobody. As they say you say something you hear it from the other. Because I had such an experience I really don't have any friends. No one... (Leman, line 178).

d. Neighbors:

Interestingly none of the women talked about a close relationship with the neighbors. The women spent most of their time alone with the children or went to their parents' or in-laws' homes. Three women stated that they were in touch with their neighbors. Eser talked about two neighbors with whom she was still in touch. Şirin talked about gathering at neighbors' houses to pour out their grievances, but these neighbors were relatives at the same time. For Alev, it took quite a long time not to lock the door and accept people to her house because she felt that everything outside the home could be a source of threat.

I was a stranger I did not go out. Because I did not know anyone. I had no relatives I was afraid to go out. I did not know if the people outside were bad...Line 25-27) I locked the door and sit in the room(Line 41) Now I have neighbors. Now my door is unlocked. Now everybody can come in (Alev, line 192).

Another reason why they did not go to their neighbors' houses was that they were afraid their children would not sit still and cause trouble, which would cause a bad reputation on their motherhood. For Şirin it was almost impossible because she had one five year old daughter and two of her older children were retarded.

Nobody will look after them. I say my daughter stay home, I will go I 'l be back quickly. I go fast, I come back. Who will look after them? (Showing her elder children) Who will look after them? The neighbors don't want them... Who will bear such a problem? (Şirin, line 59-63).

What if these children do something, I cannot leave them at home, I cannot take them to the neighbors either. I don't want them to speak about me...So I am always at home. (Eser, line 269).

And there are the children. They won't sit still. They can break up things. One cannot take them to other people's houses. I don't want them to harm others' houses (Feride, line 221-224).

As stated in the section about the problems, some women felt uneasy because of the fact that there were Romany people in their neighborhoods. It was interesting

to see that while they were socially excluded, they also excluded Roma as not belonging to their life. Their way of coping with this problem was to keep away from them and warn them if necessary.

I sometimes tell them. My husband is a bit shy. He cannot talk. So I talk. I told them not to bring the garbage in the street. (Seda, line 336-340).

6. Assistance from Social Institutions:

All ten women stated that they needed and applied for social assistance. However as stated in the problems section, very few could attain it and the help they got was temporary and insufficient. In that sense to say yes to the question whether social institutions assistance is helpful or not, is not easy. It is important to note here that women are the main actors who run after these social assistance institutions, even though they are illiterate, they don't know much about bureaucratic processes and sometimes they are not very fluent in Turkish.

I went to the coordination of women. I applied for the help provided by the municipality... But nothing came out of it. He said your father has to look after you. There is no help for you. I said well my husband is in the military, my father-in-laws is not in İstanbul either. Who is going to look after me? How am I going to feed my children? (Line 249) I have been working for the green card for 3-4 months now. I prepared all the papers... (Feride, line 253).

After my husband went to do his military service I applied for the marriage certificate. I went to the executive officer and asked him to give the salary for the children while my husband is away. My husband said don't bother to but I ran after it. (Line 329) [...] Then my husband came back and said he had no money. I told him that the salary while he was away was still available. We could rent the new house with that money (Aliye, line 365).

Only two of them currently were receiving regular help, which was food brought by a truck to the district every day.

They bring the food here by cars. We go and get it from the cars. What else can we do? And it is good. They provide me with bread it is good... (Alev, line 145-149).

Now I get food for free. They bring it by a car. There is a shop in İstiklal street where I can get clothes for free. It is good. They gave me tickets I went to the supermarket to do some shopping. It will last for 3 months. (Şirin, line 42-60).

They stated that any kind of help was useful for them, but especially the help for the children's education and health. Another thing that they mentioned was the attitude of the social worker. For example Feride talked about a social worker which provided health control for free and how helpful it was.

She was good. It was 6-7 years ago. They had a place in the neighborhood where they did health check for free. It was very good. It was good that our needs were met. (Feride, line 225-231).

He was a very nice person. He came to the house he looked at the house he asked some questions. He gave us a paper, and told us to go to the Rotary place. Then I had a salary for six months... (Şirin, line 181).

An Overall Evaluation of the Women

This study was formulated in order to identify the coping mechanisms and resilience capacities the women use and develop in the face of adversities. Thus the main question that it needs to answer is which of the women define themselves as more resilient, which of the coping mechanisms they use more and which they find more useful. However, it would be neither easy nor accurate to decide on the more resilient women with no standardized measure at hand. On the other hand, it is not possible to find such a valid measure with the population in question and personal stories provide a much richer and in depth source of information from a broader perspective. Keeping this in mind, this section will be an evaluation of each woman

regarding which coping mechanisms she uses and how she enriches her resilience capacities.

As was discussed in the literature, women are more resilient when they can benefit from personal strengths and social support systems along with emotional and problem-focused coping mechanisms. Based on this, there were especially three women, Şule, Aliye and Eser who stood out to fit the description above. They described themselves as “persistent, powerful, and rebellious when necessary”, in contrast with the traditional coping styles of women. Traditionally, it was hard for the women to take an active stance to take control of the problems in their lives, and they usually tried to overcome the problems either by keeping silent, accepting their fate, being patient, keeping the problem inside, and saying that they “have to” (*mecbur*) to stand the hardships of life.

It is very important to note that the others were not passive in finding solutions in their lives. In fact, all of them were very active, creative and successful in dealing with everyday problems such as taking care of the house, childcare, and finding help from institutions. In that sense, they tried to use both emotional and problem-focused coping mechanisms in their struggle. In the past, Kerime tried to insist on going to school, Aytül, Alev and Şirin tried to talk with their parents about not to get married with men they did not know. Currently, Feride, Seda and Şirin dealt with paperwork to get financial support from institutions for social assistance and tried to persuade the officials that they were really in need of help. However, first, they could not attain what they asked for, second, in some cases they really felt helpless as in the case of their displacement from the villages and, third and maybe as a result of these two, they did not choose to describe themselves as strong and persistent in leading their life. Thus both the new poverty conditions and the role that

was piled on them as “daughters, brides, mothers or women” led them to choose emotion-focused coping strategies and accept a rather passive stance in life.

What was different with the three women who described themselves as more in control of their lives seemed to depend on the fact that they had more “alternatives”, and more “sources of support” in their lives in addition to their insistence on changing their lives. Şule and Aliye used their work experience as a way to meet with people other than their families, to learn new things, to improve themselves in terms of educational advantages that they lacked. They both married with men that they chose and could work on their marital problems as well as other problems. Aliye had a very important familial support, his brother, who helped her with problems concerning migration, adaptation to Istanbul, and with her conflicts with her family about her decisions to work and marry. Likewise Şule and Eser had very strong mother figures which still provided support in their current lives both physically and emotionally. Their description of their personalities also gave signs of their resilience capacities; Şule stated that she did not let problems bring her down and Aliye stated that she was a persistent person, not leaving any decision unrealized once it was made. For Eser, her mother’s support and encouragement in defining women as “strong and resistant” and her father’s insistence that she finished primary school helped her to stand upright along with the “strength” that came within her.

There were four women, Aytül, Seda, Alev and Şirin, who described themselves as lacking both personal strengths and social resources of support and presented themselves as passive sufferers of the hard life conditions. At no point in their lives they could make their own decisions, they continuously used expressions like “*mecbur*”, “*çekmek*”, “What can I do?”, and “God knows better”. It was interesting to see that Seda, Alev and Şirin were among the elder women, they

arrived in Istanbul more recently and they were the least fluent in Turkish. None of them talked about their parents, relatives, friends or neighbors as very important figures in their lives. Şirin had two children who were mentally retarded; Alev had no children and could not get treatment because they had no money. They all said that they had no plans for themselves, but could feel better if they can have their children educated; Şirin and Alev did not have that hope either.

The remaining three women, Kerime, Leman and Feride could not be placed in either of the groups above. They resembled the second group in terms of how they generally coped with problems. They stated that they kept their problems inside; they tried to be patient, and did not see themselves as “strong and persistent” but “weak, unloved, and not clever”. However, their lives seemed somewhat different from the women in the second group. For example Kerime and Feride were both eager to marry when they were asked even though both were arranged marriages. However, Kerime was currently very upset for not achieving a financially and emotionally fulfilling life. Feride seemed very content with her relationship with her husband, but he was the only support for her. Leman was the only woman who ran away with her husband, but felt so guilty about it that she had no sense of asking for any sort of help from any member of the family; she had no support from the in-laws anyway. Her mother and especially her sisters played an important role in her life in providing emotional support, but she always felt she did not have the right to ask for anything, and preferred to keep silent in order not to make mischief between any of the relatives, including her husband, her parents, her relatives and her in-laws. They had other advantages which helped them struggle with daily stressors. For example, their adaptation to Istanbul was less problematic as Kerime and Leman had gone to school, and they lived here for quite a long time; they were very fluent in Turkish.

Feride had no language problem either as her family had Turkish speaking neighbors when she was young. Another striking characteristic of Feride was that she was the only woman who laughed all throughout the interview even when she was talking about serious emotional problems.

After this brief discussion on women, it is now possible to compare these results with their SF-36 scores, which is also a self-evaluation of their physical and emotional state of health. Among the women who defined themselves as more active and persistent in tolerating, enduring and finding solutions to the hardships of life, Şule had parallel results regarding her SF-36 scores. Both her mental and physical health score were the highest among the women. However the same cannot be said concerning Aliye and Eser. Eser got very low scores on all the subscales, Aliye got quite high scores in physical functioning, general health and social functioning which was parallel with her self-presentation, but got very low scores on role functioning physical (referring to the extent which physical health interferes with work or other daily activities, including accomplishing less than wanted, limitations in the kind of activities or difficulty in performing activities) and role functioning emotional (referring to the extent which emotional problems interfere with work or other daily activities including decreased time spent on activities, accomplishing less, and not working as carefully as usual) subscales.

Among the women who presented themselves as more passive and weak in the face of adversities, Aytül and Alev got very low scores in all the subscales except for social functioning, in parallel with their interviews. Seda got quite high scores except for Role physical and Role emotional subscales. Şirin interestingly got the highest scores except for Role Emotional subscale.

Among the remaining three women, Leman had the highest scores in all the subscales except for Role emotional. Kerime's scores were above average when compared with others and Feride's scores were quite high except for Role physical and Role emotional.

It seems difficult to find a consistency between the interviews and the SF-36 scores; however it might be more meaningful to look at the general results of the SF-36 scores for all the women.

Although it is objectionable to make generalizations and make a healthy discussion over a sample composed of ten people, it would not be erroneous to say that general evaluation of the women and their SF-36 scores support the first and second hypotheses. The women who spoke from an active stance seemed to be more successful in benefiting from more personal and social sources and have developed a stronger sense of self. Yet an overall evaluation of the coping mechanisms they use brings forth a more passive and emotion focused type of approaching to the problems including the three women who seemed to be more resilient. It is however not possible to find a parallel between the first two findings and SF-36 scores as these scores were low for all the women, and it is very difficult to find consistencies between the subscale scores and the women's narratives. Thus the third hypothesis is not verified. Despite this very general evaluation, it seems more meaningful in a qualitative study to elaborate on the emergent themes and categories and make a discussion within the framework of social, cultural and gendered context that the women's life is situated in. Therefore the next chapter is configured with such a concern.

DISCUSSION

The emergent themes in the results section enumerated the kind of socio-economic burden and its psychological impacts the participants lived both in the past and at present. The main objective of the present study was to demonstrate how the

women responded to and coped with these demanding conditions and whether and how these responses and coping strategies helped them withstand these adversities.

A general look at the problems reveals that the emergent categories are primarily based on deep poverty although not merely explicable by it. The women talked mainly about the hardships of life caused by all forms of deprivation, but there were many other fields such as marital and familial problems and problems concerning children reflecting their issues in their gender roles as daughters, wives, brides, mothers, and women. However, at many points these problem areas and new poverty were interrelated as they developed within the context of chronic poverty. Moreover, the participants had almost non-existent resources (educational, financial and social support) from which they could benefit from.

In such a context it is very understandable that most of the women did not report any solutions towards solving the problems in the face of incredibly hard conditions. Similarly, the way they narrated even the most traumatic events, the very daily and casual language they used, the relative lack of anger, rage or revolt seemed to reflect their habituation and normalization of these events. It appeared as if they had no chance but to live with the unchangeable life conditions that were given to them; the frequency of the word "*mecbur*" was very meaningful in this sense.

Consequently, the problem of conceptualizing how they experience the adversities and solutions they bring to them in such a context cannot be fully understood without approaching it from three angles, namely in its relation with the larger issues of poverty, culture, and finally, as a topic that cuts across the former two, gender. A closer look at the problem and coping categories aims to reflect how and to what extent, the responses of the women are shaped by these three angles.

Research Questions

Research Question 1

The first research question regarding the migration processes was asked to have a better idea about the background of the problems and coping strategies which the women used in their present lives. There are two things to be emphasized regarding the results: First, despite the very hard and traumatic experience, women did not talk much about the migration process itself. Second, their narratives depicted a normalized and habitual way of talking about these actually dreadfully traumatic experiences. These two points are evaluated after an elaboration on the results in more detail in the following part.

Results show that regardless of the particular reason behind it, all the participants migrated involuntarily. Lack of security due to conflicts based on ethnic identities and poverty were very interrelated; there were no alternatives for the people to find any jobs and provide a minimum life standard for themselves and for their families. Moreover all the women except for the ones who were married, had arrived in Istanbul as children who had no choice but to follow their families. As Akhtar (1999) points out, even when the parents migrate voluntarily, there is always a risk of involuntariness on the part of the child as there is no other choice.

For the women who migrated at younger ages two main themes emerged. As was stated in the literature, parental absence seemed to be one of the most important risk factors for how the child lived this process (Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1998; Ajdukovic, 1998; Fazel and Stein, 2002; Montgomery & Foldspang, 2001). There is a growing interest in how both the parents and children live the disintegration of the family and being left behind (Goldstein & Goldstein, 1981, Solien de Gonzales, 1961, Parrenas, 2001, Orellana et al., 2001, Rae-Espinoza, 2006, Pottinger, 2005).

Although in these studies the children are left to the relatives for longer periods of time such as more than 4-5 years while either or both of the parents migrate to another city or country for work, they give important clues as to how these children feel being left behind (Goldstein & Goldstein, 1981). The problems in these studies include not being able to share daily life concerns, feeling as a burden on the relatives, suffering from heavy work load such as cleaning, cooking, childcare or outside labor. These problems lead to difficulties such as somatic complaints, feelings of anger and loneliness and low performance at school (Parrenas, 2001, Orellana, 2001, Pottinger, 2005). These findings seem very similar to what the participants such as Leman, Aliye, and Aytül went through. However, it is again in the literature that not all children are affected so badly; some children don't live it as abandonment. Having someone to talk to, living in a supportive family and knowing that it is temporary are very helpful. Strong attachment to a substitute caregiver like a sibling can compensate the loss experience (Pottinger, 2005, Rae-Espinoza, 2006, Espin, 1987). In order to cope with being left behind, Leman's saying to herself that the separation period was temporary and Aliye's close relation to her brother were good examples supporting the findings in the literature.

Regarding the women who came to Istanbul via marriage, the migration process was neither voluntary nor any easier. It was involuntary because first they had to get married because their families wanted it, second they had to follow their husbands wherever their husbands could earn money and third their husbands had no chance but to come to Istanbul to to make a living. Here the economical, cultural and gender based conflicts intersect one more time; causing the women to end up in a place to which they feel completely estranged. Moreover, the adaptation process seemed to be harder and take longer as they were older in age, deprived of any

familial support, and with no chance of having access to any educational or social facilities.

Thus, migration was a very hard, disruptive and involuntary process for all the women. It was experienced as a sudden interruption in their life courses as they had to leave their homes, villages, lands and cultures that they were born into. There was nothing that the new city presented to them, either. The ongoing uncertainties, insecurities and never ending mobility made the migration process even harder. Ending up with the same if not worse conditions in Istanbul, perceiving no improvement after the marriage either and witnessing its aggravation caused a serious deterioration on the psychological and physical health of the women such that it seems almost impossible to elaborate on their feelings anymore. The intense feelings of vulnerability and helplessness became the dominant feelings which in the course of time seemed to be habituated. The pressure of being under continuous threat in the residential area which is supposed to provide one with a holding environment brings about overloaded feelings of insecurity and anxiety. The feelings of insecurity and exhaustion induced by the temporariness of their settlements, not having any resources to meet their basic needs, and living it as a never ending process lead to helplessness and normalization of it after a certain period of time as was also discussed in the literature (Prewill-Diaz et al., 1990; Sluszki, 1979).

It was stated at the beginning of this section that women did not elaborate much on their migratory experiences and when they did, they used an astonishingly normalizing language. This seems to be a reflection of the habituation and normalization process described above. Considering the lack of resources and personal control, it is very understandable to see women not reflecting their problems outside, but enduring the hardest conditions out of necessity (*mecburen*), and seeing

God as the only support. It must also be highlighted that this kind of coping is also very much related with the gender role that the culture imposes, demanding conformity to the hard patriarchal rules and silent endurance in the face of adversities.

In the following sections the problem areas which shed light on their daily issues and the lack of sources they needed to overcome these problems since their childhood will be discussed in more detail.

Research Question 2

As was stated before the first thing that must be emphasized regarding the problems of the women in their current lives is that, the emergent themes reflected the hardships of life mainly based on new poverty conditions which appeared to influence other areas such as familial and marital problems. These problems were also closely related with the roles given to them by the patriarchy. Bryce and Walker (1988) found a similar result in their study where they used grounded theory to look at the life experiences among low-income mothers who escaped from the war situation in Beirut. Despite the pervasiveness of the war's reported influence on the daily lives of the women, problems characteristic of being young women and mothers were frequently reported. These included marital discord, personal problems with parents or in-laws, and concerns about one's children.

The problem area that was pronounced most, regarding the women's life both before and after marriage, was financial. The discussion on the disparity between the kind of employment in the big city and the skills of new immigrants leading to an underclass was applicable to the group of people in question as they lacked the material and social resources that they needed for any integration (Keyder, 2005;

Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Yılmaz, 2003). In this sense their feelings of hopelessness and lack of expectations was very understandable and parallel to the findings in literature (Belle, 1990; Bhui et al., 2005; Bynner, 2001; Coiro, 2001; Diener et al., 2003; Hulme et al., 2001; Juby & Rycraft 2004; Miranda & Bruce, 2002; Myers & Gill, 2004; Parke et al., 2004).

Another finding regarding financial problems was that, before marriage, their emotional stress was based on not their own deprivation, but their parents' stress. Similar results were found in a qualitative study on children in new poverty, where children were mindful and worried about their parents' financial situation and their capacity to pay bills (Ridge, 2004). The investigation of life experiences reported in open-ended questionnaires reveals that sad events experienced by relatives were reported both by children and by adolescents more frequently than those experienced by the subjects themselves (Yurtbay et al., 2005). This might be partially due to their not separating the concerns of the parents from their own needs. It might also be related with the fact that the high degree of their parent's emotional stress affected very much how they lived poverty (Parke et al., 2004, Dennis, 2003, Vandergriff-Avery et al., 2004). It is also possible that the women were well aware of their financial conditions and felt and sometimes were held equally responsible for struggling with the poverty conditions when they were children.

The deep poverty that the women were situated in left them deprived of different social support systems. Education was one of the basic supports perceived by the women. However they had to quit school and start working at very young ages. This was related with the fact that their school expenses could not be afforded, but it was also clear that boys were preferred over girls if there was a chance for either of them. The roles that were given by the culture were predominantly

mothering and caregiving at home. These were in line with the related literature on similar populations (Çağlayan, 2007; İlkaracan & İlkaracan, 1998; Sunar & Fişek, 2005). It was also stated in the results that there was only one woman who was sent to school after the family migrated to Istanbul. This is an indication of how it is almost impossible for the urban poor to afford education expenses and get integrated into social life. It is shown in the literature that even if they have the chance, they are unable to gain academic success and are exposed to social exclusion because of the attitudes of teachers, peers or school staff (Prewill- Diaz, 1990; Pumariega et al., 2005).

As a replacement of the school life most women entered the work life at very young ages. Here too whether it was presented as a source of resilience or vulnerability depended upon gendered and culturally based perceptions of it. As is extensively demonstrated in the literature, child labor puts children's physical, emotional and cognitive development at risk (Altuntaş, 2003; Atauz, 1990; Panter-Brick, 2002). Although all the women talked about the physical and emotional difficulties of work life at a very young age, there were certain differences as to how they perceived and lived the work experience. The first difference seemed to be related with working before and after migration. The ones who worked before migration were seasonal workers, an experience which was both physically and emotionally wearisome. For these women working in the farms alone or with relatives was in no means a way out to meet with new people. The ones who worked in Istanbul were in textile ateliers, a sector in which children in poverty are mostly employed (Aker, Ayata, Özeren, Boran, Bay, 2002; Altuntaş, 2003; Çağlayan, 2007). Ironically, despite the hard conditions, work was usually perceived as a source of support. The only woman who lived it as a problem, Aytül was different from the

others in the sense that she did not start working of her own will, but had to work as the eldest child of in her family, and worked with members from her extended family. It is argued in the literature that being the oldest child in the family means being more open to risk factors such as being sent to work leading to school dropouts which is usually the case for sons, but for daughters as well especially among the poorest (Amin et al., 2004).

In line with the literature, the participants suffered from having to get married at very young ages as soon as they reached puberty. Thus after leaving school and a short period of work life either outside or inside the home as substitute mothers, they were expected to be housewives of their own families. Arranged marriages at very young ages in turn brought along marital problems (Sunar, 2002; Sunar & Fişek, 2005). *Berdel* marriage and marriage with patrilineal cousin, and marriage at a young age were described in the literature as a source of marital problems as well (Bayrak, 2002; Çağlayan, 2007; İlkaracan, 1998). The results depicted that four out of ten were married to cousins and three had *berdel* marriages. The high percentage can be culturally and financially explained. The marriage is financially more possible and efficient; as direct wife and sister exchanges eliminate the payment of bride-price in marriages (Çağlayan, 2007, Bayrak, 2002). Likewise endogamy keeps property in the family and reinforces patriarchal and tribal solidarity (Sunar & Fişek, 2005).

It must be mentioned that the women described their mental life as revolving around themes of lack of intimacy, expectation, absence of husband similar to the findings in the literature (Bora & Üstün, 2005; Fıfıloğlu, 2001). Altuntaş's (2003) discussion on women who did not find their husbands supportive, and complain about their wasting time in "*kahvehane*"s was valid for some of the subjects of this

study, too. As Erman (2003) stated they were mostly affected by the poverty because they were the ones who stayed at home and struggled with the poor conditions. These problems described above increased exponentially after the children were born. The psychological impact of parenting in deeply deprived conditions was analogous with the related studies both in Turkish and Western countries (Altuntaş, 2003; Bora, 2002; Bynner, 2001; Coiro, 2001; Dennis et al., 2003; Parke et al., 2004; Ridge, 2004).

Despite the fact that relatives were still perceived as reliable spouses for a good and stable marriage, there was reference to problems concerning relations with the extended family members. The results showed that women's concerns regarding in-laws were feeling strange, not having enough attention, being used as labor and feeling continuous control over their life. The ones who had to live in the same house complained about continuously working similar to the picture in previous studies (Çağlayan, 2007; Yalçın-Heckmann, 1993). Moreover these were mostly unpaid activities; not economically rewarded nor socially valued (Belle 1990; Beneria & Bisnath, 1996; Cole et al., 2001).

One other problem that caused the main pressure was the impossibility of getting a divorce or almost having no chance to oppose the pressure of the families. This was very much related with honor, an issue that is important for the whole family and is defined through the women and marriage among relatives, and embedded relations with the extended family members acts as an obstacle to divorce and look for other ways of empowerment (Çağlayan, 2007; Erman, 2001; İlkaracan & İlkaracan, 1998; Sever & Yurdakul, 2001).

The problems stated above reflect what women live in their own families, too. The family's decision on behalf of the daughter concerning education, work life,

marriage and the heavy responsibilities of caregiving for the crowded family, showed the fine line between “childhood” and “adulthood” for them. However, it must also be stated that the participants usually choose to internalize these gender roles and felt good about performing it well. They also did not want to lose the closeness with their parents; especially their fathers which was also pointed out in the study of Bora and Üstün (2005) on familial relations. They seemed to be going along with the rules of the family for the sake of not losing their status of “being the appropriate or good daughter”. It seems that the nonverbal relation between the girls and their fathers was based on maintaining being a good daughter.

The psychological state of the women in their relation with all these problem areas discussed above seem to converge in a sense of getting stuck in a tight corner. This is both emotionally and physically visible in the women’s daily lives in the sense that they spend most of their lives within the limits of first their homes and second their neighborhood.

The state of being secluded at home is closely related with issues concerning migration, new poverty, gender, and culture. The studies on women both in Turkey and the world reveal that external migration has an empowering affect on them via providing more opportunities to participate in educational, economical, vocational and social life (Aroian, Norris, & Chiang, 2003; Bolak, 1997; Erman, 1998; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1990; Özbay & Yücel, 2001; Parrado et al., 2005). However, this does not seem to be the case for the population in question. Although the urban life has brought many changes for women, the patriarchal system described in the previous sections has not changed and even got stricter (Çağlayan, 2007; Erman, 2001). Moreover women, who practice agriculture and animal husbandry before migration, lose their productive role outside home; they also are excluded from the society

because of language difficulties, and losing their social relations (Aker et al., 2002; Barut, 2002; as cited in Üstel, 2004). They also don't work because they are not qualified, or because they don't have anyone to leave their children who need primary care (Altuntaş, 2003).

Regarding the socialization problems for women, it was found that it became even more difficult after they got married. As the women were perceived as being handed to their husband's patronage, the issue of honor and the limitations it brought along caused the women to perceive it with all its weight. For example even if the women had the chance of socializing in their premarital lives, they seemed to have lost this chance after marriage. Socializing with friends was possible only if the friends were also women and the meetings were organized within homes.

Considering the heavy responsibilities of the marital life, it was evident that even such socialization practices could hardly be realized. Also in the marital life, the way men and women differed in their socializing was striking. The participants' way of describing their way of socializing seemed to be based on functional reasons such as shopping, running after children's health or educational problems and finding social assistance where as for their husbands being bored of the stress at home was enough to go to meet with friends at the "*kahvehane*". This might also be interpreted as the women's general way of spending their time not for themselves for the house and its responsibilities.

As the women spent most of their time at home, their perception of their homes emerged as another central issue. The participants were all born into crowded families, and the very small houses of Tarlabası left no place for private life. The situation was no different after they got married if they were to live with the in-laws which was usually the case since they could not afford another house immediately.

They had certain coping strategies to beautify the inside of the house, but they were helpless regarding the outside look of the flats and it seemed really difficult to give the house a shape as there were no means to. Even if they did, there was not much to be done concerning the problems in terms of basic facilities; they did not feel secure either. Last but not least; they had no perception of a possibility of going out of the place. They felt doomed to live in these houses and felt the spatial segregation everyday (Çakmak, 1998; as cited in İlkaracan & İlkaracan 1998; Yılmaz, 2003). Another interesting theme that emerged was the comparison between the houses of Tarlabası and the ones in their homelands. As part of the psychological process regarding their migration, the houses that they belonged to were horizontally spacious and open giving them freedom to move whereas the houses of Istanbul this freedom seems to get lost both physically and symbolically. The way some women such as Feride described how she could not get used the vertical and narrow shape of the houses and stairs was a good example of these feelings.

As Gibson (2001) stated, the unskilled masses of immigrants who were no longer able to participate in the social and economical life, were usually doomed to reside in the most desolate sections of large cities surrounded by high rates of crime, poverty, and unemployment, which was precisely parallel to the experiences of the participants who had no hope of change. Yılmaz (2003) points to the spatial ambiguity in Tarlabası in the sense that it is geographically close, but socio-economically very distant to the central part of the city. Although the women did not openly state the discrepancy between their life experiences and the high standards in Beyoğlu which is spatially very close to them, their way of comparing what they lived and what they saw on the streets or on TV about Istanbul, seemed to be an important reason of their demoralization concerning their present and future life. The

literature looking at the relation between neighborhood and mental health come up with similar results. The individuals who live in neighborhoods where social control has collapsed and where drug use, fights, vandalism, litter and crime are common experience a higher level distress and of subjective powerlessness than others. This also causes weaker social ties to neighbors (Geis & Ross, 1998; Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn, & Duncan, 1994).

Growing up and living in such a restricted environment led the women to feel insufficient in problem solving strategies in their daily lives even though most did perform necessities such as payment of bills. Moreover, they had continuous experience of disappointment every time they applied for social support. Women felt that they lacked the qualifications to carry out the bureaucratic procedures in the social institutions. However, what bothered them more seemed to be not attaining any help despite their hard struggle. It is argued in the relevant studies that public services were far from meeting the needs of the people and that the support and intervention of both the state and the nongovernmental organizations were very insufficient (Bora, 2005; Erder, 2002; Erman, 2003; Keyder, 2005). The discussion on the welfare culture which refers to the dependency on the welfare system and repeated procedures of asking for help and repeated failures, adding up to the stressful life conditions is very relevant to what the participants went through in their everyday lives (Belle, 1990; Cole et al., 1992). Being stigmatized and feelings of shame and humiliation were also apparent in what participants such as Eser lived with her experience concerning her daughter's work experience in the street (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003; Ridge, 2004).

Evaluation of the SF-36 Scores

As it was stated in the results section, it is not possible to make any generalizations based on such a small sample size and large variations in range and standard deviations. However, eyeballing individual subscale scores indicated low scores especially on the emotional functioning subscales. The low scores concerning emotional and physical functioning are very understandable, when the physical conditions, their settlements, the poor nutrition, heavy work load regarding housework and childcare, and their struggle to survive are taken into consideration. This is parallel with the results in the literature; crowded families, low levels of education, irregular income, migration and lack of security leads to low score of SF-36 on all the subscales (Bilir et al., 2005; Salsberry, 1999). On the other hand, they got the highest score on social functioning which was not found in the literature. Social functioning refers to the extent to which physical health or emotional problems do not interfere with normal social activities. As these women are usually at home, and social functioning means merely regular visits to relatives or institutions which are both somewhat obligatory they might think that their health does not interfere with it.

The low scores in both mental and physical health are in line with the few studies carried out with a similar population (Aker et al., 2002; İlkkaracan & İlkkaracan, 1998; Şahin et al., 2004; Yurtbay et al., 2003). The studies on Kurdish village people who took refuge in a nearby town show that the adverse affects of forced migration such as high percentages of depression, panic disorders, attention deficit and somatizations. Intense feelings of hopelessness, uneasiness, repressed anger and insecurity are common, especially in children and women (Aker et al., 2002; Şahin et al., 2004).

Research question 3-4

Looking at the results, the first thing that must be emphasized is that there are almost no resources to help women cope with the deep deprivation. The social support from the environment is almost non-existent, too. Thus it is understandable for the general affinity to use emotional coping strategies such as withstanding silently, thinking that they have to bear, using downward comparison or hope that God will help them rather than taking action towards solving the problem. These coping strategies that will be discussed in more detail in the following section cannot be evaluated without the new poverty context. Moreover, the fact that they have to face these problems as Kurdish citizens and women growing up in the eastern culture and under strict patriarchy, provides an important background so that a thoroughly evaluation can be made.

A similar discussion is carried out in the literature. Even though in the western literature the definition of resilience is based on the ability to withstand emotionally unsafe experiences and have an inclination to perceive experiences constructively and that passive responses reflected a lack of physical action directed at obtaining help or solving the problem, when there is lack of resources and sources of support, it is more adaptive to maintain an emotion focused problem solving approach from a passive stance (Masten, Best, & Garnezy, 1990; Rutter, 1987).

These discussions are parallel to the findings of eastern cultures. It was stated in the literature that the reason behind this preference was to a great extent based on the environmental conditions not leaving any room to any other language (Abuzahra, 2004; Bryce & Walker, 1988; Dill et al., 1980; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Bryce and Walker (1988) analyzed the responses that women gave to war-related, poverty-related and personal problems in two groups; active and passive responses. The passive responses included hiding their distress, thinking about the problem and

interpreting their experience in the light of some larger attitude or philosophy. It was stated that passive responses reflected lack of physical action directed at obtaining help or solving the problem. This meant at the same time a perception of helplessness in changing their situation which also explained the heavy emphasis on fatalism. In their study with low income mothers Dill et al. (1980) also found that women felt no control over the traumatic life events and used mechanisms such as denial and minimization of these events. Noh et al. (1999) found similar results in their study with Asian refugees from the southeast living in Canada facing racial discrimination. They argued that problem-focused coping did not necessarily mean a more adaptive mechanism than emotion focused strategies.

At this point the literature on locus of control and expectancy theory provides very relevant information. According to Expectancy Theory (Shore, 1997), taking action depends on the desirability of a goal and the expectation that the goal can be attained by one's actions. If they are unattainable the individual is led to a "hopeless state of mind" (Shore 1997; Corcoran et al., 1985). People's self-efficacy beliefs determine their level of motivation such that the stronger the belief in their capabilities, the greater and more persistent are their efforts. If there is continuous threat over which they have little control, it results in high levels of stress and anxiety arousal (Bandura, 1989). When the attempts to regain control and mastery of the environment cannot be realized, helplessness wins over further attempts to regain control (Shore, 1997). People in deeply deprived conditions tend to have external locus of control which is related with attributing the reasons for outcomes outside of the self such as due to luck, chance, fate or powerful persons (Juby & Rycraft 2004; Shore, 1997).

Coping strategies

In accordance with the literature on expectancy theory and locus of control, the narratives of the women reflected a position in which they felt desperation but yet went on with their struggles to survive. Their use of mechanisms like “enduring, patience, keeping it inside” as well as “spirituality and downward comparison” as the only means to cope with the high level of distress that spread out in every domain of their lives, was an indication of lack of resources caused by new poverty which lead to their admission, habituation and in that sense normalization of the problem.

However, the gender role given to the woman to conform, to silently withstand in the face of adverse conditions seemed to be socially and culturally constructed as well. For instance choosing to keep the problems inside was a consequence of the feeling that projecting it outside will lead to an increase in relational conflicts. A similar discussion was carried out in the literature, too (Bora & Üstün, 2005; Bora, 2002; Çağlayan, 2007). Noh et al. (1999) also argued that such an attitude could also be a reflection of cultural beliefs such as “adversity makes one a better person” or “to lose is to win”. It might be in this sense meaningful to give reference to similar sayings in this culture such as “ The pain which does not kill strengthens the person”, “God is testing us”, “One has to bear with what he faces” , “If there will be a problem, let it come from God who surely has a reason”³.

Spirituality was used by the participants where they had no one to ask for help but God, and was expected to work as a mechanism which dispenses justice at the end. This is also much related with external locus of control as the individual does not find any strength to change the situation but that fate, luck or a supernatural being will be an answer to problems. In the literature, it was accepted as a resilience

³ “Öldürmeyen acı güçlendirir”, “Allah bizi deniyor”, “Başa gelen çekilir”, “Gelirse Yaradandan gelsin elbet bir bildiği vardır”.

provoking factor, as well (Abuzahra, 2004; Leipert & Reutter, 2005; Grady, 2003; Juby & Rycraft, 2004; McCubbin & McCubbin, 1997; Vandergriff-Avery et al., 2004). It was also interesting that there were 3 women who did not mention religious beliefs as a way of coping. In the study where 72 people were interviewed regarding their perceptions of familial life events, Bora and Üstün (2005) surprisingly did not find religion as a primary source of support as it used to be. Yet it is to be further examined whether religion loses its function as a source of psychological relief.

Another mechanism that the women used was downward comparison which was presented as a coping method in a Turkish study with a similar population (Bora, 2002). Social comparison has been a topic that has been widely discussed in the literature (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1993; Buunk et al., 1990; Gibbons, 1986; Michinov, 2001; Wills, 1981). It has been argued in the literature that downward comparison enhances subjective well-being of the people who are in low self-esteem or feel that they are under threat (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1993; Wills, 1981). Such people benefit from downward comparison in a way that produces a favorable evaluation of the self, positive emotion, reduction of anxiety and a greater hope for the future (Buunk et al., 1990; Cairo, 2001; Gibbons, 1986; Wills, 1981). However, it is also possible to end up with a higher negative affect if witnessing the one who is worse-off is perceived as a possible threat for the subject of finding himself or herself in the same condition (Buunk, 1990; Juby and Rycraft, 2004; Michinov, 2001). Despite the conflicting findings regarding the effects of the kind and direction of social comparison on the emotional responses of the people, it is stated that both upward and downward comparison are capable of generating positive and negative affective responses depending on which aspect of the comparison is focused on (Buunk et al., 1990). Considering the population in question, it seems reasonable that downward

comparison led to an increase in their self-enhancement as they were under too much threat, too much distress and possibly had lower degrees of self-esteem.

Use of humor was accepted as a way to increase resilience capacities of people in trauma (Eishold, 2005; Franz & Stewart, 1994; Grossman & Moore, 1994; Luthar et al., 2000; Seccombe, 2002). Grossman and Moore (1994) talked about how women with traumatic histories used humor through out the interviews carried out with them. According to them use of humor was a sign of resilience and a way to distance from the emotional burden of the trauma. The participants of the present study did not express that that they used humor as a way to withstand the difficulties of life, but the way they narrated even the most traumatic events accompanied by laughter, it seemed to help them to think about these events. It is again questionable whether it is at times a defensive reaction to use it over a certain limit.

Following this discussion, withstanding for the sake of the other which was mostly constructed on their relations with their children, emerged as one of the pivotal means of coping. At this point the importance of the role of mothering for these women can be seen. There seemed to be two factors which lead to such a way of coping. The first was to withstand for the good of the children, and the second was their need to build a future fantasy on their children. It seemed as if their sense of self would be nurtured if their children could attain a stronger position in life. In certain cases daughters were given even more importance when education and work was concerned as sons were believed to find their way out one way or another, a point which was also pointed out by the participants of the present study (Bora, 2003). In another study on how women coped with poverty, the same issue was brought up by women as a way of coping (Strier, 2005). According to Strier the women's mothering role seemed to be especially an important source of power for women.

Likewise, their definition of deprivation and resilience was defined predominantly over their capacity to take care of their children. Children's well being and hope for the future was an important source of resilience for women (Strier, 2005). The studies with a similar population in Turkey has come up with similar results (Aksu & Üstün, 2005; Bora, 2003).

It was stated in the results that few women preferred to use a problem focused coping attitude when she found the conditions. The strength, stubbornness or persistence and opposing seemed to be parallel with the personal traits that were presented as characteristic of resilience such as high self esteem, hope, can-do spirit, positive self concept and psychological sense of mastery (Grady 2003; Rutter 1987; Seccombe, 2002; Walsh, 2003). The infrequency of this kind of an attitude is apparently related with the lack of social resources that is also stated in the literature (Bynner, 2001; Garnezy, 1991; Grady, 2003; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten, 2001; Masten, Best, & Garnezy, 1990; McCubbin & Mc Cubbin, 1997; Rutter, 1987; Rutter, 2003; Spilsbury, 2005; Tusaie & Dyer, 2004; Walsh, 2003).

Environmental Resources

An evaluation of the social support systems which the participants were situated in depicts the weakness and lack of various forms of such support. First, it is important to remember that the participants grow up in a collectivistic culture where solidarity and interdependence is inherent within the family, extended family, and community relations, but the social changes seem to have caused this network to dissolve (Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Bora, 2002). It is almost impossible to provide any form of support for anyone in deep poverty as everyone is in the same condition. It is also hard to look for outside support in a settlement where everyone and everything is unfamiliar and even harder to find chances of meeting new sources of support

having spent most of the time within the boundaries of home. Consequently, it is usually only the close family members with whom they can expect financial and emotional support (Bora & Üstün, 2005).

The most outstanding social supports within the families of the women were mothers and siblings. The analogies that the women made between mothers and sister, mothers and friends and sisters and friends were striking. One of the reasons for this might be that sisters were at the same time their only or closest friends; a second reason might be that the difference of age between the mothers and daughters was not acute. The instrumental and emotional support that the mother's provided were apparently very important for the women, yet the fact that some women did not have their mothers in Istanbul and the impossibility of taking them to Istanbul because of financial problems left them deprived of a crucial source of support. It was striking how the mother's instilling their daughters to withstand the problems and go on with their marriages as a reflection of the gender roles that values patience and endurance as a mother, a wife and a woman, culturally.

Siblings, especially sisters had primary importance as they had been multifunctional as each other's parents, caretakers, best friends and confidants. Having a confidant and the siblings' functional value was emphasized in the relevant literature as well (Cole et al., 1992). They had no one but their sisters to socialize both outside and inside the home especially before marriage. It seems that this way of socializing has an explanation that is based on cultural and gender issues, as they did not have other ways to socialize in the village either. Siblings provided an important social support concerning issues related with migration and adaptation processes. Espin (1987) argued, bonds to special individuals was one of the most effective strategies for coping with the loss of significant relations and familiar

places and the threats to identity imposed by migration. Aliye's relation with her brother is a good example of this.

Regarding their fathers they seemed to have a distant relation based on strict hierarchy that was culturally constructed (Sunar & Fişek, 2005; Sunar, 2002). The definition of endurance that they took over from their fathers was focused on pride and family reputation. Although it was their fathers who could most of the time do something, having the last word, to provide a solution, the women usually did not choose to do that possibly because of the distant relation.

Spousal support was also important for the women as they spent most of their time with them. It was especially important when they did not have a close family member from the family of origin. The participants saw their husbands as supportive if they felt they were being listened to, they could share their problems and responsibilities and give co-decisions. Such a relation could be formed if the woman was older in age at the time of marriage, wanted to marry, and had the chance to choose her husband as in the cases of Şule, Aliye and Seda.

Since the participants had children of preschool age, children were not perceived as providing help with problems. There was only one case where the eldest daughter worked as a street vendor which caused more problems than support as the family was both financially punished and socially labeled by the social service institutions, a case which was discussed in the related literature in Turkey. It is argued that the unaccepting attitude of the host culture adds even more to social exclusion that brings along stigmatization as an end result of migration (Altuntaş, 2003; Buğra & Keyder, 2003; Keyder 2005). Other than these, children were to provide support in terms of language difficulties and make up for educational deficits

of the women in their daily lives after they start school, a finding which is also supported by the literature (Cole et al., 1992).

Other than these, the help that came from extended family members or in-laws was to a large extent instrumental, dominantly financial and temporary, thus providing little emotional support. The situation was no better as far as the social support outside the familial connections. The emergent categories included school, work, friends and neighbors. However, there were very limited examples from each category.

It is stated in the literature that social support is most effective when it is informal and mirrors as closely as possible the social world that the person is in (Bynner, 2001). There was no reference to resident community or any other institutions that could be a source of support for them or their children (Bynner, 2001; Luthar et al., 2000; McCubbin & Mc Cubbin, 1997; Spilsbury, 2005; Wolkow & Ferguson, 2001). The women only mentioned their chance to do shopping on credit from the groceries. Their lack of contact with the outside world left them deprived of meeting possible sources of support.

As was described previously they did not have a school life that could provide them with personal and social enhancement. However, education was conceptualized as the only means to find a way out of the deep deprivation they lived in, a theme that also emerged in studies with similar populations (Bora & Üstün 2005; Garnezy, 1991). Few memories concerning their school life such as playing outside or feeling the support of the teachers reflected the potential support it could have provided the women with.

Although child labor is accepted as a risk factor in the literature, it was a source of support for some of them as children. The work life provided a chance for

meeting new people if they worked on their own will and with people outside the family. This experience provided them with the opportunity to engage in new socialization experiences, find new role models, reach some level of contentment of self as well as a better understanding of self, practical information on daily life, and be more open to socialization. Work life was also inherent in their description of resilience enhancing experiences although none worked currently. They thought that such an experience would help them feel stronger in the face of deprivation both financially and emotionally. However, in line with the literature they could not work because they were not qualified, or because they did not have anyone to leave their children who need primary care (Altuntaş, 2003). At any rate, it is crucial to point out to the fact that the main reason why they could not work was because they were women and they were not allowed to work.

There was not much reference to friendships or neighbors either. It was interesting that most women did not refer to friends either in the city or in the village, a finding that is possibly related with gender and culture. It must not be forgotten that friendship defined mostly through familial connections has a cultural base. As stated earlier the women's best friends were usually their sisters. There was also a problem of trust for the people outside the family. None of the women talked about a close relation with the neighbors, either, a finding parallel to finding of Aker et al. (2002). According to Aker et al one of the reasons was the difficulty they had in forming relations with Turkish neighbors. One other reason that came out of the present study was their concern about disturbing neighbors with the children. Their weak social ties with neighbors were also related with the insecurity associated with the neighborhood with all its habitants (Geis & Ross, 1998).

As the last factor, social assistance institutions seemed to have caused more harm than support. They could not find the attention and help they expected, they had to run after long bureaucratic procedures, the help they got was temporary and they felt that they could not get what they deserved. There were only two women who had regular food support and stated that it was very important for them. One important point that must be mentioned is the fact that this area of support was maybe the only area where they used problem focused coping and used it more than men (Altuntaş, 2003; Bora, 2002; Bora & Üstün, 2005). The reasons behind this might be the fact that women are open to utilize, provide and seek out social support where as men prefer to be independent, refraining from expressing emotions and asking for help (Belle, 1987; Monnier et al., 1998; as cited in Day & Livingstone, 2003; Ollf et al., 2007). The women's expectations from the institutions were not very extensive. They thought that they would lead a much better life as long as they could have free services in health and education. Also there were two examples where the social service worker's intimacy and involvement was a very strengthening experience for them.

In sum, it would not be wrong to say that women do not have the means of social support especially after their arrival in Istanbul. This can again be explained by the fact that no one is in the state of helping the other in the deep poverty context. Wethington and Kessler (1986) argue in their study on social support and coping that perceived and received support are two different things and find the person's perception and active choice of using help is as important as the existence of such help. It has been found in the study that perceived support was more adaptive than received support in that sense. The situation described in the present study leaves no room for such a distinction as both the actual and perceived support is very limited.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to have a better understanding of the life of women, who migrated involuntarily to Istanbul after 1990s, living in the urban poverty context, regarding the problem areas and the means and coping strategies with which they enhance their resilience capacities. The categories which emerged out of ten in-depth interviews with Kurdish women settled in one of the inner city slums of Istanbul, illustrate the wide range of problem areas and the resulting emotional distress related not only with the disparity as a results of deep poverty conditions and adaptation difficulties regarding involuntary migration, but also with the way they fall outside

the social life as a reflection of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as gender roles that they grow up in. Still, it would not be wrong to say that despite the deep deprivation that they are exposed to, women do not live these conditions as passive victims; they are active agents in trying to strive for their survival on a day-to-day basis. A general look at the coping mechanisms show that women mostly use emotional coping mechanisms to withstand the problem situation with an aim of covering up the familial and marital conflicts as much as possible, via keeping the distress within them. This seems to be also related with the absence of social support mechanisms and facilities that can help them enhance their resilience capacities within the new poverty, culture and gender paradigm. The reason why their self perceptions were, on the whole, not constructed on a definition incorporating autonomy as well as relatedness, was also based on their falling short of these social, economical and educational facilities. The women who could benefit from both emotional and problem focused coping strategies in an efficient way were the ones who had the chance of reaching these supports.

Limitations and Further Research

This study was based on interviews with Kurdish women living in urban poverty which brought forth two practical problems. The first was regarding the language; the interviews were conducted in Turkish which made it difficult especially for some to elaborate on feelings regarding intimate topics. Given their low education, they may also have difficulty articulating themselves and verbalizing their feelings. The second was regarding the fact that the interviews had been completed in one meeting; as there is the possibility of the women's not expressing themselves clearly in one meeting with the researcher. For example interestingly

there was no reference to support that emerged as a result of political identities. That might be because they felt uneasy to talk about political issues in one meeting. It was also interesting to hear so little about social exclusion. That might be related to the fact that the interviewer was not a member of their community who shared the same ethnic identity and was under the risk of being exposed to the exclusion, but a member of the community with the potential danger of exposing social exclusion.

Another limitation was concerning with the instrument (SF-36) used to scan the physical and mental health of the women. As most of the women were not fluent in reading and writing the survey was read to them; the long sentences and its language could have made it hard for them to follow. The inconsistencies in the subscales and their narratives cast a shadow on how they understood what the questions were asking. Moreover, the small sample size did not permit any generalizations to be made.

One last limitation was the availability of limited number of sources on the subject, especially the ones which had a cross-cultural perspective. Limited information on cultural issues impeded the possibility of making a broader discussion built on comparisons between studies.

As was reported in the discussion, these women are deprived of social support systems which bring forth the necessity and importance of an intervention program. In order to do that however, first there is a need to carry out an extensive study composed of both qualitative and quantitative study models. Observations would provide rich information to supplement. Also, as resilience and coping has continuous improvement and change inherent in its meaning, a long-term study would provide very valuable data.

In a future study certain issues have to be carefully thought about. The first concerns the way to get in contact with the women to form collaboration. It is necessary to carry out the in-depth interviews after a rapport is formed via several home visits. It would be preferable if the interviews were carried out in their mother tongues. The second concerns the perspective that one has to have in working with people in deprived conditions. As Chambers (1994) very rightly states, poverty is best understood from their own words. There are others who draws attention to not to impose one's own values as researchers to hear many representations, to be able to celebrate an individual's accomplishments as well-being in adverse conditions without blaming those who live in the adversity and attributing the problems to deficits of the person living in poverty (Massey, 1998, Franz and Stewart, 1994). Yet there are others who emphasize the importance of not losing the women's perspective and not conceptualize women's lives solely in terms of their role as wives and mothers (İlkaracan, İlkaracan, 1990, Beneria and Bisnath, 1996)

In light of such studies intervention programs can be developed which can provide the women with the physical and emotional support that they are lacking. In one of the interviews, one of the women asked whether there were other women who had the same problems as she did. It was a very important question as they have no chance to hear each other's voices although they live so close to each other. In this sense group therapy will be a source of empowerment along with personal support that can be provided in the intervention program. Above all, the empowerment of those who suffer from deep poverty conditions is only possible if systematically provided social support is available.

There is one more very crucial issue that needs to be mentioned as a suggestion for further research. There is urgent need for studies which focus on the

emotional burden that the men are under as their roles are changing as a result of social changes. As members of a strict patriarchy it is presumably very hard to live their adaptation problems to these social changes both openly or latently. It would be of course more meaningful if a man carries out the in-depth interviews.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
Demographic Information Form

Demografik Bilgi Formu:

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Date of birth:
4. Level of education:
5. Work experience:
6. Marital Status:
7. Age at marriage:
8. Number of children:
9. Date of arrival at Istanbul:

APPENDIX B:
Question Form

Soru Formu

1. Bana İstanbul'a nasıl geldiğinizi anlatır mısınız? Kaç yaşında geldiniz?
2. İstanbul'a geldikten sonra evlenene kadar geçen zamanı düşünürseniz nasıl bir hayattı, neler yaşadınız bana anlatır mısınız?

Probe 1: (Gelen konu başlıklarına göre)dan bahsettiniz. Teker teker ele alırsak....konusunda nasıl hissettiniz? Nasıl birşeydi? Nasıl oldu sizce? Peki bu durumlar karşısında neler yaptınız?

Probe 2: (Eğer gelmezse) a) Okul deneyiminiz nasıldı? b) Aile içindeki deneyiminiz nasıldı? c) Sosyal çevre, arkadaşlar, komşular, kurumlar konusunda nasıl deneyimleriniz oldu? d) Çalıştınız mı? Bu nasıl bir deneyimdi? Neler hissettiniz? Bu durum karşısında neler yaptınız?

3. Bugünkü hayatınızı anlatır mısınız?

Probe 1: Bu anlattıklarınızdan anlıyorum ki.....gibi başlıklar çıkıyor. Teker teker ele alırsak.....konusunu biraz daha anlatır mısınız? Nasıl bir şeydi sizin için? Nasıl hissediyorsunuz? Siz ne yapıyorsunuz bu durumda? Peki sizce bu işe yarıyor mu?

4. Genel olarak baktığınızda hayatla başa çıkmanızda yardımcı olan başka neler var?

Probe: Sadece kendinizi düşünürseniz, sizce hangi yönleriniz / yanlarınız başa çıkmanızda yardımcı oluyor?

5. Sizin sormak istediğiniz eklemek istediğiniz birşey var mı?

APPENDIX C:
SF-36 HEALTH SURVEY

SF-SAĞLIK TARAMASI

YÖNERGE: Bu tarama formu size sağlığınıza ilgili görüşlerinizi sormaktadır. Bu bilgiler sizin nasıl hissettiğinizi ve her zamanki faaliyetlerinizi ne rahatlıkla yapabildiğinizi izlemekte yardımcı olacaktır.

Bütün soruları belirtildiği şekilde cevaplayın. Eğer bir soruyu ne şekilde cevaplayacağınızdan emin olmazsanız, lütfen en yakın cevabı işaretleyin.

1. Genel olarak sağlığınızı nasıl değerlendirirsiniz?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Mükemmel.....	1
Çok iyi.....	2
İyi.....	3
Fena değil.....	4
Kötü.....	5

2. Geçen seneye karşılaştırıldığında, şimdi sağlığınızı nasıl değerlendirirsiniz?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Bir yıl önceye göre çok daha iyi.....	1
Bir yıl önceye göre daha iyi	2
Hemen hemen aynı	3
Bir yıl önceye göre daha kötü.....	4
Bir yıl önceye göre çok daha kötü.....	5

3. Aşağıdakiler normak olarak gün içerisinde yapıyor olabileceğiniz bazı faaliyetlerdir. Şu sıralarda sağlığınıza sizi bu faaliyetler bakımından kısıtlıyor mu? Kısıtlıyorsa ne kadar?

(Her satırda bir sayının etrafına daire çizin)

<u>FAALİYETLER</u>	Evet, Olduk- ça Kısıtlı- yor	Evet, Biraz Kısıtlı- yor	Hayır, Hiç Kısıtla- mıyor
a. Kuvvet gerektiren faaliyetler, örneğin ağır eşyalar kaldırmak, futbol gibi sporlarla uğraşmak	1	2	3
b. Orta zorlukta faaliyetler, örneğin masa kaldırmak, süpürmek, yürüyüş gibi hafif sporlar yapmak	1	2	3
c. Çarşı-pazar torbalarını taşımak	1	2	3
d. Birkaç kat merdiven çıkmak	1	2	3
e. Bir kat merdiven çıkmak	1	2	3
f. Eğilmek, diz çökmek, yerden birşey almak	1	2	3
g. Bir kilometre'den fazla yürümek	1	2	3
h. Birkaçyüz metre yürümek	1	2	3
ı. Yüz metre yürümek	1	2	3
j. Yıkılmak ya da giyinmek	1	2	3

4. Geçtiğimiz bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde işinizde veya diğer günlük faaliyetlerinizde bedensel sağlığınız nedeniyle aşağıdaki sorunların herhangi biriyle karşılaştınız mı?

(Her satırda bir sayının etrafına daire çizin)

	EVET	HAYIR
a. İş ya da iş dışı uğraşlarınızda verdiğiniz zamanı kısmak zorunda kalmak	1	2
b. Yapmak istediğinizden daha azını yapabilmek (bitmeyen projeler, temizlenmeyen ev gibi...)	1	2
c. Yapabildiğiniz iş türünde ya da diğer faaliyetlerde kısıtlanmak	1	2
d. İş ya da diğer uğraşları yapmakta zorlanmak	1	2

5. Geçtiğimiz bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde işinizde veya diğer günlük faaliyetlerinizde duygusal problemleriniz nedeniyle (üzüntülü ya da kaygılı olmak gibi) aşağıdaki sorunların herhangi biriyle karşılaştınız mı?

(Her satırda bir sayının etrafına daire çizin)

	EVET	HAYIR
a. İş ya da iş dışı uğraşlarınızda verdiğiniz zamanı kısmak zorunda kalmak	1	2
b. Yapmak istediğinizden daha azını yapabilmek (bitmeyen projeler, temizlenmeyen ev gibi...)	1	2
c. İş ya da diğer uğraşları her zamanki gibi dikkatlice yapamamak	1	2

6. Son bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde bedensel sağlığınız ya da duygusal problemleriniz, aileniz, arkadaşlarınız, komşularınızla ya da diğer gruplarla normal olarak yaptığınız sosyal faaliyetlere ne ölçüde engel oldu?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Hiç.....1
Biraz.....2
Orta derecede.....3
Epeyce.....4
Çok fazla.....5

7. Geçtiğimiz bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde ne kadar bedensel ağrılarınız oldu?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Hiç.....1
Çok hafif.....2
Hafif.....3
Orta hafiflikte.....4
Aşırı derecede.....5
Çok aşırı derecede.....6

8. Son bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde, ağrı normal işinize (ev dışında ve ev işi) ne kadar engel oldu?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Hiç.....1
Biraz.....2
Orta derecede.....3
Epeyce.....4
Çok fazla.....5

9. Aşağıdaki sorular geçtiğimiz bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde kendinizi nasıl hissettiğinizle ve işlerin sizin için nasıl gittiğiyle ilgilidir. Lütfen, her soru için nasıl hissettiğinize en yakın olan cevabı verin. Geçtiğimiz 4 hafta içindeki sürenin ne kadarı-

(Her satırda bir sayının etrafına daire çizin)

	Her zaman	Çoğu zaman	Epeyce	Arada Sırada	Çok Ender	Hiçbir Zaman
a. Kendinizi hayat dolu hissettiniz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Çok sınırlı bir kişi oldunuz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Hiçbirşeyin sizi neşelendiremeyeceği kadar moraliniz bozuk ve kötü oldu?	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Sakin ve huzurlu hissettiniz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Çok enerjiniz oldu?	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Mutsuz ve kederli oldunuz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Kendinizi bitkin hissettiniz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Mutlu ve sevinçli oldunuz?	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Yorgun hissettiniz?	1	2	3	4	5	6

10. Geçtiğimiz bir ay (4 hafta) içerisinde, bu sürenin ne kadarında bedensel sağlığınız ya da duygusal problemlerinizi, sosyal faaliyetlerinizle (arkadaş, akraba ziyareti gibi) engel oldu?

(birinin etrafına daire çizin)

Her zaman.....1
Çoğu zaman.....2
Bazen.....3
Çok ender.....4
Hiçbir zaman.....5

11. Aşağıdaki herbir ifade sizin için ne kadar DOĞRU ya da YANLIŞ?

(her satırda bir sayının etrafına daire çizin)

	Kesinlikle Doğru	Çoğunlukla Doğru	Bilmiyorum	Çok kere Yanlış	Kesinlikle Yanlış
a. Başkalarından biraz daha kolay hastalandığımı düşünüyorum	1	2	3	4	5
b. Ben de tanıdığım herkes kadar sağlıklıyım	1	2	3	4	5
c. Sağlığımın kötü gideceğini sanıyorum	1	2	3	4	5
d. Sağlığım mükemmeldir	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D:
CONSENT FORM

Bilgilendirilmiş Olur Formu

Bu araştırma, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi öğretim üyesi Yrd. Doç. Dr. Serra Müderrisoğlu'nun danışmanlığında, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi yüksek lisans öğrencisi Evrem Tilki tarafından yürütülecek olan bir araştırmadır.

Araştırmanın amacı çocukken İstanbul'a göç etmiş kadınların bugüne dek yaşadığı deneyimleri araştırmaktır.

Görüşmeye katılım gönüllüdür. İki bölümden oluşan görüşme için en fazla iki saatinizi ayırmanız istenmektedir. Birinci bölümde adınız, doğum yeriniz, medeni durumunuz, eşiniz ve sizin eğitim durumunuz, çocuklarınızın sayısı gibi kısa soruları cevapladıktan sonra İstanbul'a geldikten sonra bugüne kadar yaşadığınız deneyimlerinizi paylaşmanızı rica ediyoruz. İkinci bölümde ise genel fiziksel ve ruhsal sağlığınıza ilişkin soruların yer aldığı bir anketi doldurmanız istenecektir.

Görüşmeler kasede alınacaktır. Görüşme sırasında dilediğiniz zaman kayıdın durdurulmasını isteyebilirsiniz. Görüşme başlamadan önce, görüşme sırasında veya sonrasında, dilediğiniz zaman soru sorabilirsiniz.

Paylaştığınız bilgiler gizli tutulacak, araştırma içinde sözlerinizden alıntı yapmak gerektiği yerlerde isminiz kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve farklı isimler verilecektir. Sadece bütün görüşmelerden çıkacak ortak sonuçlar araştırmanın sonunda bir araya getirilmek suretiyle diğer araştırmacılarla paylaşılabilir.

Eğer bu araştırmaya katılmak istiyorsanız lütfen aşağıda "Bu formu okudum ve araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum" yazısının altındaki yeri imzalayın. Dilerseniz bu formun bir kopyasını saklayabilirsiniz.

Görüşme boyunca istediğiniz anda görüşmeyi kesebilir, araştırmadan çekilebilirsiniz.

Zaman ayırdığınız ve araştırmaya verdiğiniz değerli katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.

BU FORMU OKUDUM VE ARAŞTIRMAYA KATILMAYI KABUL EDİYORUM

Katılımcının adı:
Adres, telefon:

İmzası:

Tarih:

Araştırmacının adı:

İmzası:

Tarih:

Gerektiği zaman araştırmacıyla irtibat kurulabilecek telefon numarası:

APPENDIX E:
List of the Coping Mechanisms used by the Participants

List of the Coping Mechanisms used by the Participants

(The numbers in the parantheses indicates the frequency of their use)

Coping Strategies

1. To bear with / to endure ("*Çekmek, dayanmak*"):

Leman(*çekmek* 1), Aytül (*dayanmak* 1), Seda (*çekmek* 1, *dayanmak* 1), Feride (*çekmek* 2), Eser (*çekmek* 1, *dayanmak* 2), Alev (*çekmek* 3, *dayanmak* 1), Şirin (*çekmek* 1, *dayanmak* 1)

a. We have to ("*mecbur*"):

Kerime (1), Leman (4), Aytül (14), Seda (4), Eser (2), Alev (2), Şirin (4)

b. Patience ("*Sabır*"):

Kerime(1), Leman (5), Feride (3)

c. To keep it inside ("*İçinde tutmak*")

Kerime(2), Leman (I will not tell "*anlatmam*" 13), Aytül (5), Şule(2), Feride (1)

d. Persistence/Stubbornness ("*İnat/Sebat*"):

Aliye (1)

e. To have the strength ("*Güçlü olmak*"):

Eser (3)

2. Downward comparison:

Kerime(2), Leman(2)

3. Spirituality:

Leman (4), Aytül (3), Seda (5), Şule (3), Feride (2), Eser (1)

4. For the sake of the other (For children):

Leman (10), Aytül (3), Seda (2), Şule (3), Feride (2) , Aliye (2) , Eser (3), Şirin (1)

5. Humour:

Leman (1), Seda (1), Feride (1), Alev (1)

6. Oppose:

Kerime (1), Leman (1), Aytül (1), Aliye (3), Eser (1)

Environmental Resources

1. Familial Support:

a. Mothers:

Leman (20), Aytül (1), Seda (2), Şule (10), Eser (4), Alev (6) , Şirin (1)

b.Fathers:

Leman (3), eda (1), Feride (16),Eser (3), Alev (3)

c.Siblings:

Kerime (1), Leman (6), Şule (1), Aliye (10), Alev (1)

2. Spousal Support:

Seda (3), Şule (2), Feride (2), Aliye (2), Eser (1), Alev (1)

3. Support of Children:

Eser (1)

4. Relatives:

Kerime (2), Aytül (5), Seda (2), Feride (4), Aliye (1), Alev (2), Şirin (1)

5. Social relations:

a.Education- Teachers:

Kerime, Leman (1), Seda (6), Şule (2), Feride (1), Aliye (1), Eser (2), Alev (1)

b.Worklife:

Şule (4), Aliye (3)

c.Friends:

Leman(3), Şule (3), Aliye (1),

d.Neighbors:

Eser (2); Alev (2), Şirin (1)

6. Social Institutions Assistance :

Kerime, Leman, Aytül, Seda, Şule, Feride, Eser, Alev, Şirin, Aliye

APPENDIX F
List of Problem areas and coping mechanisms of the participants

List of Problem areas and coping mechanisms of the participants

Problem Areas	Coping
<p><u>KERİME</u> -migrated because of security and financial reasons -chain Financial Little houses Education Family-crowded, to be a daughter, to feel unprotected Marriage-decision to marry, age at marriage, left alone with responsibilities Children Secluded at home Neighborhood Institutions</p>	<p><u>KERİME</u> Patience To keep it inside Downward comparison To Oppose Siblings Relatives Education/Teachers Social Assistance Inst.</p>
<p><u>LEMAN</u> -migrated for security and financial reasons -chain To be left behind Financial Little houses Work Education Family-Alienation from the family after marriage, to be a daughter, to feel unprotected Marriage-decision to marry, age at marriage, left alone with responsibilities, in-laws Children Secluded at home</p> <p><u>AYTÜL</u> -to find jobs, (çatışmaları söylüyorlardı) -Unprepared</p> <p>To depart from the family Financial Little houses Work Education Family: to be a daughter, eldest, to feel unprotected Marriage: decision to marry, age at marriage, left alone with responsibilities Children Secluded at home Neighborhood Institutions</p>	<p><u>LEMAN</u> To bear, to endure We have to Patience To keep it inside Downward comparison Spirituality For children Humour Oppose Mother Father Siblings Education Social Institutions Assistance</p> <p><u>AYTÜL</u> To bear with, to endure We have to To keep it inside Spirituality For children To Oppose Mother Relatives Institutions</p>

SEDA

-by marriage

Financial

Little houses

Work

Education

Children

Neighborhood

Institutions

SULE

-for security reasons

-chain

-stepwise

-unprepared

to depart from the family

Financial

Little houses

Education

Marriage-left alone with responsibilities, in-laws

Secluded at home

Neighborhood

Institutions

FERİDE

-by marriage

To depart from the family

Financial

Little houses

Education

Marriage-in-laws

Children

Secluded at home

Neighborhood

Institutions

ALİYE

-to find jobs

-chain migration

To be left behind

To depart from the family

SEDA

To bear with, to endure

We have to

Spirituality

For children

Humour

To Oppose

Family-mother, father,

sibling

Spousal

Relatives

Education/teachers

Institutions

SULE

To keep it inside

Spirituality

For children

Family-mother

Sibling

Spousal

Education

Worklife

Friends

Institutions

FERİDE

To bear with, to endure

Patience

To keep it inside

Spirituality

For Children

Humour

Father

Spousal

Relatives

Education

Institutions

ALİYE

Persistence / Stubbonness

For children

Oppose

Siblings

Spousal

<p>Financial Little houses Education Family-to be a daughter, alieanation from the family Marriage-decision to marry, age at marriage, Children Secluded at home</p> <p><u>ESER</u> -to find jobs and security -marriage Financial Little houses Education Family-to be a daughter Marriage- decision to marry, left alone with responsibilities, in- laws Children Secluded at home Neighborhood Institutions</p> <p><u>ALEV</u> -to find jobs -security</p> <p>Financial Little houses Work Education Family: To be a daughter Marraige: decision to marry Children Secluded at home Neighborhood</p> <p><u>ŞİRİN</u> -to find jobs, security Stepwise, unprepared</p> <p>Financial Little houses Education Family-to be a daughter, alianation from the family, Marriage- decision to marry, age at marriage, left alone with responsibilities Children Secluded at home Institutions</p>	<p>Relatives Education/teachers Worklife Friends</p> <p><u>ESER</u> To bear with, to endure We have to To have the strength Spirituality For children Family: Mother, father Spousal Children Education Friends Institutions</p> <p><u>ALEV</u> To bear with, to endure We have to Humour Family-mothers, father Sibling Spousal Relatives Friends Institutions</p> <p><u>ŞİRİN</u> To bear with, to endure We have to For children Relatives Institutions</p>
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