

To the women whom I interviewed

LOOKING AT WOMEN'S POVERTY IN POOR HOUSEHOLDS

The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyzes the internal dynamics of women's poverty, and how women experience and cope with poverty in poor households. It mainly deals with two points, one regarding the conceptualization of women's poverty as content and context, and the other regarding the method of investigation. As for the former, women's poverty is defined as unequal access to resources (social as well as material), responsibilities (particularly the ones that exceed domestic borders) and power (defined as power to do something on one's own) within the household. The thesis employs a "household perspective," that is, women's poverty has been contextualized within the internal dynamics of household. Sectarian differences, employment, support system and family structure are defined as four dimensions that affect women's poverty through enabling or disabling women's subordination. These are investigated by drawing upon a field study, which was conducted with 24 women

in poor households in Ankara, Turkey. As for the method, how women experience and cope with poverty is presented through women's own perceptions and opinions, and by the woman's perspective, namely through the gender lens. This perspective also helps to reveal women's active agency in poor households.

Keywords: Women's poverty, Survival strategies, Active agency, Poverty experienced, Internal household dynamics, Intrahousehold resource allocation, Alevi/Sunni.

ÖZET

YOKSUL HANELERDEKİ KADINLARIN YOKSULLUĞUNA BAKIŞ

Gülsele Baysu

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Bu tez yoksul hanelerde kadınların yoksulluğunun iç dinamiklerini, yoksulluğu nasıl yaşadıklarını ve yoksullukla mücadele stratejilerini incelemektedir. Biri kadınların yoksulluğunun kuramsal ve bağlamsal kavramsallaştırılması, diğeri araştırma metoduna ilişkin başlıca iki noktaya değinmektedir. Öncelikle, kadının yoksulluğu hanehalkı içindeki kaynaklara (hem sosyal hem maddi), sorumluluklara (özellikle evin sınırlarını aşanlar) ve güce (kendi başına birşey yapabilme olarak tanımlı) eşitsiz erişim olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Tez “hanehalkı bakış açısını” kullanmaktadır, yani kadının yoksulluğu hanehalkının iç dinamikleri bağlamında kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. Mezhepsel farklılıklar, istihdam, destekleme sistemi ve aile yapısı, kadının ezilmesini kolaylaştırarak ya da engelleyerek kadının

yoksulluğunu etkileyen dört boyut olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bunlar, Ankara’da yoksul hanelerde 24 kadınla gerçekleştirilen bir alan araştırılmasına dayanılarak incelenmektedir. Metod konusunda, kadınların yoksulluğu yaşayışları ve onunla mücadeleleri kadınların kendi görüş ve düşünceleriyle ve kadın bakış açısından, yani toplumsal cinsiyet bakış açısıyla, sunulmaktadır. Bu bakış açısı yoksul hanelerdeki kadınların aktif aktörlüğünü ortaya çıkarmaya da katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadınların yoksulluğu, Varolma stratejileri, Aktif aktörlük, Yoksulluk, Hanehalkı iç dinamikleri, Haneçi kaynak dağılımı, Alevi/Sunni

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty has not usually been investigated through the gender lens. With increasing arguments held by postmodernists and feminists against “male stream” poverty measures and definitions, women’s poverty has been recognized and has become the focus of many studies and debates. Defining women’s poverty has two considerations that should be dealt with simultaneously: one regarding the conceptualization of women’s poverty, and the other regarding the method of investigation. Firstly, women’s poverty can be defined in material and “objective” terms, yet such conceptualization would be incapable of understanding non-material bases of women’s deprivation, which are generally the grounds for women’s poverty. Thus, the thesis aims to use an all inclusive definition of women’s poverty as unequal access to resources (social as well as material), responsibilities (particularly the ones that exceed domestic borders) and power (defined as power to do something on one’s own). Moreover, the focus is on the household. Moore (1988:55) argues:

Households are important in feminist analysis because they organize large part of women’s domestic/reproductive labor. As a result, both the composition and the organization of households have a direct impact on women’s lives and on their ability to gain access to resources, to labor and to income.

Yet, adopting a household perspective does not mean an engagement with the types of the households (with such an approach, female headship then becomes the only gender transparent factor); on the contrary it aims to open up the “black box”, that is, the household. So, women’s poverty has been contextualized within the internal dynamics of household.

Secondly, without an understanding of how women experience and cope with poverty through women's own perceptions and views, and the woman's perspective, the gendered nature of poverty cannot be understood thoroughly. Women's perceptions need to be taken into account in any evaluation of women's poverty vis-a-vis household's poverty. This may pave the way for arguments that women's own perceptions are biased, yet whether or not such a perception bias exists can only be understood by listening to the voices of poor women. Moreover, the perspectives of women experiencing poverty should not be taken as "givens" but should be contextualized within the larger social processes (ideological, economic, and social) as well the processes of the local context in which they live. This is because women's poverty is a reflection of gender inequalities in society at large, which are constituted by and reconstitute these larger social processes.

The two domains, that is, the content and context of women's poverty and the method of investigation, are inseparable. In order to study women's poverty as unequal access to resources, responsibility and power within the household, how women experience and cope with poverty must be presented through women's own perspectives and analyzed by the woman's perspective, that is, it must be studied through the gender lens. The main endeavor of this thesis is to accomplish providing at least partial answers to the following questions by drawing upon the literature and a field study conducted in a *gecekondu* settlement: What are the internal dynamics of women's poverty? How do women experience and cope with poverty? What does "women's unequal access to resources, responsibility and power" correspond to in reality, that is, in women's daily lives and in their own words? What are the dimensions that are intertwined to produce an enabling or disabling context for poor

women in urban Turkey in the distribution of resources, responsibilities and power within the household?

The thesis consists of an introduction and a conclusion and three main chapters, namely, the investigation of poverty studies through the gender lens, of women and poverty in the “Third World”¹ through the household lens, and of the internal dynamics of women’s poverty in the household as narrated in the in-depth interviews conducted with women in a *gecekondu* settlement.

In the first chapter of the thesis, poverty studies are analyzed from the standpoint of gender so that the importance of looking at internal dynamics of women’s poverty through the individual women’s own perspectives and the woman’s perspective is emphasized. Poverty measures are categorized in two ways: “poverty observed” and “poverty experienced.” The failure of conventional poverty analysis, namely, “poverty observed” with its materialist understanding is to neglect looking at the dynamic relation(s) between gender and poverty through women’s own perspectives. They present an “outsider’s argument” because they do not acknowledge the importance of the perspectives and perceptions of women experiencing poverty in defining/understanding the processes through which women become poorer than men. All these studies give “poor” women a feature of “otherness” by ignoring their voices. “Poverty experienced” presents a postmodernist feminist alternative to study poverty, which, instead of an engagement in objective poverty definitions and measures, aims to shed light on how women themselves

¹“Third World” is used for its convenience to refer to three regions of the world, namely, Latin America, Asia and Africa, with the understanding that these areas, while exhibiting certain similarities, have many differences as well. The term is used by no means to imply an inferior position or homogeneity for the Third World women. One should bear in mind the danger for overgeneralization and homogenization with the use of such abstractions (Gilbert, 1994: 606; Parpart, 1993:457; Scheyvens and Leslie, 2000: 129).

experience and cope with poverty, and on how these experiences are grounded in a local context.

The second chapter aims to reveal the relations between gender, poverty and household in the “Third World” context by drawing upon the literature. Anthropological approaches to women’s poverty are studied since they not only provide evidences to uncover the cross-cultural diversity concerning different forms of households, consequently shedding light on the complexity of intrahousehold inequalities that disadvantage women in various ways, but also provide the basis for revealing certain regional uniformities/similarities in the relations that govern production, distribution and consumption within the household. These similarities and diversities are presented based on Kandiyoti’s (1988) and Kabeer’s (1994) ideal-typical models of household systems: corporate household organizations and segmented household organizations. Therewith, Turkey as “a belt of patriarchy” is studied. The premise underlying such a literature review is to find out the dimensions that may have effects on women’s unequal access to resources, responsibility and power within the household. Four patterns –women’s employment, family structure, support system and religion/religious sect- are defined as to have differing effects on the intrahousehold resource allocation among women and men, often mediated by gender inequalities in society at large, encouraged and justified by patriarchy. This means that these dimensions, through enabling or disabling greater subordination and control over women, strengthen or weaken their access to the resources, responsibilities and power within the household, thus affect women’s poverty, vis-à-vis men. However, women are not seen as passive in this process. They are active agents and develop strategies for “bargaining with patriarchy” (Kandiyoti, 1988: 275). These patterns are presented as a semi-

framework, reflecting the constraints and boundaries within which these bargaining processes take place.

In the third chapter, the internal dynamics of women's poverty and how women experience and cope with poverty are discussed by drawing upon a field study, which was conducted with 24 women in poor households in Ankara, Turkey. In the field study, in-depth interviews were conducted with women in a *gecekondu* settlement, most of the dwellers of which were rural-to-urban migrants. Survey questions are designed not only to reveal women's unequal access to resources, responsibility and power, but also to investigate whether or not the dimensions defined in the second chapter have a systematic effect on women's subordination, hence to reveal whether or not they are critical dimensions in understanding women's poverty. Finally, two patterns, namely, "deferring women" and "defiant women", emerged, and these patterns are discussed in relation to the literature. While women's perceptions are presented in their own words, these are not taken for granted. As it is necessary to pay attention to the context within which these women live and give meaning to their experiences, it is also questioned whether or not the characteristics of the local context, the neighborhood, which mainly consists of Alevi families, have an influence on women's access to resources, responsibility and power. Moreover, in any interpretations and conclusions drawn, women's active agency is not ignored; on the contrary, special attention is paid to hear their voices and to listen to their silence.

In the conclusion chapter, the issues that should be taken into account in any study of women's poverty are summarized. These are the following: the importance/the need of understanding women's poverty as multiple processes, of contextualization of perceptions of the women into local dynamics, of unconcealing

women's active agency that might be (mistakenly) considered "perception bias," of investigating women experiencing and coping with poverty through the gender lens for policy making and of further studies on women's poverty in Turkey.

CHAPTER I

A CRITIQUE OF POVERTY STUDIES THROUGH THE GENDER LENS

The main endeavor of this chapter is to approach the existing poverty studies from the standpoint of gender within the “Third World” context in order to put emphasis on looking at internal dynamics of women’s poverty through the individual women’s own perspectives and the woman’s perspective. First, I focus on the definitions of poverty because how poverty is defined is related to by whom it is defined, which is a critical point in our understanding of women’s poverty. The inconsistency and the tension between the images and the understandings of poverty presented by politicians, journalists, activists and academicians, and the actual living conditions of those who are “poor” are inevitable owing to different premises and values underlying each one’s use of the term “poverty”. This inevitably suggests that in order to understand how women experience and cope with poverty, their perspectives and perceptions need to be taken into account and proposed for the agenda. However, women’s experiences and perceptions should not be taken as “givens”, rather they should be understood with regard to the context in which women are embedded.

As for the reasons for studying “poor women in the Third World” context, women form the majority of the poor, the unwaged and the economically and socially underprivileged in most societies, particularly in the “Third World” (Buvinic and Yudelman, 1990; Sen and Grown, 1987: 23). They also suffer from gender-based subordination (Kabeer, 1999; Smith and Williams, 2001). Thus, the

perspective of the “poor” women provides the best departure point to study poverty (Sen and Grown, 1987: 23). Moreover, as Sen and Grown² (1987: 9) argue the “poor” women in the “Third World” with their whole-hearted efforts to grant the survival of their families, provide “the clearest lens for an understanding of poverty.” In this line, Kabeer (1997: 2) adds to the argument of why to study “poor” women in the “Third World” by saying “in her the conjuncture of race, class, gender and nationality is found, which altogether symbolizes underdevelopment.”

1.1. Human Poverty: Absolute versus Relative Poverty

The concept of poverty is a highly complex one to deal with. Poverty is generally considered as failure to meet the basic requirements of a “decent life”, the concept of which varies from society to society. In other words, poverty is a state of deprivation including biological requirements. O’Boyle defines poverty as follows:

Poverty is a problem in unmet human physical need. That is, persons and families in poverty lack the goods and services needed to sustain and support life and the income to purchase the goods and services which would meet those needs (O’Boyle, 1999: 282).

Mingione defines it in broader terms in the following way:

The concept is based on the idea that for various reasons and for variable periods of time, a part of the population lacks access to sufficient resources to enable it to survive at a historically and geographically determined minimum standard of life and that leads to serious consequences in terms of behavior and social relations (Mingione, 1993: 324).

Most definitions of poverty associate poverty with a “lack” or “deficiency” of the necessities required for human survival and welfare. However, there is no

² Sen and Grown are criticized by some postmodernist feminists by being modernist in their attitudes towards “poor women of the Third World”, which I do not agree. For detailed criticism of Sen and Grown, see Hirshman (1995).

consensus about what are these basic human needs and how they can be identified (Wratten, 1995). Does the totality of these basic requirements need to be expressed in an absolute sense or a relative sense? That is, does one measure unmet physical need strictly in terms of the things which are needed to maintain some minimal standard of living (namely, absolute standard measure), or is it better measured in terms of one person's income relative to the income of others (namely, relative standard measure) (O' Boyle, 1999: 282).

The terms "absolute poverty" and "relative poverty" are criticized in many ways. Sawhill (1988: 1076) argues that absolute standards of poverty are socially defined and not absolute in fact. O' Boyle (1999: 282) criticizes the distinction between the two terms as being fictitious because an absolute standard measures poverty relative to the income required to purchase the goods and services to maintain a minimal standard of living. He prefers to use "minimal-living standard" in place of "absolute standard" and "income distribution standard" instead of "relative standard" and establishes his own poverty index, which incorporates both. For him, unmet human physical need, this is how he defines poverty, is two-dimensional and poverty is neither absolute nor relative but both. That is, unmet physical need has both a minimal living dimension representing human individuality and an income-distribution dimension representing human sociality. Similarly, Peter Townsend (1970, in Hanumappa, 1991: 5) dismisses absolute versus relative poverty distinctions as unreal. He prefers to conceptualize poverty as relative deprivation state in reference to maldistribution of resources especially in the "Third World".

On the contrary, Amartya Sen (1985: 669-670) argues that it is critical to know whether the poor are in some sense absolutely deprived particularly as far as

the "Third World" countries are concerned. According to Sen, poverty is not just a matter of being relatively poorer than others in the society, but of not having some basic opportunities of having certain minimum capabilities. But it does not mean that these basic capabilities do not vary from society to society or over time but it means that, in the context of poverty analysis, it is a question of setting certain absolute standards of minimum material capabilities relevant for that society. Similarly, Rector, Johnson and Youssef (1999: 304-305) object to constructing any definition of poverty based on relative income distribution because it brings inequality to the fore but inequality and poverty have meanings which for them are quite different. They argue that poverty is strictly a matter of physical necessity, minimal needs and suffering.

1.2. Poverty Studies: Reconsidering Their Nature and Implications through the Gender Lens

Poverty has not always been analyzed from a gender perspective. Prior to the feminist contributions to poverty analysis, the poor were either seen as composed entirely of men or else women's needs and interests were assumed to be identical to those of male household heads. Gender research has challenged the gender-blindness of poverty studies.

Poverty is conventionally associated with poverty line measures based on income or expenditure, which focus on physiological survival as the basic need. But it is increasingly extended to encompass multiple indicators of physical well being (Kabeer, 1994:139). As a more dynamic alternative to these measures, the concepts of entitlements and capabilities are proposed which, Kabeer (1994) argues, provide insight to the relation of poverty and gender. All of these studies make up the

“poverty observed.” That is, observed and presented by politicians, journalists, activists, academicians, which give “poor” women a feature of “otherness” and overlook how women themselves experience and cope with poverty. As an alternative to “poverty observed”, the postmodernist feminist argument is presented, which asserts that greater attention to the voices of women experiencing poverty would help to deconstruct the multifaceted linkages between poverty and gender more effectively than any set of statistics. In this line, subjective perceptions of women experiencing and coping with poverty, namely, “poverty experienced” is introduced as an alternative.

1.2.1. Poverty Observed

In this section, both materialist approaches to poverty and entitlement and capabilities are discussed through gender lens. Materialist approaches are analyzed in two categories: poverty line measures and multiple well-being indicators.

1.2.1.1. Materialist Approaches To Poverty

i. Poverty Line Measures

Poverty can be defined in a number of different ways. The World Bank defines poverty as “The inability to maintain a minimal standard of living”, namely uses absolute standards. In this line, their poverty assessments are based on the data derived from poverty lines, and poverty indicators (Jackson, 1996: 495). Poverty line identifies the proportion of the population with incomes below a certain level considered necessary to meet minimum nutrition and survival needs, which implies that it gives priority to income as the key means and the market as the key institution for meeting basic needs (Kabeer, 1997: 4). The other is poverty

indicators, which commonly include GDP per capita, mortality statistics, life expectancy and literacy statistics (Jackson, 1996: 495).

All of these objective indicators of poverty entail gender bias and distortions of many kinds, most of which relate to the use of the household income as the unit of analysis³. Income-based measures take no account of the “economies of scale,” which benefit the larger household (such as savings on cooking fuel by preparing bulk), and which requires understanding how women cope with poverty within the household (Wratten, 1995: 13). Besides, absolute poverty line measures based on household income-/expenditure-based measurements of poverty are deficient in understanding intra-household inequality in the distribution of resources and income. Household income says little about individual access to income and is therefore an unsatisfactory indicator of individual poverty (Jackson, 1996: 497). According to Haddad and Kanbur (1990, in Jackson, 1996: 497) as household income rises so do levels of inequality among members and this increase in inequality weakens the positive effects of total resource increase on the poorest individuals of the household, which are generally the women. So within the same household, women and female children may be relatively poorer than other household members or they may be deprived of basic needs even if the household itself does not fall within the defined absolute poverty (Beneria and Bisnath, 1996). Many studies confirm the existence of gender bias in intrahousehold distribution. In empirical studies relating to India and Bangladesh, and other countries in the “Third World”, gender bias in nutritional achievements, health care and mortality rates are

³ However, this paper doesn't mean to drop the household as a unit of analysis altogether; on the contrary, it suggests to use an approach that aims to open up the household in order to reveal household inequalities, namely, cultural/anthropological/ethnographic approaches to household (Hart, 1997: 19, Kabeer, 1994: 113; Singerman and Hoodfar, 1996: 21).

found (Kynch and Sen, 1983; Sen, 1984; Sen and Sengupta, 1983; Das Gupta, 1987; Papanek, 1990).

Razavi (1997: 56), in her study of Rafsanjan, shows how improvements in the household income fail to capture the loss of autonomy reported by women. The changes in crop portfolio and the increasing levels of household opulence in the region have reduced women's participation in fieldwork and their opportunities for earning an income. For women, improvements in household income have brought greater seclusion. Razavi (1997: 56) further argues that a poverty measurement based on household income would be incapable of finding out how women are impoverished through the very same processes that enrich the household in her study of Rafsanjan. Similarly Sylvia Chant (1997: 26-27) argues that the use of aggregate household incomes as a poverty indicator is prone to introduce bias especially when one would study the poverty of women-headed households compared to that of men-headed households.

ii. Multiple Indicators of Well Being

Contemporarily, in order to get over the problems of poverty line approach, which uses household-income-based measures, poverty is defined, in a broader sense, to include deprivation(s) from culturally defined levels of well being(s) other than physiological survival (Kabeer, 1994: 139). These basic dimensions of deprivation mainly include a short life span, lack of basic education and lack of access to public and private resources such as health care, housing, clothing and sanitation (Chossudovsky, 1998: 299).

However, although well-being indicators are more helpful to obtain "a gender differentiated picture of deprivation" as they are obtained on the individual basis,

they are limited in that they still capture many kinds of gender bias and distortions (Razavi, 1997: 50). This is because men and women have different relations to poverty indicators. That is, “poor” women are disadvantaged by a different metric from “poor” men. For example, land ownership is rarely used to define women’s socioeconomic position as it may be used to define men’s. Approaches to poverty which emphasize household assets and resource access to define poverty, overlook the differing relationship of women to property. Another example is that in many “Third World” countries, women live longer than men. However, this in no way implies that as men have shorter life spans, they are discriminated against but that women and men have different life expectancies (Jackson, 1996: 496). Razavi (1997: 54) gives Iran as another example, in which female mortality rates (including babies and children) are higher than men’s. Although over time, female mortality rates decline, Razavi argues that this by no means implies a modification of the discriminatory behavior that led the way for excess female mortality rates but only an overall growth in infant and child survival rates.

Another criticism towards such materialist approaches to poverty is that in spite of incorporating multiple indicators of well being other than physiological needs to the measurements of poverty, they still have a limited understanding of poverty. They inevitably miss out important aspects of well-being, since a limited number of variables can be brought into the calculation (Wratten, 1995). Moreover, a more inclusive definition of basic needs would encompass more intangible aspects of deprivation, which may play a critical role in poverty of women (Kabeer, 1994: 139-140). For example, Chambers (1995, in Satterthwalte, 1997: 15) argues that there are many aspects of deprivation other than tangible ones including vulnerability, powerlessness, dependence, isolation and humiliation. Besides

Wratten (1995) states that people's own conceptions of disadvantage show that they attach greater value to qualitative dimensions, such as independence, security, self-respect, identity, decision-making freedom, legal and political rights. However, then the problem would be how to assess intangible aspects of deprivation and their implications for women and men, which may be quite different and how to assume whether or not tangible and intangible needs of women and men are met (Kabeer, 1994: 140).

1.2.1.2. Entitlements and Capabilities

Gendered dimensions of poverty can be understood by using the notions of entitlements and capabilities because these concepts aid understanding both the outcomes of deprivation and the underlying causes. Besides, they provide a more dynamic approach to poverty as they are based on individual capabilities of the poor (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık, 2001: 38). Amartya Sen (1990:133) has defined entitlements as the collection of goods over which people can establish ownership through production and trade, using their own means. Capabilities, on the other hand, have been defined as the alternative combination of "functionings" or "doings and beings." That is, what a person can do and be. The capabilities are of many kinds, such as being free from hunger, being sheltered, participating in social life, being free to travel (Sen, 1985: 670) and so on.

According to Beneria and Bisnath (1996), these benchmarks are useful for the evaluation of factors related to the gendered dimensions of poverty. For example, "poor" women's relatively low entitlements are at the source of their dependency, vulnerability, and low degree of autonomy. Similarly, their limited capabilities, such as in cases of illiteracy or low educational levels, tend to lock them in the

vicious circle of poverty and deprivation. However, Kabeer (1994: 140-141) argues that causes of poverty are not simply a question of inadequate entitlements and capabilities but also of “structurally reproduced distributional inequities” such as gender and class. Social relations of gender are as significant as poverty in generating entitlement inequities. She sees the reformulation of Sen’s idea of entitlements as an alternative approach to poverty lines in that it draws attention to different bases of claims on resources which prevail in a society by expanding the analysis of poverty from access to the market to a wider set of relationships and activities. Thus, it shifts beyond an economic focus on ownership and exchange to a focus on socially constructed values and relations.

Entitlements vary for men and women in households because women and men may become impoverished through different processes. Kabeer (1994:141) defines two processes through which women become impoverished. First, women can be poorer together with the rest of the family through both the condition and deterioration of household entitlements collectively. She gives Bangladesh as an example where the entitlements of women are embedded, to a greater degree, within family and kinship structures, which are primary sources of survival and security for women. The second emerges when women’s interests diverge from and moreover conflict with those of male members of the household. They can become impoverished independent of other members of family. For example, poorer households, where it is more difficult for women to have more children economically, increase women’s deprivation –more than men- as procreation is very important for a wife’s status within the household (Lockwood, 1997). Another example is polygyny, which is a major cause of female and child poverty. In polygynous households, women have limited rights of support from their husbands,

and junior wives or wives who had fallen out of favor are often very poor (Mayoux, 2001). Moreover, Kabeer (1997: 5) mentions how differential intra-household entitlements lead the way for differential extra-household entitlements:

Gender asymmetries in intra-household resources and responsibilities and the powerful norms of dis/ entitlements which underpin them, help to shape the differential ability of different categories of household members to gain access to extra household institutions and hence to an expanded range of entitlements.

As a result, the entitlement perspective provides an insight to reveal the relations between gender and poverty. It helps to define the processes through which women become poorer than men. However, it is still an outsider's argument because it does not acknowledge the importance of the perspectives and perceptions of women experiencing poverty in understanding these processes through which women become poorer than men. So entitlements perspective as well as materialist approaches to poverty gives women a feature of "otherness" by ignoring their voices. In order to reveal the relations between gender and poverty, how women experience poverty needs to be investigated, which is elaborated in the following section.

1.2.2. Poverty Experienced

The failure of conventional poverty analysis with its materialist understanding of well being as well as the reformulation of the entitlement perspective is to neglect looking at the dynamic relation(s) between gender and poverty through women's own perspectives. These mechanically materialist approaches to poverty are found to be unsatisfactory especially within the postmodernist feminist discourse where women's poverty includes qualities beyond command over material resources and where the woman's perspective is put on the agenda. Since the early 1980s, with the

help of postmodernist feminist discourse, there has been an alternative approach to study poverty which, instead of an engagement in objective poverty definitions and measures, aims to shed light on how women themselves experience and cope with poverty, and on how these experiences are grounded in a local context.

1.2.2.1. A Postmodernist Feminist Critique of “Poverty Observed”

Without an understanding of the internal dynamics of women’s poverty through women’s perspectives and the woman perspective, gendered nature of poverty cannot be understood thoroughly or even cannot be revealed at all. For example, Shaffer (1996, in Çağatay, 1998) in his study of gender and poverty in Guinea finds out that poverty studies, which investigated the internal dynamics of women’s poverty through women’s perspectives, revealed that they were disadvantaged in access to resources, while the traditional quantitative consumption approach revealed that they were not (see also Razavi, 1997, p.13 in this chapter).

Moreover, without taking into account the perceptions of women coping with poverty through the woman’s perspective, they will continue to be seen as passive and “target” for poverty alleviation (Satterthwaite, 1997: 15). In this line, Tony Beck (1994, in Satterthwaite, 1997: 15) criticizes materialist approaches to poverty, which do not have an agenda of unconcealing women’s active agency, as follows:

This is the language of bureaucratic planning with ‘targets’, ‘aims’ and ‘recipients’ ready to be ‘pushed’, ‘raised’, accept delivery and be attended to. It is the language of control. The poor have become statistics with which statisticians can play and experiment... The preoccupation with measurement fits well into a system where policy is created by a centralized state and then imposed on the poor ‘from above’ in order to shunt the poor above the poverty line.

Jane Parpart (1993: 443-444) further explains the reasons underlying these approaches, which see the “poor” women as the “undifferentiated other”. These approaches to poverty assume that the reality and priorities of white western middle class woman can be applied to women from all races, classes and regions of the world. They ignore the possibility of differences between the women themselves. Thus, she criticizes Western scholars in that they help to create “Third World” women as “an undifferentiated ‘other’ oppressed by both gender and Third World underdevelopment.”

The charge of essentialism is another element in postmodernist/ postist critiques of materialist approaches to poverty. Poverty is seen as an essential construct since it has been used to generalize “Third World” women as vulnerable objects of development interventions and the “other” of western feminism. Gayatri Spivak (1995, in Jackson, 1997: 149) criticizes western feminists in that they assume to be “the able women of the North”, endowed with subjectivity and to know what “the poor women of the South” want. She gives the example that where, in poorer households, children mean social security for women, the right to abortion is immaterial and therefore criticizes western feminists who focus on reproductive rights on abortion in such a context.

Other than materialist approaches to poverty, Sen’s capabilities approach is also criticized because of its underlying “ethnocentric and androcentric assumptions.” That is, underpinning the capabilities approach, there is the implicit construction of human as rational, white and male. Moreover, how they define what human is imposed on others by their claims to know what the capabilities are humans should have (Jackson, 1997: 149).

1.2.2.2. A Postmodernist Feminist Alternative: “Poverty Experienced”

The aspiration to understand the lived realities of “Third World” women would promote a search for previously silenced women’s voices, particularly their interpretations of the world in which they live, their survival strategies, their experiences with poverty, their achievements and failures and their desires for change. The goals and desires of “Third World” women would be discovered rather than assumed and investigating internal dynamics of women’s poverty would shed light on how poverty alleviation policies could be conducted on the basis of actual experiences (Parpart, 1993: 454). Similarly, Gita Sen and Caren Grown (1987) emphasize the importance of listening to and learning from women’s diverse experiences and knowledge, and of maintaining a commitment to long-range strategies dedicated to breaking down the structures of inequity between genders, classes and nations and going beyond “otherness”.

Despite its usefulness, postmodernist feminism is not without its contradictions and critiques, one of which is the question of self-representation. It has been problematized by postmodernism in a way which has given new discussions about women’s objective and subjective interests and how they can be known in a development context. What do local perceptions of women consist of? What do women see as their gender interests? What status do we give to which voices? Postmodernist feminism acknowledges that no representation can be a direct reflection of those represented but aims to create the conditions where many voices representing selves can be heard and by that, distortion and loss of content is minimized.

However, Sen (1990: 126-127) criticizes the postmodernist assertion that beyond women’s voices are legitimate representations of “objective” gender

interests because according to him, self perceptions of “the poor women of the Third World” reflect the biases and prejudices inherent in all cultures.

Particularly in traditional societies women may be subject to a ‘perception bias’ that takes inadequate account of their own self-interest... The lack of perception of personal interest combined with a great concern for family welfare is of course, just the kind of attitude that helps to sustain the traditional inequalities (Sen, 1990: 126).

Bina Agarwal (1994, in Hart, 1997: 20) is deeply critical of the assertion that women are unaware of their self-interest as well as Beck (1994, in Jackson, 1996: 499). Sen’s understanding of “the poor women of the Third World” is in line with the World Bank’s understanding of them as backward premodern beings with no agenda of their own, tied to traditional ways of thinking and acting:

Women feel reluctant to seek help for themselves and their children... In some societies where women are not encouraged to think for themselves... women are bound by tradition and gender based difficulties... to improve women’s nutritional status, women themselves must be convinced of the need... women’s lack of self confidence... it often shows up as silence or extreme denial of self and dependence on external authorities for direction (World Bank, 1989, in Parpart, 1995: 230).

As a result, this criticism is not well taken by postmodernists because the possibility that “poor women of the Third World” know how to act in their own interests has been largely ignored by these criticisms.

Another criticism is about postmodernism’s link to practical action. As a theoretical project that aims to uncover relations of power, abandon universalism and essentialism and emphasize difference, postmodernism is indeed seductive. However, in practice, whether it can offer policy solutions without raising their story to the status of the truth is the question posed by Geeta Chowdry (1995: 36) “If all stories are equally valid, which stories will feminist development practitioners adopt? Is the colonial representation of Third World women as valid as the self-representation of Third World women?”

Mridula Udayagiri has similar concerns about postmodernism's link to practical action. She argues for the importance of forming policy concerning such issues as hunger, inadequate health care and lack of literacy, which derive much of the development policy and practice in the "Third World" (Udayagiri, 1995: 175-176).

Cecile Jackson (1997: 147) warns about the danger of exclusively non-materialist concepts of poverty, which refuse to acknowledge physical needs. The extreme conservatism in some new social movements, which follows the non-materialist perspective, serves as a warning, an example of which is the New Ageist's claim that "one can be happy living in a cardboard box and poverty is a gift." However, postmodernist feminism does not have such an extreme stance on materialist conceptions of poverty. Rather, it draws attention to the overemphasis given to materialist approaches.

1.3. Conclusion

Much has changed since the 1980s with the emergence of postmodernist feminist discourse. During the past two decades, women's issues including poverty with its gender dimensions have been at the forefront of social change. With the help of rising postist critiques of objective poverty studies, many studies started to use participatory assessments that aim to look at the internal dynamics of women's poverty and "poverty experienced" together with quantitative assessments of poverty (Wratten, 1995, Çağatay, 1998).

In this thesis, the importance of the postmodernist argument that policy makers, politicians, journalists, activists, and academicians must learn to learn from and listen to "poor women in the Third World" is emphasized. That is, how women

experience poverty can only be understood through their perspectives and by hearing their voices. Those who find themselves privileged to know more than “others” must acknowledge the importance of investigating women’s poverty as a dynamic and complicated process, which can only be understood with regard to “their” perspectives and perceptions. The critical argument is that those who are at the other end of the “Us/Them” bridge cannot know better, and only by hearing and understanding the voices of women experiencing and coping with poverty, this bridge may disappear and this may pave the way for gendered poverty alleviation policies.

However, this focus on women experiencing and coping with poverty does not imply that the situation can only be explained with reference to their own dispositions and beliefs. We have to take into account the various social, economic as well as ideological relations, which shape and define the context in which women are embedded. Thus, women’s perceptions and perspectives, rather than being taken for granted, should be contextualized in the wider web of social processes through which women are disadvantaged in access to resources vis-à-vis men. In order to recognize gendered nature of poverty, the following chapter aims to understand and define the conditions under which it is more unlikely/likely for women to have access to resources, responsibilities and power, by drawing up on literature.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN AND POVERTY IN THE “THIRD WORLD”

THROUGH HOUSEHOLD LENS

The main endeavor of this chapter is to provide a basis for understanding the gendered nature of poverty in the “Third World”. Gender dimension of poverty occurs since women and men have different access to resources and power, both within and outside the household, reinforcing each other (Kabeer, 1994: 141; 1997: 5; Sen, 1990: 130). This glaring asymmetry is by no means apart from the deeply entrenched institutionalized nature of gender inequalities. So one of the aims of this thesis is to draw attention to the processes by which the biological difference of sex is translated into social inequalities of gender in different societies (Kabeer, 1999), and its implications for poverty of women particularly.

While trying to provide a base for understanding women’s poverty as unequal access to resources, responsibilities and power, as a reflection of gender inequalities in society at large, this thesis also recognizes that these processes by which gender inequalities, or more generally gender relations, are constituted do not operate in a social vacuum but are the products of the ways in which institutions are organized and reconstituted over time, -one of the most important ones being the family-household⁴-. Moore (1988:55) argues:

Households are important in feminist analysis because they organize large part of women’s domestic/reproductive labor. As a result, both the composition and the organization of households have a direct impact on women’s lives and on their ability to gain access to resources, to labor and to income.

⁴ It would be incomplete to equate household with family (Bruce and Lloyd, 1997; Buvinic, 1983:18), although they overlap. However, this thesis prefers to use the two terms, namely, family and household, interchangeably with an emphasis on kin relationships with the use of the former. This is in line with the literature (Dedeoğlu, 2000: 141; Singerman and Hoodfar, 1996: xxxiii; Young and Salih, 1987: 354).

So this thesis is an attempt to understand women's poverty through household lens, which is a quite common form of social organization in most regions of the "Third World" and often represents the primary site for the structuring of gender relations and women's experiences (Harris, 1991). The focus will be on women's poverty within the family-household and how intrahousehold unequal distribution of resources impoverishes women, while recognizing the importance of the household's embeddedness in the larger social context and recognizing that the family-household is not the only institution where gender inequalities are constituted and reconstituted but there are others, such as policy-making agencies (Kabeer, 1999).

As the thesis employs a household perspective, it is necessary to define the term. Singerman and Hoodfar (1996: xvii) define the household as a collective institution, composed of men, women and children negotiating and renegotiating their roles and positions according to changing circumstances within and outside the household. This collective institution ensures its maintenance through generating and disposing collective income. Harris (1991:139) defines it in relation to women:

The English term household denotes an institution whose primary feature is co-residence; it is overwhelmingly assumed that people who live within a single space, however that is socially defined, share in the tasks of day-to-day servicing of human beings, including consumption, and organize the reproduction of the next generation. Co-residence implies a special intimacy, a fusing of psychological functions, or a real distinction from other types of social relations, which can be portrayed as more amenable to analysis. It is undoubtedly the case that whether or not it coincides with a family of procreation, household organization is fundamental to ideologies of womanhood, and that households are in material terms the context for much of women's lives.

In this respect, the gender dimension of poverty can only be understood through the lens of the household, with the emphasis on intrahousehold inequalities in terms of

access to both resources and power. In order to uncover the gender dimension of poverty, first, a critique of economic models of household will be provided in search for an approach to unpack the household unit and to shed light on intrahousehold inequalities. Secondly, the complex relations between women's employment, family and kinship structures in the "Third World" will be uncovered with the anthropological approaches to households which provide a wealth of information not only about the differences but also about the commonalities observed in different regions of the "Third World" (Beneria and Roldan, 1987: 5). Here two distinct patterns, correspondingly two ideal-typical models of household will be used as analytical tools to provide a relative and comparative insight to gender inequalities and women's poverty. Thirdly, the gender dimension of poverty will be contextualized within the asymmetrical intrahousehold relations in Turkey as a case of "patriarchal belt" (Caldwell, 1978; Kandiyoti, 1988). Emerging patterns out of the literature will be used as a semi-framework for understanding women's poverty in Turkey.

As a last remark, the overall focus will be on the urban context, yet cases belonging to rural areas will also be provided, first to present a broader comparative overview of women in the "Third World"; and second, since in some regions, many women still live in rural areas and the studies are rare for the urban context, like in sub-Saharan Africa (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 32-38). Moreover, Wratten (1995) argues that strictly concentrating on urban poverty or rural poverty, which is legitimized on the basis that urban poverty is more extensive and worse than rural poverty or vice versa may divert attention from structural determinants, which affect the life chances of the poor in both sectors, namely, gender, class and race. So treating this rural-urban divide as a continuum rather than a rigid dichotomy

(Wratten, 1995) and presenting cases from both when necessary are appropriate for the purpose of this thesis, that is, to reveal gendered dimension of poverty.

2.1. Economic Models of Household

In search for a theoretical framework to describe the various determinants of household decisions regarding the allocations of resources among its members- especially between men and women-, the conceptualizations of household in economy gain significance, not only because they shape and limit our understanding of social reality but also because, with a more practical concern, economists' assumptions about the household inform and shape a range of different policies (Kabeer, 1994:96). Two different approaches to the household will be considered, namely, unitary models (Samuelson, 1956; Becker, 1965, 1981) and bargaining models (Folbre, 1986, 1994, 1997; Kabeer, 1994; McElroy, 1997; Sen, 1990).

2.1.1. Unitary Model(s)

Unitary model, or neo-classical theory, treats the household as a unit of altruistic decision-making, assuming that the household acts as one and that there exists a household welfare function (Haddad, Hoddinott and Alderman, 1997). In its early versions, as it was developed to deal with individual preferences, it aggregated the preferences of members of the household in order to approximate household behavior. Samuelson (1956: 10) argued: "The family acts as if it were maximizing their joint welfare function", and justified his argument by asserting natural altruism to the family head and a consensus among members (Haddad, Hoddinott and Alderman, 1997: 5; Kabeer, 1994: 98). However, the household collectivity

was thus left as a black box in economic theory (Chiappori, 1997: 51; Kabeer, 1994:98).

Becker (1965), who laid the foundation of the New Household Economics, integrated the production and consumption activities of the household economy and extended maximization principles to its internal workings. The essence of his approach was that, in accordance with a single set of preferences, the household combines time, goods purchased in the market, and goods produced at home to produce commodities that generate utility for the household (Haddad, Hoddinott and Alderman, 1997). This is a major contribution especially for the analysis of female labor supply because in most societies many women are confined to household production (DaVanzo and Lee, 1983: 62).

However, family is still portrayed as a welfare maximization unit, based on the principle of comparative advantage, which means that family labor is allocated in such a way that each member specializes in those activities that give them the highest relative return. The same problem with Samuelson's argument rises here too: what about the intrahousehold distribution. While Samuelson tries to legitimize it by assuming altruism and consensus –What Kabeer (1994:99) calls “full altruism”, Becker (1981: 192) with his “Rotten Kid theorem” – What Kabeer (1994:99) calls “selective altruism”- accepts the possibility of inequalities within the household, but argues that this inequality reflects the optimal decisions for the household welfare, taken by “benevolent dictatorship” of the household head. So altruism within the household does not rule out welfare differentials within the household, since they are considered to be reflecting differentiation on the basis of comparative advantage (Rosenzweig, 1986).

As for policymaking, they argue that general economic growth is enough to reduce gender bias in intrahousehold distribution, and thus policymakers should direct income subsidies and transfers to the household, not to women and that person-specific transfer programs are misguided (Rozenzweig, 1986). Hart (1997: 16) criticizes these arguments for assuming that the household altruist knows best. Empirical evidences are mixed. Alderman and Gertler (1997), in their study of rural Pakistan, find that increase in family resources reduces differences in investment in human capital between men and women. However, some other findings show that the household altruist does not necessarily behave so altruistically. Kennedy (1989, in Kabeer, 1994: 104) in his study of contract sugar farming in a Kenyan district finds that increases in household income are not translated into an increase in the nutritional health of women and children.

Apart from policy implications, the unitary model is criticized in many other ways: aggregation of individual preferences into a joint welfare function with an assumption of harmony of interests; joint welfare maximization with an assumption that all household resources are pooled (Chiappori, 1997; Folbre, 1986; Haddad, Hoddinott and Alderman, 1997; Hart, 1997; Kabeer, 1994; Sen, 1990).

First of all, it is argued that the household model proposed by neo-classical theory conceals the subordination of women by men in the household. Besides, it is argued that at the heart of the model lies a paradox, which on the one hand assumes a household head guided by competitive self-interest in the market and on the other hand guided by selfless altruism in intrahousehold distribution (Folbre, 1986: 6). The harshest criticisms come from empirical evidences on distributional inequalities within the household, which provides a base for empirical refutation of the idea of intrahousehold welfare maximization. Many studies confirm the

existence of gender bias in intrahousehold distribution. In empirical studies relating to India and Bangladesh, and other countries in the “developing world”, gender bias in nutritional achievements, health care and mortality rates are found (Chen, Haq and D’Souza, 1981; Kynch and Sen, 1983; Sen, 1984; Sen and Sengupta, 1983; Das Gupta, 1987; Wyon and Gordon, 1971; Papanek, 1990).

Another line of empirical evidences refutes the assumption that all household resources are pooled and reallocated according to the principle of “Pareto-optimality”. That is, intrahousehold allocational distribution is such that no member can be made better off without anyone else being made worse off (Hart, 1997: 17). In this situation, the gender of the household member who earns money becomes irrelevant, since all resources are first pooled, then reallocated (Kabeer, 1994:103). However, this is not the situation as far as empirical evidences are concerned. Thomas (1997), based on the survey data from Brazil, finds that an additional income in the hands of women raises the share of the household budget spent on education, health and housing by a factor of between three and six compared with additional income in the hands of a man. It is also found that as income under the control of women rises, more is spent on child health and nutrition.

Similarly, Senauer (1990), based on the research in the Philippines, finds that as wife’s estimated wage rate rises, so does the share of the household calories consumed by women and children. On the other hand, father’s wage has a negative impact on children’s long-run nutritional status. Pitt and Khandaker (1994, in Hoddinot, Alderman and Haddad, 1997: 133), in their study of informal credit programs in Bangladesh, conclude in a similar way, namely, differential expenditure choices between women and men. As a result, many studies confirm

this gender-differentiated picture in the disposal of income: while men tend to spend a higher share of their income on goods for their personal consumption (e.g. alcohol, cigarettes, meals eaten out, female championship), women tend to spend their income on goods for children and on collective household consumption (Hoddinot, Alderman and Haddad, 1997: 130; Whitehead, 1991: 114).

To face these criticisms it requires a model, which would not assume unified welfare maximization and disaggregate decision-making unit within the household, which is the bargaining model⁵.

2.1.2. Bargaining Model(s)

These models, derived from Nash's game theory, assume that household is composed of self-interested individuals who engage in both conflict and cooperation. Decision-making within the household is seen as the resolution of potentially conflicting preferences through a process of negotiation between unequals. In Sen's (1990: 129) "cooperative conflicts", "the members of the household face two different types of problems simultaneously, one involving cooperation (adding to total availabilities) and the other conflict (dividing the total availabilities among the members of the household)." The actual division of household resources depends on a process of implicit bargaining; the person with greater bargaining power enjoys the larger share of resources. The bargaining power is defined by threat points or fallback positions, which reflect the level of welfare that each could attain if they fail to cooperate, by perceived interest and perceived contribution. This means that within the household, the one who would

⁵ Instead of bargaining model, "collective model" is preferred by some authors (Haddad, Hoddinot and Alderman, 1997: 1-2).

have a better position when they fail to cooperate –that is, divorce in marriage- and the one who better perceives his/her interests and the one who thinks he/she contributes more will have more bargaining power within the household (Sen, 1990).

However, as Folbre (1997:266) argues, defining fallback position as the constant threat of divorce would undermine its credibility altogether. Rather, it seems reasonable to include social norms in family allocation and in fact there is a tendency towards this direction. Lundberg and Pollak (1997) define fallback positions as a noncooperative equilibrium determined by social norms, which dictate a certain division of labor based on separate spheres for women and men. McElroy (1997) argues for the inclusion of “extrahousehold environmental parameters” into the framework of bargaining power. For example, in urban Bangladesh, a rule that requires that mothers must give up custody of children after divorce reduces women’s bargaining power (Kabeer, 1995, in Folbre, 1997: 265). Similarly, in Cameroon, children are seen as the property of husband’s lineage on divorce, and fear of separation from their children limits women’s bargaining power (Mayoux, 2001: 451).

Bargaining models suggest that women’s participation in outside employment improves their bargaining power within the household by improving their fallback position, perceived contribution and interest. Therefore, it is associated with greater gender equality in the distribution of household resources (Sen, 1990: 144). As for policy-making, the bottom line of these arguments is that resources should be channeled directly to women (Hart, 1997). Many studies support the argument that women gain from their economic participation. In the Caribbean, Dagenais (1993), Momsen (1993) and Pulsipher (1993) and in India,

Rao and Rao (1985) all argue that paid work provides women more independence from men. Boserup's (1970) study points to the contrast between women's dependent status in the male-farming systems of south Asia and male town –where women are secluded- and their greater autonomy in the female farming systems of sub-Saharan Africa and female towns characterized by the visibility of women traders. Osmani (1998) in his study of poor rural women in Bangladesh finds that credit from the Grameen Bank improves women's bargaining power on two aspects of Sen's framework, perceived contribution and breakdown position⁶. With reference to Mexico, Wilson (1991: 188) argues that "women as workers have won some greater freedom with regard to certain areas of their lives. They are no longer tied to the house, they can take decisions as to how to spend a proportion of the money they earn". Chant (1991: 221) also supports the argument that female labor participation is gainful with reference to Queretaro, Mexico.

However, there are opposite arguments which maintain that women's outside employment, while reducing their traditional sources of power and status within the household, does not necessarily bring more bargaining power to women. MacLeod's (1996) case study of lower-ranking female government employees in Cairo shows how they lose their traditional sources of power and status. Similarly, Kamphoefner (1996), in her study of low-income illiterate women in Cairo, finds that changing the locus of women's activity toward the workplace causes them to lose their power base in the household and in their community. Afshar (1991:1) argues in a similar way: "the process of development in the Third World has, by and large, marginalized women and deprived them of their control over resources

⁶ The results concerning the third aspect, perceived interest, are mixed. He explains it by saying, "obviously, centuries of cultural conditioning cannot be undone by less than a decade's involvement in income earning activities" (p.80).

and authority within the household without lightening the heavy burden of their ‘traditional duties’”. As for the double burden, Buvinic (1983: 20) confirms that in the “Third World”, “poor” women reduce their leisure time when they enter the labor market instead of making trade-offs between childcare and market work, which, in turn, increases their heavy load. The empirical evidences support this argument from Malaysia (DeVanzo and Lee, 1983), from Philippines (Popkin, 1983) and from India (Rao and Rao, 1985).

As a result, although bargaining models have many advantages over unitary models (Sen, 1990: 125), they are also criticized, and empirical data is mixed concerning the argument whether or not women’s employment empowers them within the household.

2.1.3. A Criticism of Economic Models

Criticisms to these models come from both within and outside of the realm of economics. First, unitary models and bargaining models criticize one another for being incapable of producing testable hypotheses, because of the circularity of utility function for the former and open-endedness and complexity of their models for the latter. Another criticism is that they are not distinguishable from each other at the level of hypothesis testing –Hoddinott, Alderman, and Haddad (1997: 131) call the situation as “observational equivalence”-. For instance, a significant correlation between welfare differentials among members of a household and incomes may be explained with both joint welfare maximization and the bargaining model (Kabeer, 1994: 112-113).

Secondly, both unitary and bargaining models are criticized as being economically determined/reductionist. While bargaining models assume that

“reducing inequalities faced by women in the economy can reduce inequities inside the household” (Senauer, 1990: 161), unitary models do not differentiate between men and women and assume that a general increase in the household resources can reduce gender bias in intrahousehold distribution. Yet, they both remain within the limits of economism. For example, Shakhathreh (1995:140), in his study of women in Jordan, finds that cultural, demographic and economic factors all play a significant role in female labor participation. Similar results are also found in Kenya (Anker and Knowles, 1978 in Shakhathreh, 1995: 131-132).

Moreover, ever-changing household relations and behavior cannot be reduced to economic variables. The household is contextualized within the existing social structure and relations, which mutually enforce and change each other continuously (Dedeoğlu, 2000: 149-150). Kabeer (1994: 114) also argues for embeddedness of the household within the wider political and social relations. Similarly, Whitehead’s (1991) formulation of “conjugal contract” is such that household budgeting is considered to be an essentially political process including the power to label and define. For example, based on her study of North-East Ghana –in west Africa-, she states that relative wages earned by women and men are not simply translated into their relative power because of cultural practices that define the work done/ income earned by men and women incomparable.

In sum, first, “the control and allocation of resources within the household is a complex process, which has to be seen in relation to a web of rights and obligations” (Moore, 1988: 56) and in relation to social and political relations and structures. Second, intrahousehold struggles over resources, labor and redistribution should be seen at the same time as struggles over culturally-constructed meaning and definitions (Hart, 1997). Third, the question then becomes “not simply what are

rules governing intrahousehold resource allocation but rather how are gendered rights and obligations constructed, maintained and made to appear ‘natural’” (Hart, 1997:19). As a result, to do that requires cultural/anthropological/ ethnographic studies (Hart, 1997: 19, Kabeer, 1994: 113; Singerman and Hoodfar, 1996: 21), which are considered in the following section.

2.2. Anthropological Studies on Households in the “Third World”: Socially Constructed and Empirically Diverse⁷

Feminist anthropological studies started to open up the black box, that is, the household, by dealing with gender, labor and welfare within the household on the one hand, and linking it to extra household domain of ideology and economy on the other hand. It draws attention to the importance of decision-making processes within household systems that serve to structure the distribution of rights, resources and responsibilities among members in systematically different ways. But it also draws attention to embeddedness of intrahousehold inequalities within the extrahousehold domain. This also paves the way for studies of gendered nature of poverty, which essentially reflect gendered inequalities of command over resources. Here resources should be understood in their extended meaning, not only incorporating land, labor and capital but also political and social resources (Guyer, 1981: 102 in Kabeer, 1994: 121). This is especially important as far as women’s poverty is concerned.

Anthropological studies also provide evidences to uncover the cross-cultural diversity concerning different forms of households, consequently shedding light on the complexity of intrahousehold inequalities that disadvantage women in various

⁷ This title is borrowed from Kabeer (1994).

ways. Besides, these studies provide the basis for revealing certain regional uniformities/similarities in the relations that govern production, distribution and consumption within the household. These similarities and diversities will be presented here based on Kandiyoti's (1988) and Kabeer's (1994) ideal-typical models of household systems, at the same time with the aim to "expand and flesh out" (Kandiyoti, 1988: 275) these ideal models. The preference to use these models is that, as in all ideal models, these models will provide a device to compare and analyze the variety of empirical data. This by no means implies to suggest a rigid and unchanging typology. As argued above, households are historically and culturally constructed in the context of changing economic and social transformations.

As suggested by Kandiyoti (1988) and Kabeer (1994), there are two ideal types, like the two ends of a spectrum. While on the one hand there is the ideal type – Caldwell (1978) calls it as a belt of "patriarchy-patriliny-patrilocality", Kabeer (1994) calls it as corporate household organizations- that includes northern Africa, Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia; on the other hand, there is the ideal type –Kabeer (1994) calls it as segmented household organizations- that includes the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.2.1. Segmented Household Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean

Sub-Saharan Africa, which refers to those countries on the southern edge of the Sahara desert, is characterized by extreme ethnic, religious, linguistic, political and historical diversity. Because of these varieties, it is difficult to generalize about gender relations and the African family. Yet there are certain similarities in terms of

women's being under slightly less pressure than their counterparts in the "Third World" regions (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 32-38; Guyer and Peters, 1987). Women and men have separate but interdependent responsibilities in production, and separate but interdependent obligations to their families. Women are not totally dependent on men on the household and children's maintenance. Moreover, this relative autonomy provides them the scope for openly expressed conflicts. This is in part explainable by "the insecurities of African polygyny for women" which give way to relative autonomy in certain areas of their life (Kandiyoti, 1988: 277). It is also in part due to the fact that women are not oppressed by religion, at least relatively, as Christianity and Islam are combined with indigenous religions in practice (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 34).

In many parts of West Africa, the tradition of women living with their female kin persists. Divorce is also common in West Africa, for example in Liberia (Lockwood, 1997: 92). When women get divorced, they usually get custody of their children and are able to share out marital property (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 36). This, at least, implies that the patriarchal household is not necessarily the norm in sub-Saharan Africa.

Guyer (1988), in her study of the Beti in southern Cameroon men and women, finds that men and women are involved in separate spheres of productive activity, and acknowledges complementary obligations in certain areas of consumption, including food provisioning and expenditures on children (feeding, education, initiation and bride wealth). In Cameroon, Mayoux (2001) argues that women have always played a key role in production and marketing of food crops and are entitled to sell crop surplus to earn cash for their families.

Roberts (1989) studies the “sexual politics of production” among Yoruba households in Nigeria. Here farming means working for men, while trading means working on their own account. Women carry out household tasks in return for food provision from their husbands. Farm tasks are remunerated separately and this remuneration is used to finance women’s independent trade activities. The pursuit of a separate venture strengthens women’s bargaining positions with their husbands and allows them to insist on compensation for their farm services. Similarly Harrington (1983) states that economically active and independent Yoruba women are expected as part of their adult role to support themselves and their children and they have a high percentage of economic participation. Spiro (1987) argues that both trading and farming with simultaneous childcare and domestic chores are organized in such a way, with all household members –including men- helping, that they put no constraints on Yoruba women’s money-making activities.

Whitehead (1991) states that when production processes are gender-segregated, as in her study of rural Ghana, women are better able to control the products of their labor. Here men and women cultivate different crops and have independent plots. Men are legally obliged to ensure that the granaries are filled through the collective family effort on household fields. The Mandinka in Gambia also have a system of separate and jointly managed fields. In addition, there is some gender division of labor by crop. Women and men both contribute labor for food provision but are specialized in different crops (Dey, 1981, 1982).

In rural Tanzania, women have separate budgets through their own income-earning activities and so do men. Decisions are usually taken on the basis of discussions in the household (Holmboe-Ottosen and Wandel, 1991).

In southern Sierra Leone, among the Mende communities, women are largely responsible for subsistence production, while obtaining assistance through the family, husbands, brothers, cousins, or sons. Men and women are specialized in different crops as well as have different responsibilities (Ntiri, 1995).

Vaa (1991), in her study of both rural and urban Mali, concludes that findings from urban Mali support the findings in the rural: men's and women's productive and reproductive roles in Malian rural society are complementary; similarly, women in the urban economy never withdraw from economic activity. They often keep their earnings secret and spend it on household expenses. She argues that this is common in West Africa. A husband's income is normally kept secret from his wife, so is hers from him, and each spouse covers a defined set of expenses, often borrowing from each other.

However, the picture presented here is not necessarily so positive when it comes to poverty. First, many studies here accept that the relative autonomy and bargaining power of women exist concurrently with the fact that their identity and worth still depend on marriage and motherhood. Procreation as well as the responsibilities for upkeep of the household are still foremost moral obligations for African women (Afonja, 1990; Harrington 1983; Holmboe-Ottosen and Wandel, 1991; Lockwood, 1997; Whitehead, 1991; Vaa, 1991). They add to the impoverishment of women in various ways. Poorer households, where it is more difficult for women to have more children economically, increase women's deprivation –more than men- as procreation is very important for a wife's status within the household (Lockwood, 1997). Besides, polygyny is a major cause of female and child poverty. In polygynous households, women have limited rights of support from their husbands, and junior wives or wives who had fallen out of favor

are often very poor (Mayoux, 2001). However, Harrington (1983) argues the opposite: polygamously married women are less likely to suffer from nutritional burden than monogamously married women as poligynists are generally wealthier than monogamists. It is argued that this is so because, in polygynous households many women contribute to the household economically (Harrington, 1983; Brydon and Chant, 1989: 157). This paves the way for another argument, that is, the increased workload of women. In many cases, being ultimately responsible for upkeeping of the household, many women have very long working days, and the poorer they are, the longer they work, which in turn adds to their double burden. (Vaa, 1991; Harrington 1983; Momsen, 1991:38-39). In this respect, extended families are said to be functional in reducing women's household tasks as many women share out the responsibilities (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 156-7).

As for the Caribbean, the pattern is similar in some respects. Women are generally responsible for the upkeep of the household economically, and female labor participation is very high. Although jobs available to women are not many and the majority of women work in small-scale, low status money making activities with limited rates of return, paid work still gives women greater independence from men (Dagenais, 1993; Momsen, 1993; Pulsipher, 1993). Family structure also plays an important role in enabling women greater autonomy. Unlike many societies, marriage is not the only type of family union. There are at least three common forms, namely, legal marriage, common law –without legal marriage, couples living together- and visiting –a regular relationship without sharing the same household-. Childbearing may occur in any of the unions. The flexibility of family structures increases women's responsibility for maintenance of the household, as the husband is not necessarily the breadwinner, concurrently with an increase in women's

autonomy. Decisions are taken on the basis of discussion between partners (Massiah, 1990). Although the dominant religion is Christianity, which carries a patriarchal ideology, the material conditions of Caribbean women help them escape from some of the more oppressive aspects of their faiths. In summary, while on the one hand they enjoy economic independence and authority within the household, on the other hand, they still have secondary status within the society at large and have to cope with several problems arising from sexual discrimination in the labor force and violence from men (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 21-24).

The picture presented here is far from complete. There are important variations in African kinship systems, marriage forms, residences, and gender roles. Besides, households are historically grounded, changing according to the international economic and political forces (Kandiyoti, 1988). But in the end, here the aim is to present uniformities, which make sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean pattern concerning women different from other “Third World” regions. “It is within a broadly defined Afro-Caribbean pattern that we find some of the clearest instances of noncorporateness of the conjugal family both in ideology and practice, a fact that informs marital and marketplace strategies for women” (Kandiyoti, 1988: 277).

2.2.2. Corporate Household Organizations in North Africa, Middle East and South Asia

The belt of “the classic patriarchy” lies from northern Africa to Bangladesh, across the Middle East and the northern plains of India. The households, which most resemble these ideal-typical models, are those in the Muslim Middle East and, within the South Asia, those in caste Hindus, Muslim groups and landowning

classes. As for India, northern India is a more typical instance of “classic patriarchy” than Southern India (Kabeer, 1994: 116; Kandiyoti, 1988: 278) where a more egalitarian kinship system and women’s links with their natal kin are maintained (Dyson and Moore, 1983), female seclusion is relatively less practiced (Agarwal, 1989), and nuclear families are the most common form of households (Padmini and Krishnamoorthy, 1995). In spite of cultural, historical and economic varieties, the corporate household structures generally resemble Boserup’s (1970) male farming systems and male towns. They are organized around cultural rules, which focus on male responsibility for the protection and upkeep of women and children. The practices of female seclusion, patrilineal inheritance and patrilocal residence intertwine to produce corporately organized, patriarchal household forms (Kandiyoti, 1988). The idea of female seclusion, *purdah*, is related to the given importance of women’s chastity. Women’s sexual behavior must be controlled, with various ways, so that they do not bring dishonor upon their both male and natal kin (for Mexico, see Wilson, 1993). Polygamy is permitted and practiced commonly, particularly in Muslim countries (Brydon and Chant, 1989: 24-32). The social norms to promote male breadwinner are reflected in men’s advantageous position relating to claims to resources and power compared to women (Kandiyoti, 1988).

Many studies show that female labor force participation is very low in this region compared to other regions. The Middle East and North Africa have the lowest rates. Then come Pakistan and Bangladesh and then India where participation rates are relatively high. In terms of basic well being and nutritional status, women are in a disadvantaged position (Brydon and Chant, 1989:13-45; Kabeer, 1994: 122-123; Moghadam, 1995: 9). For example, Pryer (1987), in her

study of malnutrition in the poor households in an urban slum of Bangladesh, shows that when food is scarce, women and young female children are the most vulnerable to malnutrition. Moreover, in Bangladesh, there is excess female mortality in most age groups and overall female life expectancy is lower, which is, while in line with the general South Asian pattern, the reverse of the pattern of lower male life expectancy in the rest of the world (Sen, 1990).

Female seclusion is a widespread practice among landowning households in the northern plains of India. Men are dominant in the marketing of produce while women are generally responsible for the home-based processing of crops and domestic chores. Women cannot individually appropriate the products of their labor (Kabeer, 1994: 118). Likewise, Mies (1982 in Sen, 1990: 144; 1986), in her study of lacemakers in Narsapur, India, states that cultural norms promoting women's seclusion limit the range of options available to women regarding unpaid work and home-based earning, which is compatible with the housewife role and thus less likely to enhance their position. Mazumdar and Sharma (1990) argue that increasing economic growth in India coexists with religious revivalism, which in turn prevents women from beneficiary effects of the former. They show how gender asymmetries, promoting women's subordination by imposing barriers on their access to resources, still persist with reinforcement of patriarchy by the dominant Hindu legacy.

In northern rural India, Agarwal (1989) shows how marriage practices and cultural norms relating to post-marital residence all make it less possible for women to use their legal rights to agricultural land. Constraints to women's visibility in public spaces and various forms of purdah practices when combined with patrilocal marriage residence become barriers to women controlling, managing and self-

cultivating land. In south India, which is considered to be providing greater freedom of movement for women, Lessinger (1989) shows how practices of male-female avoidance and gender division of labor limit the ability of “poor” women to trade as successfully as men.

In Bangladesh, purdah limitations restrict women’s contributions in market production and agriculture in fields, explaining their low levels of outside labor force participation and the invisibility of their participation. Time-allocation studies show that women work as long hours as men do, the former in subsistence and reproductive activities, the latter in income-earning activities, but women’s work remains invisible (Kabeer, 1994: 122-126). Ahmed (1995) explains why purdah becomes important both in Hindu and Muslim communities with the fact that the society places a high value on the chastity or virginity of girls before marriage, which in turn is used to account for commonality of child marriages in Bangladesh.

Shaheed (1989), in her study of urban Pakistan states that purdah, two essential components of which are gender segregation and female seclusion, divides the space into public and private, exterior and interior, male and female. This division of space, which does not entail equal distribution of decision-making and authority, combined with urban living, where working places are in the public – male domain-, have increased its negative effects on women’s earning ability. Purdah in Pakistan affects urban women more than rural women, and in the urban, it distresses the “poor” women the most -but not the poorest women-. Her study involves these most-affected “poor” women, who on the one hand have to work to earn money and on the other hand have to comply with the respectability imperatives of purdah. They find the solution to work as home-based pieceworkers with very low returns.

In Iran, Afshar (1989) explains how the Islamic state promotes the ideology of seclusion and domesticity. It is assumed that male breadwinners protect women. Yet, in practice, poverty, male unemployment, ease of divorce unilaterally and polygamous marriages all add to the impoverishment of women. This makes it a must to earn money for women, on the one hand, and the difficulty of finding jobs available to women due to state-led Islamic ideology, which favors the domesticity of women, leads women to work in home-based jobs with very low incomes or even to prostitution on the other hand. Likewise, Razavi (1993), based on her study in a rural district of Iran, states that village discourse discourages female visibility and encourages domesticity and motherhood. She also illustrates how women are deprived of their legal rights to land inheritance –which is based on Islamic law which orders that females inherit less than males- through the purdah ideology and male control over ploughing, since there is a taboo against women’s ploughing and irrigating.

In Sri Lanka, the idea of working women outside the home does not cause so many problems, yet prevailing ideologies promoted by the caste system concerning the subordinate position of women to men restrict the nature of employment and the payments they receive (Kurian, 1989; Rosa, 1989). Incomes earned are not given to women but to men, and women have no direct relations to cash as men do shopping. Women have no influence on how their income is spent (Kurian, 1989).

In the Moroccan case, women are expected to restrict themselves to the domestic sphere, and in towns, they are more secluded and have to veil when they go out. It is the man who mediates woman’s relation to the monetary sphere. For a woman to buy or sell something is very much downgraded. In poorer households,

although it is considered shameful for women to work for wages, they may work in domestic services to the extent that it remains within the framework of kinship or common regional origin (Maher, 1991).

In Cairo, Egypt, the husband has the sole responsibility for the upkeep of his family. He has the right to restrict his wife's mobility, which, in practice, paves the way for preventing women from working outside the home. He has the unilateral right to end the marriage (Hoodfar, 1996: 4). In Jordan where female labor force participation is very low, Shakhathreh (1995), in his study of determinants of female labor force participation, finds that religion has a significant negative effect on women's decision to work.

To summarize, women in "classic patriarchy", -though in varying degrees- are forced to conform not only to the roles of wife and mother but also are subject to the religious ideology, which promotes seclusion of women from the public domain, including working outside the home. Women's place in the extended or joint family, and patrilocal residence makes them subject to control and domination. These all add to the impoverishment and poverty of women as they make it more difficult for women to have access to resources and power both within and outside the household.

However, the picture offered here, composed of illustrative cases, by no means claims to be the only practice or even the most-widespread practice in the region, as the region is wide and open to variation. Moreover, this picture should not imply a portrayal of women as victimized, passive and powerless. Women create their own strategies of power. For example, Rogaly (1997) states that while a daughter-in-law in West Bengal, may have less power in a hierarchical joint household than a mother-in-law, she may choose to sit and wait her turn, or decide

to take steps to form a separate household with her husband, taking the resultant burdens. So, women are not absolutely passive in anyway, although they may be more passive than those in the segmented household organizations. “Even though these individual power tactics do little to alter the structurally unfavorable terms of the overall patriarchal script, women become experts in maximizing their own life chances” (Kandiyoti, 1988: 230).

2.3. Turkey

2.3.1. A Belt of Patriarchy?

Turkey is a Muslim and secular society going through rapid social change, which has been prompted by massive rural-to-urban migration since the 1950s. Turkey, on the one hand, belongs to the region, which Kandiyoti (1988) calls “a belt of patriarchy,” and on the other hand aims to integrate into Western secular modernity. Consequently, it is possible to find various combinations of modern (and western) with tradition (and village culture), and religion-oriented lives with secular lives (Erman, 2001). While rural and particularly Eastern Turkey remains more traditional and more patriarchal, urban and Western Turkey provides a basis for more egalitarian relations of gender and family (Moghadam, 1993).

2.3.1.1. Family Structure

Classical modernization theory assumes that while in the rural, the extended family is the norm, accompanied by an emphasis on collectivist values, the urban consists of nuclear families, accompanied by individualistic values (Brydon and Chant, 1989:151-153). However, many studies refute this argument in two ways. First, they show that this is not necessarily the case: the majority of families are nuclear

households in the urban area as well as in the rural area in Turkey (Duben, 1982; Gökçe, 1993; Şenyaplı, 1982). These studies do not suggest that rural-to-urban migration resulted in the nuclear households. Secondly, in spite of the commonality of nuclear households, the extended family and wider kinship relations play a significant role in both urban and rural areas and among all social classes (for Turkey, Duben, 1982; Gökçe, 1993; for India, Rao and Rao: 1995: 147-148, 164). A shift from collectivist values to individualistic ones is not necessarily the case. Close family ties serve as a security system, particularly in times of poverty. For instance, maintaining relations with the village is a way of survival of poor households in the city (Ecevit, Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 1999). Patrilocal residence is still practiced and valued in the city, yet more often in Eastern regions (Gökçe, 1993). This is especially true for the newly married couples and due to economic necessities (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982). In Turkey, divorce rates are low (0.5%) and as a result, there are not many female-headed households (10%) (Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women, 2001).

2.3.1.2. Marriage and Inheritance

Civil marriage is the legal norm, and 88% of the marriages are accompanied by religious ceremony. Those who practice only religious ceremony is 7% and 53% of these marriages are practiced in Eastern regions of Turkey (Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women, 2001). Polygamy is illegal, yet it is possible to see such instances, especially in the rural areas and Eastern regions. Women have negative attitudes towards polygamy but particularly women in Eastern regions accept it as a possibility (Gökçe, 1993; Yalçın-Heckman, 1990). Endogamy and arranged marriages are practiced as a way of strengthening close family ties and

kinship relations. Especially in Eastern regions and in rural areas, parents –often the father- play a significant role in arranging marriages for their children (Gökçe, 1993). Bride price is valued as the symbol of chastity and the economic gains it brings. On the other hand, it is an obstacle in the cases where the husband-to-be is incapable of paying it (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982). It is not practiced commonly (24%) (Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women, 2001). As for inheritance, although women have legal rights, they may be deprived of this, as these issues are resolved informally and in favor of men especially in rural areas (Sirman, 1990). It should also be noted that women do not have equal access to property ownership although there exist no legal constraints. Both in rural and urban areas, the number of men who own property overrides that of women (Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women, 1994).

2.3.1.3. Gender Relations⁸

“Second class status of women in the Middle East is also seen in Turkey” (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982: 10). Family honor, which is related to chastity and proper sexual behavior of women, is used to account for many restrictive regulations on women, including husbands’ negative attitude towards women’s working outside the home. Cultural norms order that the “head of the family” must control women’s sexual behavior (Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002). There are also instances of female-male avoidance. Women express negative feelings about working together with men, which is considered to be a threat to family honor (Ecevit, Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 1999). Social norms argue for

⁸ While gender is used to look at women and men as separate categories, gender relations seek to look at the social relations through which women and men are constituted as unequal social categories (Kabeer, 1999).

the subordination of women to the male breadwinner. Patriarchally extended families and village community exert control over women, even in the city. So, women generally do not want to live close to their villagemates and/or relatives in the city (Ecevit, Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 1999; Erman, 2001). Within the family, the age of women has a reverse effect on the degree of control on women. That is, young women are the most restricted, while older women are the least. They are also the most disadvantaged in the hierarchy of women in patrilocal households. For example, young brides are the ones who work in the service of the family (Erman, 1997), although it remains invisible (Sirman, 1990). Patrilocally extended households add to household inequalities, and thus to the impoverishment of women. Women who have social networks that they can rely on, such as the natal family, and independent income due to working or natal family's wealth, are in better positions and have a higher status (Thorbek, 1994; Erman, 1998).

2.3.1.4. Women's Work

Female labor force participation is low in Turkey. In rural areas, 74.8% of the women are unpaid family workers in agriculture. Of women, 15.7% of city dwellers and 51.9% of rural residents are in the labor force. 67.5% of rural migrant women in *gecekondu* settlements do not work outside the home (Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women, 1994; Gökçe, 1993; Erman, 1997, 2001; Şenyapılı, 1982). Although some studies show that Turkish women generally approve of female employment (Papps, 1993; Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2001), men in rural migrant families generally do not approve women's working outside the home (Çınar, 1994; Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2001). The patriarchal ideology that sees women's place as the home and men as the breadwinner, relates

family honor to women's sexuality, and regards women's working and earning money as a threat to the male breadwinner image and hence to the family honor. These are major obstacles to women's working outside the home (Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002). The conditions of jobs available to women, especially to migrant women in the city, namely, insecure, low-paid jobs, is another important obstacle (Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002; Papps, 1993). Another relevant point is whether women's paid employment improves their status within the family. Some studies show that working outside the home brings some changes in favor of women, such as increases in the cases where decisions are made jointly, and where husbands help in housework (Gökçe, 1993). Although working women generally hand over their incomes to the male "family head" (Ecevit, Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 1999), their access to cash money and the commonality of women's shopping for the family are seen as changes in favor of women. However, these changes are in no way challenging the patriarchal ideology (Erman, 1997). Other studies show that working outside the home does not automatically improve their positions (Bolak, 1997). The ideology of familism and patriarchy prevent women from gaining autonomy from paid work (Erman, 2001). Paid work is seen as an extension of women's traditional roles and activities (White, 1994). Even women themselves may see their income as "pocket money" and tend not to regard themselves as working (Çınar, 1994; Erman, Kalaycıoğlu, and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002; Erman 2001). This is particularly the case when women do home-based work, but it is also found in outside work -when women work as cleaners- (Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2001). Besides, even when women feel that their work is important, they think that this is because of contributing to the welfare of their family and children. Thus, family enjoys a

significant place in reproducing social identity for women, which paves the way for regarding women's work as an extension of their traditional roles (Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002). To the extent that women's working is seen as insignificant and as an extension of their role, it renders women's economic contributions to their families invisible (Erman, 2001).

When the family occupies such a central place in the lives of women and the husband is defined socially (and institutionally until very recently) as the head of the family, migrant women's radically challenging this patriarchal structure, which has dominated Turkish society for years, upon their entrance into the labor market, would be quite unexpected. Taking into account the vulnerable position of migrant women in the labor market further support this expectation (Ecevit, Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 1999: 32).

2.3.1.5. Religion and Religious Sects

Another relevant issue concerning women's position within the household is religion. Islam plays a significant role in reproducing patriarchal ideology by promoting spatial segregation of men and women, confining the latter to domesticity (Brydon and Chant, 1989; Afshar and Agarwal, 1989; Shakhathreh, 1995). In the case of Turkey, different religious sects, namely, Alevism and Sunnism, should be considered in terms of differential effects on women's issues. Alevism has more liberal and egalitarian attitudes towards women. Politically, Alevism presents itself "as progressive, religiously tolerant and democratic" (Kehl-Bodrogi in Erman and Göker, 2000: 99), which may imply gender equality. It does not promote spatial segregation between men and women in religious ceremonies. Alevis have less traditional gender role expectations than Sunnis (Gökçe, 1993). Erman (1998), in her study of rural migrant women, finds that there are more Alevis in the group of initiating women and more Sunnis in the group of submissive women. Moving to the city is a liberating experience for many Alevi women.

Another study shows that it is more possible for the young generation Alevi women to challenge patriarchy, particularly when they have strong mothers as role models (Erman, 2001). Alevi women also start working earlier in the city than Sunni women (Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2001). Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç (2002) find that, although both Alevi men and Sunni men do not approve women's working outside the home, Alevi men accept the situation more easily. As a result, women's position and status within the household is likely to be different in the case of Alevis and conservative Sunnis.

As stated in the beginning, Turkey is undergoing rapid social change, and it would be wrong to present a single picture of women in Turkey. However, as the thesis tries to provide the bases for understanding women's poverty, the picture presented here holds true for many cases, in which women are disadvantaged in their access to resources within the household compared to men. In this regard, Turkey is still a part of the region which is considered to be "a belt of patriarchy" including North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

2.3.2. Emergent Patterns for Understanding Women's Poverty

Mueller (1983), in her attempt to develop a framework for understanding women's poverty, argues that men and women gain access to the necessities of their life primarily by two means. First, they gain access to these necessities by means of paid work. Second, they gain access to the necessities of their lives by support systems, that is, social networks that people rely on for help. Yet, to understand women's poverty, namely, women's unequal access to resources compared to men, these two dimensions -employment and support system- present an incomplete

picture. Religion and traditional culture play a significant role in women's poverty as well, by dictating women's seclusion and dependency on men. They may impose restrictions on women's working outside the home even when economic conditions necessitate such an activity. Women caught in poverty trap may face conflicting choices between survival needs and social status and respectability in the community. Thus, any attempt to provide a basis for understanding women's poverty should include religion as well (Afshar and Agarwal, 1989).

Bearing in mind what is stated above, together with the literature presented here up to now, including not only the region composed of North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia where Turkey is included, but also the region involving sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, suggest that the following dimensions intertwine to produce an enabling or disabling context for women in the distribution of resources, responsibilities and power within the household. This holds true particularly for women experiencing poverty in urban Turkey.

(i) Residential patterns: Whether women live in a patrilocally extended family or nuclear family may have differing effects on intrahousehold resource allocation; the former leading to greater subordination and control over women, which may disadvantage their position concerning their access to resources.

(ii) Support systems: Support systems are considered to be working in favor of poor households (Mueller, 1983). However, as far as women are concerned, it depends on whether the family lives close to woman's natal family and can rely on the natal family's wealth or the family lives close to husband's family and can rely on the husband's family's economic resources.

(iii) Religious sect: Whether the family is Alevi or Sunni is considered to play an indirect role in women's access to resources; the former has an enabling

role in terms of the ease it provides with regard to women's working outside the home compared to religious Sunni families. Here it should be acknowledged that, although ethnicity has not appeared as a significant dimension in affecting women's poverty, detailed research on it may reveal it.

(iv) Women's employment: Whether or not women have access to cash through their paid work is also significant. However, the problem is that the two dimensions, that is, earning an income and having access to money, do not necessarily go hand in hand. Women may work outside the home yet hand over their incomes to men, or they may not work outside the home but manage family budget. The issue becomes complicated when the question of whether women gain from their paid work or the costs of working (that is, losing traditional sources of power within the household due to prevailing negative attitudes towards women's employment and increase in women's workload as domestic duties still remain women's work) override its benefits, is incorporated into the picture. Yet, in the literature there is a tendency towards seeing paid work as beneficiary to women, at least in the long run⁹.

(v) Demographic factors: The age of women, the number of years they have spent in the city, and the number and age of their children should also be taken into account with regard to women's poverty.

In sum, these emergent patterns should be noted as to have differing effects on the intrahousehold resource allocation among women and men, although often mediated by gender inequalities in society at large, encouraged and justified by patriarchy. This means that these dimensions, through enabling or disabling greater

⁹ For example, Kandiyoti (1995: 307) argues that "changes in the material conditions of production and reproduction create new areas of uncertainty and a renegotiation of relationships based on age and gender which are reflected in new processes of household-formation and family dynamics."

subordination and control over women, strengthen or weaken their access to the resources, responsibilities and power within the household, thus women's poverty, vis-à-vis men's. However, women should not be seen as passive in this process. They are active agents of this process and develop strategies for "bargaining with patriarchy" (Kandiyoti, 1988: 275). These patterns should be seen as a semi-framework reflecting the constraints and boundaries within which these bargaining processes take place.

2.4. Concluding Remarks

This thesis employs a household perspective to understand the gendered nature of poverty. Yet, a focus on the household may be both prolific and risky. Risk lies in seeing the household as an end rather than means. For example, defining households by the type of "headship" causes a negligence of what goes on inside of the "black box," namely, the household, since the female headship then becomes the only gender transparent factor. In this respect, it fails to address the poverty experienced by women in nonpoor households resulting from gender bias in the distribution of resources within households (Çağatay, 1998). Thus, the more useful questions to investigate women's poverty is not what type of a household it is but what the units and processes of production, consumption and distribution are within the household (Guyer and Peters, 1987). So the focus should be on the processes by which women may be disadvantaged in their access to resources, responsibilities and power.

The approach adopted in the thesis is to identify households as dynamic structures. Household is both the result and channel of larger social processes, and it is the place for discrete and rival interests, rights and responsibilities. It is a

segmented unit, much like labor markets segmented by gender, age, ethnicity and so on (Guyer and Peters, 1987). Moreover, the ideological, cultural and historical construction of the household, marital and age relations and family structure are also critical to get a complete picture of the dynamics of production, consumption and distribution within the household, which may produce hostile conditions for women and disadvantage women's access to resources.

As a last remark, these processes can only be uncovered by taking into account the perspectives of women experiencing and coping with poverty. However, this focus on women's perspectives does not imply that the situation can only be explained with reference to their own dispositions and beliefs. We have to take into account various social, economic as well as ideological relations, both within and outside the household, which shape and define the context in which women are embedded. The semi-framework suggested in the previous section is an attempt to define some dimensions of this context, which is considered to be influential for women's access to resources, responsibility and power, as far as the women experiencing poverty in urban Turkey are concerned.

CHAPTER III

A FIELD STUDY OF WOMEN EXPERIENCING POVERTY IN A *GECEKONDU* SETTLEMENT IN ANKARA

The endeavor of this chapter is to uncover the internal dynamics of women's poverty in terms of unequal access to resources, responsibility and power by drawing upon a field study. It aims to present how women experience and cope with poverty in their own words. Moreover, Sen's (1990) two central concepts, namely, perception bias and fallback position, are discussed throughout the chapter. The chapter consists of mainly three sections.

In the first section, women's unequal access to resources, responsibility and power will be examined in details in search for an answer to two questions. (1) Is there a gendered bias in access to material as well as to social resources, responsibility (particularly the one that exceeds the domestic borders) and power (as power-to-do on one's own)? (2) Do women have "false consciousness?" Is there a perception bias?

The second section deals with the dimensions defined in the second chapter that may have differing effects on women's poverty by enabling/disabling women's subordination. These dimensions are sectarian difference, employment, support system, family structure/residential pattern and demographic factors such as age, years of living in the city and the number and age of children. Whether or not these dimensions have a systematic effect on women's subordination is investigated so as to reveal whether or not they are critical dimensions in understanding women's poverty, as suggested in the second chapter.

The third section deals with two patterns concerning women's access to resources as well as responsibility and power: the case of defiant women where poverty brings about power, and the case of deferring women, which refers to "total poverty" (not having access at all/or having restricted access to resources, responsibility and power).

3.1. Research Site and Sample

The research is carried out in a *gecekondu* (squatter) neighborhood in Ankara where 2700 rural-to-urban migrant families, including both first- and second-generation migrants, live. More than half of the dwellers own their *gecekondus*. Five hundred houses do not have title deeds, which means that they do not have legal status. As for the tenants, the rents of *gecekondus* range from 80 to 120 million Turkish Liras¹⁰. More than half of the men do not have a regular job with social security. Even the ones who have a regular job may earn 450-500 million Turkish Liras at most. Women generally start working due to economic hardships. Nearly 30% of the women in the neighborhood work outside the home. They generally work as cleaning women in hospitals, schools, etc or as domestic cleaners. The common residential pattern is nuclear family. Extended or compound-type arrangements are not very common. 70% of the dwellers are Alevis and 30% are Sunnis.¹¹ The neighborhood has a "modern" look, as Alevi women are not veiled, and may often wear trousers.

¹⁰ 1 US Dollar amounts about 1 695 000 Turkish Liras in 2002-08-01. The minimum wage in Turkey is about 180 million Turkish Liras.

¹¹ The information is based on an interview with the *muhtar* (elected local administrator, the head person of the neighborhood).

Although the dwellers, particularly the tenants, are poor families, it should be noted that they are not at the extreme end of poverty. The houses have infrastructure (running water, electricity); for most of the cases, the toilet is inside the house, not in the garden. The houses are not located very close to one another so that they receive sunlight. It is a secure and quiet neighborhood where illegal acts are not prevalent. The neighborhood is preferred for the field study on the basis that it provides a more common model of poor households, not the marginally poor.

The research is based on the data collected through in-depth interviews, which lasted about two to three hours. Twenty-four in-depth interviews were conducted with women in poor families, most of whom were tenants. Interviews were aimed at learning about how women experience and cope with poverty, and this chapter is based on their feelings and perceptions, presented in their own words. As explained in the previous chapters, women are not passive followers of their husbands; on the contrary, they are “experts¹²” of their own lives, and in order to uncover this dynamic, complicated and sometimes biased process, their perceptions need to be taken into account.

The interviews were conducted with 13 Alevis and 11 Sunnis. As the neighborhood consists of mainly Alevi families, the spatial concentration of religious Sunnis in some streets helped me to find other Sunni families. Photography was also used to form closer relations with the families. Yet, Sunni women tended not to let me take their photographs.

¹²“Expert” is used to refer to that women are very creative in developing ways to get what they want without necessarily challenging the patriarchal system as a whole. For example, they secretly keep some money for themselves from the daily allowances given by the husband in order to buy clothes, slippers and the like from street peddlers on credit. Instead of expert, strategist, tactician, or skilled may also be used, but expert is preferred on the basis that it suggests a specialty.

In the research, poor households were mainly reached by the help of the *muhtar*. The women whom I interviewed also helped me to find poorer households. They guided me to economically disadvantaged families. The argument that subjective and non-material bases of women's poverty should be emphasized does not suggest dropping out objective criteria. The economic conditions of the households are the bases for choosing the research sample. Thus, they need to be presented. The sample families can be classified into three groups, namely, those with social security and a regular income, those without social security and regular income, and those without any income. In the first group, there were seven families. Men earned minimum wage. In one case, woman also worked as a cleaner. In another case, two sons of the family also worked. Three of these families did not own a *gecekondu* and paid rents ranging from 80 to 120 million Turkish Liras. In the second group, there were 13 families, in ten of which men were the primary providers. They worked as scavengers, street peddlers, porters, construction workers, and, in one case, as a taxi driver. Their incomes were very irregular, and they generally earned minimum wage at most. In two families, daughters, who worked in clothing shops, were primary providers and received their wages on a weekly basis. In one family, the woman who worked as a domestic cleaner was the primary provider. Seven of these families were tenants. In the third group, there were four families, three of which were tenants. They were the most disadvantaged group, and lived on borrowed money.

3.2. Women's Poverty: Unequal Access to Resources, Power and Responsibility

Women's poverty is defined as women's unequal access to resources, responsibility and power. In the following, each of them is considered in details in order to

explore possible gendered biases. While doing so, the question of whether or not women have “false consciousness” is discussed.

3.2.1. Women’s Access to Resources

The interview included questions that aimed at uncovering any possible gendered bias in access to the following resources: use of money (how much and for what), homeownership, inheritance, education, transportation expenses, use of city center, brand and price of cigarette -if any-, use of telephone, and women’s perception of priority in the allocation of food to household members.

3.2.1.1. Allocation of Money

The results of the interviews suggest that women’s direct access to money (to “touch money”) is possible via two ways: paid employment and daily/monthly allowances given by the husband for housekeeping expenses. As for the first, only two of the women whom I interviewed are currently working outside the home, yet five women are looking for jobs, three of whom used to work until recently. Eight women are doing home working (knitting, doing lace work, sewing quilt, making bread for winter); yet it should be reminded that the income of such work is very irregular and small. Secondly, many women take allowances from their husbands on a daily basis, or on a monthly basis although this is less common, for housekeeping expenses, ranging from buying bread to whole kitchen expenses. Most of the time these women keep some of the money for themselves. However, there are also cases where women cannot keep any money for themselves because of extreme poverty, or in those cases where women cannot “touch money” at all

because of the husband's restriction on women to do shopping, including going to the grocer to buy bread.

Those women who presently work/used to work outside the home, all of whom are Alevi women except Emine, do not/did not hand over their incomes to their husbands, but the woman and the husband have separate and predetermined domains of expenditure. A currently working woman, Leyla, works as a domestic cleaner three days a week. She spends her wage on kitchen, children and herself, while her husband spends his wage on the rent of the house, bills and other expenses. She does shopping on her way home –in Kızılay, the city center- and proudly says, “I spend my wage on my own”. Latife, who used to work as a cleaning woman until recently, says that she did not hand over her income to her husband but spent it on her children and to pay the rent of the house. Nezahat, who used to work as a babysitter, says, “I decided on half of the wage on my own, and gave the other half to my husband for expenses. I bought on credit a dishwasher and a television set for myself, I spent the remaining money for my daughter's trousseau”. Altın, who also works as a cleaning woman, spends her money on the bills and some small needs of her children, while her husband spends his money on kitchen expenses and the rent of the house. She also stresses, “I do spend my income as I wish. I do not have to listen to my husband.” However, this does not mean that she spends it for herself as she wishes. Including the women who have work experience, they all give priority to children's expenses and collective household consumption while spending their incomes. Another example is Latife who says, “I worked for my children, in order to buy whatever they wished.”

Spending patterns of the women who do home working and the women who keep some money from the daily/monthly allowances given by the husband are not

different from the working women in this respect. Sultan, an Alevi woman, spends on her children's school expenses, and Fadime and Döne, both Sunnis, spend on their children's trousseau, and all the others state that they spend on their children. However, different from working women who can do shopping in the city center, they spend their incomes inside their neighborhood where many street peddlers sell slippers, clothes, headscarves, and the like, on credit. Saving money from daily allowances is always done in secret. Most of the time, doing paid home working is also kept a secret from the husband either because the husband is against woman's earning and spending money on her own, or because the husband is against women's buying something on credit. Sultan says, "I do lace work for money if people ask me. But I don't tell it to my husband since he does not let me do it for money".

The picture presented here suggests that although women have access to money in some ways, they do not use the money for themselves. This is in line with the literature (Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002; Hoddinot, Alderman and Haddad, 1997: 130; Whitehead, 1991:114). Yet in fact when further questioned, I found out that most of the time they also kept some for themselves. Sultan, who sews quilts says, "I cannot resist it, I buy slippers, socks etc. for myself". Döne, Filiz and Zekiye, who all do lace work, say that they buy headscarves and some clothes, such as socks and underwear, for themselves. Leyla, a cleaning woman, says "I also spend it for my own expenses. I buy clothes, slippers and shoes." Safiğül and Esmâ, who do not do paid work but save money from daily allowances, say that they buy slippers and plates. Cevriye does not have paid work, and only allowance given to her is to buy bread. She saves from this money to buy cigarette for herself secretly, since her husband does not let her

smoke. She says, “If he saw me smoking, he would kill me”.¹³ An Alevi woman, Nezahat(1)¹⁴, who does not do paid work, receives some money from her working son. She keeps it a secret by misinforming her husband about the son’s wage. She spends some of this money to buy clothes for herself on credit. Although these examples may seem trivial, they are not trivial in the lives of the women in poor households where the total income is often equal to or less than the minimum wage. They suggest that women do have access to “usable money”, that is, the money they use is for themselves. This is the case even if they do not earn money, or even if they have access to little money. Women are “experts” of their lives and find ways to have access to money when the “male breadwinner” is unaware of and would be displeased to hear about this money circulation.

However, women’s access to some “usable money”, by no means, implies that total income of the household is open to women’s access, nor does it imply that women have equal access to money with men. Few of the women I interviewed say that they manage the family budget. But even in most of these cases their domain of responsibility does not exceed managing kitchen expenses, and their access to money does not go beyond daily/monthly allowances given by the husband. Only in four cases, women had access to total income, two of which were earned by the daughter of the family and the husband was unemployed.

The situation becomes worse for women in the cases of extreme poverty, “no regular income households”, where women do not have access to any “usable money” because they do not have access to any money or to such little money that it

¹³ With similar reasons, most of the time smoking women never use a brand of cigarette which is equally or more expensive than their husbands’.

¹⁴ As there are three women whose names are Nezahat, I give them numbers. Characteristics of each woman are defined in details in Appendix A.

is only enough for survival. Serap, who is a tenant and whose husband has no regular job, says, “I cannot keep any money for myself. He gives me very little money, sometimes even 500 thousand Turkish Liras become impossible to find.” Similarly Ayten, whose husband has no job and who is currently looking for a job, says, “He gives me 500 thousand Turkish Liras at most, which is not enough even to buy bread”. Nearly half of the women I interviewed had no access to “usable money” as a cost of poverty of the household. Even if the husband has no job, bias in the allocation of money works in favor of men. He may still be in a better position concerning access to “usable money” compared to women and other members of the household. For example, while Zehra, whose only daughter is working in return for little money, has the responsibility to make ends meet and she cannot keep any money neither for her nor for her children, her husband spends all his day in a coffee house, using the daily allowance given to him. Similarly, Emine’s husband, who has no job, spends the allowance for his own expenses such as cigarette, transportation and sometimes even gambling, while Emine has the responsibility to make ends meet with little income, which is earned by the daughter of the family. Whitehead (1991: 114) confirms this gender-biased pattern in the disposal of income. Men tend to spend on their personal consumption more than women.

In brief, there is often a gendered bias in the allocation of money and the spending patterns even in the cases of extreme poverty. However, this does not suggest a “false consciousness”¹⁵ or passiveness on the part of women as they

¹⁵ If women do not spend for themselves, and do not give priority to their own needs, this may be considered to be a kind of false consciousness or perception bias.

create ways of having some access to “usable money”, except for the cases of “no regular income households.”

3.2.1.2. Allocation of Other Resources

Resources here include social resources, such as education, use of city center, use of telephone, as well as material resources, such as transportation expenses and homeownership. Any gender bias concerning access to and allocation of these resources is investigated in this section.

The women’s use of city center is very limited because of both men’s restrictions and economic burdens, except for the women who work/used to work outside the home. At least half of the women whom I interviewed do not use the city center at all. The remaining women generally use the city center to go to or take children to hospital, to apply to the municipality for food and coal aid, and more rarely to visit relatives. Moreover, none of the women, except for the women who work outside the home, use city center on their own. Generally a relative, mostly a male, a woman neighbor, or children accompany the woman. Nezat(3), a Sunni woman, says, “I have been living here for 14 years, I haven’t used city for five years except for applying to green card¹⁶”. She adds, “He didn’t send me alone, he is a bit *gerikafali* (backward)”. But the obstacles to use city center are not only men’s lack of permission. They have to save from transportation expenses. As men usually work or look for work, women believe that their transportation expenses cannot be reduced. As a result, it is the women’s share of transportation that has to be reduced. This causes women to be confined to the home and the neighborhood.

¹⁶ Green card is a kind of health insurance provided by the state to poor families.

For example, Hanife and her family migrated to the neighborhood two years ago, and she has never seen anywhere else since then due to extreme poverty, while her husband “has to” use city center since he works as a street peddler.

As for the use of telephone, women generally do not use telephone as often as men because of economic burdens. Similar to transportation expenses, while men “have to” use telephone for job-related reasons, women have to reduce their own part. In the cases where woman’s natal family is psychologically and/or economically supportive of the woman, she uses telephone as much as her husband to call her relatives. In the cases of extreme poverty, telephone is cut off due to unpaid bills. Another case is some women’s inability to use telephone because of their illiteracy.

Education is a significant source of bias in women’s lives. Six women openly told that their families discriminated against them and did not send them to school, while opening the way for their sons’ education. Safigül, who is illiterate, says, “My family sent me neither to school nor to work. I rebelled against my family as they didn’t send me to school.” Similarly Sultan, who is a primary school graduate, states, “They favored their sons’ education. Otherwise, I wouldn’t face so much difficulty and poverty.” Nezahat(3), who is currently going to school to get primary school certificate, says, “It is very common in the village. They took me from school in my second year, while my brothers graduated from primary school.” A primary school graduate, Cevriye, also says that her family favored her brother and sent him to secondary school. All these women wish that they were educated. Education is a (more) important source of self-confidence for these women (than for men). A striking example is Safigül’s case where both she and her husband are illiterate. She feels very vulnerable about her illiteracy and says, “I don’t use city

center, and I don't do shopping. I am illiterate; I cannot even read the numbers on the money bill. My husband does the shopping." Answering the question about decision-making, she says, "My husband makes the decisions. My mind is incapable of understanding either good or of evil. I am illiterate." Another illiterate woman, Cemile, whose husband is a primary school graduate, explains why her husband manages the budget as follows, "He is *okumuş* (literate, educated), and his mind works better. So he manages everything." In sum, bias in access to education is a significant source of women's deprivation. Thus, most of the women give priority to their daughter's education. Nezahat(2) says, "I do want my daughter to continue her education. She will not be uneducated like me. She should rescue herself." Latife also says, "I want it more than my son's education. She shouldn't be repressed like me."

Women's legal rights are not "usable rights" all the time. There is often an inequality in access to "usable rights," such as homeownership and inheritance. In the research, most of the families were tenants but in the few cases where the family was not a tenant and the house had a title deed, it belonged to the man. When further asked to women if they would want to have the title deed in their name, answers differed. Safigül, an Alevi woman, says that she does not have the right to own the house, as her husband earns the income and pays the taxes of the house. A Sunni woman similarly says that as long as her husband lives, she has no such right. Both of these women are in their 50s. Younger women are more open and more willing to have title deeds. Filiz, who is a 32-year-old Sunni woman, says that she would want it if they had another house. Nezahat, a 36-year-old Alevi woman, says, "I do want it but my husband thinks that I would leave him If I had the house." Only one woman, Emine, has half of the title deed of the house as her husband has

the problem of gambling, and she is afraid of losing the house. As for inheritance, four women accept that their brothers seized their share of inheritance. Nezahat(2), a Sunni woman, says, “It works like that in Sivas. Women do not have the right to inheritance. Women take their bridal trousseau and leave.” Another Sunni woman, Ayten, also thinks it as natural: “There are two tractors, nothing more for inheritance. It will belong to my brothers. I don’t have any right to it”. However, this is not the case all the time. Some Alevi women go against this tradition and they ask for their share. Cevriye says that their brothers tried to seize her share but she didn’t let them do it. She insisted on her rights. Cemile says, “Of course, I will insist on my share because I deserve it, I am also the child of the same mother and father.” More than half of the women say that if they faced such discrimination, they would ask for their share.

As the research does not gather data on nutritional intake measures and is based on the perceptions and responses of the women, in order to reveal any possible bias and “false consciousness” in the allocation of food, women’s priorities are asked. Almost all the women give priority to their children especially for the food that is expensive and thus can be bought in small amounts, such as meat and some fruits. However, more than half of the women do not give priority to their husbands by saying, “we both have had enough, we cannot grow more.” This is in contrast with what Osmani (1998) has found out in the case of Bangladesh. He says that women find it natural to have unequal access to food between men and women. In my research only few women give priority to their husbands over themselves. For example, Serap, an Alevi woman, says, “First my children because they are small, then my husband because he works.” This does not necessarily suggest a perception bias. It can be argued that children do need more energy and a richer diet

than adults. Besides, women's giving priority to other household members is not a matter of survival and works only for expensive food such as meat and some fruits that can be bought in small amounts. Moreover, women's reasoning for giving priority to their children and to their husbands does not emanate from a feeling of self-worthlessness; on the contrary, this is a source of self-worth for themselves. Many women proudly say that they are more self-sacrificing compared to their husbands, and this is a positive attribute.

3.2.2. Women's Access to Power

Power is defined here based on the explanation of power with regard to women, proposed by De Groot (1991: 125-126) "It needs to be equally concerned with women's positive ability to create and sustain both material and cultural autonomy and to subvert, adapt or resist within the structures of male power. She also emphasizes "the importance of women's networks in various kinds of productive work, in community life, or the undertaking of household and family care." For convenience, power is defined here in short as the "power to do something on one's own". Interview questions deal with decision-making (who and what), initiativeness and survival strategies within the household.

Decision-making involves decisions concerning the following subjects: buying or changing a house, children's education, buying furniture, migration, choosing the neighborhood where they live, and leaving the extended family. Initiativeness involves applying for/ getting aid from the municipality, borrowing money, and organizing relations with relatives and neighbors.

Similar to the findings of Erman's study of rural migrant women in Turkey (1997), the research finds out that most of the women wanted to migrate as much as

their husbands. Some say that they took the decision to migrate together. Some say that they persuaded their husbands. Most of the time migration to the city meant at the same time leaving the extended family and forming a nuclear family in the city. Latife says, “In the village, I lived with my mother-in-law and father-in-law. They made me work too much. I persuaded my husband to come to the city to escape from work.” Leyla complains about her in-laws: “They favored their own daughter and made me work hard. As I worked all the time in the farm, my daughter didn’t know me as her mother for a long time. I wanted to migrate very much.” Similarly, Nezahat(2) complains about her in-laws: “They favored my sister-in-law, they were gossiping all the time.” Hanife also says that she wanted to leave and come to the city because there was too much repression there. Emine explains the reasons behind her family’s migration as follows, “We were working in my father-in-law’s farm. We didn’t benefit from it at all. We came to the city in order to make a home for ourselves.” Ayten wanted to get married to someone living in the city in order to escape from the heavy workload in the village and told about it to her father, and he married her to one of their relatives in the city. Elmas similarly states that she wanted to escape from village. The reasons of migration are not only to escape from the repression of in-laws, to have a home of their own and to get free of the heavy workload of the village. They also migrated to the city for economic reasons. Safigül says, “I also wanted to migrate. I used to think that Ankara was full of money”. Serap says, “There was no job to earn a living there. So both I and my husband wanted to migrate.” Nezahat(3) says, “If we don’t have an income, why would we stay in the village? I also wanted to come to the city.” There are also those who have no stakes in decision to migrate. Sultan, an Alevi woman, says, “As he is the breadwinner, he doesn’t ask women whether to migrate or not.” Zekiye, a

Sunni woman, and Esma, an Alevi woman, are not happy with the decision, as they have no relatives or villagers in the city. Esma complains, “My husband decided to migrate. *Milleti* (his nation) lives here, he said he had missed them.” On the other hand, Esma, who long lived with her in-laws in the city, took the initiative to persuade her husband to leave the extended family, “I persuaded my husband to separate the houses. Why should I want to keep on living with them, to let them repress me more?” As for choosing the neighborhood, economic reasons play a significant role. Then comes living close to relatives. This does not involve a pre-planned decision, but women generally state that they love living in this neighborhood.

As for the decisions regarding children’s education, buying furniture and renting/buying a house, only five women told that the husband made all the decisions. Cemile says, “*Beyim* (My master)¹⁷ makes the decisions, I cannot; as he works, he knows best and organizes everything.” Esma says, “*Beyim* is *ileri görüşlü* (open-minded), he decides about everything.” Döne says, “I cannot do anything without consulting him; I obey whatever he says.” All the other women state that they participate in decisions in one subject or another or in all three. Sometimes they play the leading role in decisions. Most of the women (18) say that they are responsible for children’s education, and they decide together with their husbands. Eight of these women say that they make decisions regarding children’s education on their own. Half of the women (14) say that they buy furniture together with their husbands. For example a woman says, “I need a cupboard, a machine etc. How can men know about that? This is **my** responsibility.” Other women have developed their own ways to get what they want. Cevriye says, “I do buy on credit

¹⁷ *Bey* (Master) implies more respect and deference to the husband than the word *koca* (husband).

from the shop that we always go, he just pays the money. I have bought a television cupboard secretly, but he pays the money of course.” Nezahat(1) says, “If I want something, and he objects, I stop talking to him. In a week’s time, I get what I want.” As for buying/ renting a house, most of the women (17) state that they decide together with their husbands. For example, Nezahat(1) says, “We decide together, he doesn’t do anything without consulting me.” However, they add that most of the time economic reasons play the critical role. It is also true for buying furniture. Latife, who has been married for 10 years, says, “We haven’t bought any furniture. It is my bridal furniture that we have still been using.”

About initiativeness, almost all the women borrow and lend money to/from their neighbors, relatives or villagers. For small amounts, they do not consult their husbands to lend or borrow money, they decide on their own. This is very natural when we remember that they do not have access to large amounts of money. As for coal and food aid, 20 families have taken or are currently taking the aid. In order to get the aid, first it is necessary to apply to the *muhtar*, who is easily accessible to women as the office of the *muhtar* is in the neighborhood. Secondly, it is necessary to apply to the municipality, which is in the city center. Seven women state that their husbands, sons or brothers in-law apply for the aid. Serap says, “I don’t know anywhere, my husband applied for the aid.” Sevgi says, “I am not so active to apply for help.” Twelve women state that they applied both to the *muhtar*’s office and the municipality. However, this may not imply that these women are very initiative. First, in no cases they go alone; instead they are accompanied by their neighbors and/or relatives. Secondly, the reasons behind their “initiativeness” may be what Sultan says, “applying for help hurts my husband’s pride.” However, in any case, this may at least become a starting point for taking the women out of the borders of

the neighborhood/ home in which they are confined. Moreover, these are not the only cases in which women show initiative. The women who used to work/work outside the home all state that they find their jobs through their own relations with neighbors, and their elder sisters. This contrasts to the findings, which state that husbands are effective in placing women in jobs, for example, by finding the families who need cleaning women through their social networks (Erman, Kalaycioğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002). In this research, it is the woman's social network that works.

Women are very active in their relations with their neighbors, relatives and villagers, and in the research neighborly relations tend to be the woman's domain. Only three women say that their husbands intervene in their relations and decide whom the women should or should not see. Most of the women state that their husbands do not intervene in their relations, and they say that they know and decide whom to visit, with whom to be friends and not to be friends. Some proudly say that they are very good at relationships, and they are more initiative than their husbands. Sevgi says, "I keep in touch with our relatives better than my husband." Cemile says, "He doesn't intervene; I don't argue with or offend anyone. I try to get along with everyone." Nezahat(2) says, "I choose my relations according to behaviors and attitudes, my husband does not poke his nose into it." Elmas says, "When I tell him that I will visit someone, he doesn't object." The results are not surprising since the neighborhood and relations with neighbors are very important in women's lives, and they are more effective and freer in these relations as long as they stay within the borders of neighborhood. They spend all the days together, by knitting, doing lace work, preparing food for winter, helping each other in washing and sewing quilts, borrowing and lending money to/from each other and so on.

As stated above, women are “experts” of their lives. This becomes important particularly in poorer households where resources are very scarce. Almost all the women have developed ways, that is, survival strategies, to cut down on the bills, to use the limited resources as efficiently as possible. They find free second-hand books and school uniforms for their children by using their close relations with the neighbors. In order to heat the houses in winter, coal and wood are required for stoves. As they generally receive coal aid, the problem is to buy wood. Women collect sticks, cardboard, and paper to be used instead of wood. Serap makes *tezek* (dried dung used as fuel) with the dung of a cow owned by her neighbor. The women who have gardens in front of their houses grow vegetables, such as tomato, lettuce, parsley, french beans, pumpkin and onion. They have fruit trees, such as apricot, cherry and sour cherry. One woman even grows strawberry, which is difficult to grow in the climate of Ankara. Although most tenant families do not have gardens, with the help of women’s relations, the tenant family can use vegetables and fruits that are grown in the neighbors’ gardens. Especially for preparing fruit jam, it is very natural for a tenant woman to ask for collecting some fruits from her neighbor’s trees. Some women also go to the nearby village to collect herbs, like wild thyme. They dry vegetables, and prepare canned food and pickles for winter, since in the winter vegetables are all the more expensive. Women try hard to reduce the expenses, even for bread, which is quite cheap compared to other kinds of food. Women make bread for winter together with their neighbors; they go to *halk ekmeğ bayii* (people’s bread shop, a kiosk-like shop run by the municipality where bread is sold half of the market price) and wait in the line for hours. Zekiye says, “We went there at three o’clock in the morning many times. Otherwise, they run out of bread before we buy.” They try to reduce bills too. Sevgi

uses the water discharged from the washing machine to wash colored clothes in order to save on detergent, hot water and electricity. Nezahat(3) does not use the vacuum cleaner at all and irons rarely to reduce the bills. If the family has relatives living in the village, they go to the village once a year (in many cases, going to the village once a year becomes a luxury because of transportation expenses). Women work in the farm and bring back flour, wheat, grape molasses etc. In brief, women, with their mind, hands and bodywork, actively participate in the survival and housekeeping of the household. However, the benefits are not equally distributed, neither are responsibilities.

3.2.3. Women's Access to Responsibility

For the purpose of the research, the responsibility for doing something and the power to be able to do something are dealt in separate sections. This is because they do not always overlap. For example, children's education is almost always women's responsibility. But whether or not the daughter of the family will continue her education may be decided by the father, as in the case of Fadime, a Sunni woman whose family migrated from Çorum to Ankara ten years ago. Moreover, what is investigated in the interviews is whether women's domain of responsibility exceeds the borders of the house, or even the kitchen. These questions involve daily and monthly shopping, going to the neighborhood bazaar, taking children to school and to hospital, paying bills, and managing the budget, some of which are already dealt with in other sections.

Daily shopping refers to buying bread and unexpected needs that can be met from the nearby grocer. Monthly shopping refers to buying major food and cleaning items, which generally requires going to a supermarket –there is none within the

neighborhood- as it is more economic than shopping at the grocer stores within the neighborhood. The common pattern is that while women do the daily shopping, men do the monthly shopping. In some cases women and men do the shopping together. One working woman, Leyla, does the monthly shopping on her way home. Another woman, Nezahat(3), who does the monthly shopping, uses the market, which they always go and are familiar with. In some cases, because of poverty and with the help of food aid, monthly shopping is not done. As for vegetables and fruits, women usually buy them from street peddlers, and sometimes they go to the bazaar with neighbors and relatives. Men –husband, son, or father-in-law- are responsible for paying the bills and taxes, which requires getting out of the neighborhood. Women are generally responsible for taking children to the hospital, and if the school is far, to the school. For hospital, generally a relative or a neighbor accompanies the woman, particularly if the children are young. As for managing the budget, as it is stated before in details, it's generally the man's responsibility. In fact, woman's sphere of responsibility exceeds the domestic sphere in few cases where the husband has no (regular) job and/or behaves extravagantly.

3.3. Sectarian Differences, Employment, Family Structure, and Support

System: Do They Really Make a Difference in Women's Poverty?

In the second chapter of the thesis, four dimensions are defined that affect women's poverty though creating an enabling or disabling context for women's subordination. They are sectarian differences, namely, being an Alevi or Sunni, employment status, family structure, namely, extended or nuclear, and support system. Besides, some demographic variables are defined such as age, years of

living in the city, and the age and number of children. In the following, they are discussed with regard to the interview results.

3.3.1. Sectarian Difference

As stated in the second chapter, Alevism is a more liberal branch of Islam, particularly with regard to men-women relations and women's clothing. Alevi women do not veil or use turbans. Sometimes they use headscarves but they loosely cover their hair. Sunnism is a more widespread and conservative branch of Islam. Yet, not all Sunnis, and only the more traditional and conservatives use veils, turbans or hair scarves. In my research, all of the Sunni women are veiled. In this section, the interviews that are conducted with 11 Alevi women and 13 Sunni women, and their results are compared. Besides, Sunni and Alevi women's own perceptions are obtained by asking whether there is a difference between Alevis and Sunnis with regard to women's freedom and husbands' attitudes towards their wives' working outside the home.

No significant differences between Alevi and Sunni women are found concerning decision-making, initiativeness and responsibility patterns. For example, participation in the decisions regarding buying furniture, children's education, buying/renting a house, migration, leaving the extended family, borrowing and lending money do not differ across Alevi and Sunni families. Yet, slight differences emerge. The interviews suggest that Sunni women tend to be more submissive to the conditions of the extended family¹⁸. Emine says, "When I lived together with my in-laws, I was in the service of the family. But there is nothing wrong with that.

¹⁸ Yet, the conditions of extended family with regard to woman's position seem unchanging as per Alevi or Sunni families.

Of course I should.” Döne says, “They warned me against doing this or that. But they are my in-laws. They don’t want me to be bad. They are always right in what they say.” In the interviews, most of the Sunni women lived longer with their in-laws than the Alevi women. They live until brothers-in-law get married or father- and mother-in-laws die. Yet, this is not the common pattern. Sunni women also participate in the decisions and/or persuade their husbands to leave the village and/or the extended family. The results of the research also suggest that Sunni women are more submissive to their family’s discrimination against them in inheritance.

Another slight difference emerges in the answers to the question of whether or not men have the right to beat women. In the case of Alevis, the number of women who state that men do not have such right slightly exceed that of women who claim that men do have such right. In the case of Sunnis, the pattern is reverse. However, in Sunni women’s answers, there is an underlying assumption that the husband would not beat his wife if she does not make any mistake. So whenever a husband beats his wife, he is right. An old woman says, “This is natural, it happens, men do have such a right.” Döne says, “No one is beaten if not guilty.” Nezahat (2) says, “The husband does not beat if the wife doesn’t have any mistakes.” As for Alevis, the answers suggest that the husband is not considered to be always right to beat the woman. Latife says, “It is not right to beat but there are women who deserve to be beaten.” Zehra says, “There are cases where men are right, there are cases where they are not. I am against beating.” Sevgi says, “If a woman behaves immorally, if she *kötü yola sapmak* (to stray from the right way of life, to begin to live immorally), then she deserves to be beaten. Otherwise, I am against beating. Why should men use their physical strength on women?” Not only sectarian

differences but also the age of women plays a significant role in the women's views regarding men's use of physical violence against their wives. A 53-year-old Alevi woman, Safigül, says, "Men are most of the time right at beating women. Women are generally immoral and too talkative." This is similar to a 51 year-old Sunni woman who finds the husband's beating his wife natural.

The most striking difference between Alevis and conservative Sunnis is found with regard to men's attitudes towards their wives' working outside the home. Only three Alevi women (Perihan, Elmas, Safigül) tell that their husbands do not let them work outside the home¹⁹. One of these women, Elmas, has recently sold socks, underwear, and the like, shouldering them in a bundle and walking about the streets of the neighborhood to sell them. On the other hand, all of the Sunni women except Emine, whose husband has a problem of gambling, tell that their husbands do not let them work. The reasons behind such attitudes are as follows: husbands do not want to live on women's money; in-laws are against women's working and they affect the husband's decision; the husband is concerned about the possible gossips, like "do you see, her husband makes her work outside the home. What a man!"; the husband thinks that it is against their traditions and religion. A man, who has a very negative attitude towards working women, exemplifies his reasoning as follows, "There was a woman who worked outside the home, she left her husband and ran away to marry some one else." Moreover, half of the Sunni women whom I interviewed also think in a similar way. Emine, who has worked until recently says, "If my husband was a responsible man, why should I work? He wants me to work, because he wants to live on women's money by not

¹⁹ This does not seem to be related to the age of woman; the argument that the younger the woman is the more jealous the husband becomes, so he doesn't let the woman work does not hold true for these cases. Their ages differ: 30, 35 and 51.

working at all.” Another woman says, “Women’s working is not right in our traditions. A woman works only because of extreme poverty. Otherwise, no man would let his wife work.” Other women say that it is inappropriate for a Muslim woman to work, and women should stay at home according to their traditions. Moreover, half of the Sunni women think that it is inappropriate for a woman to work in a place where men and women work together. So, it is not surprising that in the research there is not any Sunni woman, except Emine, who work/used to work outside the home.

On the other hand, there are two Sunni women who are currently looking for jobs in spite of their husbands’ disapproval. Many other Sunni women also think that women can and should work if the family is poor, and they add that if their living conditions get worse, their husbands must let them work. Only a few Sunni women state that women can and should work so as not to be in need of men’s money, and to spend their own money. One of these women, Nezhahat(3)²⁰, complains about her husband’s attitude, “He does not let me work because he is *yobaz* (religious fanatic), intolerant. He has *köylü kafası* (peasant-mind, backward).” Besides, the number of Sunni women who do home working is equal to that of Alevi’s. Without challenging the image of “male breadwinner”, they participate in the income earning process. As for managing the budget, most of the Sunni women do not have access to the total income, and compared to Alevi women who say that they manage the budget (it should be stated again that they are also few), there are less Sunni women who claim to manage the budget.

²⁰ Nezhahat’s husband works as a scavenger, which is not a prestigious job. Nezhahat is not respectful to her husband’s job (see page 100 for more information about Nezhahat); her strength may emanate from her husband’s low-status-job.

Sunni women and men are more willing and open with regard to their daughters' education and employment than women's own education and employment. All the Alevi and Sunni women support their daughter's further education and employment. Both Sunni and Alevi women state that their daughters should not be desperate for man's money. A few Sunni men still think that their daughters should not go to school and should not work. For example, Fadime's husband, who is a 35-year-old man, does not let his daughter to continue her education. Yet, Fadime and the daughter, who likes school very much, are trying to persuade the husband. Only few women (three Sunnis and one Alevi) state that their daughters should not work if the husband is rich enough. Some Sunni women think that if their daughters do not have a profession, they should not work. As for helping the child to establish his/her own business/work, while Alevi women tend to support daughter's, Sunni women tend to support son's. Nezahat(2), a Sunni woman, explains the reason as follows, "My daughter will get married, and her husband will take care of her, but my son has to earn his living first."

In sum, the results suggest that in traditional Sunni families, through increased subordination of women particularly concerning paid employment, women's access to resources seem to be made more difficult. Compared to Alevi women and men, Sunni women –although less than Sunni men- and men tend to have more negative attitudes towards women's paid employment, and women's and men's working together. Yet, with increasing poverty, attitudes, particularly and firstly women's attitudes, begin to change. As for daughters' education and employment, Sunni women and men are more positive and willing than when women's own education and employment are concerned, particularly provided that

the daughter becomes a university graduate and has a profession. On the other hand, there are cases where the father prevents daughter's education.

In the research, the perceptions of the Alevi and Sunni women support the above argument that Alevi women are more open and freer, and that Alevi men are more tolerant of/open to their wives' working compared to conservative Sunni families. Most of the Alevi women and more than half of the Sunni women openly support the argument. Nezahat(2), a Sunni woman, says, "They are freer. In our traditions, women's right to speak and to go outside the house is very restricted." Döne, another Sunni woman, says, "Their clothing is different. My husband does not let me wear trousers, and uncover my hair. The number of their working women is also high." Yet another Sunni woman, Nezahat(3), says, "Alevi women are freer. They go out. My husband doesn't let me go anywhere alone. They (the husband and the husband's brother) send a man to escort us (The wife and the brother-in-law's wife who was present during the interview). This is *geri kafalılık* (backwardness)." But not every Sunni woman, who supports the argument that Alevi women are freer, complains about the situation. Filiz says, "They seem to be freer, more at ease. But we like our traditions; they are more appropriate for Islam. We stay away from men." There are also those who think that sectarian differences make no difference, and it changes from person to person. For example, Perihan, a 30-year-old second-generation Alevi woman, says, "Alevi women seem more open and freer but there are many Sunni veiled women who are more modern than Alevis." There are also women who think that, due to poverty, there remained no such difference between Alevis and Sunnis concerning women's paid employment. Zekiye says, "If the family lives in poverty, both Alevi and Sunni men have to give permission to

women's working." Similarly, Ayten, another Sunni woman, says, "Now they are all the same. Everyone tries to earn a living."

As a result, this research suggests that sectarian differences make a difference in favor of Alevi women with regard to the ease it provides to women's paid employment²¹. This may also be considered as a disadvantage as it increases the workload of women. Yet in the following section, it will be clearer why this is not the case.

3.3.2. Employment

In this section, first, women's attitudes towards employment will be discussed. Then an answer to the question of whether or not working outside the home makes a difference in women's lives will be sought.

As stated in the first section, there are only two women currently working, and five women are looking for a job, three of whom have a working experience. This means that most of the women whom I interviewed do not work outside the home, they are not looking for jobs, and they do not have an experience of working either. Under these conditions, it is surprising to find out that most of the women appreciate women's working, and many women would like to work if they did not have a reason of not working, such as small children, husband's disapproval, being illiterate/low level of education, and the lack of jobs appropriate for themselves.

Many women, particularly Alevis, want to work and/or appreciate women's working not only because of poverty/economic reasons, but also because of the freedom of spending their own money. Nezahat(1), who is looking for a job, says,

²¹ However it should also be noted that increasing poverty may open the way for Sunni women to participate in the labor market.

“Even if our conditions improved, I wouldn’t leave my job. Women should work in order not to be in need of men’s money. Women shouldn’t beg for money like a beggar from their husbands.” Cemile, who is illiterate and who would like to work if she were educated, says, “Women should work not to be submissive to anyone. Working women eat and wear whatever they want.” Similarly, Sultan says, “The husband might be good and rich, but a woman should work so as not to be submissive to the husband.” Zekiye, a Sunni woman, says, “Housewives are submissive to their husbands economically. If I earned money, I would buy nice clothes for my children and myself, I would go out, I would do whatever I want.” Nezahat(3), another Sunni woman, says, “Why should a woman be in need of men’s money? If you tell your husband one of your needs, you cannot tell him the other. He complains about the five cigarettes that I smoke a day. If I worked, he wouldn’t be able to say anything.” These are not the only reasons for women’s appreciating working outside the home. Some women state that working makes women healthier. A Sunni woman says, “Instead of sitting at home and thinking, getting bored all day long, working makes the mind and the body healthier.” Esma, an Alevi woman, says, “Working frees women from inactiveness and immobility, and it makes them healthier.”

When asked questions about who the poor or rich are (not the names but the criteria), and how their own conditions can improve, women generally define poverty and wealth with regard to material resources of the “male breadwinner”, that is, whether he has a regular job or not, and in some cases together with owning a house. However, this is not always the norm. Four women state that women’s working is a criterion too. Hanife, a Sunni woman, says, “I don’t have a profession, so I am poor.” Leyla, an Alevi woman, says, “Working woman is rich as she spends

her own money.” Nezahat(1), another Alevi woman, says, “If a woman does not work, her condition is worse in the family than the husband.” Although their poverty definitions still seem referring to material resources, in fact it is also about the freedom of/ enjoyment of spending one’s own money, rather than the income itself. In answering the question of how their conditions can improve, they give reference to themselves and/or daughters. Nezahat(1) says, “If I and my daughter work too, our conditions would improve,” and Zekiye, who is Sunni, says, “If both my daughter and son grow up and start working, then our condition may go better.”

As for the working women and the women who have work experience, it is true that they gained some freedom of spending their own money as dealt in details in the first section. For example, Altın, who works as a cleaning woman says, “I spend my income as I wish, I don’t listen my husband’s murmur.” Apart from the freedom of spending money, all of the women who work/used to work outside the home have more initiative, are more assertive in the decisions, and carry responsibilities that exceed the domestic/neighborly borders, such as doing monthly shopping and using the city center.

Many of these women have very positive attitudes towards working in spite of starting to work outside the home only because of economic hardship. They state that even if their conditions improve economically, they want to continue working. For example, Leyla says, “I started working because of economic reasons, but now I wish I had started working long ago.” They have also very positive attitudes towards their daughter’s education and future paid employment. The only Sunni working woman, Emine, and an Alevi woman, Latife, are not happy about their own working (they say that if their conditions improve economically, they don’t want to work), but are very willing to send their daughters to school in order for

them to have a profession and to earn their own living. Emine says, “She should work, I suffered a lot, she shouldn’t be in need of *el ođlu*’s (stranger, used instead of husband) money; the money she earns becomes sweeter.” Similarly, Latife states that she gives priority to her daughter’s education so that she will not be repressed like herself. Then, the reason behind these women’s not being fond of their own working can be the kind of work that is open to them, namely, cleaning, which has a low-status. Another research (Erman, Kalaycıođlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002) also suggests that the kind of employment available to these women discourages them from getting paid work.

As a result, it can be argued that there emerges a general tendency among the women towards appreciating women’s paid employment, irrespective of women’s own employment status. The positive attitudes are more apparent towards the women who have professions, and towards their daughters’ future employment. Women’s paid employment makes a difference in the expected way by those who have no work experiences but who have positive attitudes towards employment: a more self-chosen spending pattern, more initiative and more power concerning family decisions compared to non-working women. Moreover, this process is self-reinforcing. The expectations of the women are somehow satisfied and the desire to work outside the home strengthens.

3.3.3. Family Structure

In this section, the question of whether living in an extended or nuclear family makes a difference regarding women’s positions in the family and the family’s poverty is discussed. In the research, there are no extended families. Yet there are cases where three or four houses are located next to one another around a courtyard.

The women live with their own families in a separate house. Yet they spend the day, and sometimes have meals together with the other families. These families live like an extended family. This is similar to what Lomnitz (1997) calls “compound-type arrangement,” which is defined as “groups of neighboring residential units which share a common outdoor area for washing, cooking, playing of children and so on.” Apart from that, nearly all of the women whom I interviewed lived with their in-laws when they first got married. A Sunni woman, Zekiye, is still living with her single brother-in-law.

Based on women’s past experiences, the cases of living as an extended family can be categorized in two ways. Firstly, there are the cases where living with in-laws is preferred on the basis of economic advantage although it increases women’s workload. Secondly, there are the cases where it brings greater seclusion and workload for the woman and no economic benefit. For the first cases, women do not want to leave the extended family because of the fear of falling into poverty, but in-laws are willing to separate. Zekiye, who still lives with the brother-in-law, does not complain at all since he earns money and helps the family. For the second cases, women are assertive in the decision to leave the extended family. Moreover, in the research, there are currently no cases where living with in-laws is not economically beneficial, yet it continues. In one way or another, after a few years of living together, the family leaves in-laws, and as described in details in other sections, the woman’s role is no trivial in this process.

All women, irrespective of their preferences, state that the workload increases in the extended family, as they are in the service of the whole family. For example, Latife says, “It is *el kapısı* (a stranger’s house). How good can it be? Workload increases. It is not like your own house. In your own house you can leave

the dirty dishes unwashed and go out, but in your in-laws' house you can't do it." Sevgi, who lived with her in-laws for a long time, says, "We were seven people living in a one-room-*gecekodu*. There was no washing machine. I had to do all the work on my own." Moreover, women are repressed by in-laws' restrictions and warnings. For example, Fadime says, "I suffered a lot. I was very young when I first got married. They suppressed me. Then we continued to live with my brothers-in-law until they got married. It was no better." Women attribute their getting along with in-laws to their own submissiveness. Perihan says, "It was okay as I didn't disobey. It became bad when I answered back." Similarly, Cemile says, "It was good since I don't like quarrels. When I don't quarrel, how can they quarrel with me?" Yet, not everyone was able to get along with their in-laws. This may bring about domestic violence. Safiğül says, "I answered back to my mother-in-law. My husband told me to shut up. I didn't, so he beat me." Similarly, Sevgi says, "My husband beat me once and it was because of my bachelor sister-in law's provocation."

As for the cases where they live close to in-laws but in separate houses, this is an economically advantageous choice as they live in their fathers-in-law's houses but they do not pay rent. Similarly, Lomnitz (1997) states that compounds become economically more secure than nuclear households. However, it may not be so advantageous for women. In these cases, women's relations with the neighborhood and other neighbors are very limited. They do not borrow or lend money and they do not at all socialize with them. They are more inward-oriented and ineffective with regard to the decisions and responsibility in the family (apart from domestic responsibility, which may even increase due to the increased workload). For example, it was very difficult to interview the women who lived in an

extended/extended-like family. A mother-in-law prevented me from interviewing her bride, and in another case I had to interview the mother-in-law instead of the bride whom I initially wanted to interview. The mother-in-law was a very effective woman on the decisions concerning the whole family.

There are also two cases where women told that they used to live with their natal families in order not to pay rent. The women said that they were not happy to live together with their own families²². Cemile states that it caused gossips and teasing in the neighborhood, but they had no chance because they did not have money to pay rent. Zehra says, “My father was getting angry with the children and it hurt my pride.”

In sum, women as well as husbands may prefer the extended family (the patriarchally extended family is more common and preferable) because of poverty. It provides economic benefits, yet this does not turn into advantages for women’s access to resources. On the other hand, the research does not have any examples to suggest the opposite either, that is, living in extended families is increasing women’s unequal access to resources. As for the access to responsibility and power, living in extended families is definitely disadvantageous for women’s position in the family. It is a cost-benefit analysis and women may take on the costs in return for benefits, that is, to escape from falling into poverty.

3.3.4. Support System

Support system refers to both economic and psychological support of woman’s natal family, and the interview investigates whether this makes a difference with regard to women’s access to resources, responsibility and power. Support system is

²²In Turkey, a man who lives with his wife’s parents is called *iç gıveysi*, and it is looked down upon.

also discussed in relation to the “perceived threat” literature which, in a few words, argues that woman’s position-to-be in fallback position, that is, in the case of divorce, influences her current condition concerning her bargaining power. Whether woman’s position-to-be or an active support system is effective in increasing woman’s bargaining power when the two do not overlap is also investigated.

There are different kinds of aid. Firstly, when there is an economic aid and if it is money, woman receives it and spends it on her own. When it is clothes, gifts and the like, it is for children. Woman’s family may send food to the family. Besides, woman’s natal family may lend money, and in this case, woman asks for it and man spends it. More important than what kind of aid it is and how it is spent, its possible effects are discussed in relation to woman’s access to responsibility and power.

Support system is intertwined with other dimensions, such as sectarian difference, employment and age, to produce different patterns. In Alevi families, almost all the women, who receive psychological and/or economic support from their parents and/or sisters and brothers, state that they could think of divorce²³ and would survive without their husbands by living with their natal families. Besides, they state that they would start working outside the home. For example, Leyla states, “I could manage living on my own. I would go to live with my family and work outside the home”. These women are at the same time effective in their current lives concerning decisions, responsibility and initiativeness. On the other hand, in Alevi families, half of the women state that they cannot think of divorce at all. They do not receive any support from their families. For example, Cemile says,

²³ Thinking of divorce does not necessarily refer to a self-made decision. In most of the cases, this implies a compulsion on the part of women, like getting divorced from a man who leaves his family. Besides, divorce is unapproved by traditions and is not very common in Turkey (White, 1994).

“I have no family to go back, I am not educated. I guess I would *kötü yola düşmek* (stray from the right way of life and begin to live immorally, that is, become a prostitute).” Similarly, Elmas, who has no support from her natal family, says, “I have no one to hold on. I think I would commit a suicide.” One of these women, Cemile, is very restricted in her behavior. She cannot even buy bread from the nearby grocer on her own. The other woman, Elmas, is also restricted in her behavior by her husband. He is one of the rare Alevi men who do not let their wives work outside the home. She even could not say that she did home working when her husband was with us at the beginning of the interview. Besides, she was subject to domestic violence. The other cases are also similar. The results suggest that for Alevi families, women who have recourse to their natal families tend to participate more in decisions, responsibility and power in the family. For the women who have no support, the pattern is reverse. This suggests that women’s support system increases their bargaining power in their families.

In the case of Sunni families, almost all of the women stated that they could think of divorce as a possibility, and added that they would go and live with their natal families. Two women also stated that they would work if necessary. Yet, this does not turn into a better position for the women in their current lives. There are women who are more powerful as well as those who are not. The fact that their fallback position would not be detrimental, since they would live with their family, does not necessarily increase their bargaining power within the family. This may suggest that, since Sunni families are more conservative and religious (at least the ones whom I interviewed), in case of divorce, they cannot leave the woman on her own because it is related to their own *namus* (honor). The family either looks after the divorced woman or re-marries her with someone else. This is more like a

tradition that works in cases of divorce and does not provide a psychological and/or economic support for women in their current lives. Thus, this does not increase women's bargaining power and does not increase their influence on the decisions within the family.

In the research, many women stated that they would go and live with their natal families in case of divorce. They would not be unprotected. This refers to a better condition in fall-back-position. However, as it is the case in Sunni families, women's position-to-be in fallback position is not the only and the most important criterion in increasing women's bargaining power within the family. When it does not mean current psychological and economic support to the women at the same time, the latter becomes more significant regarding women's bargaining power.

Another example, which increases women's strength in fallback position but does not mean an active support system and thus does not increase women's bargaining power in their current lives, is women's taking pension as long as they are unmarried²⁴. This improves women's condition with regard to fallback position but does not provide support for now. This is similar to the above argument. It does not turn into increased bargaining power for women. For example, when they get married, their monthly pension from their deceased fathers' payments is over but instead they are paid a sum of money for once. But women say that they had to hand over the money to their husbands so that men would not feel bad and get angry with them. If the women owned and spent their own money, this would be taken as a threat to the "male breadwinner" image. In sum, let alone increasing their bargaining power, women give away their right to spend the money so that this will

²⁴ In Turkey, when a civil servant dies, a pension is assigned to his family. When the wife of the civil servant dies too, the pension is assigned to the unmarried daughter of the family, as long as she is unmarried, including divorced ones.

not be interpreted by the husband as the woman's bargaining power has increased vis-à-vis himself.

In brief, the results suggest that an active psychological and/or economic support system helps women gain more power and responsibility in their lives. This may be mediated through increased self-confidence due to knowing that their natal families support them, rather than their better condition-to-be in fallback position, that is, the case of divorce, which rarely takes place.

3.3.5. Demographic Factors

Most of the women whom I interviewed are first-generation migrants in their late thirties. There are two women who are in their fifties, and there are four second-generation migrant women²⁵ who are in their late twenties and early thirties. Age and being first or second-generation migrant seem to overlap in my research so I will take them together. As for age and the number of children, the age of children plays a significant role in women's decision to work outside the home, provided that they do not have anyone to look after the children.

The research results do not suggest any systematic effects of age and/or years of living in the city on women's access to resources, responsibility and power. For example, when two old women who migrated to the city long ago are compared, it is found out that while one is very powerful within the family compared to her husband, the other, Safigül, is very submissive to the husband. This is also true for the young, second-generation women. While some of them are very active in

²⁵ The women who have been living in the city since they were children (until 3-years-old) are included as second-generation migrant women.

decision-making and assuming responsibilities, some are very submissive to their husbands. More than age/years of living in the city, other factors, such as sectarian difference, support system and employment, play the leading role in determining the context in which women's access to resources, responsibility and power are made easier or more difficult.

The research does not suggest any systematic effects of age/time spent in the city on women's attitudes towards husband's beating his wife or towards men's and women's working together, either. Three of the four second-generation young women state that the husband has a right to beat his wife. Two of them are against women's and men's working together.

Although the interviews do not show any systematic results when first- and second-generation migrant women are compared, it needs to be stated that the research is not aimed at comparing first and second-generation migrants, and the number of second-generation women may not be enough to compare. Moreover, the low level of education of the second-generation women in this research may be an intervening variable. All are primary school graduates except one middle school graduate. Studies in the literature suggest that age and being first or second generation migrant woman make a difference, when this means higher educational levels for the second-generation (Erman, 1998, 2001; Tienda and Booth, 1991).

3.4. Any Patterns Emerging?

There are two apparent patterns, like the two ends of a continuum, rather than two different categories. I suggest that woman's perception of husband's irresponsibility with regards to living up to the male breadwinner image who provides for the family, and his inconsistent attitudes towards women's paid employment are the

key concepts in defining the patterns. Men's so-called "benevolent dictatorship" and the rules of this "dictatorship" do not work in times of poverty. This is like Kandiyoti's "crisis phase":

The impact of contemporary socio-economic transformations upon marriage and divorce, on household formation, and on the gendered division of labor inevitably lead to a questioning of the fundamental, implicit assumptions behind arrangements between women and men.

Women start to find out that some of the ground rules of this "dictatorship" do not work, such as "The wife stays at home and the husband provides for the family". They find out that the husband is incompetent as a breadwinner and what he says is not always right. Then they start questioning the other rules, such as "I obey, whatever the male breadwinner says." This leads to overt conflict within the family.

If women attribute it to the conditions other than the husband's will, then even if the husband has no job, he may not be defined as irresponsible, and women may prefer to surrender to his authority. Bolak (1997: 221) explains it as follows: "Most women's notion of manhood center on the man's potential for responsible behavior rather than his current ability to provide for his family."

I call one of the two patterns "defiant women" whose husbands do not have regular jobs and/or behave irresponsibly. These women often refuse to surrender to men's authority. Moreover, due to husband's irresponsibility, while on the one hand the responsibility (domestic and often extra-domestic) and power of the women tend to increase, on the other hand their access both to resources and usable resources (especially the material ones) tends to deteriorate.

The other pattern I call "deferring women" who surrender to their husband's authority since they find their husbands as "responsible breadwinners" and want the husband to be the primary provider. Their access to responsibility and power is

restricted compared to the former group. As for access to resources, they are more or less similar to the first group.

3.4.1. Defiant Women

In this group, there are fourteen women, most of whom perceive their husbands as irresponsible and/or incompetent breadwinners; and one of whose husband is away from home for long times because of his job. More than half of the women in this group are Alevis. They are managing the budget on their own or together with their husbands. Two of them are currently working; three of them have work experiences and want to work again. Two of them are looking for jobs in spite of their husband's disapproval.

They are generally assertive in what they want and they have power in decisions vis-à-vis their husbands. They are more or less unsatisfied with their husbands who cannot live up to the expectations of the "male breadwinner" model, and some make a mockery of the breadwinner image of their husbands. They all state that they could think of divorce as a possibility and most of them add that they would have recourse to their natal family and work if they get divorce. Most of them feel that their natal families support them. For two working women, their elder sisters are very strong models and help them finding job, looking after children and the like. They often mentioned their elder sisters and gave examples from their lives during the interview.

All of the women in this group find themselves more self-sacrificing and suffering than their husbands. For example, one woman explains the reason behind her answer as follows, "When something bad happens, you say *vay anam* (oh! my mother), not *vay babam* (oh! my father)." With regard to the question of whether

women or men are in a worse condition/poorer in the family vis-à-vis one another, all state that women are more responsible, suffer more, think and act more in their families, so they are in a worse condition. Latife says:

Men don't think about what to prepare for meals, they say that they are hungry, but they don't ask whether there is food or not. They only think of themselves. Does he think whether I am hungry or not? No he doesn't. But I do think of him and my children.

Many of them attribute women's poorer condition to their not having paid employment. Nezahat(1) says:

Women are in a worse condition. You want to buy something. If you tell your husband one of them, you can't say the other. You have to ask, like a beggar. He ends up giving permission to me to buy in one way or another but it causes quarrels.

Leyla says, "The woman who earns money is in a better condition." Zekiye says, "The women who do not work are in a worse condition vis-à-vis men. They are desperate for men's money and thus they have to ask for money from the husband."

All of the women in this group question husband's position in one way or another. For example, Leyla, who works as a cleaning woman and whose husband currently has no job, states, "He didn't want me to work in the past. Now he is even preparing the meal before I arrive. How unreliable/unstable men are!" Similarly Altın says, "He used to be against my working. I started working in spite of his disapproval. Now he is very pleased with my earning money!" She answers the question of whether she currently gets along with and loves her husband, saying, "Are there any good men? "

Nezahat(1) says, "In the past, he used to say that even if he lost one of his arms, he would provide for the family with the other arm, and he would never send me to work. Then what happened? Because of economic hardships, he had to let me work." She also complains about her husband's extravagancy, "Now I manage the

budget. If he had given me the money to manage in the past, he wouldn't have been in such a bad/poor position in his retirement.” This woman escorted me to show the way to another woman's house for the interview and it was dinner time for the husband. She prepared the meal but didn't wait for him to come home. She went back home late since she waited for me to finish the interview. I asked her whether her husband would get angry with her, and she said that he couldn't dare to say anything to her.

Another woman, Nezahat(3), a Sunni woman, who is looking for a job in spite of her husband's disapproval, who works as a scavenger at the municipality's garbage dumping site, explains the reasons behind her husband's disapproval as follows, “He is *geri kafalı* and *görgüsüz* (backward, uncultured, ill-bred). He hasn't entered into society, he has not seen anywhere than the garbage dumping site.” Similarly, another Sunni woman, again Nezahat(2), whose husband also works as a scavenger, and disapproves her working finds her husband *yobaz* (religious fanatic), *köylü kafalı* (peasant-minded, backward) and intolerant. Some of the women swore at their husbands, and men in general, during the interviews. These all imply women's defiance to the husband and the model of male breadwinner.

A more equitable pattern in the access of women and men to responsibility and power is accompanied by increased difficulty in access to resources for these women. The responsibility and power of these women have increased due to their husbands' irresponsible spending patterns and their inability to live up to the expectations. Yet at the same time, their irresponsibility in spending brings about inequality and difficulty for these women and other members of the household in their access to resources, especially the material ones. For example, Emine's husband is a gambler, so she is the one who has the whole responsibility for the

family and is the one who makes the decisions concerning the family, irrespective of her husband's approval. She worked until recently and is looking for a job currently. Her daughter works now and hands over the income to her. Yet the husband, who does not work currently, spends his allowance very irresponsibly. Because of his debts, everything in their house was sequestered once. She decided to get divorced once, and then gave up in order not to lose the right to the title deed of the *gecekodu*. The case of Zehra, who is Alevi, is very similar to Emine's, who is Sunni. Zehra's husband is unwilling to work and spends his day in coffee houses. Because of her small boy, she cannot work, but her daughter works and hands over the income to her. She has the whole responsibility to make the ends meet, while her husband takes some allowance from the daughter and spends it for his own expenses.

Another case is Latife, an Alevi woman, whose husband spent all of his money on another woman, leaving all the responsibility on her shoulders. When he was fired, he had to leave the other woman but his current position in the family depends on Latife's decisions, since she threatens the husband with divorce. Although in other cases, men do not have such extreme spending patterns, they are still advantaged in access to resources, by spending on their personal consumption, for example by using expensive foreign-brand cigarettes, such as Marlboro, by using the city center often although they have no jobs, and so on.

This pattern of "defiant women" suggests that access to resources, and responsibility and power does not necessarily overlap. Thus, this research demonstrated that women's poverty is even more complicated than it is presented in the previous chapters. Sometimes poverty brings about power for women and may open the way to empowerment. This is similar to the pattern defined by Erman

(1998): “Initiating Migrant Women: Empowerment through Hard Work.” Besides, as these women are more assertive in the decisions concerning the whole family, there is more overt conflict, and even domestic violence, except for the one case where the husband accepts the situation more than other husbands²⁶. Moreover, spending patterns for working women and the women who used to work suggest separate spheres of expenditure for men and women. They all resemble the sub-Saharan African pattern and suggest a departure from the “belt of classic patriarchy” or a crisis of this system (Kandiyoti, 1988).

3.4.2. Deferring Women

There are nine women in this group, three of whose husbands have no regular jobs and work as street peddlers, or porters; two of whose husbands have no jobs currently. None of these women work, have work experience or are looking for jobs currently. Most of their husbands disapprove their working, even doing homework in the house. More than half of the women in this group are Sunnis.

They are not assertive in the decisions vis-à-vis their husbands. For example, they may have a say and responsibility concerning children’s education but they have to obey the final decisions made by the husband. Moreover, they not only obey but also defer to the husband’s decisions as he is considered to be the primary provider of the family. None of the women in this group consider their husbands as irresponsible and make fun of their husbands.

There emerge two reasons for this deference, that is, the belief in their husband’s “potential to be responsible” in spite of husband’s current inability to

²⁶ This may be considered similar to the pattern “power renegotiated,” defined by Bolak (1997: 228) as follows: “In these households, women have gained an ascendancy... which enables them to be assertive in the household with less challenge by their husbands.”

provide for the family, thus we can talk about two subgroups in the group of “deferring women”. Firstly, women may feel themselves vulnerable and incompetent vis-à-vis their husbands. There emerged different sources of feeling incompetent in this research. Two of them are illiterate and feel very incompetent and find their husbands educated, intelligent and competent to provide for the family, although one of the husbands is currently unemployed and the other works for the minimum wage, which is not enough since they live in a rented house.

Another resource of feeling incompetent and vulnerable is women’s inability to give birth to a baby. Two women had problems in giving birth to a child. One of them, an Alevi woman, Elmas, said that she could not give birth to a baby for the first five years of their marriage and became subject to domestic violence. In the other case, a Sunni woman, Döne, could give birth to only one child. In this case, even the husband’s being away for a long time because of his job, has not increased the responsibility and power of the woman. When Döne’s husband is away, her son behaves as the head of the family and takes on all the responsibility. She says that she cannot do anything without consulting her husband. Another source of feeling incompetent is women’s lack of family support. A woman’s parents stopped seeing her. The two other women’s parents are deceased and the brothers and sisters live very far away. They have no single relative/villager of their own living in the neighborhood or even in the city.

Almost all of the women state that they cannot think of divorce at all. One says that she would commit a suicide in case of divorce; another says, she would *kötü yola düşmek* (become a prostitute). Only two Sunni women, who have brothers living in the village, state that they would go back to their families; their brothers would not leave them unprotected. No one in this group said that they would work.

The other reason behind their deference to the husband who is unable to provide for the family is their respect for and appreciation of the traditional division of labor in the family. The women in this subgroup resemble Kandiyoti's (1988: 283) "female conservatism as a reaction to the breakdown of classic patriarchy." There are three women in this group, and two are second-generation migrants and one has been living in the city since she was ten years old. Filiz, a Sunni religious woman, states, "I love being a housewife. I want my daughter to be a housewife like me." Although her husband who is a taxi driver has an alcohol problem, she states that her husband is a religious man and has no bad habits except for drinking alcohol, and she respects her husband's decisions and wants him to have the final say in the family. Cevriye, a Sunni woman, whose husband is a street peddler, similarly does not want to work outside the home as she is "used to comfort of staying at home." She does not do shopping at all and is very pleased with not having such responsibility; she is proud of her husband as a responsible man. Perihan, an Alevi woman, says that she is against women's and men's working together (she is the only Alevi woman who is against that) and states that her husband makes the final decisions. She says, "My husband knows how to spend money. Even when he goes to coffee house, I don't ask him how he spends the money."

In fact, both Filiz and Perihan²⁷ feel psychological support from their families and could think of divorce, adding that they would work. As for beating,

²⁷ The case of Perihan is different from others since her family's support is only for divorce. Her family insists on her divorcing her husband. Perihan, who doesn't want to divorce her husband, "has to" adopt her husband's conservative attitudes in order to show her family that she defers to her husband. Besides, in spite of her family's insistence on divorce because of her husband's unemployment, she thinks that her husband is a perfect man but he cannot find a job because of external conditions.

Perihan and Cevriye are the only women in the deferring women group who think that men do not have a right to beat their wives. Besides, this subgroup of women participate more in the decisions compared to the women who feel vulnerable or incompetent. Yet they never challenge and question the husband's authority and believe in surrendering to husband's authority. They adopt some kind of conservatism.

In the deferring women group, more than half of the women think that their husbands are more self-sacrificing, and women are in better conditions since they don't work outside the home. For example, Cemile says, "He suffers more, he earns the money. What the woman does is only to cook whatever the husband brings." Perihan says, "Women are comfortable at home; the responsibility is on the husband's shoulders. You only tell him the needs, he has the responsibility to provide them." Similarly, Cevriye says, "As long as they don't work outside the home, women are in a better condition, they sit at home, doing nothing. "

In brief, deferring women are more restricted in access to responsibility and power compared to defiant women. They still adopt the "male breadwinner" model and do not question or challenge it. There is no overt conflict. This group resembles Bolak's (1997: 226) category of "patriarchal accommodation" under which "the wives are less challenging of the ground rules and do not seem to aspire to a renegotiation of gendered prerogatives."²⁸

As for access to resources, there are evidences to suggest that inequality in access to resources continues. Women do not have access to money directly; for some the only way to touch money is to buy bread. They use the city center even

²⁸ It should be noted that Bolak's study is based on the data collected through interviews with the women who are primary providers of the family. In the "deferring women" group there are no primary-provider-women.

less than the former group. Apart from their husband's using more expensive cigarettes, some have to keep their own smoking secret from their husbands. Since nearly half of the women in this group do not know how much their husbands exactly earn or how much they spend for their own personal consumption, most of the time the husband's spending patterns could not be found out in the interviews. A few women state that their husbands go to coffee houses and one woman says that he spends on drinking. It can be concluded that woman's unequal access to resources is also observed in this group.

In the deferring women group, women's unequal access to resources, and responsibility and power intertwine with/converge to produce some kind of "total poverty," where women's access to all three dimensions, namely, resources, responsibility and power, is restricted.

3.4.3. An Ambivalent Case

There are variances in each pattern and not a single woman lives in the same way as the other. Yet the case of Hanife, who is a Sunni woman and migrated to the city two years ago, is significantly different. On the one hand, she challenges and questions the authority of her husband, and on the other hand, she surrenders to the husband's authority. Hanife's husband works as a street peddler and wants to go back to the village to live with his parents. Hanife, who complains about her in-laws, refuses to go back and threatens the husband with divorce. She says, "Even he goes back, I will stay here and I will work." Her relatives' backing her decision to stay in Ankara in case of husband's leaving provides her strength in the discussions with the husband, but not physical strength. The husband gets very angry with Hanife and beats her every day. Hanife has never gone anywhere else than the

neighborhood since she migrated. She has no access to money, even to buy bread. She has no access to responsibility and power vis-à-vis her husband either. She seems to belong to the “total poverty” pattern, yet she does not defer at all. She threatens the husband with divorce and makes fun of his masculinity as he beats her by saying *erkekmiş* (What a man!). She seems to belong to the defiant woman, yet she accepts the situation more as she finds it more appropriate according to Islamic traditions. As she resembles to both patterns, she does not belong to any category.

About her ambivalence, I suggest that where she was born and grew up make a significant difference, that is, Syria. Although she is a Turk and knows Turkish and has relatives in Turkey, she grew up in Syria and got married to one of her relatives. After a few years of living together with her in-laws, she persuaded her husband to migrate to Ankara, where their close relatives live. As this neighborhood is an Alevi neighborhood and provides a more liberal atmosphere for women, she faces a challenge for her prior experiences and ideas such as “Woman do not work and stay at home.” She, on the one hand, accepts and reinforces the existing patriarchal values about the “proper womanhood”, and on the other hand, she objects to her husband on the very same values she seemingly embraces. This is what makes her an ambivalent case. Moreover, the influence of this neighborhood holds true for all the women interviewed, which is elaborated below.

3.5. The Influence of the Neighborhood on Women’s Access to Power

It is necessary to pay attention to the context within which these women live and give meaning to their experiences. When the patterns emerged in this Alevi neighborhood are compared to those in other studies, the results support the significance of the context.

Erman's (1998) study of rural migrant women in another *gecekondu* settlement in Ankara suggests four patterns: "initiating migrant women", which resemble "defiant women" in this study, "the most submissive migrant women", which are more or less similar to "deferring women", "economically advantaged migrant women" and "struggling young migrant women," the latter two of which have no correspondence in this study. As for the "economically advantaged women with higher social status and comfort, and less power," all the families in this study are poor and thus no woman is economically advantaged. As for the "struggling young migrant women," as explained in other sections, Erman (1998) states that they all have more schooling, while in this study all the younger migrant women were primary school graduates and thus no such pattern emerged.

About "the most submissive migrant women: low power and low social status, high patriarchal control," I suggest that the more liberal atmosphere of this Alevi neighborhood intervenes so that even the vulnerable/incompetent feeling women in the "deferring women" group are not as restricted in their behavior as "the most submissive migrant women" are²⁹. Firstly, most of the women in the "deferring group" state that Alevi women are freer in their behavior and clothing and that there are more Alevi women who work outside the home than Sunnis. Some Sunni women even appreciate Alevi women's being freer. This proves to be an example for these women. Although they do not adopt it immediately, their values start to change. For example, most of these women state that they appreciate women's employment, particularly provided that the family is very poor. They say in answer to the question of how their neighborhood's attitudes are towards

²⁹ The younger women in the other subgroup of "deferring women" certainly participate more in the decisions and are restricted less by their husbands compared to "the most submissive migrant women."

women's working: "In this neighborhood many women are working outside the home. It is approved, why shouldn't it be? Women have a right to contribute to the family when they are poor." Apart from economic reasons, there are a few women who would like to work since it brings freedom of spending one's own money. Fadime states, "I think that women should work outside the home. You cannot ask for money from your husband all the time. If I earned money, I would spend it as I wish for my children and for my own needs."

Moreover, there are women in this group who find themselves more self-sacrificing than their husbands and this is seen as a positive attribute. Döne states, "What does a man live through? He goes out in the morning and comes back in the evening. Does he know the poverty in the kitchen? No. You suffer it. You cannot dare to say to him about your needs." Besides, the two Alevi women in this group do not work outside the home because of their own feelings of incompetence due to their illiteracy, not because of their husbands' disapproval. It was not difficult to interview any of the women in this category as they were more open than "the most submissive migrant women" defined in Erman's article (1998) and they were not afraid of their husband's disapproval of the interview.

As for Bolak's study, in this study there are few women who are primary providers of the family and they are in the "defiant woman" category and are very assertive in the decisions vis-à-vis their husbands. They question "the ground rules of gendered prerogatives." In this respect, the women in my study seem to be more powerful and sometimes challenging compared to women in other studies (Bolak, 1997; Erman, 1998; Erman, Kalaycıoğlu and Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2002). This is particularly evident in both Alevi men's and women's and Sunni women's positive attitudes towards women's working outside the home. Besides, the women who

work/used to work are more likely to gain almost equal access to power, responsibility and resources with their husbands within the household.

In brief, I suggest that this neighborhood, which consists of mainly Alevi dwellers, provides a more liberal environment where more positive attitudes towards women's employment emerge. Although it does not immediately turn into an increase in the number of women who work outside the home, the questions in the minds are enough to pave the way for such a change in favor of women's access to responsibility and power vis-à-vis their husbands.

3.6. Conclusion: Women's Poverty Reconsidered

The research supports the argument that access to resources, responsibility and power is a gendered-bias-process. When poverty is defined not only in material terms, but also in terms of power negotiations and responsibility, we can say that the three do not necessarily converge to produce poverty. A poorer woman (in material terms) may not be poor with regard to power and responsibility. On the contrary, the research suggests that poverty may bring about power for women in some cases. Not only that "what is good for the family is not good for the woman" but also that "what is bad for the family may be good for the woman" hold true. For example, all the women in the neighborhood start to work due to economic hardship, and then they like spending their own money. As one said, "I wish I had started working long ago."

This is not always the case. Poverty may increase women's powerlessness. It destroys women's touching money in their subtle ways, such as women's saving money from the daily allowances given by the husband. It may cause domestic violence. It makes extended families or compound-type household arrangements, in

which women are more passive and submissive, more preferable alternatives to nuclear families. It may lead to some kind of female conservatism in the ambiguity, and novelty it contains.

These two different patterns suggest that poverty causes a “crisis of patriarchal system.” In this crisis, while some women question the ground rules and try to maximize their power vis-à-vis their husbands, some hold onto the existing system more tightly. What determines what the woman would do are sectarian differences, and women’s social resources, such as family support, residential pattern, and (woman’s perception of) husband’s employment status.

Moreover, women are not passive in this process at all. Their wills, interests, perceptions and survival strategies play a significant role in determining their positions vis-à-vis their husbands. For example, they create ways of having access to “usable resources,” such as money. Thus, any presentation of women’s “poverty experienced” needs to have a dynamic understanding of women. This is possible by listening to their voices and their own words. However, in this study, women’s own words are not taken as “givens” and they are contextualized in order to unconceal not only macro social processes (social, economic and ideological) but also the local, “geography of the neighborhood”³⁰ that shape and define the context in which women are embedded and give meaning to their experiences.

In brief, this research argues that women’s poverty is a complex process that can only be understood through women’s own perspectives and perceptions, and the woman’s perspective, and by taking the social context into account.

³⁰ It refers to both physical environment and social environment such as the characteristics of the dwellers. For the influence of the physical environment (*gecekondu* settlement) on Turkish migrant women, see Erman (1996).

CONCLUSION

Women's poverty should be understood and studied as a web of multiple processes. Yet, in the literature, most of the time, it is women's employment that derives attention when women's poverty is considered. This thesis aims to provide a more complex picture of poverty by defining women's poverty as women's unequal access to resources, responsibility and power within the household. And, in doing so, it does not dissociate women's poverty from asymmetrical gender relations taking place in society at large. On the contrary it presents women's poverty as affected by macro social processes as well as by local dynamics. It does not present the household as the only institution that these asymmetrical relations are constituted and reconstituted. On the contrary it presents the household as contextualized within the existing social structure and relations, which mutually enforce and change each other continuously.

The thesis defines four dimensions that may affect women's access to resources, responsibility and power through enabling or disabling women's subordination: sectarian differences, employment, support system and family structure, and the findings support the assumption that these four dimensions are intertwined to produce an enabling or disabling context for women's poverty. Thus, any study that aims to understand the gendered nature of poverty should take into account these dimensions as far as the women, particularly the rural-to-urban migrant women, in urban Turkey are considered.

Furthermore, this thesis brings forward several arguments. Firstly, it should be noted that information is contextual, including the perspectives of women, which the field study tries to present. The results of the field study suggest that the

“geography of the neighborhood” has an impact on defining the context in which women give meaning to their experiences. In this case, the neighborhood’s being composed of mainly Alevi dwellers makes a difference not only in the attitudes of Alevis but also those of Sunnis, particularly apparent in the attitudes towards employment compared to those found in other studies. This suggests that although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, historicization of the neighborhood would be insightful. If further studies that aim to present a political history of this Alevi neighborhood through gender lens, that is, the repercussions of this historicization on women, were carried out, it would have also implications for women’s poverty. Moreover, a study that is carried out in a neighborhood composed of mainly conservative Sunni families would provide comparative results. How such a composition would affect Alevi and Sunni dwellers’ attitudes, particularly women’s, would yield further implications for women’s poverty.

Secondly, the thesis argues that women are not passive followers of their husbands’ will, and of “gendered prerogatives,” and rejects the assumption that women are not aware of their own interests, namely, the perception bias. Women are active agents of their lives. In many cases, it is found out that they somehow try to maximize their own interests, that is, they do not surrender to their husband’s authority at the expense of their own interests and/or wills. For example, although this may seem trivial in the eyes of researchers, keeping some money from daily allowances are important and enough to satisfy some of their needs. Even their positive attitudes towards the husband’s beating his wife should be considered as a strategy, which prevents the possibility of being beaten. If a woman knows when the husband would be considered “right” at beating his wife, then she is more likely to minimize the situations where she is going to be subject to domestic violence.

This is not a value judgment and does not mean that I approve it. Moreover, I do not take women's own words as "givens." Yet, this implies that women's "positive" attitudes do not reflect a false consciousness. On the contrary it reflects some kind of consciousness, that is, women are aware of their interests. It is a strategy of not being beaten in the cases where a woman does not have much chance to get divorce from her husband even if he beats her. In this regard, I think that this thesis brings insight to perception bias discussions and presents many examples of women's "strategic thinking"³¹, and they are not examples of false consciousness.

The third point the thesis presents is the argument that the household's poverty may bring power to women in some cases. This certainly does not suggest that poverty is "good" for women. Poverty should be considered as a "crisis" phase, which produces "challengers" as well as "conservers" of "classic patriarchy." What makes women "challengers," "defiant women," or powerful women in these cases is the inability of the husband to live up to the expectations of "primary provider" and the emergent need for another income as well as the woman's perception of the husband's incompetence as the "primary provider." Besides, woman's receiving psychological and/or economic support from her natal family is a factor that strengthens woman's position in these cases. Moreover, it is found out that being an Alevi is positively correlated to being a defiant woman in this study. Defining the internal dynamics of this process of gaining power through the household's poverty has repercussions for poverty measures, since how poverty is defined determines how it is measured. Poverty alleviation policies should be conducted on the basis of the experiences of women. Any gendered poverty measure should take into account

³¹ Strategic thinking is used here to suggest that one is an "expert" of one's own life, which is explained in previous chapters.

these internal dynamics in order not to end up in a pattern of “economically advantaged women with higher social status and comfort, and less power,” as defined in Erman’s (1998) study. Reducing household’s poverty does not directly turn into a reduction of woman’s poverty. Any institutional attempt to reduce the household’s poverty by paying to the husband may have deteriorating effects for the wife in terms of her access to power. Although, policy implications of this discussion are beyond the scope of the thesis, the main underlying reason for defining the internal dynamics of poverty through gender lens and investigating how women experience and cope with poverty is to provide the base for a gendered poverty measure.

This thesis may be a starting point for further studies in Turkey, which concentrate on women’s poverty. Even the well-studied aspects of women’s poverty in the literature, for example, the poverty of women-headed families, go unresearched in Turkey. In this field study, many women stated that women-headed households that they knew were not poor, either because the children worked or the woman received her deceased husband’s pension. Moreover, de facto women-headed households can be another area of investigation, which goes unresearched in Turkey. This thesis will serve its purpose if it stimulates further studies, which are necessary to get a complete picture of how women experience and cope with poverty.

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APPENDIX A LIST OF INTERVIEWED WOMEN

The interviewed women are listed by name, and characteristics for each of the women are listed in the following order: name of the woman, religious sect, age, place of birth, years of living in the city, educational level, employment status, husband's employment status, children's employment status.

A woman who didn't want to give her name, Sunni, 51, a village of Ankara, 23, primary school drop out, housewife, scavenger without security benefits, none.

Altın, Alevi, 34, Ankara, second-generation, middle school drop out, cleaning woman with security benefits, self-employed (car repair) with security benefits, none.

Ayten, Sunni, 32, Çorum, 11, primary school graduate, housewife and looking for a job, street peddler-currently unemployed, none.

Cemile, Alevi, 36, Samsun, 16, illiterate, housewife, factory worker with security benefits, none.

Cevriye, Sunni, 34, a village of Ankara, 24, primary school graduate, housewife, street peddler without security benefits, none.

Döne, Sunni, 39, Kırıkkale, 25, primary school graduate, home working, welder with security benefits, 20-year-old son works as a welder with security benefits

Elmas, Alevi, 35, Çorum, 15, primary school drop out, home working, porter without security benefits, none.

Emine, Sunni, 38, Erzincan, 20, primary school graduate, work experience as cleaning woman and currently looking for a job, unemployed, 19-year-old daughter works in a clothing workshop without security benefits.

Esmâ, Alevi, 27, Adana, 7, primary school graduate, housewife, construction worker without security benefits, none.

Fadime, Sunni, 32, Çorum, 16, primary school graduate, home working, cook with security benefits, none.

Filiz, Sunni, 32, Kırıkkale, 31, middle school graduate, home working, taxi driver without security benefits, none.

Hanife, Sunni, 20, Syria, 2, middle school graduate, housewife, street peddler without security benefits, none.

Latife, Alevi, 29, Yozgat (city center), 27, primary school graduate, work experience as a cleaning woman, home working and looking for a job, street peddler-currently unemployed, none.

Leyla, Alevi, 33, Sivas, 16, primary school graduate, domestic cleaner without security benefits, welder-currently unemployed, none.

Nezahat(1), Alevi, 36, Tokat (city center), 20, primary school graduate, work experience as babysitter and looking for a job, retired and currently worker in a private company with security benefits, elder son, 19 years old, works in service sector (cargo with security benefits), the younger son, 18 years old, works in a cafeteria without security benefits.

Nezahat(2), Sunni, 31, Sivas, 2 months, primary school graduate, housewife, scavenger without security benefits, none.

Nezahat(3), Sunni, 35, Sivas, 14, primary school drop out and currently goes to school in order to get middle school degree, home working and looking for a job, scavenger without security benefits, none.

Perihan, Alevi, 30, Ankara, second-generation, primary school graduate, housewife, unemployed, none.

Safigül, Alevi, 53, Yozgat, 33, illiterate, housewife, cook-currently unemployed, 18-year-old son works as an apprentice in a hairdresser's without security benefits.

Serap, Alevi, 25, Ankara, second-generation, primary school graduate, housewife, porter without security benefits, none.

Sevgi, Alevi, 39, Erzurum, 18, primary school graduate, housewife, scavenger without security benefits, none.

Sultan, Alevi, 38, Yozgat (city center), 17, primary school graduate, home working, skilled worker in a small workshop (tailor) with security benefits, none.

Zehra, Alevi, 39, Tokat, 6 months, reading and writing without school, housewife, running coffee house-currently unemployed, 17-year-old daughter works in a clothing workshop without security benefits.

Zekiye, Sunni, 34, Elazığ, 10, primary school graduate, home working, truck driver with security benefits, none.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Migration, Residence, Neighborhood

1. Where did you migrate from? When? Why? (Marriage/ looking for a job, etc.). Ask both for herself and for her husband separately.
2. Who decided to migrate? Did you want to migrate? Why?
3. Did any relatives/villagers of yours use to live in Ankara before you migrated? Where did they use to live? What about your husband's?
4. Did anyone help you to rent/buy the house when you first migrated to Ankara? Is she/he your relative/villager or your husband's? How did you find this house? (If it is her own house), whom did you buy from? (If it is a rented house), who is your host/hostess?
5. Is this house your first residence in Ankara? (Ask about all the houses in which she resided) Why did you move to another house? Who decided on moving?
6. Why did you choose this neighborhood? (Economic reasons, relatives etc.) Are you the one who decided on living in this neighborhood or is it your husband?
7. Who do you know better in this neighborhood? Are they your relatives/villagers or your husband's relatives/villagers? If not, have you met them after you migrated?
8. How are your relations with your neighbors? Do you spend time together? What do you do together? Do you help each other, and if so, in what ways? (Doing food for winter together, doing lace work etc.). Do you lend and borrow money?
9. Do you help anyone and receive help from anyone? Do you lend and borrow money? (Even if it is in small amounts like 1-2 million Turkish Liras, ask for details). Who are they? Relative/villager/neighbor?
10. Do you get any aid from the municipality? (Coal, firewood, food etc.) If so, who applied for the aid, you or your husband?
11. Who are the wealthiest in the neighborhood? Who is the wealthiest woman in the neighborhood? (Pay attention to the criteria that she employs to define wealth) Would you like to be in the place of the wife of a rich man?
12. Who are the poorest in the neighborhood? (Pay attention to the criteria that she employs to define poverty.) Are there any women whose husbands are deceased that you know? What about their economic conditions? Are they the poorest or not?
13. What are the advantages/disadvantages of living in this neighborhood? What do you need most in this neighborhood? What do you think women need most in this neighborhood?
14. Do you go out of this neighborhood? How often? Why? What about your husband? Your children? (Ask about whether or not there is a decrease in her frequency of going out due to increased poverty.)

Woman's Relation to Her Natal Family and Her Husband's Family

Relations with her natal family:

15. Where does your family live? (Near/distant). How often do you visit them? If rarely, why? (Poverty-distance, husband's permission etc.)
16. (If it is distant) why don't you live close to your family? Would you like to live close to them? What about your husband? Have you ever lived together with your family?
17. How is your family's economic condition? Are they wealthy? Do they help you? (e.g. living in their house without paying rent, the natal family spends on children) Do they give you cash? (If so, ask question 53)
18. Do you have brothers? Have your parents ever discriminated against you by favoring your brothers concerning education, inheritance and the like? Did they help your brother to establish his own business? If so, what about you?

Relations with in-laws:

19. Where does your husband's family live? (Near/distant) How often do you visit them? If rarely, why? (Poverty-distance, willingness to stay away from them etc.)
20. (If it is distant) why don't you live close to your husband's family? Would you like to live close to them? Have you ever lived together with them? (If they lived together some time), How many years did you live together? Why did you separate? Would you like to live together again?
21. How is your husband's family's economic condition? Are they wealthy? Do they help you? (e.g. living in their house without paying rent, the natal family spends on children).

If woman's or husband's family resides in the village, ask the following questions (both for woman's natal family and the husband's family separately)

22. Do you work when you go to the village? (in the farm, etc.) What do you do? What do you take in return for your work? (money, food, etc.)
23. Do you bring food from your village? Is it only enough for your family's need or do you also sell it? Do you or your husband sell it? If you are the one who sells it, how and for what do you spend the money? (If the food brought is from woman's natal family, ask whether she can keep some money for herself.)

Characteristics

Name, age, place of birth, educational level, employment status, and income are asked for each of the family members.

Job History

For each of the family members who work or have work experience and for their each employment, the followings are asked: Date of work, time, duration of employment, content and status of the employment, income, cause of quitting the job, social insurance, if any.

Women's Employment

Ask the following 8 questions to those women who currently work or have work experiences:

24. How did you find the job? Who helped you to find the job? Is she/he your relative/villager/neighbor or your husband's?
25. Why did you start to work? (Husband is disabled/unhealthy, economic reasons etc.) Who wanted you to work at first? Who decided on your working outside the home, you or your husband?
26. Who looks after your children during your working outside the home? How was it like when the children were young? Do you think that children are obstacles for women's working outside the home?
27. How do you go to work? Do they pay for transportation?
28. How much time do you spend on housework? Do your children help you in housework? What about your husband?
29. Are you happy with your job? In what ways do you like/dislike your job? (If she doesn't like her job), what kind of a job would you like to have? Would you like to go on working if your economic conditions improve? What do you think your husband would want you to do, to go on working or to leave?
30. How much would you like your wage to be? How much would be enough? (Pay attention to whether she refers to her own wage or husband's wage)
31. Do you decide on your wage or hand over it to your husband? How and for what do you spend it? Do you keep some money for yourself? If so, for what do you spend it? What is your wage generally spent for?

Ask the following two questions to those women who do not work currently:

32. Why don't you work? (Husband's permission, young children, lack of appropriate jobs, lack of education, age, health etc.)
33. Would you like to work? Why, why not?

Ask the following questions to all women:

34. Have you ever done home working? Do you do home working currently? (Knitting, doing lace work, sewing, preparing food for winter and the like). If she does, why? How do you find purchasers? Do you sell them in the neighborhood? Do you do home working on demand? How much do you earn for each piece? How and for what do you spend the money? (Ask question 53)

Attitudes towards employment:

35. What is your attitude towards women's employment? Do you appreciate of women's working outside the home? Should women work outside the home? What do you think about women's working in a place where women and men work together? Why, why not?
36. What is your husband's attitude towards your working outside the home?
37. Would you work outside the home if your husband objected to it? Has such an event happened in your family or husband's family? If your husband objects/objected to your working outside the home, why do you think he objects?

38. What is the common attitude of this neighborhood/ “your people” towards women’s working outside the home? How important would their objection be in your decision to work outside the home?
39. What is your family’s attitude towards women’s working outside the home? What about your husband’s family’s? How important would their objection be in your decision to work outside the home?

Children’s employment

40. Who decided on the child’s working, your husband, you or the child? Did the child have to leave the school in order to work?
41. How and by whom was the work found? Your own relatives/villagers or husband’s, or child’s friends or else?
42. Why is child’s working required?
43. How does the child spend his/her wage? Does she/he hand over the income to you or your husband, or does she/he spend the wage on her/his own? (If the child hands over his/her wage to the woman, ask question 53.)

Incomes and Expenses

44. Do you receive any aid? (The *muhtar*, green card, any political party, aid for writing materials from school, certificate of poverty³², coal or firewood aid, and the like.) If they receive aid, who applied for that?
45. When you run out of money, what do you do? Borrowing money, selling the furniture at home and the like. (If they borrow money) from whom do you borrow money and who borrows money, you or your husband?
46. What is the total income of your family?
47. Ask for expenses:
 - A- Rent
 - B- Bills: telephone, electricity, water, bottled gas (ask the monthly average for each) do you try to cut down on the bills? What do you do? Who uses the telephone most at home? How often do you make a call?
 - C- Food: Do you make an effort to reduce food expenses? What do you do? How often do you eat meat and fish? Where do you buy vegetables and fruits? (Street peddler, neighborhood bazaar, green grocer) Who buys vegetables and fruits? Do you buy them on a weekly basis or on demand? How often do you buy fruits? What is your priority in allocation of food? (father, children, herself)
 - D- Transportation: Who has the larger share in transportation expenses? What do you do to cut down on transportation expenses?
 - E- Cigarette and newspaper: Who smokes at home and how frequently? (If the woman also smokes, compare the brand of the cigarette she smokes with the husband’s.)
 - F- Education: How much do you think you spend on education? (on yearly basis or on a monthly basis) What do you do in order to reduce the expenses? (to buy second-hand books, to provide them from neighbors, to receive aid from school, and the like) Who is responsible for that, you or your husband?

³² This is an official document given by *muhtar* in order to prove that someone is poor. The only way to apply for aid to municipality is to receive this document first.

G- Heating: How many kilos/tons do you buy firewood and/or coal?
What do you do in order to reduce heating expenses?

H- Health: How do you get drugs prescribed? (Ask in details to those without social security) Do you or your husband take the children to hospital, and to which hospital?

48. Do you prepare canned food, tomato paste, jam, pickle, and the like at home?

Intrahousehold Relations

49. Who makes the final decisions in your family regarding the children's education, buying/renting a house, and buying furniture?

50. Who does daily shopping? Who does monthly shopping?

51. Who has the final say in relations with relatives and neighbors? Who is more effective in managing relations with relatives and neighbors?

52. Who manages the budget? Why?

53. If you have access to money in some way (by working outside the home, home working or taking daily/monthly allowances from the husband), do you keep some money for yourself? If so, for what do you spend it?

54. Do you think your husband keeps money for himself (from his salary/wage)? If so, for what do you think he spends it?

55. What would you like your monthly income to be? How much would be enough?

Self-Classification

56. According to you, what is poverty? Who do you call "poor"? Why?

57. Do you think you are poor? Why? Compared to whom you find yourself poor/ not poor?

58. Is your economic condition better or worse than your neighbors', your relatives'? If your economic condition is better than your neighbors', your relatives', do you help them? If your economic condition is worse than them, do they help you?

59. According to you, are women in a better position or worse position (poorer) in the family vis-à-vis their husbands? Why?

60. Who do you think is more self-sacrificing, you or your husband? Who do you think is more self-sacrificing, women or men?

61. Do you think your economic condition will improve in the future? How can your economic condition improve?

62. What do you think about your children's future? Will they be in a better or worse position than yours now? Do you want them to continue their education (to go to school)? What about your daughter? If you had enough money, would you establish a business for your daughter or son?

63. What is the best thing that makes you happy in your life?

64. What is the worst thing/the biggest problem in your life?

65. In place of whom would you like to be? Why?

Ownership of Durable Goods

66. Which of the followings do you have and for how many years?
Refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, TV set (how many), video/VCD player, fully automatic washing machine, dishwasher, radio/tape-recorder/music set,

telephone, cellular phone (how many, who do/does they/it belong to?), water heater (working by electricity or bottled gas?), PC, car.

Are any of these bought for you by your family or husband's family?

67. What have you bought recently for your home? When?
68. (For only home owners) Does this house have a title deed? If so, who does it belong to? (If it belongs to the husband,) why do you think it belongs to your husband? Would you like to have the title deed by your name?
69. Physical amenities of the house: How many rooms are there in this house? Is kitchen separate? Is toilet inside the house? Are bathroom and toilet separate? Do you have garden?

Personal Questions

70. How is your relation with your husband? Do you get along with your husband, with your in-laws? Is he a good husband?
71. Do you do all the housework on your own? Does your husband help? If so, in what ways? (Preparing meals, looking after children etc.) What about your children? Does your son or daughter help you?
72. How did you get married, *görücü usulu* (arranged marriage) or *severek* (by loving)? Do you love him now?
73. If you were separated from your husband in some way, what do you think your position would be? Would you survive on you own or have recourse to your natal family? What would you do?
74. Does your husband beat you? Has he ever beaten you? Have your in-laws ever beaten you? According to you, do men have a right to beat their wives?
75. How do you spend a day? Have you ever attended a course?
76. In what ways do you think Alevi are different from Sunnis or are they any different?
77. Do you think being an Alevi or Sunni makes a difference with regards to women's freedom? What about with regards to women's working outside the home? Which do you think are more liberated and free, Alevi or Sunni women?