

**WOMEN TRAPPED BETWEEN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPHERES: MANIFESTATIONS
OF ALIENATION¹**Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate)* Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)** **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the perception of femininity shaped by gender norms at the intersection of public and private spheres, and to which of these spheres women feel they belong more. This examination examines not only the ties or new forms of relations that women establish towards the private sphere, but also the alternatives available for the continuity of the private sphere and the meanings they carry in social relations. In-depth interviews were conducted with 17 female workers in factories in Istanbul, and the data were interpreted through critical discourse analysis. According to the results of the research, women become strangers to the private sphere, which is characterized as their “place,” and cannot fully find a place in the public sphere. While women are not enough for the private sphere to which they feel they belong and cannot fully find a place for themselves in the male-dominated public sphere, they also become strangers to the gender norms they have internalized and their assumptions about being a woman. Women are squeezed between the private and public spheres and become alienated by losing their belonging, identity, and beliefs about their gender.

Keywords: Women, Private Sphere, Public Sphere, Alienation, Gender Alienation.

Jel Codes: J16, J22, J71, Z13, D63.

1. INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx conceptualized alienation as a fundamental consequence of the capitalist production system, particularly elaborated in the 1844 Manuscripts (Marx, 1976). He identified four dimensions of alienation: the worker becomes estranged from the product of their labor, as it is commodified and controlled by the capitalist; from the labor process itself, as it occurs outside the worker's control; from other workers, as competition replaces solidarity; and, ultimately, from their own creative potential, reducing the worker to a passive tool of production. Marx attributes the root cause of alienation to private

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ownership of the means of production (Marx, 2003). In *The German Ideology*, he further explores alienation's historical origins, emphasizing that individuals become subjugated by the very social systems they create, framing alienation as both economic and ideological in nature (Marx and Engels, 2013).

Although the concept of alienation as a critique of industrial production is one of the basic concepts at the center of sociological research, the subject of alienation is determined as the “male” worker (Çakır, 2008:193), and women's experiences are not given enough space without the need for gender questioning. Seeman (1959) classified alienation into five dimensions and analyzed it accordingly. These are powerlessness, sense of meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-alienation. According to him, an alienated person loses his/her effectiveness over his/her life, loses his/her sense of meaning, does not believe in rules or the possibility of change, cannot position himself/herself within social values, and turns into someone who wants to get away, even from himself/herself. This is the loss of the integrity of human beings. Thus, one's relationship with oneself loses its personal character, and one's relationship with the whole of life ceases to be personal. From a feminist perspective, alienation is based on the masculine domination of women. Gender norms that differentiate women and men involve negative discrimination against women and women are marginalized and experience a different form of alienation. Thus, the woman experiences a specific alienation in the social-public sphere, which seems to be separate from each other, and in the private sphere, which shapes her way of being (Alp, 2014: 342). Therefore, it seems important to question alienation within the different variables of the private and public spheres. In line with this approach, these two spheres are not completely separated from each other but rather intertwined with each other, especially with the participation of women in the public sphere today.

Women's experiences of the private sphere and alienation include women's perception of “being a woman”, domestic routines, childcare, marriage and kinship relations, as well as the domestic division of labor (Donovan, 2014: 105). In this context, women's perspectives on “being a woman” have an important place in their experiences as “knowing subjects”. The relationship between public sphere and alienation corresponds to a more complex process for women. The woman has to think about and realize the private sphere while taking part in the public sphere to which she is alienated. Thus, while trying to find a place in both spheres, the woman becomes alienated from the gender norms and perceptions of femininity that she has internalized (Beauvoir, 2019).

This study investigates the perception of femininity shaped around gender norms at the intersection of public and private spheres, and to which of these spheres women feel they belong more. This research covers the ties and new forms of relations that women establish with the private sphere, as well as the alternatives available for the continuity of the private sphere and the meanings of these alternatives in social relations. In this context, in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 women workers in factories in Istanbul and the data were interpreted through critical discourse analysis. We aim

to benefit women themselves, gender equality advocates, and policymakers by understanding the process of women's alienation between public and private spheres, and by understanding the effects of gender norms on women's perceptions of belonging, identity, and gender.

2. WOMEN IN THE LITERATURE ON ALIENATION

Alienation is not a concept specific to the modern period, and corresponds to a broad historical debate. In general terms, alienation is defined as a detachment from oneself and the whole, and loss of identity (Aşkaroğlu, 2017); alienation from one's original activity and its results, products and direct production (Petrovic, 1991: 602); loss of visibility of the creativity and activity of the human essence (Ofluoğlu and Büyükyılmaz, 2008: 139); and separation from one's own self, cooling down, becoming passive (Deryahanoğlu, 2019: 10).

In theoretical discussions on alienation, the alienation of women has not been given enough importance. In Marxist theory, women are the subject of both the relations of production and alienation. (Hirschman, 1993: 539). Another important point is the complexity of the woman's relationship with alienation and the fact that she experiences alienation in very different ways than the man who is the subject of the alienation debate. This process of change, which involves women's participation in the public sphere and is built on a patriarchal social and economic structure, has alienated women from their labor in a binary structure, although it has provided certain rights and freedoms. Feminist theory examined alienation from the perspective of women in this duality, and shifted alienation from the public sphere to the private sphere. With the visibility of domestic labor through feminist theory, the discussion of alienation, which had previously been ignored, was included in this field (Alp, 2014: 340-342).

Many reasons, such as women's isolation at home, unpaid or low-paid labor, and dependence on men, make alienation inevitable for women. When women cannot participate in social processes, they are deprived of creativity, work, and benefits. On the other hand, taking part in paid employment alone is not enough to eliminate women's alienation but carries the risk of increasing it (Dalla Costa and James, 1972). When the Marxist approach is examined, it is thought that the only space that is not alienated is the private sphere, but the focus of such acceptance is to have full control over the labor process. While women's domestic work is characterized by lack of control and necessity, on the other hand, it is seen to be far from creativity as it is routine, boring and unimportant work. Far from realizing themselves or working creatively with these chores, women do not care and question these chores sufficiently except as a way of earning a living or meeting their expectations of their femininity. Therefore, the claim that housework distracts from alienation becomes invalid for women and labor processes (Stevenson et al., 2020: 259; Donovan 2014: 153; Yörük, 2009: 68).

Socialist feminists have examined concepts such as ideology, class, consciousness, and alienation from different points of view using a woman-centered approach and have discussed the differences in women's class positions and forms of exploitation. While examining women's relationships with

alienation, the socialist feminist perspective has placed the most important emphasis on the duality of private and public spheres. This approach, which deals with the forms of exploitation that women experience as a result of their participation in paid employment, as well as the relations that continue in the household, has adapted the Marxist theory that limits exploitation from the public sphere to the domestic sphere and women (Yükselbaba, 2016:134; Hartmann, 2016).

3. THE MEANING OF FEMININITY AND GENDER ALIENATION IN THE PRIVATE-PUBLIC SPHERE DUALITY

Historically, the dichotomy between private and public spheres has been based on politics and production relations. The private sphere is associated with privacy and the natural lifecycle of humans. The public sphere, on the other hand, has been defined as an area where people realize themselves as citizens, participate in social production and make decisions about the continuity of life (Michel, 1984: 21). The position of women in the dichotomy of private and public spaces, despite including many cultural, social, economic, and political differences, has changed, but is still primarily defined within the private sphere. Life in the household has been expressed in an abstract and secondary form and left behind in the male-dominated public sphere, which is seen as primary (Pateman, 1988: 12). Women's labor is rendered invisible in this sphere where reproduction is ensured, gender roles are determined and which forms the background of the production system. In the private sphere where women perform household chores, they largely give up their sociality and assume many responsibilities alone. While this role difference between men and women is historically and socially constructed, the fact that it is maintained daily reinforces these roles (Hattatoğlu et al., 2002; Durakbaşa, 2008:21). Regarding gender roles and housework associated with women, Beauvoir (2019) argues that housework not only involves dealing with constant pollution and waste in terms of its nature but also continues in a continuous cycle without achieving any results. While reproducing life for others through daily and repetitive work, women give up being themselves and their own desires. Ideas such as women's biological and physiological differences, their lack of technical skills, and their existential belonging to the private sphere create a cycle between the sexes that cannot be fully overcome, and men's position in the public sphere becomes permanent (Chabaud-Rychter and Gardey, 2009: 288).

Pateman (1988) explains the increase in the exploitation of women's labor as the transformation of patriarchy into a patriarchal civil society. On the other hand, she states that the public sphere belongs to men along with the concepts of citizenship and civil society. Although women are also citizens of the public sphere, they take their place primarily as wives and mothers (Koçak, 2024: 50). The main problem in this regard is that women are in a disadvantaged position compared with men. The capitalist system's reconstruction of the private-public dichotomy and the sexist structuring of this process compel women to engage in paid public work without making domestic roles independent of women. An important problem here is that the work that women perform outside the private sphere, which is their primary sphere, is characterized as a "contribution" to the family budget and devalued (Kara, 2006: 8-9). In these

developments, institutional, ideological, economic and political distinctions have also been incorporated into the private-public dichotomy, and as a natural consequence, the market and the household are based on different gender orders. Spaces/areas are reconstructed and gendered in the modern sense through priorities and superiorities (Sancar, 2009: 51-54).

The concept of gender refers to the cultural and social construction processes and meanings of women and men independent of the biological manifestations of sex (Demez & Tunca, 2018). In the opposition between sexes, men are in the foreground and women are in the background, while activity is associated with men and passivity with women. The understanding of gender and femininity is based on this deprivation, identities are shaped by binary oppositions through the other, and femininity is defined through elements that are not like men (Yıldız, 2019: 4). The basis of the formation of the symbols that determine masculinity and femininity is based on reason; reason represents masculinity and the irrational represents femininity (Dağdelen, 2021: 831). At this point, a strict gender regime is established through masculinity and femininity. This gender regime creates a collective community of beliefs and values regarding masculinity and femininity (Özdemir, 2019: 93).

Through gender norms, which are an output of economic power, biological and cultural norms, women are characterized as loyal, smiling, sweet-tongued, possessive, submissive, sacrificial, delicate, fragile, emotional, naive and self-sacrificing. Femininity is primarily associated with motherhood and is defined as an emotional being who sacrifices for others (Koçak, 2024: 50; Özdemir, 2019: 104-106; Duman & Güngil, 2024: 191). In modern society, womanhood and motherhood do not always proceed in parallel, and conflict situations arise. Womanhood is left behind motherhood and eliminates the possibility of a womanhood independent of motherhood. Women also experience motherhood and isolation from their social lives as part of the process. Thus, honor, marriage, motherhood, home life and sacrifice constitute the basic framework of womanhood (Yıldırım, 2020: 249). Women are subordinated to male authority both within the family and in society, objectified as a form of property, perform care work for children and men, and are mostly involved in low-quality and “feminine” - and in patriarchal society mostly worthless - forms of productive labor (Ehrenreich, 1976). In this respect, women's invisible domestic work refers to unrequited and unquantifiable labor and work for love. In the absence of working hours, an endless chain of responsibilities is in question throughout a woman's daily life (Brenner, 2000:2). The narrow stereotypes determined by gender on women have become highly visible in the processes of participation in the public sphere. A woman who raises her children with the help of a nanny/nursery with her participation in paid employment suffers from remorse (Özkaplan, 2009:17).

The “state feminism” that pushed women into the world of work did not lead to equality in women's domestic division of labor and sexual morality and created a serious rift between women's identities in the domestic and public sphere (Kandiyoti, 2013: 236-239). In this process, women, who found themselves unprepared and pushed into the world of men, not only participated in paid

employment in this unfamiliar field, but also took part in the public sphere such as schools, streets and public transportation. The power established by men in the public sphere and the legitimacy and continuity of this power gains more meaning with the positioning of the outsiders (Sankır, 2010: 2) and the masculine power creates the public sphere according to its own rules through obstacles and restrictions in women's living conditions (Erbaş, 2008: 22), thus excluding the feminine from the public sphere (Koparan, 2020: 57).

While the worker in paid employment enters a different sphere of life as soon as he or she leaves the factory, if this worker is a woman, the approach to this issue takes a different dimension from unpaid labor. As soon as the woman leaves the factory, the second shift begins for her. For men, the private sphere corresponds to a space where alienation is eliminated; for women, it is equipped with alienating elements of reproduction. Because the woman becomes alienated from the labor process and its product with her unpaid labor in the reproduction process and under the domination of men (Sümer, 2009: 115). Mitchell (2006) states that this alienation can become more dramatic than the alienation of the wage worker.

In short, the position of women in society has reduced to a secondary role throughout history. As a result of this ideology, women have been excluded from social, economic and political life and have become an alienated gender facing various experiences. Women undergo a special kind of fragmentation and loss of their existence as women and are subjected to forms of alienation that can be distinguished from forms of alienation in the social order (Bartky, 2020: 129). Women who experience these problems in both social and economic relations inevitably become alienated from the perception of femininity that society attributes to them and from themselves by being in the second position in terms of labor. As Çakır (2008) points out, women's alienation has a multifaceted structure, and women may experience alienation in a more specific way than men at this overlooked point.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

4.1. Research Methodology

In this study, using a qualitative research methodology, women's direct narratives and experiences were central. Women's ways of thinking about and grounding in these experiences are considered very important (Harding, 1986). The qualitative method has become important in women's studies as it includes emotions, behaviors, experiences, and thoughts. With this method, women's problems are made visible through their experiences and their own voices (Kelly, Regan, & Burton, 1992).

4.2. Research Group

Within the scope of the study, in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 full-time blue-collar women workers in factories in Istanbul. The fieldwork was conducted in Istanbul to assess diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, belief, culture, and socio-economic status, to provide a broad perspective on the

factors affecting alienation, and to evaluate the impact of workplace conditions and urbanization on alienation. The women in the research group were selected to reflect the distinction between private and public spheres and their experiences of alienation among those who have been working for at least one year, have completed 18 years of age and are married.

4.3. Data Collection Tools and Process

The interviews were conducted in June-August 2024 using a semi-structured interview form in which women could talk about themselves in order to reveal the conditions in which they were in their own expressions. Such an approach also provides women with a wider space in which differences can be revealed, rather than limited or simulated responses to limited questions (Marshall, 1999: 240-241).

4.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained in this study were interpreted through critical discourse analysis. After coding and categorizing the data, implicit and explicit meanings were revealed. It was examined what the participant's discourse meant in the context, what it was associated with, or with which topic the participant made this discourse. Thus, the impact of social and cultural norms on discourse has also been revealed (Kümbetoğlu, 2020: 124). Critical discourse analysis examines social and ideological power relations by focusing on discourse, and aims to reveal how women are alienated within social structures (Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 1993). In this study, the impact of speech on individuals was evaluated by analyzing the representations of gender and power relations through language. In particular, issues such as the exclusion and marginalization of women as well as their subordinate positions are addressed, and how this situation reproduces social norms is examined through the use of language (Lazar, 2005). In this context, the focus is on power structures and hegemonic relations in discourse, and how language objectifies and marginalizes women (Wodak, 1997). The ways in which the private and public spheres are differentiated, the ways in which their experiences make sense of these two spheres, and the meanings of gender alienation are discussed on the basis of commonalities and differences.

5. WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES ON GENDER ALIENATION: FACTORY WORKERS IN ISTANBUL

5.1. Demographic Findings

Within the scope of the study, in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 women factory workers in Istanbul. The average age of the women was 41. 9 of the women graduated from primary school, 1 from secondary school, 5 from high school, 1 from associate's degree and 1 from open education bachelor's degree. While 12 of the women did not have any professional qualifications, 2 were pre-accountants, 2 were machine operators, and 1 was a security guard. In addition to production labor, 4 women also worked as kitchen staff in paid employment. Only one of the women had no children, and one was pregnant. The number of children of other women varies between 1- 4. Women's earnings are

in the range of 17000-21000 and women have lower income levels than their husbands. At the time of the research, the net minimum wage was 17,002 TL.

Table 1. Demographic Findings

Participants	Age	Level of education	Profession	Position	Husband's occupation	Number of children	Number of persons living in the household	Individual income / Household income (TL)
P1	57	Primary School	-	Worker	Construction worker	2	2	17000/40000
P2	47	Primary School	-	Worker	Worker	3	5	20000/42000
P3	28	Secondary School	-	Worker	Worker	-	2	18000/40000
P4	36	High School	Security Officer	Worker	Master	2	4	20000/45000
P5	53	Primary School	-	Worker - Tea Maker	Master	3	5	20000/60000
P6	34	High School	-	Worker - Tea Maker	Worker	3	5	19000/40000
P7	32	High School	Associate Accountant	Worker - Tea Maker	Driver	Pregnant	2	17000/47000
P8	46	Open Education Faculty	Associate Accountant	Worker - Tea Maker	Security Officer	1	3	17000/45000
P9	28	High School	Machine Operator	Worker	Master	1	3	20000/45000
P10	49	Primary School	-	Worker - Shift Supervisor	Retired		4	19000/45000
P11	45	Primary School	-	Worker	Worker	2	4	18000/38000
P12	45	Primary School	-	Worker	Master	2	4	17000/40000
P13	52	Primary School	--	Worker	Driver	2	2	18000/39000
P14	39	Primary School	-	Worker	Law Enforcement Personnel	4	5	21000/65000
P15	32	High School	-	Worker	Worker	2	4	17500/37500
P16	28	Associate Degree	Machine Operator	Worker	Worker	1	3	17000/35000
P17	49	Primary School	-	Worker	Retired	4	4	17000/65000

5.2. Findings on the Perception of Femininity

The difference between sexual identities is presented through oppositions as a necessity of nature. The position of women and men in social life, the division of labor between them, and their positioning in the public and private spheres are maintained through opposition between masculinity and femininity (Bourdieu, 2015:20). The women who participated in the interviews described being women in terms of the following qualities: slavery, servitude, sacrifice, hardship, and motherhood. This is also visible in the statements of P4 and P7: *“I can't explain being a woman in one word, there are so many ways to describe it... A woman is a mother, a maid, a worker, a cleaner, a health worker...in short, everything”*, *“Being a woman means trying to live. We are oppressed everywhere, we do not see anything good, to be honest... I would like to know what it is like to be a man. They can easily get away with everything”*. As an extension of these statements, the women stated their duties as cooking, being a woman to their husbands, raising children, cleaning, and keeping the house in order. A woman's place is primarily at home, and her most important duty is to be a woman at home and a good mother for her children (Koçak,

2024:50): “When we are born as a girl, it is our duty to do these things directly, girl, woman, bride, mother...” (P12). As P11 stated, being a woman corresponds to responsibility and struggle at every stage of life: “I can say for myself that being a woman is a very responsible and difficult thing. I have always struggled with difficulties. Financial difficulties, what I went through with my husband, raising the children, and taking on all responsibilities. I got married at the age of 15 and my life has been like this since I was 20...When I look back, I say I can't do what I did then, I had a lot of difficulties; I was subjected to violence, psychological pressure. I wonder how I did it; I must have done so automatically. I was very tired physically and mentally, and I received psychological support. Being a woman was very difficult from my perspective”.

While being a woman is generally defined with negative qualities, the most important privilege for women is being a mother (Özdemir, 2019: 104-106). Women have expressed this as a quality that positively distinguishes them from men, and often as a reason for not wanting to be a man. Women see childbearing, being a mother and raising children as a sacred duty. One of the participants, P6, expressed this as follows: “I think it is a privilege to be a woman, to give birth and to be a mother... Bringing a generation into the world and raising them is a gift to us”. However, this quality of women, which is expressed here in a positive sense, is also one of the most important reasons why women cannot feel that they belong to the public sphere.

The place of women in the private and public spheres was expressed as the home by all participants. Although women seem to be liberated from housework and home as a space, they can give up the public sphere and paid work if they choose (Yılmaz, 2018: 2). Almost all the women interviewed had to leave their previous jobs due to marriage and childcare: “After my daughter was born, I did not work until she was 12. There was no one to take care of her, and I did not want to give the money I would get to the babysitter” (P8). Giving up the private sphere and her roles in it means both disbelief in change in the private sphere and a significant loss of her femininity. P1 and P4 expressed this situation as follows: “If I have to give up one of the jobs, I will give up paid work. Of course, this place is temporary for me, and my boredom disappears. I earn two or three cents, but I would leave even tomorrow. Will your husband see you as a woman as soon as you give up your work at home?”, “Household chores remain while working, that's why it's hard. You have to do the housework as a woman, if you cannot do it, you are incomplete as a woman somewhere”. As can be seen in these statements, being a woman is interpreted as being in the home and as lacking when one is liberated from the home.

For women, being in the private sphere and assuming the responsibilities of the private sphere means maintaining order in a space they can control, controlling this space and feeling peaceful. In addition, women generally characterize housework as routine, boring, monotonous and meaningless (Stevenson et al., 2020: 259; Donovan 2014: 153) and state that they are not happy with the cycle and their position in the household: “For men, my work has no meaning or value. If it is not done, of course.

It's just to eat, drink and sleep. Because there is masculinity” (P5). “You are constantly erasing the same thing, doing the same thing, it's like you are hypnotized. I can't imagine enjoying this job” (P6). “One day I just didn't cook, my husband said to me, 'When have you ever cooked properly?’” (P11). As P14 stated, housework is seen as worthless rather than unimportant: “The work I do at work is more creative and meaningful, I never underestimate being a housewife, but being a housewife and housework are seen as things to be underestimated”. As seen in the women's statements, being a woman and the work performed in the private sphere are largely expressed in terms of worthlessness, meaninglessness and redundancy. Women have this perspective as an outcome of both their domestic experiences and their social relations.

The expressions and stereotypes used by women include negative self-image, objectification of the subject by being in a passive position, assuming an emotional burden and responsibility, forming the self with social expectations and restricting their roles. These statements were frequently expressed by women during the interview process and the perception of femininity was formed within this framework. As seen in P14's statement “*I never underestimate being a housewife*”, on the one hand, women define themselves with external observers and on the other hand, there is an effort to maintain their perception of femininity.

5.3. Women's Gender Alienation in the Context of Private and Public Spheres

Women's participation in paid employment and thus in the public sphere is mostly due to economic necessity (Kara, 2006: 8-9). Despite the economic necessity in the process of participating in the public sphere, women's husbands, relatives and friends initially view this situation negatively and resist women's employment. Women stated that this resistance disappears to a significant extent when they start working and provide financial resources for the household. P3 expressed this as follows: “*My husband first said, do not go to work. He doesn't want women to work. That is how they [her husband's family] are, and my father-in-law also told me not to work. I already knew the man here. My husband said, you cannot work if there are men. He took me to and from work for a week*”. Patriarchy manifests itself at the moment of women's entry into paid employment in the relationship between private and public spheres. The woman must first obtain the approval of the man, and this man can be her husband, father or father-in-law. This is because the woman must first fulfill her duties as a wife and mother, which constitute the role of “womanhood” imposed by society, and stay outside the public sphere as much as possible.

In the dichotomy of private and public spheres, women's place is characterized as the private sphere and women are significantly aware of the impact of gender norms in this process. The source of this situation is expressed in the upbringing process and it is seen that women question this situation more after they start working. This is reflected in the statements of P6, P8 and P9 as follows: “*This is the way it is in the society, there are few people who do it in men. That is how we learn and teach. There*

is always someone doing it behind him, he knows it, he doesn't need to do it. Even I make this mistake even though I know I do it, I want my son to do it, but he doesn't do it anymore when he has his mother and sister behind him”, ”As women, we raise men wrongly. Again, we women are actually responsible for this, if we educate them accordingly in their childhood, they will get better. They raise men like kings, then such problems arise”, “This problem is all about the upbringing culture, I have a brother, for example, he sits until the evening and says, 'Bring food, put food, put coke, bring bread'...He never hears sentences from his mother like 'you can do it yourself, take your own food'. Men continue to expect the same from their wives”. It was clearly stated in their statements that women questioned, criticized and ideologically resisted gender roles. This questioning was often parallel to women's experiences in the public sphere. The expressions “raising like a king” and “serving men” also make patriarchy visible through direct discourses.

For women, taking part in the public sphere offers many advantages. First, to a certain extent, women are liberated from the private sphere. Women feel more free, self-confident, social, capable of change and useful when they work. Even among women who are satisfied with being in paid employment, there is an intense concern about losing their femininity and forgetting to be a woman (Alp, 2014: 340-342). P2 and P17 expressed this situation as follows: *“If I were a non-working woman, I would greet my husband properly when he came home from work. Since I'm exhausted, I can't even open the door for him. If I didn't work, I'd send him off and greet him when he came home. The kids too... If I didn't work, the kids would come home in the evening, eat their dinner, take their showers, grab their phones, and relax. Earning money wouldn't be a big deal [for them]. Being at home would be better for them.”* *“Being a woman was always taught to us as being at home, building a home. You can't step outside of that. Yes, we work just like our husbands, but it's impossible for it to be the same. I'll still be the one managing the house. Sometimes, I think, when I was always at home, I cooked, cleaned, and took care of everyone. How much of that can I do while working? A lot less. Then I wonder, am I missing something? Does my husband still see me as his wife, does my child see me as the same mother? It's different, I don't know”.* Women question and worry about these qualities through which they construct their perception of femininity. The public sphere is seen as a temporary experience that women realize in their lives, and as it creates a deficiency and inadequacy in the private sphere, it also poses a threat to being a woman.

Women's participation in paid employment involves implicit agreement on the maintenance of the private sphere, as expressed in the concept of patriarchal bargaining (Kandiyoti, 2013). If a woman participates in paid employment, she guarantees that the work in the private sphere, especially childcare, will not be disrupted, and only with this bargain can she participate in paid employment: *“The man will work anyway, his job is to take care of the house. However, this situation is different when a woman works and she is not like a man. When a man works, he wants to have his food ready, his laundry ready, his house cleaned. When a woman works, who will do it, she will do it herself. No one will come and*

say, 'Oh, you're working, I'll do it'. If you have to work, you have to keep up with the work, otherwise the whole balance is disrupted, and the man knows that he is working knowing this" (P15).

Women's roles between the two spheres involve a significant sense of social pressure and squeezing. Women feel inadequate in the private sphere, which they identify with, and even more inadequate in the public sphere, which they are unfamiliar with. A serious rift is thus created between women's identities in the domestic and public sphere (Kandiyoti, 2013: 236-239). Women express their perceptions and experiences of this situation as follows: "One gets stuck, of course, when there is both home and work. The working hours are already very long, the rest of the time is spent cooking, eating and resting. There is one day off a week, and on that day, you don't know what to do and what to catch up on" (P7), "Economy, payments, balance at home... I am especially depressed right now. I have a daughter and I think about her future, so that she can get somewhere" (P8), "I become a very grumpy and unhappy person while doing housework. I get very frustrated because I can't do the details because I can't keep up, it bores me. If I didn't work, it would be nice to do everything in detail, but when I work, I can't keep up, which makes me very unhappy... On my way home from work, I spend half an hour thinking about what to cook and how to do the laundry. When I get home, I do laundry without even taking off my clothes, then I cook, I mean I am unhappy" (P9). Women feel "trapped" in the private and public spheres and "stuck" between the two.

Women undergo a special kind of fragmentation and loss of their existence as women in the dualism of private and public spheres and are subjected to forms of alienation that are distinguishable from forms of alienation in the social order (Bartky, 2020: 129). What women experience here is not only a complaint about the existing conditions and the inequalities inherent in domestic work; women are experiencing a new space and questioning these experiences. Within the framework of their experiences, women compare their roles with men and become more aware of inequality. At the same time, they cannot break away from their traditional roles, they exist in these roles and gradually become strangers to being a woman (Mies, 1981): "Between home and work, it's as if I get lost, you don't even have time to breathe, you don't. You don't even realize what you're going through, it's as if they set me up like one of those toys with wind-ups, I'm just doing those automatic things" (P17), "I'm always distracted when I'm working, no matter what the job is. Work at home, home at work, children, husband, cooking, cleaning... It is both difficult and impossible for one person to think about so many things. My husband also thinks about things, of course, but when you look at the result, I am the one who does, thinks, worries. I forget myself when I think about these things" (P13). The expressions of being lost, distracted and forgetting oneself also reveal women's alienation from themselves and their gender.

Although women have succeeded in becoming visible in the public sphere and political obstacles to this have been removed, new problems are being added to the existing problems of women (Şimşek, 2012: 59; Hersch, 2015). The role of working woman is added to the three roles of women as mother, wife and housewife (Altan Arslan, 2000: 5). Thus, faced with a double burden in the public sphere,

women are limited to the roles of housewife, mother or wife and rendered anonymous (Ersöz, 2015: 97). The most important problem that women's presence in the public sphere poses for them is the perception of inadequate motherhood. Through the sanctification of motherhood, women's position is reinforced and a serious sense of guilt is built on women who do not meet these qualifications (Badinter, 2011: 82). When women work, they are squeezed between womanhood and motherhood and experience psychological pressure/conflict arising from this situation throughout their working life. When a woman does not fully fulfill her motherhood, she feels guilty, stuck, incomplete and disconnected from her femininity. This situation inevitably squeezes the woman between two spheres and makes it impossible for her to find a full place in the public sphere (Walby, 2011: 5-6). P4 and P6 convey this situation with their experiences as follows: *"A working mother is a tired mother, a mother who cannot spare time for her children, compared to a non-working mother, we lack a lot here. Children are in need of mother's love. Even if I meet their demands financially, they want me around them more... My son is in his adolescence period, and now there are complaints from the school, so I wonder if this wouldn't have happened if I hadn't worked, I wonder if this happened because of me. It is as if I am not enough as a mother", "I actually love working, I am dynamic, but I am deprived of the hours I spend with my children, I feel sad, I can't go to their special days. My daughter had an event, I couldn't go, I felt so sad"*. The conflict arising from being in the public sphere in terms of being the perfect wife and mother that society expects from her reproduces inadequacy for women.

The psychological conflict women experience regarding motherhood is further reinforced by pressure from the social environment. The social environment acts as an important pressure mechanism by telling women that it is enough for their husbands to work, that children are neglected and that they should take care of them first. This situation increases the psychological pressure on women and causes alienation of women from their gender on the basis of motherhood: *"People think it is unnecessary for women to work, they want them to stay at home, cook and take care of their children. There have definitely been times when I have felt this"* (P7), *"I manage well under these conditions, but as I said, sometimes it gets to this point, sometimes I feel like sitting down and crying out of anger, especially when I cannot take care of my children"* (P15), *"My friends at work say you have children, how long are you going to work, if I were in your shoes I wouldn't be able to last this long. If I have a problem at work, for example, my husband immediately says 'don't work if you want, just be a housewife and stay at home'. I experience such difficulties"* (P14). Women also form their perceptions of being a woman through these social discourses. A woman is an inadequate subject of both the public and private spheres. The contradiction between the perception of womanhood necessitated by society and the fact that she is in the public sphere for compulsory reasons has an alienating effect on women.

In order to minimize this contradiction, women make a great effort in the private sphere and focus more on the night shift option. Thus, they are more likely to realize both being a working woman and a mother who can be sufficient for their children, as P4 stated: *"It is better for me to work at night, I have*

my day, my day is all mine. I can do my cleaning easily, I can spend more time with my children, I can make tomorrow's dinner. When I work during the day, I can't do any of these things, I can't keep up. For example, my husband prefers to work during the day, he doesn't worry about these things because for him, his work comes first". However, as seen in the statements of P4, the woman again feels inadequate in both areas and this psychological contradiction emerges again: *"When I work at night I am more adequate in both spheres, housework, cleaning, shopping, but I am not adequate for my children, I always fall short in that regard"* (P4). Even when she works night shifts and utilizes all her daytime time for her home and children, she is still not adequate as a mother. The fact that the woman is in the public sphere is effective here, rather than the time spent and actions taken. The underlying meaning of this situation created on women and internalized by women is that a woman in the public sphere will be an inadequate woman in any case.

An extension of this situation is the women's refusal to accept these responsibilities from their male children and their statement that even if they involve their husbands in housework, they cannot do it as they do. When the women's statements are analyzed holistically, it is seen that the woman wants to get rid of the dependency of the private sphere (Hooks, 1984: 134), but at the same time, she experiences the tension of losing her dominance in the private sphere and being a woman and having her beliefs about her gender taken away from her because the position of women in the public sphere has not gone beyond simple articulation (Acar Savran, 2002: 301). Although P2 stated that she was not happy doing housework and that it was often meaningless, she also stated that she could not be completely liberated from housework as follows: *"I can't stop doing housework, how can I? If I get a helper, the man [her husband] will leave me and marry a new one. Instead of giving the salary to someone else, I would quit and do it myself. That's why my heart wants to do the housework first"*. Gender alienation becomes even more visible at this point. Women's place is at home and men's place is in the public sphere, and being a woman is based on being a good wife and mother. P1 expressed this situation as follows: *"A woman's place is at home, of course, you cannot leave. It would immediately be a problem, and you would be shamed, people would talk about it. Raising children, cleaning, cooking, taking care of the husband... these are women's main job duties. That's why home is more important"*.

Women who do kitchen work as well as production at the workplace stated that production work is more routine and rule-based, and that although kitchen work is similar to work at home, they feel more valued and meaningful in their paid work. P5 and P6, who work both in production and in the kitchen at the factory, expressed this situation as follows: *"Housework is useful for everyone except me. I am the only one who gets tired. Whatever I do, they don't see these jobs as valuable... At home, it is as if I do it for nothing, but at work I can get paid for it. The work I do at work is more valuable, everyone is satisfied"*, *"They gave me the chance to establish my own order, and they told me to set my own rules in the kitchen. They bought glasses, treats, etc. for me to get used to it. I started to feel like home there. They made me feel that I was valuable... I make tea and clean, but those people see it as valuable. I*

make tea at home and take it to my husband, he doesn't even say 'thank you'. When I offer it to a person there, they say, 'Sister, thank you.' I make more at home until the evening, but I don't even get a thank you". Another important point here is that these jobs in the private sphere are compulsory and have no compensation or social value. While women are unhappy in these roles imposed on them by their gender and see these jobs as burden, they feel happier and more meaningful when they do similar jobs in the public sphere. Therefore, from a different perspective, she re-questions her womanhood at home and the perception of womanhood she has learned.

Younger women between the ages of 28-34 are more satisfied with being in the public sphere than women of other ages. Their ideas about gender roles and being a woman are changing, especially under the influence of social media, and this leads them to perceive their work at home as worthless and to perceive participating in paid employment as more meaningful. Women in this age range state that their domestic responsibilities are still excessive and tiring, but they want to continue working because they are satisfied with the benefits of paid employment. On the other hand, these women's alienation processes are intensely realized in the context of being in paid employment as women, and they express that they do not feel that they belong to this field as much as men. P16 expressed this situation as follows: *"Housework is very tiring for me, it's like a second job after work. You don't have much time to rest and do something. I feel this inadequacy more especially when it comes to my child...It felt good to start working, I was very closed at home after I got married and had a child. I started because of financial inadequacy, but it was good for me to socialize, to stand on my own feet and earn my own money. It is also good for me to produce and succeed"*. P11, one of the participants, conveys this situation with her own observations as follows: *"Today's women are smarter, they do division of labor. Women are not burdened as much as before, women work just like men, so they divide the work. Women do not allow this. They say we live together at home and don't give the opportunity...Education, social media, young people are raising themselves, and they are more rational. I wish it had been like this in my time, I saw it from my mother and my father would not have done it either"*. However, when the women's statements are carefully analyzed, it is seen that while they have been liberated to a certain extent from cleaning and cooking in the private sphere, the perception of inadequacy in motherhood continues.

Even though the woman is in the public sphere in a makeshift way, she is satisfied with the benefits that this situation provides her. When a woman is in the public sphere, she experiences the advantages of earning income, empowerment and socialization, but she is distanced from being a good wife and mother, and for this reason, while she cannot find a permanent place in the public sphere, she is alienated from her womanhood. Because women try to exist in both fields and cannot fully exist in both fields (Kiraz, 2011: 166; Hartmann, 2016): *"Working was good for me psychologically, I got out of my monotonous life, and I communicate with people. You can't wake up at home every morning with the same happiness, you get tired, and you want things to change... I don't think I am raising my children very well while working like this, but I am constantly trying to keep up with things and I can't be a very*

happy mother when I am like this... I wish I could get someone's help so that I wouldn't be left behind at home, if that were the case, I would definitely want to work and produce. I can improve in my work, I can succeed, I can advance myself” (P14), “When I leave work, sometimes I am very tired, all I want is to lie down, sleep and rest like a human being, but of course I can't do that. Then I wonder why I got married and why I had children” (P16). Women clearly experience identity conflict between their traditional roles and the expectations of modern society.

Although women have insufficient control over their work, they are significantly aware of the social and individual benefits of their work. While being aware of all these developments, women experience the most important problems through their roles in the private sphere. Therefore, when women seek a place for themselves in the public sphere, the fact that they bring the private sphere with them within the framework of gender norms hinders this process of belonging: *“Men are seen as superior to women in terms of power. Therefore, if someone is to be laid off, it is a woman because men are more useful to them. There is also the issue of children, when I was hired, they asked me, 'Do you have children, do you often take time off for them?' When I said, 'I have someone who takes care of my child, that's why I was able to start working,' they said, 'OK, then it won't be a problem” (P16). Thus, while the woman becomes alienated again from the public sphere to which she is a stranger, she also becomes alienated from her perception and experiences of womanhood in the private sphere by failing to fulfill the roles expected of her in the private sphere. In order to exist in the public sphere, women give up motherhood, and when they give up motherhood, they give up womanhood.*

As seen in the findings of the study, women are primarily women of the home and mothers of their children. Women, whose positions are socially constructed in this way, have participated in paid employment out of necessity and have become significantly aware of the advantages they have gained here. However, these advantages do not correspond to the essence of being a woman in their world of meaning and are dispensable for women at any time. Being in the public sphere is disadvantageous for “being a woman” despite the advantages of being a woman in the public sphere, primarily because she is a woman of the home and a mother. Even though the woman tries to establish a sense of belonging, she is constantly reminded of these qualities, and they are repeatedly brought to her attention. Therefore, with the existence of the private sphere, the woman is again alienated from the public sphere to which she already does not feel she belongs, and more importantly, she is also alienated from the private sphere to which she feels she belongs. At this point, the most important factors are both questioning gender norms by being in the public sphere and feeling inadequate in terms of her duties and responsibilities. Women move away from the qualities of “being the woman they know”, question these qualities, and in the process lose their belonging to both spheres, becoming strangers to both spheres and ultimately to their identity and gender.

6. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As social and economic conditions changed, women started to work for wages and started to take part in the public sphere. Thus, being a woman started to be reconstructed with the rules of the public sphere. While women were working for wages, they could not get rid of their dependence on the private sphere. As can be seen from the findings of the study, the private sphere is still the primary sphere of women and the place where they feel a sense of belonging within the framework of the gender roles expected of women.

Historically and socially, the public sphere corresponds to a sphere from which women are excluded. The subject of the public sphere is men, and even if women find a place for themselves in this sphere where men belong, they do not have the same conditions as men. Women try to exist in the public sphere both for historical reasons and due to the special conditions of the private sphere. The discourse that women do not belong in the public sphere is strengthened by the processes and conditions of waged employment, the pressure of the social environment, and the dominant perception of femininity.

While working in a paid job, women devote themselves, their families, and their social environment to fully maintaining the order of the private sphere and their responsibilities therein. Tasks such as childcare and raising, cooking, cleaning, and maintaining the order of the house are equally expected from women. For this reason, women make great efforts to fulfill their responsibilities in the private sphere in the time left after their paid work and thus to be an adequate wife and mother. The titles “working woman” and “working mother” are added to the difficulties of being a woman, and women begin to question their gender roles. In addition, even if women feel more free, self-confident, social, open to change and useful while working and are happy to work in a paid job, they experience intense anxiety about losing their femininity and forgetting to be a woman.

Thus, women question their roles as women during their paid work processes and experience significant psychological conflict in this regard. While women think about their responsibilities at home when they leave their paid work, men are only in the private sphere as the user of these responsibilities. Women face intense feelings of inadequacy during this process. Stuck between the two areas, women cannot adequately fulfill their qualities as mothers and wives and constantly feel inadequate in this area. Because being a woman primarily means being a good wife, a good mother and a good housewife in a social structure built on patriarchy.

Thus, women begin to question their perception of being a woman, move away from their feminine identity, and become alienated from being a woman by being squeezed between two areas. The perception of the “ideal woman” created by serving men, taking care of their children, and doing housework flawlessly has inevitably put women in a contradictory situation during the paid work process. The responsibilities imposed on women by society push them away from the public sphere,

where they do not feel a sense of belonging. This situation reflects a state of emotional conflict, associated with feeling inadequate and incomplete in both spheres. Moreover, it leads to women's alienation from the private sphere, where they construct their identities and feel a sense of belonging, and ultimately, from their own gender.

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KATKI ORANI / CONTRIBUTION RATE	AÇIKLAMA / EXPLANATION	KATKIDA BULUNANLAR / CONTRIBUTORS
Fikir veya Kavram / <i>Idea or Notion</i>	Araştırma hipotezini veya fikirini oluşturmak / <i>Form the research hypothesis or idea</i>	Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate) Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)
Tasarım / <i>Design</i>	Yöntemi, ölçeği ve deseni tasarlamak / <i>Designing method, scale and pattern</i>	Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate) Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)
Veri Toplama ve İşleme / <i>Data Collecting and Processing</i>	Verileri toplamak, düzenlenmek ve raporlamak / <i>Collecting, organizing and reporting data</i>	Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate) Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)
Tartışma ve Yorum / <i>Discussion and Interpretation</i>	Bulguların değerlendirilmesinde ve sonuçlandırılmasında sorumluluk almak / <i>Taking responsibility in evaluating and finalizing the findings</i>	Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate) Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)
Literatür Taraması / <i>Literature Review</i>	Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak / <i>Review the literature required for the study</i>	Didem GÜR (Ph.D. Candidate) Assoc. Prof. Beyhan AKSOY (Ph.D.)

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