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RE-VISITING GENDER, NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AND LEISURE:
IS THERE ANY TIME LEFT FOR WOMEN IN THE DIGITAL AGE?

BEGÜM IRMAK KÜÇÜK
116813005

PROF. DR. ASLI TUNÇ

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Re-visiting Gender, New Media Technologies and Leisure: Is There Any Time
Left For Women in the Digital Age?

Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Yeni Medya Teknolojileri ve Boş Zamana Yeniden Bakış:
Dijital Çağda Kadınlara Vakit Kaldı Mı?

Begüm Irmak Küçük
116813005

Tez Danışmanı : Prof.Dr. Aslı Tunç
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Jüri Üyeleri : Doç. Dr. Nazan Haydari Pakkan
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Doç. Dr. İtir Erhart
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Prof. Dr. Selva Ersöz Karakulakoğlu
Maltepe Üniversitesi

Doç. Dr. Elgiz Yılmaz Altuntaş
Galatasaray Üniversitesi

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PREFACE

TO MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER...

This dissertation is initiated with an interest in my hectic daily time allocation and expanded through a journey of exploring the concepts of leisure, gender and new media technologies. At a time of global crisis and turmoil, I had the opportunity to re-assess my priorities as a woman and re-visit the influences of leisure episodes in my routine. Within this journey, I was lucky to be surrounded with the support of my advisor, friends and family to find the space to work and reflexively manage my time. A novel journey within itself, this process has become a significant marker in underlining the preponderance of utilizing leisure time, focusing on the contributing factors like geography, gender and socio-economic factors.

Re-visiting leisure spectrum with highlighting gender and new media technologies contribute not only provides a novel case in the Turkish context, but also provides a personal reflective room for better navigating in a digitally infused environment. Before delving into this journey, I would like to express my gratitude to all contributing parties starting with my advisor Aslı Tunç and my dear professor Nazan Haydari Pakkan for their continued guidance and wisdom. I would like to thank my parents and sister for all their support since the very beginning of my decision to start the PhD process. I am grateful to all my friends for their continued support, especially to Ayça Ulutaş who has been my collaborative peer during the last five years at Bilgi University. If I ever lost interest, you kept me motivated. My partner in life, Ödül Küçük, deserves a particular note of thanks: your counsel, support and kind words have, as always, served me well.

I hope you enjoy being a part of this journey.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ICT	Information Communication Technologies
TÜİK	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu

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ABSTRACT

Aiming to scrutinize the relationship between leisure and gender, this study covers a group of women's stories who share a common leisure sphere in the Turkish context. Drawing from a personal yet common narrative, women's leisure time and related challenges are portrayed through an additional layer regarding the entrance of new media technologies into daily lives. Living in a digitalized environment, the boundaries between work, home, daily responsibilities, and leisure becomes blurrier than ever. Domestic responsibilities are still mainly assigned as women's duties; it is becoming a challenging task to juggle between fragmented tasks and to create time for leisurely activities. In terms of covering the entangled nature of leisure and gender domains, a requirement to revisit the boundaries of each concept is portrayed through focusing on real-life excerpts. Envisioning an effort to provide a timely and contextual portrayal, leisure's multi-layered nature is recognized alongside with its historical journey. In this context, this research aims to understand women's unique takes on leisure time and their satisfaction with their current time allocation of their daily routines within a feminist perspective. Acknowledging the possibilities of utilizing leisure time for self-satisfaction, liberation, resistance and empowerment, a feminist postmodern interactionist perspective on leisure is utilized to open up a new sphere of feminist discussion around exploring the vitality of women's leisure opportunities and constraints. Conducting focus groups, one-to-one interviews, and participant observation, participants' stories are examined through thematic analysis, enabling them to locate the experiences at the core of the study. Construction of the cases focusing on urbanite working women in Turkey and revisiting the gender-leisure spectrum enable to underline the multi-dimensionality of leisure and provide a toolset for further research in the area. Multi-layered definitions of leisure, the role of experience and context and fragmented nature of women's time-use management are all contributive factors that define this peculiar journey.

Keywords: Leisure time, new media technologies, feminist research, digitalization

ÖZET

Boş zaman ve cinsiyet rolleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma, Türkiye bağlamında ortak bir boş zaman alanı paylaşan bir grup kadının hikayesini kapsamaktadır. Kişisel ancak ortak bir sorunsaldan hareketle, kadınların boş zamanları ve ilgili zorlukları, yeni medya teknolojilerinin günlük yaşamlarına girişiyle ek bir katman olarak tanımlanır. Dijitalleşmiş bir ortamda yaşamak, ev, iş, günlük sorumluluklar ve boş zaman arasındaki sınırları her zamankinden daha bulanık hale getirmektedir. Ev içi sorumlulukların hala esas olarak kadınların görevleri olarak atandığı bir toplumda, farklılaşmış sorumluluklar arasındaki dengeyi sağlamak ve bireysel aktiviteler için zaman yaratmak zorlu bir görev haline gelmektedir. Boş zaman ve toplumsal cinsiyet alanlarının karmaşık ve iç içe geçmiş yapısını kapsayabilmek açısından, her kavramın sınırlarını yeniden gözden geçirme gerekliliği gerçek hayat anlatılarına odaklanılarak tasvir edilir.

Zamansal ve bağlamsal unsurları göz önünde bulundurarak tanımlanan boş zamanın çok katmanlı doğası, tarihsel yolculuğunun içerisinde anlatılır. Bu bağlamda bu araştırma kadınların boş zamanlarına ilişkin benzersiz tutumlarını ve günlük rutinlerinin mevcut zaman kullanımları üzerindeki etkilerini feminist yaklaşımlarla anlamayı ve anlamlandırmayı amaçlar. Boş zamanı kişisel tatmin, özgürleşme ve direniş için kullanma olasılıklarını kabul eden postmodern etkileşimci bakış açısı, kadınların boş zaman fırsatlarının ve kısıtlamalarının dinamikliğini keşfetme etrafında yeni bir feminist tartışma alanı açmak için kullanılır. Odak grupları, bire bir görüşmeler ve katılımcı gözlem üzerinden katılımcıların hikayeleri tematik analiz ile incelenerek, deneyimler çalışmanın merkezinde konumlandırılır. Türkiye'deki şehirli çalışan kadınlara odaklanan ve toplumsal cinsiyet-boş zaman spektrumunu yeniden gözden geçiren vakaların inşası, boş zamanın çok boyutlu feminist bir alan olduğunun altını çizmeyi ve bu alanda daha fazla araştırma için bir araç seti sağlamayı mümkün kılar. Serbest zamanın çok katmanlı yapısı, deneyim ve çevresel faktörlerin etkileri ve kadınların

zaman ynetiminin paralanmıř doęası bu yolculuęun en nemli ıktıları olarak ne ıkar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Serbest zaman, yeni medya teknolojileri, feminist arařtırma, dijitalleřme

INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS PECULIAR ABOUT LEISURE?

Within the last couple of years, I started to be more interested in how I allocate my time during the day due to several reasons: As I approached the late 20s, I was working full time at a job, I was newly married and managing most of the housework, I was starting my PhD studies, and also, I was watching an excessive amount of television series on various screens. And more strikingly, I was not performing these tasks in an orderly fashion. Rather, I was simultaneously working on something or consuming online content of some form continuously during the day. Like a vicious cycle, I was occupied with a screen within the listed activities, whether for work or entertainment purposes. Accordingly, multi-tasking became my daily motto; and the boundaries between work and leisure time were long gone. The only leisure sphere that I can identify separately was a woman only circle practicing meditation. Once I became more and more interested in my agenda as a middle-class urbanite woman, I soon realized that most working women I know were also contemplating similar issues: multi-tasking, juggling between work and house responsibilities, binge-watching TV shows, spending too much time in front of screens. More strikingly, the identified roles and responsibilities of womanhood stand at the core of the daily routines, shaping and redefining the leisure realm. Even though some of these concerns were not entirely peculiar to the spirit of the times, some heavily rely on the altering nature of how women experience time with the emergence of new media technologies. Hence, I initiated a two-fold journey to understand the leisure domain within new media technologies and gender dimensions in an effort to untangle the interwoven dynamics at play.

“Our everyday leisured lives are so interconnected to digital cultural forms, products, services, and economies that it has thus become impossible to understand leisure” without considering new media technologies (see Silk et al., 2016). Boundaries between various spheres of women’s daily lives are more blurred by the possibility of managing spatially and temporally fixed activities (Chess, 2018;

Martinson et al.,2002). New media technologies have become one of the main components of the leisure domain in the 21st century. The incursion of new media technologies (Internet, smartphones, computers) into everyday lives is “transforming leisure practices, not only by offering new leisure options but also by changing how, when, and where leisure is experienced” (Sintas et al., 2015, p. 81). As a result, boundaries between and within the realms of work and leisure are blurred. Leisure itself becomes fragmented and simultaneous, offering new ways to experience the pre-existing analog activities through various types of the screen uses with the help of new media technologies (Mokhtarian et al., 2004; Schultz & McKeown, 2018). Within the altered nature, screens heavily dominated leisure spectrum as a mediator offering an eclectic array of activities. Overall, the linkage between new media technologies and leisure is not free of tension, yet the former’s influence on the latter is mainly covered with overarching influence. Instead, the relationship is framed as a mutually shaped continuum in this study, acknowledging each notion’s equal impact and historicity. Thus, the remaining elements contributing to the new media-leisure dynamic such as societal and individual factors, become more visible.

The gendered nature of the leisure domain provides to a deeper understanding of the coordinates of this study. Women’s opportunities for leisure time are fragmented and occur all day and include power relations (see Wajcman, 2015; Lee, 2006). More specifically, it is not suitable for women to employ continuous and stable leisure activities due to household responsibility interruptions. In addition, those experiences are mainly constrained by geographies of space and time. Within that framework, the boundary between work and leisure is not clearly defined for women; hence it is challenging to engage in continuous activities (Bittman & Wajcman, 2000). The introduction of new media technologies complicates the already fragmented nature of women’s experiences of leisure time by altering time and space allocations. Juggling between various responsibilities, the very meaning of leisure is problematic for women, yet untangling the notion requires acknowledging the peculiarities of defining a stable category of woman as well. In

other words, while the gender gap is evident in exploring leisure opportunities, there is still a need to deconstruct the category of women to recognize the diversity of identities and experiences. Hence, this study acknowledges the peculiarity of each women's experiences with appreciating the instability of such categories. Concurring with Bryce's (2001, p.11) notion that "leisure is part of the fabric of women's everyday lives", individual stories are at the heart of this study. When women express stories about leisure, they are also speaking about their lives. Hence, in trying to make sense of leisure in their lives, women are at the same time trying to make sense of their lives.

Contemplating the relationship between new media technologies, gender and leisure spectrum, the contextual and geographical markers play a crucial role in describing the everyday life projections. Being a female member of a patriarchal society inhabiting capitalist values and structures, experiencing and defining leisure become highly contextual, multi-dimensional, and gender-specific. In turn, the *raison d'être* for re-visiting leisure domain in Turkey in this specific time has numerous contributing factors. Rising urbanization, higher levels of education, increasing labor force participation, and increasing penetration of new media technologies for urban women are amongst the major aspects regarding the featured properties of the cultural context. This framework concurs with the aforementioned problematization of women's shortage of leisure time and opportunities and also signals a shift with the intrusion of new media technologies.¹ Moreover, it is becoming more and more common to coincide with discussions around the implications of spending too much time in front of the screens or feeling too pressed for time within social circles. Terms like binge-watching or nomophobia are now part of the academic and daily rhetoric (Yengin & Kınay, 2016). Rather than concentrating on the universal impacts or inherent properties of new media

¹ According to TÜİK's 2017 data, 86,1 % of women who are participants of the workforce uses the Internet, 59,9 % of them also use a computer in Turkey. Higher levels of education mean less time for leisure activities in Turkey, an average of 1.29 minutes per day. Women in the workforce spend five times more time than men on family responsibilities (TÜİK, 2017). In 2019, women utilizing a cell phone between the ages of 16-74 became % 90,2 and 61,0 % of women in the workforce display that they work without feeling pressed for time (TÜİK, 2019).

technologies, this research is an attempt to envision the type of persons and type of activities and interactions that emerged with the influences of this new era flourished by post-industrialist repercussions. The emergence of a personal dilemma initiated a broad interest in understanding women with similar experiences without deliberately preponderating any listed research areas.

As a result of a self-reflexive process, several questions will be raised to investigate further the above-mentioned process encompassing a basic yet comprehensive main question:

How do women define leisure time?

- How do new media technologies shape and redefine women's experiences of leisure time?
- How do women define their relationship with leisure in line with time and space?
- How do new media technologies affect women's relation with screen use during their leisure time?

These primary and related sub-questions are formed to investigate a taken-for-granted issue, women's leisure, and open up a discussion space for unraveling the dynamics at play. Starting with questioning possible meanings of leisure time, there relies on an opportunity to revisit the conceptual coordinates of the term. Once leisure time is defined, its relation to new media technologies, time and space allocations, and the role of screen use are proposed to create a map of women's leisure domain. Within that effort, there is a feminist interest in involving in a reflexive effort to underline the vitality of leisure time and to re-evaluate its practical influences in daily routines. On that note, previous studies covering leisure's interactions and definitions progressing with feminist influences and new media technologies' intrusion are portrayed in Chapter 2, providing a historical timeline. The peculiarity of this study relies on its way of combining two discrete dimensions, gender and new media technologies, in a specific cultural context initiated by an individual yet common problematization of leisure time. Rather than concentrating on the inherent properties of technologies or driving upon time

measurement scales, an exploratory effort is presented with a feminist twist through centering around women's unique narratives. Taking one step further, re-visiting the definitions of leisure provides space for multi-dimensional inquiry through challenging and re-imagining the rigid boundaries.

To pursue this challenge, a feminist theoretical framework is utilized to pinpoint and reevaluate the already existing challenges on leisure's everyday repercussions. Acknowledging the multi-faceted nature of feminist theories and their various applications, a unique form of analysis is preferred, seeking to underline women's experiences in the Turkish context. Emphasizing women's own stories, an effort is created to increase self-awareness about the participants' daily time allocations and initiate a discussion circling the quality of life as the broader picture. Wearing's (1998) "feminist postmodern interactionist perspective" on leisure is combined with post-structuralist and transnational undertakings on women to capture the essence of contemporary discussions and provide a toolbox to untangle the stories of the participants. Complying with Wearing's (1998) conceptualization of the self as pertaining to the properties of construction and liberation, stereotypical categorizations on gender, modernity, and everyday life experiences are re-visited to open up new spheres of discussion for re-writing the conceptualization and implications of leisure. Influences of digitalization, changing time-space allocations, and nature of the activities, leisure is framed as resembling a pendulum rotating between expansion and contraction based on women's socio-economic coordinates and everyday life practices. The interconnectedness of leisure and feminist theories not only created the backbone of the theoretical framework explored in detail in Chapter 3, yet also underlined the ubiquity and the implication of conducting an up-to-date analysis. Post-structuralist and transnational influences effectuate discussions around relationality, plurality, inclusiveness, and interconnectedness, emphasizing the long-dismissed factors like race, ethnicity, class, religion, age and non-Western female experiences. Acknowledging that the study of leisure is and will always be incomplete and fluid (Henderson, 2013), the unique *mélange* of theories facilitates a flexible ground for exploring women's

peculiar relationship with leisure in their multiplicity within and amongst themselves.

Mainly engaged with leisure through a feminist lens and exploring the implications of new media technologies through screen use and time management, the main focus emerges as the real-life experiences of the participants. Recognizing the participants as “the experts of their own experiences” (DeVault & Gross, 2012, p.78) and acknowledging the distinctiveness of generating knowledge by listening to their perspectives lead to utilizing feminism not only as a theoretical framework but also as a research method. Appreciating its basic principles such as reflexivity, social change, and positionality, the attempt is to challenge “the invisibility and distortion of female experience” (Lather, 1982, p. 21).

Similar to the initiation of the research process, the research design is influenced by an individual reflection on my own leisure domain. The most prominent fraction of my leisure realm is consisted of a woman-only healing and support circle, gathering to practice meditation and share personal stories as the core activities. Once I realized that this group is the major actor defining my leisure sphere, I contacted the group members to find out if they were willing to take part in this research journey where we investigate the coordinates of our daily routines concentrating on the concept of leisure and new media technologies together. Their eagerness to participate in the research process incorporated motivation and excitement, alongside the resemblances of the initial reactions shaping the preliminary questions of the study. Formed four years ago, ‘Meditation Chics’, that is the commonly selected initial group name, is originally consisted of 5 members between the ages of 27-38, having similar backgrounds on working at corporate jobs, having at least college degrees, living in the populated cities of Turkey and having English as their second language. Prior to initiating the research phase, the group was welcoming new members who completed the introductory course on mediation provided by the group leader and changed its group name to ‘Mindfulness Education’. Coming from similar social circles, those women met as

a result of their interest in practicing meditation and the initiative of the group leader to conduct an introductory course. Within this growing circle, ten members approved to be a part of the dissertation, yet eight joined the research due to personal impediments. All participants concur that their *raison d'être*s for joining the group are “taking time for themselves, relieve stress and anxiety, progressing and taking care of the self through women’s support and spiritual doctrines”. All in all, group members expressed the commonality of sharing a leisure sphere alongside many more attributes and their willingness to continue to be part of this women-only circle.

Within that journey, a combination of methods is preferred as being valued tools of feminist research and qualitative research in general: conversational interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. Hitherto operational as a group, participants already accustomed to opening up and sharing personal experiences and interact with each other. Forming collective identities and solidarities and reflecting within an environment with such possibilities promotes the preference of focus groups in feminist research (Rose, 2001). In addition to interactive data and favorable group dynamics, conversational interviews are preferred to cover the possible neglected details and enhancing the chance of apprehending detailed stories. Besides, they are mediated as an effort of collaborative knowledge production in articulating on both the participant’s and the researcher’s meanings, underlining the prerequisite of active listening, particularly on the side of the latter (Charmaz, 2006). Being part of the group for several years, I had the opportunity to be both an insider and outsider through my roles as a group member and a researcher respectively. As a result, a comprehensive understanding of the group structure, dynamics, and responses are scrutinized through providing personal insights throughout the study. Advancing with multi-methods, collecting richer responses, generating interactive discussions, and active/ collective learning have become the main advantages of the research design process.

The initiation of the research by conducting the first face-to-face focus group planned for May 2020 has been remodeled by the Covid-19 pandemic. After all, our lives have been re-structured due to mandatory safety measures, altering the way we interact with time and space all at once, not to mention its effects on the fluctuating connotations of leisure time. All the sessions, including focus group and one-to-one interviews, organized online via Zoom, enlarging the possible time limits by eradicating the barriers of physical meetings yet infusing brand new limitations and possibilities. Being at home and involving in a research process enable the participants to feel more relaxed in comparison to meeting at an allocated location, augmenting their motivation to participate more. Yet, delays in Internet connections or the lack of physical proximity hindered the process at times, leaving the researcher to reflect on the altered nature of the research design in detail. Chapter 4 will explore the methodological underpinnings and research design in detail, providing a detailed scheme on the coordinates of the selected tools.

Drawing from personal narratives and problematizing women's leisure moments have their repercussions and influences. Placing the everyday descriptions at heart, there is a feminist interest in scrutinizing women's strategies to create traditional or alternative leisure modes within the patriarchal realm. One step further, problematizing leisure in itself is a middle-class concern, circled by capitalist and patriarchal forces at play. Hence, the effort in this study is a multi-faceted one: to untangle the traditional notions of leisure through women's accounts while contextualizing the peculiar experiences in the Turkish context. Initially, women's urge and capability to form a meditation group portrays a specific socio-cultural positioning that underlines certain privileges in terms of holding the flexibility of spending leisure time at their disposal to a certain extent. The selection of the activity also matters in reflecting on the current trends amongst middle-class women in Turkey, bearing in mind the growing popularity of spiritual practices as leisure activities in the last decade with neoliberal and global influences. Setting the study coordinates, the next step will be to untangle the leisure domain by displaying the consequences of new media technologies and gender.

In line with the theoretical underpinnings, participants' lived experiences at the core, thematic analysis within the narrative tradition is preferred to focus on the story itself by keeping an intact form, rather than treat the experiences as plain data parts and blend the outputs of focus groups and interviews in an organized and meaningful manner. As two-fold progress, initial analysis is conducted manually and assisted by a software, NVivo, to better cluster the data into thematic categories. Aiming to portray themes and patterns describing the data, an interpretative strategy is deployed to form a global view of the stories and generate interrelated discussions amongst the thematic categories for an enriched discussion opportunity. Intricately linking theory and practice, conducting the research, mining and exploring the data, and presenting outcomes have become an interlinked mission that requires the researcher to be self-conscious about her involvement and acclaimed feminist stance. In essence, leisure as personal and social spaces are scrutinized through pondering on women's daily routines, leisure definition, leisure activities, and digital habits.

Starting from acknowledging the plurality of identities women deploy and present, women's strategies to create or exercise diverse modes of leisure moments are framed within a feminist lens. The thematic analysis facilitates to shape and present the complex web of relations, presenting the core of this thesis: women's stories. Leisure time definition, Impact of Covid-19, Screen Use, Leisure Time Activity, Leisure Time Satisfaction, Social Media Consumption, One Day Routine, Personal Information, and Eagerness to Read the Thesis or Be A Part of the Process are the main codes and building blocks contributing to the design of analyzing the outcomes. Being an attempt to locate the incompleteness and fluidity of leisure practices with a post-structural twist, Chapter 5 initiates a discussion on implications of this formulation within the greater picture of leisure studies by contextualizing the outcomes.

The fabric of the society we live in stipulates the coordinates to locate the outcomes of this thesis, including a historical trace of the main concepts operated to make

sense of women's experiences. Linking leisure and social class, presenting the latter having a decisive effect on the former, Veblen (1899) problematizes the socio-economic factors in defining leisure opportunities. In time, notions like injustice, exclusion, and gender inequality merged into the leisure domain, and the entrance of new media technologies and the influences of globalization blurred the already undetermined spheres of daily life (Rojek, 2001). This journey has its implications in defining Turkish urban middle-class women's relation with leisure, starting from problematizing the issue of consumption as a driving force in defining "female sociability" (Özyeğin, 2002, p.43). Contemporary feminist researchers like Kandiyoti (1987) and Ayata (2002) underline the impact of gender-specific cultural experiences in describing women's everyday life practices in Turkey. Thus, studying leisure is loaded with the potential to not only provide women with a space to reflect on personal experiences yet enabling a greater discussion on the limitations and possibilities of cultural connotations. Thereby, contextualizing the outcomes is an attempt to locate those unique experiences within a local and global spectrum to open up possible ways of visiting leisure from a feminist perspective and providing the participants a safe space to reflect on their patterns to question the quality of their lives.

In the case of selecting the mediation circle as the main group of this thesis, not only personal reasons like proximity and sharing a leisure domain influenced the decision, but also socio-economic factors and prevailing trends enter into the scene. Participants' choice of a common leisure activity based on self-care denotes the spirit of the times, opening up a discussion around the interconnectedness of the local and the global dynamics. Intending to grasp the multi-layered subjectivities of womanhood and leisure opportunities and limitations, this group is a starting point to re-conceptualize the real-life experiences by paying closer attention to daily routines rather than complying with grand narratives. With such an effort in mind, eight women's peculiar experiences of leisure are probed in detail in Chapter 6, referring to the unique fabric in the context of Turkey. To become involved in this

peculiar ride, I welcome all readers to witness my intellectual journey, starting with Literature Review in the next section.

2.CONTEXTUALIZING LEISURE

Definitions of leisure have a unique way of representing the spirit of the times within which it is framed. Researchers pinpoint four prominent characteristics of the leisure experience: “It is freely chosen, intrinsically satisfying, optimally arousing, and requires a sense of commitment” (Mokhtarian et al., 2004, p. 88). Leisure is also categorized as residual time, an activity functional for society and freedom (Aitchison, 2013). Three broad schools of thought have shaped leisure studies’ courses up to date: Functionalism, Counter-culture critiques informed by a Gramscian approach, and Feminism (Rojek, 2000).

Within this study’s objectives, leisure’s bonds with social and cultural markers such as class, time, new technologies, and gender are essential to untangle since even in contemporary debates, it is impossible to frame leisure without defining its sphere of influence. This peculiar sphere of influence still requires acknowledging the limitations of class relations (industrial society) and time, with an updated take on both in terms of social and cultural dynamics. Throughout this part of the chapter, I will explore leisure and leisure studies’ conceptualizations within the media framework and leisure’s natural ties with the understanding of time. Following the historicity and its bonds with time, a further layer will be added to explore the introduction of new technologies and their influences on leisure studies’ framework. Gender relations, as the cement of the whole discussion, will be scattered through the entire composition with a closer look at how women’s leisure is defined throughout this process mentioned above and the current debates that shape the literature. It is fair to conceptualize this section of the thesis resembling a bicycle wheel, leisure being its hub, sitting at the core connecting the notions of social and cultural markers as its spokes. The tire, surrounding and accompanying the whole system, is a critical feminist perspective constantly imposing its influences on each argument’s layer.

The starting point becomes delving into understanding what stands as the opposite of leisure: work. The intermingling of work and leisure precedes the birth of leisure

studies by centuries. The relationship between work and leisure creates tension since the former's influence on the latter is portrayed as a negative one for the worker (Snape et al., 2017). "We are busy that we may have leisure", Aristotle's (1989) words, vividly characterize the dynamics of work-leisure balance, in which one is both the cause and the result of the other (p.264). By contemplating the sociology of work as a field, the work-leisure factor created the core of Thomas's (1964) writings on industrial society, underlining the significance of differentiating between pre-industrial and industrial meanings of the term. In the following decades, the field began to blossom with the seminal works of Bailey (1978), Cunningham (1980), and Jones (1986), where the main concern was on the relationship between leisure and social class or leisure and social control, concentrating on the more unique forms of leisure, sports, or tourism (Platt, 2018). At this point, Burke's (1995) coining of leisure as a "modern invention" is crucial since he makes a compelling argument regarding the discontinuity in the historicity of the term (p.140). Referring back to the middle ages, Burke (1995) argues that activities of these times that can be considered as a part of leisure were not particularly referred to as such at the original time. Like Thomas's (1964) distinction, he proposed that industrialization is a critical social marker for re-framing the work-leisure dynamics in analyzing the changing patterns. Hence, the process of modernization and industrialization are two key elements to commentate on while framing leisure's history as we understand it today, considering the social meaning of leisure is still in flux (Platt,2018).

To this end, researchers (Kelly, 1978; Neulinger, 1974/1981; Shaw, 1985; Tinsley, Hinson, Tinsley, & Holt, 1993) attempted to identify this dichotomous relationship through utilizing a natural sciences approach by listing the characteristic properties of each sphere. Yet, after completing the listings, there remain many shared characteristics between paid-work and leisure properties. On the other hand, constructivist/ interpretive research mainly concentrates on the meanings created when individuals engage in a particular activity (Sintas et al., 2015, p.82). As a result, some researchers (Dupuis, 2000; Smale, 2000) conclude that activities can

change in meaning when space and time are transformed. Besides, some researchers claim that (Churchill, Clark, Prochaska-Cue, Creswell, & Ontai- Grzebik, 2007) individuals are inclined to create different meanings based on the same activity depending on their socio-cultural backgrounds.

Within this process, social class becomes one of the crucial markers for scrutinizing leisure's changing dynamics. Drawing on Veblen's (1899) infamous work on leisure class, the term has never been free of tension. The intermingling nature of leisure and class can be traced back to Veblen's definition, in which leisure class is basically defined as the first of the three social classes he proposed: high society, the middle class, and the working class. Unfair division of labor is the distinctive element within these classes, in which the high society basically does not contribute to the means of production in a meaningful way but instead indulges itself with leisure. To further develop his argument, Veblen (1899) heavily criticized conspicuous consumption stemming from the unequal stratification in the society, resulting in the waste of time and money. As Fritjers and Leigh (2008) proposed, the possibility of presenting one's worth was either linked to consuming expensive goods or overtly displaying the exercise of leisure activities in Veblen's (1899) writings. Whether it's leisure or consumption, which is considered conspicuous, was the depiction and problem of the socio-economic fabric of the 19th Century industrial society.

In the early 20th century, leisure started to play a major role as a bargaining factor in industrial wage negotiations (Snape et al., 2017). Not only was leisure considered meaningless in the absence of work, but also there emerge contradictory ideas on the construction of work-leisure balance (Snape, 2015). Whilst Hobson (1914) and Russell (1935) argued for fewer working hours enabling the workers to enjoy more active leisure endeavors, Zimmern (1916) expressed concern over the worker's lack of determination on what to do in more free time. This contradictory theme continued during the inter-war years; the profitability and the practicality of leisure were mainly discussed from both sides (Snape et al., 2017). Yet, it was until the

1960's 1970's that the concept of leisure started to evolve as an attraction for sociologists, starting with Grazia's (1964) writings that locates the coordinates of modern society's work-leisure balance. Leisure was framed as the crucial factor that men are required to be complete, in addition to work. Up to this point, the commonality in the historical discourse displays a "conditioning" or "suppression" of the leisure for the working class by industrial production (Snape et al., 2017, p.6). Even though the work-leisure debate was rejected after the Second World War, prospects of the age of "leisure and computers" re-enacted an interest, which in turn inspired leisure studies as an independent subject field (Snape, 2017).

Although expectations showed the opposite, the 1970s did not bring out the leisure-centered society per se, and the influence of social class remained in determining leisure pursuits remained as a major actor (Carney, 2016 & Bowler, 2017). To untangle the process, Symth's (1977) and Habermas's (1962) writings play a distinctive role in exploring the leisure-consumption, and leisure-social class relationship echoed in current discussions. Symth proposed that (1977), except for the time dedicated for sleep, all remaining slots are dominated by exploring what one can consume (p.2). In other words, leisure time does not exist per se; rather, time except for sleep is actually consumption time. Within this line of argument, work time is not necessarily criticized, yet it is believed to overrun its limits on leisure time, and the overarching influences of consumption are underlined (p.15). Hesmondhalgh (2007) recognizes the significance of audience commodity debate in shaping leisure's conflicting relationship with consumption and furthermore accuses Symth's (1977) theory to be very reductionist yet provocative.

Delineating leisure in relation to reason, public discourse, and action, Habermas (1962) references the birth of the public sphere to the 18th Century Enlightenment ideas. Habermas's (1962) concept of the public sphere is a vital component to revisit for locating the leisure studies' historicity. The development of the public sphere, hence the private sphere, is articulated by the discussions of bourgeois leisure. Even though leisure is not underlined in most of Habermas's writings, it

plays a significant role as one of the initiators of the public sphere domain. Yet, with the role of modernity at play and its instrumentalist and consumerist influences, leisure becomes nothing more than a “shallow replacement for the public sphere of Enlightenment” (Habermas, 1984). At this point, Habermas’s (19884) depiction of leisure excludes not only private but also gendered nature of societal formations at the expense of praising a uniform public sphere. In his line of thinking, as leisure transforms into a shallow ideal, it also triggers the collapse of the public sphere. (Hemingway, 1996) By distinguishing between free time and leisure time, the former represents the consumption of culture, whereas the latter signaling the creation of culture, Habermas (1956) envisions the former’s domination, resulting in leisure commodification. Referring to Veblen’s (1899) conspicuous consumption where wasteful consumption for power and status is linked with leisure, Habermas draws a pessimistic picture in which leisure is privatized.

The framework mentioned above is crucial yet incomplete to represent the initial point of convergence of leisure and the public sphere. Fraser (1990) provides a detailed critique of Habermas’s idealization of the liberal public sphere and his failure to examine “the other, non-liberal, non-bourgeois, competing public spheres” (p.61). If public sphere is idealized as a homogeneous and liberal entity, leisure is only confined to a bourgeois class, public concerns are their concerns only, excluding women and men of color. Privatization of gender politics and the exclusion of women are the main problematics of such idealization, yet this framework is also questioned by Fraser (1990) to include the possibilities of many publics instead of one. Demonstrating that “bourgeois public was never the public”, and confuting normative formations on the public sphere, Fraser (1990) stipulates a multi-layered analysis concerning not only gender politics yet also the existence of non-binary societal formations (p.77).

As a second layer in this line of argument, evaluating the relationship between social class and leisure is a significant marker. The idea that “leisure and class are

inextricably intertwined” has long been discussed, referring to social class as a leisure constraint (Junui & Henderson, 2001). Yet, in Veblen’s (1899) utilization of a Marxist perspective, what it means to be in a particular class is directly related to how one leisure. Yet, in current discussions, leisure behavior is defined based on numerous factors rather than solely concentrating on social class. Wajcman’s (2015) depiction that “there is no more distinctive time for family, work and leisure but they all combine” captures the essence of this shift. It was primarily characterized in particular spheres of life instead and nourished from paid work in current understandings of leisure. That was the distinctive element that binds social class and leisure together. However, when it comes to the current state of everyday life affairs, the various spheres of life seem to collide in a permeable fashion. Gender, religion, geography, ethnicity, socio-cultural influences are amongst the leading indicators to define the realm of leisure.

Basically, the notions of inequality, exclusion, and injustice remain influential in explaining leisure constraints, yet post-industrial society’s failed expectations of decreased labor and increased free time required a revised understanding of leisure (Rojek, 2001). Neither the end of work nor leisure enters the scene; instead, a more intricate picture emerges as the distinction between leisure and the rest of life becomes more blurred. The main facilitators of this blurriness can be traced to globalization’s influences and the entrance of media technologies into our everyday lives. With the amplified life span, retentive retirement dates, and predictions of diminished work opportunities, concerns over the balance between work and leisure also become an international concern (Carney, 2016 & Bowler, 2017). In recent debates, leisure is argued within the contexts of “urban industrial resources, health and well-being, social order, inclusion and exclusion, affluence, deprivation, and distributive justice” (Rojek, Shaw, Veal, 2006). Moreover, the quality of life associated with leisure is replaced with well-being debates, which evokes a sense of Aristotelian depiction of leisure, focusing on intellectual utilization of leisure time rather than relying on passive spare time activities (Snape, 2017). Hence, the work-leisure relationship as it was framed is no longer valid for all; that is to say, it

matters but should be re-visited in line with the day's dynamics. In other words, social and cultural influences that provoked leisure studies remain crucial, yet the expanding and rapidly changing facets aimed to be recognized for the purpose of this piece. Although post-work society's expectations are not processing as post-industrialists presumed, the socially constructed meaning of leisure as an opposite to work needed to be challenged as the work-leisure paradigm no longer captures current debates. (Snape, 2017)

2.1. What Is “New” About the New Media-Leisure Relationship?

The intrusion of new media technologies into the everyday lives altered how we experience leisure (Sintas et al., 2015). It is the diversification of new leisure options that transforms leisure practices and the “how, when and where leisure is experienced” (Boczkowski, 2010). Traditionally, home is considered the primary site of leisure for men, whereas it is presented as a woman's site, independent of whether she is a part of paid employment or not (Morley, 1986; Na, 2001). One of the most discussed leisure activities at home is considered time spent on television viewing, which underlines a significant difference when it comes to gender roles. Men watch television without disruption, whereas women constantly get distracted with other activities on purpose (multi-tasking) or without consent, generally for childcare or checking household duties (Morley, 1986). When spending time with television, women express the feeling of guilt and missing out on tasks compared to men, considering time stolen from domestic responsibilities. Frissen (1992) concludes that since women are prone to spend their time in a more fragmented fashion due to the blurriness of work-leisure boundaries, the activities they prefer for free time also differentiates. As a matter of fact, it is not convenient for women to engage in “continuous and stable” leisure activities. Utilizing Deem's examples, rather than computing that requires uninterrupted attention, women prefer to read books or listen to the radio while at home. Combining several of the listed research findings, Na (2001) asserts that economic independence cannot be the major actor

in defining women's possession of free time, given the limitations of the unequal division of labor in the household.

Moving one step further, Schwanen and Kwan (2008) identify this shift by utilizing the cases of the Internet and mobile phone use in expanding and challenging the time-space constraints. Similarly, it is argued that information communication technologies (ICTs) "deterritorialize activities, making them less tied to specific time and spaces" (Couclelis, 2000; Aoyama & Shepard, 2003; Urry, 2004). With the help of ICTs, a combination of spatial and temporal layers emerged. For instance, there is an opportunity to combine paid labor and childcare at a single physical location or utilize travel or waiting time for work or entertainment purposes (Mokhtarian & Salomon, 2001; Lyons & Ury, 2005). Thus, the activities became more fragmented, and "the boundaries between various spheres of life- paid labor, caregiving, leisure- become blurred" (Whittel, 2001; Urry, 2004). Even though most of the previously mentioned discussions portray a fundamental change in the configuration of everyday lives, the possible insinuations of ICTs according to gender, class, or age have been overlooked or missed out in many cases.

Shifting between the different spheres of everyday life may fluctuate between men and women (Schwanen & Kwan, 2008; Brannen, 2005). Whereas the employment sphere contravenes into the domestic space-time for men, the opposite seems to occur for women (Massy, 1996). According to the mentioned studies, mobile phones cause and exacerbate this difference by enabling women to continue managing household responsibilities remotely. According to research conducted in Israel, it is also shown that women tend to utilize mobile phones to manage household responsibilities much more often than men (Lemish & Cohen, 2005). All in all, following the social shaping of technology arguments, it is crucial to underline the fact that ICTs "do not have inherent properties or universal impacts" (Valentine & Holloway, 2002, p.316). Instead, the nature of interactions between these new technologies and their users shapes the course of the implications they have on our everyday lives. The type of activities and technologies combined with

the cultural and social framework embedded in the process are all indicators of this peculiar relationship (Schwanen & Kwan, 2008).

In essence, the peculiarity of the current times, the intermingling of new technologies and leisure, has its roots in a shift in our experience of the notion of time. Thompson (1977) underlined the transformation of “the spatial and temporal organization of social life” has shifted and transformed with the emergence of digital technologies (Tubella, 2005). As a result, new forms of interaction and forms of relating emerged. In the 20th century, the home was considered the main physical space where one can enjoy freedom from work obligations and hence exercise most leisure activities (Tubella, 2005; Schwanen & Kwan, 2008). Yet, with the intrusion of digital technologies and always-on connectedness, people can perform various tasks that used to require physical attendance like work, education, shopping, or even participating in civic duties. Yet, the separation of work and leisure “evaporated, and the meaning of home is changing significantly” by the altered meanings of time allocation (Tubella, 2005, p.263).

Manuel Castell (2006) is one of the leading figures in depicting the structural transformation of the 21st century by exploring the rise of the network society, underlining industrial technologies’ pervasiveness in creating global networks of capital, information, communication, technology, and science. Challenging the notion that “we are alienated by technology” and the pessimistic stance on losing the human touch, he proposed a multiple layered analysis of network society’s influences not destroying but transforming the already existing economy, labor, media, and sociability (2006, p. 7). Within this framework, he depicts the altering characteristics influence on how one experiences time concerning daily activities and hence the definition of leisure. Technological change does not create unemployment but rather creates a new array of flexible jobs, that in turn, induce “self-programmable labor” (Castells, 2006, p. 10). Within that line of thought, self-programmable labor enables the workers to enjoy more flextime, yet his conceptualization does not include if this flextime works in favor of the worker in

practical terms. Moreover, he proposes that the Internet tends to create a “hyper-social society” rather than an isolated one, building up more connections and engagement that was not available before (Castells, 2006).

In this respect, Castells (2001) proposed the idea of “timeless time”, alternatively named “accelerated time” or “instantaneous time”, to capture the essence of the society described above. Speed is the defining factor of this time and social life, referring to being always on the move. The clock time of the industrial age, or equivalently, linear time, is coming to an end, and the speed of the new technologies brings forth the disappearance of time altogether (Castells, 2006). Even though it is Castells (2006) who is mainly cited amongst the academic circles about the speedy nature of the time we live in, there is an overwhelming discourse on how our lives became busier and busier and dominated by digital technologies in literature, newspapers, and books. As a matter of fact, there is a whole new terminology for depicting the hurriedness of life about digital technologies: starting with the stigmatization of digital addiction, one can exercise digital detox as a solution to cut ties and yet still feel anxious about being disconnected: nomophobia.

Nomophobia, an abbreviation for no mobile phone phobia, is chosen as the Cambridge Dictionary’s Word of the Year in 2018. In parallel with nomophobia, the concept/ phrase FOMO (fear of missing out) has started to be associated with mental health problems based on excessive screen use such as television or social media (Hunt, 2018). Challenging the idea of blaming the technology for all, Wajcman (2016) suggested that “seeing us as simply hostages to the accelerating logic of machines” is highly simplistic (p.2). She maintained that bridging the speed-technology debate is “technologically deterministic”, as in the case of Castells, and speed is “as much a cultural artifact as it is a technological one” (p.46). Yet, if one is to feel pressed for time, it is not solely the technology speeding up or down on its own, but rather the way people’s preferences and choices of utilizing it.

In other words, living in a network society or a society accessorized with digital connections, the exposure to technology is not a one-way road, but rather there is a social and mutual shaping of people and objects. Although the definition and practical feeling of time in the 21st century are differentiated from the one in the 20th century, it is not defined as a separate realm operating on its own or has a life of its own. Within Science and Technology Studies (STS), this causality is framed through the explanation that “time practices are also sociomaterial” (Wajcman, 2016). By the same token, new/digital technologies are not presented as peculiar in regards to disrupting time and space through injecting acceleration per se (Wajcman, 2016; Standage, 2014). As in the case of the telegraphy (Standage, 2014), it is not uncommon to expect disorientation in time and stirred up by the enhancements since the 19th century. There is continuity rather than a disruption in terms of how one experiences time and speed, yet the vision of a “universal” or “uniform” display attributes an excrescent role to technology. What, where, and how we perform daily tasks are multi-layered, consisting of elements of socio-cultural contexts rather than a single technologically deterministic approach.

Thus, in a similar vein, the widespread perception that people are getting scarcer on leisure time is also challenged (Wajcman & Dodd, 2016). Time-use studies, where people log their daily activities in detail, conducted within the last 50 years, disclosed that the amount of overall leisure has not decreased (Wajcman & Dodd, 2016). Yet, the gap between objective and subjective time stems from the lack of stress on the quality of time. Utilizing the example of the need to respond to emails quickly, Wajcman (2016) concludes that it is the collective norms rather than the technology of data transmission itself that shapes the new technologies’ application to daily lives. As a matter of fact, considering speed as a “discourse”, she adds a critical layer to the way we conceptualize or even contest the notion of time, including the urge to create more leisure time, within the digitalized realm (Wajcman & Dodd, 2016, p.196). In other words, politics of the time, in Nowothy’s (1994) words, “any capacity to participate depends on the power and control one has over one’s own time”, is a multi-layered phenomenon requiring to dissolve and

reckon with the peculiarities of the experiences rather than solely concentrating on the technology itself.

2.2. Gender Dimension in Leisure Studies

The phrase, “peculiarities of the experiences”, forges the spine of this study in terms of connecting leisure time, new technologies, and the everyday lives of women. If one’s own leisure time is to be unraveled for research purposes, the first and foremost step should be identifying the subject in question. It is not surprising to note that leisure has numerous predictors including ethnicity, race, geography, and gender (Roberts, 2004); yet the journey till this date cannot be considered a smooth or unanimous one. In a parallel vein, Rojek (2000) identifies three broad schools of thought that shaped the course of leisure studies up to date, that are functionalism, counter-culture critiques influenced by the Gramscian approach, and feminism; in addition to the pluralist and Neo-Marxist point of views circulating current debates (pp.104-111).

To put it in a nutshell, functionalism underlines the role of free individuals and choice, whereas pluralism represents the other side of the coin by pointing out the constraints in addition to the desires and motivations of the individuals (Rojek, 2000). From a neo-Marxist perspective, capitalism is considered the essential marker of leisure (Rojek, 2000). Feminist interest in leisure started in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Bialescki,1989; Green, Hebron& Woodward,1990) and blossomed after the 2000s (Bittman & Wajcman, 2000; Mattingly& Bianchi, 2003; Mattingly & Sayer, 2006; Raisborough, 2006; Sayer, 2005). Although only some non-feminist scholars orbited women’s unequal access to leisure time during the 1970s (Kelly, 1975, Robinson, 1977, Wilson, 1980), a unique feminist approach to leisure began to cultivate very recently, to name it: over the last three decades. Like the core, the studies conducted after the 2000s in Turkey mainly question women’s peculiar experiences of time, which is certainly different from men’s (see Demir & Demir, 2006; Eryaşar, 2007; Iwasaki, 2007; Karayigit, 2015). Alternatively, it is proposed that leisure time is gendered in which the traditional roles are constantly

reproduced, in which leisure is defined as passive and home-centered, contributing to oppressive dynamics at play (Karayığit, 2015).

To concentrate on the milestones of the interplay of leisure and feminism, I will start by re-visiting some of the influential waves that produce various frameworks. These eclectic influences shape the way in which leisure is defined, studied and contextualized. Within that tradition, Chris Rojek is a leading scholar studying the interwoven dynamics and influences of feminist literature on leisure studies. In the 1980s, socialist and liberal feminism were the dominant theoretical perspectives, and the publications on leisure studies were inclined to examine particular groups of women living in specific places (Rojek, 2000). This was rather remembered as a pessimistic glance at women's leisure, concentrating solely on the repressive parts of enjoying (or even being subjected to) free time. During the 1990s, it appeared as if leisure studies were not particularly in line with the changing course of social sciences; it was rather a dry season in terms of opening up to new horizons (Rojek, 2000). The *raison d'être* for such deceleration is mainly blamed on the binary divide of work-leisure scape (Rojek, 2000). Hidden forms of leisure, related to home, household work, children, or everyday errands, were missing from the framework of the leisure researchers due to an excessive interest in leisure environments associated with formal or paid leisure. Hence, the theorization of informal leisure becomes a part of the agenda for cultural geography, cultural studies, and gender studies (Rojek, 2000).

With the entrance of post-structural feminism and its influences, new layers of critical thinking about leisure time are also introduced. On the one hand, post-structural feminism calls into question many taken for granted issues at once, starting with the binary nature of the work-leisure divide as a part of a broader agenda: questioning the post-Enlightenment grand narratives that have functioned to capture the social world in dualistic terms, like self-other, leisure-work or public-private (Rojek, 1995). Offering to integrate culture and leisure, the post-structural theory is both highly appraised and criticized, the former pertaining to its challenge

on binary oppositions and the latter for dismissing the private sphere in favor of concentrating on the public (Rojek, 2000).

According to Chess (2018), women's leisure time has always been 'problematic', due to its potential to overlap with domestic roles and spaces. Alternatively, since women have more responsibility at home in comparison to men, work and leisure activities are often blurred for women, whereas for men, they have more strict boundaries (Aitchison, 2003; Green et al., 1990). Hochschild (1989, 2001) defined this phenomenon as "leisure gap", in which male leisure time is valued differently than female leisure time, consequently leaving women with less free time overall.

Early feminist literature of 1980's concentrating on women's leisure underlined the concept of "leisure as resistance" (McKeown & Parry, 2017). Leisure became a site for women to challenge the stereotypes, dominant ideologies that empowers the unequal distribution of power in essence (Shaw, 2001). "Leisure as resistance implies that leisure behaviors, settings, and interactions can challenge how power is exercised, making leisure a form of political practice" (Shaw, 2001, p.186). Contemporary feminist research, adding up to the earlier works, portrays that this relationship is even more complicated by the "interplay between reproduction and resistance" (McKeown & Parry, 2017). Besides, women's leisure practices are not seen as a detachable part of other aspects of their daily lives. On the contrary, it is fragmented and occurs all day, permeating into the fabric of one's way of living. Feminist leisure studies researchers have been in search of digging out the boundaries created by the complex relationship described above. In the more recent studies, researchers claim that women tend to choose cheap, easy to learn, or timely flexible leisure activities (Chess, 2018). The last component is crucial in terms of signifying that women find it easier to fit leisure activities in between other activities, based on the fragmented nature of their time allocation. (Deem, 1986; Wajcman, 2000) At this point, Henderson's (1996) argument "one size doesn't fit all" idea is still valid based on its realization that women's leisure time is not only restricted by being a woman, yet it varies on "social, cultural and ideological

constructs in the lived experiences of women.” (p. 142) Similarly, other factors such as age, social class, ethnicity, abled status are significant markers in defining the interpretations of leisure time. Recently, post-structural feminism and neoliberalism pave the way to defining leisure as a personal space, offering possibilities of resistance, choice, control, and self-determination all at once.

This re-framing of the categories of women and leisure time is also part of a bigger picture: the post-modernist and post-structuralist stances on challenging the normative, Eurocentric and patriarchal idealizations of pre-existing categories and introducing the multiplicity of spheres and identities into the discussion. One step further, the dichotomies of men/women, leisure/work, private/public are challenged and unraveled with the acknowledgment of fluid and multiple identities and the transgression of various spheres of everyday lives (Çaha, 2005). Sintas et al. (2015) described that “the holy trinity described by modern researchers- time, space and activity, whether leisure or work, has been dynamited with ICT’s” (p.83). Likewise, researchers like Hesmondhalgh (2010), Postigo (2003), Terranova (2000) underlined the combination and hybridity of activities that result in heterotopic spaces.

In line with the newly introduced permeability of categories, the theory of intersectionality becomes a powerful tool for conducting leisure studies, emphasizing the interactivity between the structures of race, class, and gender in accessing leisure experiences (Orton-Johnson, 2014; Gopaldas, 2013). Not only the grand narratives circulating class and leisure studies become challenged, but also the category of social class is re-visited with bearing in mind that the category cannot be utilized as a monolithic concept. Hence, the fluidity and heterogeneous conceptualizations pave the way to a conceptual decline in the realm of public/private sphere discussions. Even in Habermas’s (2010) later works, leisure is contextualized as a part of the private sphere with the influences of globalization, economic changes, and post-modernism. Yet, the practical consequences also contribute to the discussions on the decline of public life. Currently, even the term

leisure is contested with new definitions to keep up with the conditions of everyday practices. The coining of the term digital leisure is a vivid example of how leisure's traditional spheres are transforming.

Digital leisure, referring to "time spent engaged in digital practices and spaces while in a leisurely state of mind" is now at the heart of discussion in defining an individual's way of managing and participating in different spheres of everyday lives (Redhead, 2016, p.831). As an alternative, some researchers (Parry & Light, 2014; Valtchanov et al., 2016) utilize the term "technologically mediated leisure" to describe the listed activities as opposed to referring to them as digital leisure (Sintas et al., 2015; Spracklen, 2015). For the purposes of this study, digital leisure becomes a key player in exploring women's leisure experiences, in addition to the altered time and space boundaries with the intrusion of new media technologies. In other words, digital leisure is an end product of the diffusion of new media technologies into the realm of everyday lives. As in the case of the changing dynamics of the home as the primary site of leisure and television as the main leisure source at home; the very definition of leisure itself and its components are changing. The reason why a particular interest in screen use is utilized as a concept in this thesis is the result of a process whereby screen studies do not only refer to television viewing but rather a complex array of screens available for the multiplicity of activities including streaming, gaming, running errands, reading, socializing, or killing time. "Speed of new technology is so pervasive and its effects so widespread that we can say to be post-TV such is the change in our watching and listening habits and the platforms available at the touch of a button" (Redhead, 2016, p.821). What this means for us, as digital leisured citizens, requires concentrating on-screen within its multiple meanings and applications.

Rainie and Wellman (2012) have argued that not just the activities, but the way people interact with each other also altered with the incorporation of digital technologies, resulting in the necessity of focusing on the networked individual as the main unit of study. What they call the "social network operating system" is the

defining feature of this era: “personal- the individual is at the autonomous center just as she is reaching out from her computer; multiuser-people are interacting with numerous diverse others; multi-tasking- people are doing several things, and multithreaded- they are doing them more or less simultaneously” (p.7). This system is based on two underlined concepts; “contamination of spaces” and “crossing of borders”, in which individuals are experiencing a mission to make sense of the activities that are taking place out of their usual context and no one is certain about whether to classify these activities as leisure or unpaid work or both (Rainie & William, 2012). For Terranova (2000), this kind of blurriness between cultural expression and work challenges the traditional links between work and leisure, and it is under-analyzed in media studies up to date. Notably, some practices of digital leisure are not social per se, like reading an online magazine, surfing through the Internet, or watching a YouTube video (Valtchanov & Parry, 2017).

Investigating the applications of digital technologies in the leisure time of individuals, researchers covered different aspects of the spectrum. Tapscott (1996) and Toffler & Shapiro (1985) explored the intersections between consuming and producing online content with the intrusion of new media technologies and came up with the term “prosumers” to define the new dynamics. Some researchers claimed that by reducing the physical and temporal distances, digital technologies made it simpler for people to interact with others (Anderson & Raine, 2010; Kanuka & Anderson, 1998; Schroeder, 2011). In Francisco et al.’s (2016) review of social digital leisure, the concept is linked solely with the sociability aspect of new technologies, as the name itself suggests. This identification is underlined up to a point where there is no interaction during the activity, it is assumed that leisure is converted into entertainment (Franciso et al., 2016, p.259). Within his review of similar research, the aspect of sociability is permanently in check; whether to measure social relations, social support, or interpersonal relationships (Cummings & Kraut, 2002; Swickert et al., 2002; Robinson, 2011). Concluding that digital leisure “interacts with and transforms traditional leisure”, digital technologies’

transformative nature on turning entertainment activities into leisure activities are underlined.

Scrutinizing on home-based digital leisure, Sintas et al. (2017) expands the analysis to include that digital leisure opens up new spaces and time frames in which individuals “can do what they like, when they like, in the order they want, and for as long as they want, they do not depend on what is programmed or published by media, they can search TV programs, movies or news and they also can share it with other or make it alone” (p.90). Basically, Sintas et al. (2017) provide the essence of how new media technologies disrupt the concept of leisure in this framing. The focus of the study is again on the social aspect of leisure, utilizing the concepts of “living together separately” (Flichy, 1995) and being “alone together” (Turkle, 2011) in the household, yet the challenged homogeneity of the household and the networked individual is underlined to take the pressure off the influence of digital leisure on measuring sociability.

On the other hand, digital leisure as a concept has its implications on the subject field, prompting philosophical and theoretical conversations about the boundaries. Redhead’s (2016) articulation of digital leisure sums up the discussion by proposing a simple question: Where are international leisure studies going? This question needs to be offered to align with current trends and also to demolish the old barriers surrounding the field. Again, this question refers to the current debates about the fields’ future, generally presented with an either/ or scenario. The first option is rather pessimistic, considering the consumption of the field by rather “livelier” and “newer” fields like digital sociology or digital anthropology. The second option is relying more on the explosion of new studies and foresees the emergence of ‘Digital Leisure Studies’ as a field in itself, informed by critical theory and bringing traditional leisure up to speed (Redhead, 2016). With making a move toward the latter, Redhead (2016) envisions the emergence of ‘Digital Leisure Studies’ as a result of globalization, digitalization, and neoliberalism, boosting a conceptual change. Within this spectrum, the aim is to focus on more specific areas (such as

digital leisure cultures) rather than solely discussing if the internet is for the good or bad of society. Parry and Light (2014) are concerned over the fact that while technology's pervasiveness in everyday lives has been commonly argued, it "has not been adequately conceptualized within the leisure literature" (p.51). Silk et al. (2016) agree with the need for Leisure Studies to not be stuck in an analog world, but rather conceptualize and theorize the centrality of digitality, as well as catching up with the "accelerated culture". (p.714)

Silk et al. (2016) also recognize the task to understand and investigate the contributions that Leisure Studies can provide or cause concerning the convergence of digital culture and our everyday lives. In his framework, data troubles and body politics are the two major sets to initiate a conversation about locating the necessary theoretical and conceptual lenses into the field. Data troubles refer to the economic value of leisure regarding companies' tendency to collect personal data for either profit-oriented desire or optimization. The blurriness of consumption/ production in contemporary leisure practices becomes a significant tool to investigate political and economic considerations in digitized Leisure Studies. In accordance, new responsibilities are introduced for leisure participants in terms of being aware of the personal data collection and use (Silk et al., 2016). On top of data protection and consumer rights, the reproduction of power relations in terms of the organization, representation, and experience of bodies as social power is underlined (Silk et al., 2016). As Silk and Andrews (2011) point out, digitized leisure cultures are capable of reproducing or disseminating gender, racial, class, or ability norms (p. 719). Thus, incorporating the inequity and injustice circulated by digital leisure cultures is as essential as the empowering forms it induces whilst negotiating on the boundaries of contemporary leisure studies. Indeed, it is also crucial to be vigilant about the populations that are absent from the digital world incorporated in Leisure Studies when incorporating the possibilities for the academic field.

More recently, Schultz and McKeown (2018) put together an effort to provide a guideline for studying digital leisure practices by offering a three-step analysis:

“We should study and emphasize what people do with a large proportion of their leisure time; We should study it in ways that are timely and accessible, and we should do so with a justice bent” (p.3). For the former part, utilizing statistics from the United States and Canada², the authors suggest a global trend towards spending the majority of leisure time engaging in digital practices and until recently, researchers tend to take digitization for granted as a part of everyday practices (p.3). As the second layer, bearing in mind the complexities of trying to keep up with technology rhetoric, the pace of knowledge production should catch up with the pace of effects of digitalization in everyday lives and also be accessible to the public (p.5). Redhead’s blogs and Brabazon’s YouTube lectures and vlogs are listed amongst the examples of how academics play with the current tools to convey information to the public in the most accessible manner. As the third step, the reason why behind leisure studies is defined as embracing and social and environmental justice issues (p.8).

To untangle the utilized notions, a brief visit to the details of the terminologies is required. Digital Leisure Studies refers to an interdisciplinary subdiscipline of Leisure studies, covering the study of digital leisure cultures, practices, experiences, spaces (Redhead, 2016, 2017; Silk et al., 2016). Digital Leisure is an argumentative word, just as leisure is. “Digital leisure practices and spaces are intertwined with work in ways that physical leisure spaces are not. Time spent in engaged in digital practices and spaces while in a leisurely state of mind”. (Redhead, 2016; Schults & McKeown, 2018) Traditional leisure cultures are defined as sports, fandom, outdoor activities, etc., whereas most leisure activities are digitized in the current environment except for few analog-only activities. Digitization of the analog areas of research (Brabzon & Redhead, 2016) refers to the digital leisure cultures and they cover “technologies and practices which have built cultures around them:

² In the United States, leisure activities that consume the majority of time per day are: 1. Watching TV (168 minutes), socializing and communicating (39 minutes), using a computer for leisure (26 minutes) (American Bureau of Labor Time Use Statistics, 2017) & Canadians are spending an increasing amount of their time at home online, app. 24,5 hours a week. (Media Technology Monitor, 2017)

namely apps, smartphones, online games, interaction on some form of social media, and the downloading of films, live televised sports events and music” (Redhead, 2017a, p.14).

2.3. Implications of Visiting Leisure Studies

Opening with an exploration on the historicity of the term leisure, this chapter aims to pinpoint the outlining moments in Leisure Studies literature in relation to two major categories: new media technologies and gender. Derived from the Latin word “licere” meaning “being free”, the term leisure has been prevalently utilized as vacant time (boş zaman) instead of leisure time (serbest zaman) in Turkish. Nevertheless, this study’s main focus, leisure time, often embraces different connotations than vacant time in terms of referencing to time dedicated for one’s own selection of activities outside of personal and societal responsibilities. In a sense, vacant time becomes an umbrella term encompassing leisure time and residual time from work (Sills, 1968). Yet, the above-mentioned journey provides a framework in which the attempt to provide a rigid definition of the term has never been free of tension.

Discontinuities on the term’s historical journey being evident, influences of the Industrial Revolution and the capitalist economy distinctively mark the separation of work from leisure time (Aydoğan, 2019). In a sense, leisure time is excluded from daily life rhetoric and characterized as equivalent to being idle. Hard-working is appraised as the dominant lifestyle whereas the significance of leisurely activities is disdained as factors impeding the fully functioning of the capitalist system. Subsequent with the Modern Era, leisure evolves into a rationalized recreation format, once again becomes integrated to real life practices. Being merchandised and homogenized, leisure practices not only occur in a consumption-focused environment but also valued based on their productivity (Aydoğan, 2019). At this point, work/leisure dichotomy is reproduced and disseminated, marking a requirement to re-assess the coordinates of the terminology within the field.

It was until the 1960's and 1970's that the concept of work-leisure balance in modern society becomes an attraction point for the sociology scholars and leisure's crucial role (for men) is re-visited. Before such an interest, industrial production's "conditioning" or "suppression" regarding leisure activities of the working class are mainly discussed and criticized (Snape, et al., 2017, p.6). The prospect of new media technologies' influences re-enacted and interest in the already rejected work-leisure debate around post Second World War, which in turn inspired the emergence of Leisure Studies as an independent field. The postindustrial society's failed expectations of increased free time and decreased labor initiated a revised definition of leisure (Rojek, 2001). With the influences of globalization and the entrance of new media technologies into everyday lives, the end of work or the end of leisure arguments become obsolete. On the contrary, a more complicated picture emerges as the discrepancy between leisure realm and the rest of life entangles in a novel fashion. The socially constructed meaning of leisure as an opposite or complementary to work needed to be scrutinized as the paradigm no longer captures the essence of current debates (Snape, 2017).

As seen throughout this chapter, the reason why new media technologies are utilized as one of the two main facilitators of the discussion relies on its influence of re-defining leisure realm. In an effort to avoid technological determinism, discussion around new media technologies aim to capture the mutually changing dynamics not only on the side of the technological advancements but also on their social and practical applications. Changing notions of time, especially the disappearance of linear time (Castells,2006), has its influences on allocation of daily responsibilities and activities. Moreover, with the intrusion of ICT's, activities become less tied to time and space constraints, introducing a new array of possibilities and constraints at the same time. Dislocating home as the center of leisure activities and fragmentation of leisure moments are the two key defining factors of the newly defined leisure realm. Yet, the effort in this study is not to focus on or define a rapture in leisure's historicity, but rather to capture the coordinates of the field within current dynamics with considering its long-lasting journey. Even

though defining leisure is still in flux (Platt, 2018), the attempt is to untangle the modernist dichotomies, to scrutinize current meanings and to reflect on the newly added layers such as the term digital leisure.

As the second major facilitator, feminism's relation to leisure studies has been discussed through the initial interest in the field starting in the late 1980's and growing influence after the 2000's. Feminism not only shaped the course of leisure studies, yet there were some concerns over the unequal access to leisure time before 1970's, initiating the flame. The studies after 2000's mainly revolve around the differences between women's and men's experiences of leisure time, pointing out the gendered nature of the phenomenon. Starting with more pessimistic takes on leisure being passive and home-centered for women through leisure as resistance categorization, the narrative shifts to scrutinizing modernist and dualistic categories circling leisure debates. Moreover, with the influences of post-structural feminism and neoliberalism, a new layer is added to question the emancipatory affluences of leisure by considering the possibilities of choice, resistance, control and self-determination. Hence, definitions of leisure are shaped and redefined by various feminist influences, adding up on each other like a multi-layered composition. Within that layers, what stands out as the most common arguments are the existence of a leisure gap in which male leisure time is assessed and valued differently than female leisure time and the restricting role of domestic duties of women. On top of that, there remains a controversy regarding the influences and stance of leisure within everyday life rhetoric between optimistic and pessimistic stances. In this dissertation, the aim is to recognize all sides of the coin by avoiding to assign overarching meanings to either side, and to acknowledge that women's leisure time is not only defined by being a woman only. Dismantling the category of woman, as in the case of poststructural feminist thinking, other contributing factors such as age, social class, ethnicity, geography are taken into account whilst portraying the experiences of the participants. With such effort, the multi-dimensional bondages of leisure- new media technologies-gender spectrum will be investigated throughout the chapters in detail, referencing to their implications on each.

Concurring with Freysinger et al. (2013), the central premise of this dissertation is that opportunities for leisure will enrich people's lives (both men and women's). Examining and reflecting on gender relations empowers people to advocate towards personal and societal improvements that will greatly improve women's and men's leisure lives in turn. Within that framework, gender is relational: Under the contexts of society, culture, and history, it is built and remodeled in relation to and contact with other individuals. Leisure provides a space for not only gender reproduction, but also gender resistance and transformation (Shaw, 2001) All the presented notions of leisure suggest the complexity of the construct up to this point. As a matter of fact, leisure can clearly be considered and examined in a variety of ways. The conceptualization of how leisure should be framed evolves and is interrupted as ways of knowing and dominant discourses altered. The multiple ways of imagining leisure indicate the problematics about essentializing leisure, favoring the 'both-and' rather than 'either-or' thinking (Freysinger et al., 2013). Consequently, recent demarcations of leisure "as a state of mind as well as meaningful experience" are significant contributions to the literature in terms of centering women's actual everyday life routines (Freysinger et al. 2013). These perspectives underline the role of the actor in play, rather than placing too much emphasis on the activity and the conditions necessary to experience leisure. Enjoyment, happiness, self-fulfillment and perceived freedom are amongst these conditions to experience leisure moments (Freysinger et al., 2013). Yet these definitions also need to combine the socio-cultural contexts, not to ignore the factors defining the leisure realms in the broader sense. Considering all, next section provides an effort to locate the case study covering both the individual and societal level of influences within.

2.4. Locating the Case Study

Within the accelerated buzz around digital leisure studies in examining the everyday lives of women (or men), gendered experiences of Turkish women's leisure have become one of the underlined topics in academic research recently.

Even though “research on women, gender, and leisure has been conceptualized in the past 20 years by Western scholars, studying women and leisure in developing countries is almost a new phenomenon” (Aydın et al.,2014, p.34). The changing role and status of women in society are currently re-examined through critical issues such as “the interrelationships among the type of work women do inside and outside of the home, in a career and the perceptions of work-family and leisure roles” (Aydın et al., 2014, p.608).

Gender is marked as the most important factor impacting leisure activity preferences and participation levels in Turkey (Eryasar, 2007; Aydın et al., 2014). As stated by Henderson et al. (2002), women have been influenced by the traditional structures imposed by sex roles, family responsibilities, work, and dictated characteristics of being a woman. Hence, their “leisure activities are bounded by their roles in society” (Demir & Demir, 2006, p. 41) and these activities are more likely to be centered in and around the home (Eryasar, 2007). Additional major factors contributing to women’s participation in leisure activities incorporate work status and the residency location (Aydın et al., 2014). Alongside these markers, the rapidly changing sociological texture like the extensive rise in the number of well-educated working women exerted considerable shifts in the traditional gender roles since the 1980s (Uray & Burnaz, 2003). Although the number of well-educated working women is on the rise, with the income level also being on the move, the level of support for women’s responsibilities in family structure remained almost the same (Aydın et al, 2014). Within the modernist rhetoric, it is still indicated that “marriage and children are the ultimate duties of Turkish women, and women who are wives and/or mothers are expected to almost exclusively fulfill domestic roles” (Kulakaç, 2006, p.837). This uneven power relation has its reflections in the leisure domain, like the notion that “married women have the right to have free time is not strong among Turkish women” (Iwasaki, 2001, p.81). Moreover, non-employed Turkish women mostly prefer “handcrafts, knitting, and visiting activities whereas employed women mostly prefer cultural activities” (Demir & Demir, 2006, p.36). Even though such

categorizations are problematic and limiting, most studies circle around the gender specific experiences as pre-given categories.

In Turkey, there has been little research on women's leisure. The great majority of extant research (Demir, 2005; Erkip, 2009; Koca et al., 2009; Sönmez et al., 2010) draws on broader feminist leisure literature to argue for the significance of context in determining women's leisure experiences. In accordance with such research outcomes, academic interest in Turkish women's leisure participation is heavily linked with examining visiting activities through sociological lenses. The concept of Invitation Day is analyzed in both Aydın et al.'s (2014) study as a leisure activity, with the aim of understanding the common motives for participation factors. Karayığit (2015) also concentrated on gendered fields in women's leisure time experiences with the case study of Invitation Days in her doctoral thesis in the light of gender studies and sociology of leisure. Kara (2013) conducted research for differentiating between leisure time behaviors of ethnic women groups in the general population of Turkey, with a descriptive analysis in health sciences. Although the above-listed studies contribute to a deeper understanding of women's leisure in Turkey, the concept of leisure time is mostly attributed to non-digital spheres only, except referring to the role of social media use for cultural gatherings. However, with the recent influences of digitalization of leisure time, or digital leisure, the opportunities or obstacles for women to exercise their leisure time have significantly altered.

At this point, this study aims to contribute to the literature on women's leisure experiences in Turkey by shedding a light on the current leisure environments, bearing in mind the androcentric affluence of the concept of leisure time. In addition, leisure time experiences will be utilized through combining the lenses of communication studies and gender studies, with locating screen use of any kind at the center for several reasons. Firstly, the concept of leisure time now entails an examination of digital leisure as an inseparable part of everyday lives. Secondly,

digital leisure entails a vast array of activities that require some sort of screen use, differing from watching an online show or shopping groceries through a mobile application. And lastly, the digitalization of our everyday lives brings out the altered notions of time use especially for women, which needs a re-visit in terms of figuring out the role gender plays at the intersection of the above-mentioned process. Yet, this study will be an attempt to open up a new window in understanding women's experiences of everyday lives in relation to leisure activities and time within a digitalized era concentrated with screens.

3. LEISURE FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A feminist theoretical framework directed my study from the very beginning. Yet, it is also recognized that understanding feminism is to look beyond the monolithic definitions of the terminology. Henderson et al. (1996) define feminism as “the philosophical and theoretical frameworks that embody aspects of equity, empowerment and social change for women and men” (p.13). In other words, “feminism is not merely about a way of thinking, but it is also crucially a way of being and doing” (Valtchanov, 2013, p.11). Hence, I would like to open up this chapter by stating that theory and practice are intricately linked in feminism, influencing and developing one another continuously.

The meanings of feminism(s) and its repercussions on leisure vary across diverse times and places and have often been the focus of many debates (Valtchanov, 2013). Henderson et al. (1989) define feminism as personal and emphasizing the validity of women’s experiences. It is also political in the sense that it aims at women understanding their own lives mixed with oppression and subordination (Henderson et al., 1989). As for Stanley and Wise (1983), feminism and feminist theory are often utilized interchangeably; yet feminism “is not only a set of beliefs but also a set of theoretical constructs about the nature of women’s oppression and the part that oppression play within social reality” (p.49). In relation, feminist theory is not a “single body of work, and one cannot make general statements about it or review it comprehensively” (Stanley & Wise, 1983). However, the same authors have listed three frequently argued assumptions regarding women that are mutual to all feminist theories:

- a. “women are oppressed and share a common set of oppressions”
- b. “the personal is political in that personal experience is affected by the system in everyday life”
- c. “Feminist consciousness and the understanding of what it means to be a woman can be developed.”

In the light of these three assumptions, there is a philosophy of not understanding women to be a simple additive to the patriarchal world, but rather a call for theories to apply to women's everyday lives. In terms of developing feminist consciousness, one has to create an altered consciousness for oneself and others that are concretely apart from the traditional take on societal roles (Lafontaine, 1982).

Wearing (1998, p.4) states that:

“There are as many feminist theoretical perspectives concerning leisure as there are sociological and feminist perspectives. Feminist theory in this context refers to those forms of analysis which seek to underline women's experiences in patriarchal, capitalist, modern and post-modern, Western and developing countries, with an emphasis on increasing the quality of life for women and men.”

This dissertation, informed by a feminist epistemology, is based upon a uniquely mixed theoretical framework drawn upon Wearing's (1998) conceptualization of leisure and feminist theory. Her theoretical framework, “feminist postmodern interactionist perspective”, regards leisure as personal spaces, in which the self has the opportunity to expand beyond the rigid stereotypes of modernity, especially around gender (p. 157). Besides, Wearing (1998) does not comply with the idea of the self being irreversible and destructive, but rather the possibilities of construction and liberation are underlined. What this unique combination offers is a place where not only “rewriting the script of women beyond its phallogocentric definition” but also “rewrite the concept of leisure, so it reflects spaces that women make for their own sense of self-worth and pleasure, spaces of negotiation, resistance and possible transformation” with a post-structural twist (p.157). Taking one step further, I intend to add one more ingredient to this unique blend by considering the introduction of new technologies into the realm of leisure. Even though Wearing (1998) takes into account the dynamics of 21st-century women and their possible concerns, there is an element (of digitalization) missing from the picture.

The emphasis on experience and expansion in Wearing's (1998) theoretical framework still applies to current society's concerns. The reasons for re-visiting her framework constitute a twofold argument: Firstly, her depiction of leisure domain is valid for understanding the current dynamics of leisure spectrum, containing the emancipatory and restrictive sides at the same time. Secondly, the concerns over new media technologies dominate the leisure studies in such way that feminist concerns are merely evident in much of the recent studies. Hence, a re-visit through a feminist lens requires a re-consideration of the historicity of the feminist influences in production and dissemination of knowledge(s). In the light of these arguments, the impacts of digitalization of leisure time are not undervalued, on the contrary, the aim is to scrutinize its influences through a feminist framework without essentializing or universalizing its impacts.

Hence, I would like to add and underline the fact that digital leisure or leisure in a digitalized age also encompasses the idea of construction and re-construction in terms of what it does to the time, space, and content of the activities that are at play. As a result, I would like to continue this study by stating that theoretically, leisure as social/personal spaces are treated as pendulums, rotating between expansion and contraction based on women's unique experiences. Incorporating post-structuralist ideas of agency, resistance, and many subjectivities, I aim to cover both sides of the coin by presenting the concept of a pendulum. Yet, before delving into the theoretical framework's current usage, I would like to explore the historicity of the leisure and feminist theoretical ideas.

The interplay between leisure and feminist theories contributes to this study's backbone, particularly shedding light on how the latter formed the understanding of the former in its historical journey. From the very beginning, feminist analyses criticized the excessive emphasis on the work/leisure distinction by contemplating on choosing "productive sphere and the work ethics as the basis of identity construction, which ignores the everyday experiences of women" (Wearing, 1998, p.7). With shifting the focus to the non-productive sphere of consumption and

leisure as a tool for individual identity, feminist leisure theorists began to open up a space for leisure theories that acknowledged women's perspectives (Wearing, 1998). Concepts such as unpaid labor, consumption, and the domestic sphere challenged the dichotomous narrative around work-leisure narrative. Wearing (1998) also links the emergence of feminist leisure theories to a shift in sociology, in which work-centered models are started to be challenged in terms of explaining the basis of contemporary societies.

The first piece considered to relate to feminist theory with leisure is by Talbot (1979), adopting a liberal or socialist stance on explaining women's leisure in the United Kingdom, and this study becomes a catalyst for initiating further research on women's leisure time (Aitchison, 2003). At the time, even though Stanley (1980) demands more radical feminist alternative research, the following studies are influenced by the socialist or liberal stances initiated in the primary research. Aitchison (2003) confirms that socialist and liberalist feminist research is the dominant theoretical perspective for the majority of publications during the 1980s in the United Kingdom. In terms of content, these studies mainly focus on particular types of women or specific leisure participation types within clearly designated geographical spaces and places. Even though most of the case studies conducted during this period embark on socialist feminist perspective and class relations to be more specific, Aitchison (2003) underlines how these studies paved the way to contemporary feminist research in leisure adopting different theoretical perspectives.

During the 1990s, the momentum in feminist leisure studies in the United Kingdom was not maintained, transferring the focus to leisure management rather than critical leisure theories (Aitchison, 2003). For a period in the 1990s, "it appeared as if leisure studies had lost its way and could not keep up with the new theoretical advances and methodological innovations of social science" (p.54). Yet, the research arena was established further in the United States during the 90s, tackling the issue of race (Henderson, 2001), women's leisure outside and inside of the home

(Valentine, 1989 & Samuel 1996), incorporating a revisit and redefinition of an earlier analysis of leisure time through work-leisure dichotomy, socialist feminist takes and gendered definitions of leisure. While major feminist leisure studies during the 1980's "disrupted the discourse of leisure studies, they can also be viewed as a part of leisure studies structuralist sociological tradition where from the very beginning, leisure research in Europe was a topic-oriented field of research dominated by sociological perspectives but strongly leaning towards public policy interest" (Mommaas, 1997, p.241).

Another way to contextualize the interconnectedness of feminism and leisure is to revisit the particular interests in studies that evolved with societal dynamics. To be more specific, the unique areas of research of feminist scholars on leisure portray a similar storyline regarding the above-mentioned historical journey. Early feminist scholars underline why it is critical to study women through several points: "1) economic and ideological influences of women's lives require attention, 2) demographic and social changes influence women's lives, and it requires further study, 3) women face with unique struggles, 4) changes in education, gender expectations and family life alter the study of women, 5) despite positive accomplishments, challenges towards women's progress deserve attention" (Henderson et al., 1989). Likewise, early scholars shape the leisure field in terms of substantiating the meaning of feminism in this specific context. They present feminism as a twofold project, both as a social movement and a theoretical framework that influences how leisure is defined and redefined (Parry & Fullagar, 2013). With such efforts, feminist leisure research "made women's lives visible, identified power imbalances in social structures and cultural spheres" (Bunch, 1985; Wimbush & Talbot, 1988; Henderson et al., 1989).

Leisure studies are enhanced with the appearance of various trajectories of feminist thoughts in terms of embracing the multiplicity of perspectives. There is a significant shift in terms of challenging the categorization of gender through binary relations as "women" and "men" to recognizing the diversity amongst groups of

women with the rising influence of diverse feminist standpoints and postmodern ideas (Parry & Fullagar, 2013). With such a shift, feminist leisure research “focused on understanding leisure in the context of everyday life along with its social structures for various groups of women” (Henderson & Biasleschki, 1999, p.172). As a result, a diversity of experiences on women’s leisure realms were presented by concerning mothers, lesbians, married women, working women, young girls, black women, older women, immigrant women, and women with disabilities. Basically, what happens in the realm of feminist theory is interlinked with and presents its repercussions in leisure theory. Moreover, feminist influence on leisure has been an interdisciplinary project from the very beginning and has utilized various feminist perspectives like radical, Marxist, socialist, liberal, and post-structural/post-modern. Harding’s (1991) questioning of the nature of knowledge itself shifted the philosophical territory within leisure studies (Samdahl,1999). More precisely, feminist leisure scholars introduced the ideas like reflexivity and social change, widening the research paradigms within leisure scholarship. Taken as a whole, the shift to scrutinizing differences among women, stretching the focus of research and the methodological inputs all enabled feminism to open up “the way for asking more encompassing questions about leisure” (Henderson & Biasleschki, 1999, p.168).

Within that spectrum, Wearing (1998) draws on post-structural feminist theory through the real lives of ordinary women, presents a critique of these previous feminist leisure studies by underlining the fact that even though the male bias is challenged, labor aspects of family is still missing from the picture. Her work has been influential in initiating post-structural analyses of gender to the subject field of leisure studies (Aitchison, 2003). Within this journey Wearing (1996) portrays several theoretical takings that influenced the way which leisure is defined, and hence feminist theory relates to that specific definition of what counts (or does not count) as leisure. As the first layer, the belief that “leisure is good for society” is revealed with functionalist theory and in relation to time-budget and recreational studies (Wearing, 1998, p.14). As a second layer, there emerges an emphasis on

structure and agency in access to leisure with Marxist and Neo-Marxist studies, underlining the capitalistic mode of production (Wearing, 1998, p. 22). The self and freedom constraint of leisure is emphasized with interactionist theories as the third layer (Wearing, 1998, p.45). In addition to those, cultural studies, post-structural and transnational feminist approaches all contribute to seeing leisure from various angles: the issue of hegemonic culture, the multiple subjectivities of self/women, and the unheard voices and leisure(s) of non-female experiences beyond borders.

Within the purposes of this study, a fourth layer is added to this formulation to expand on the historicity of knowledge production and conceptual configuration. Leisure in itself is a construct and an idea that crosses national borders and affects women's lives and concerns. Hence exploring the theorization of feminist concerns in relation to leisure studies embodies the ways of attending international issues in women's studies. As Kaplan and Grewal (2002) portray, the first approach, which has been popular since the 1970s, was to emphasize the parallels between women all over the world and throughout history. This approach did not consider the intersections of race/class/gender/nationality in the study of women's experiences because it focused on issues like motherhood and family structure. The second and ethnocentric perspective saw Western culture as new, and other cultures as in the need of catching up with the West in terms of its own terms. The development approach was useful in framing issues such as poverty, education, and health, but it also demonstrated that modernization does not have to imply women's empowerment (Kurian et al.,2016). As a result of this realization, feminists realized that the context for analyzing women's lives needed to shift once more, this time to include an international structure of states that is deeply gendered (Kim-Puri, 2005). Feminists from all over the world are utilizing interdisciplinary methods to understand the asymmetries and disparities that emerge from new ways of globalization to counter this new framework. Namely, transnational feminism indicates both a contemporary feminist paradigm and its consequent activist movements, concerning with how capitalism and globalization influence individuals across nations, races, genders, sexualities and classes. Exploring the

geopolitics of knowledge, Mohanty (2013) refers to a procedure that causes some knowledge to be “lost in translation” as it travels between placed based meanings and a Eurocentric globality. As a remedy, the common struggles of women are portrayed with the awareness of acknowledging the locality of global and vice versa within the neoliberal dynamics. Moving beyond the boundaries of the nation-states and the dichotomies of the West-East discourses, this outlook has the potential to re-visit leisure studies through de-essentializing the predefined categories and making room for utilizing more inclusive and interconnected tools of analysis. Hence, transnational feminism’s way of defining the category of womanhood and its related struggles through dialogue and collaboration pave way to acknowledge the significance of co-construction of knowledge during the research phase, once again linking theory to practice. As a whole, the listed layers contribute to the selection of methodological approaches in this study, placing theory and methodology as linked and fluid formations.

As lenses to see and measure leisure, the theories alter how it is approached and studied in various academic fields. Starting with the functionalism of the 1960s, leisure is characterized as a separate category, “interpreted as non-work time and activity” (Wearing, 1998, p.6). In relation, leisure becomes concretely separate from work time, and the researcher’s effort to measure leisure time depends upon quantitative methods. In this line of thought, leisure belongs to the white, middle-class male, and their experience is analyzed as a universal one. In the symbolic interaction theory of the 1970s, leisure is defined as an experience, meaning differing from individual to individual (Wearing, 1998). The qualitative methodology produces its data, underlining the subjective meanings attached to an array of experiences and individual accounts. Leisure experiences are both rewarding and challenging, yet leisure is crucial for the development of the self (Wearing, 1998, p.15). Feminist theorists who adopted this approach present how women and men’s experiences can be different, usually favoring the latter over the former (Shaw, 1992; Samdahl, 1988; Bella, 1989; Henderson et al.; 1989,1996; Wearing, 1992a). Based on Gramsci’s notion of cultural hegemony, cultural studies

focus on working-class leisure subcultures (Hall and Jefferson, 1976). Feminists who write with this theoretical lens and perceive leisure as a space for struggle and mediation to move beyond culturally defined boundaries of femininity mainly shed light on how girls' and women's experiences of such fields are different from men's (McRobbie, 1978; Roman, 1988). Theorists who adopted post-structural theories to leisure, even though the number is few, mainly focus on the concept of leisure as 'personal space' or 'my space' (Rojek, 1985, 1993a, 1995; Hargreaves, 1987). In relation, post-structuralist feminist theories mostly rely on multiple subjectivities of women and various femininities; "the possibilities of resistance to and subversion of male domination through leisure; possibilities through leisure of rewriting masculine and feminine scripts; access through leisure to alternative discourses and the productive as well as the repressive aspects of power relations" (Wearing, 1998, p.145).

Writers including Mommaas (1997), Rojek (2000), and Wearing (1998) have all contributed to challenging the indifference of leisure studies in terms of engaging with post-structural ideas at a time when the issues of disruption of theories, postmodernism, the new self, and diversity were heavily discussed in social sciences. What Coalter (1997) identifies as a crisis in leisure studies produced by postmodernism captures the essence of the times: "Leisure research in the postmodern world appears to focus on conspicuous consumption- the public world, the tourist gaze, hyper realities, etc. There is a need to put the personal and political back on the research agenda" (Aitchison, 2003, p.57). Feminist research's attention to merge public and private has its influences in the 1990s by underlining the issues of time, space, control, and regulation and turning the leisure gaze into both public and private arena (Aitchison, 2003, p.59).

Although several different theoretical takes are presented throughout the introduction of this chapter to cover the field, this dissertation is mainly based and developed around Wearing's (1998) theoretical framework, namely "feminist postmodern interactionist perspective, which enables leisure theory to open its

doors to insights from post-structuralist theory and throw some light on leisure spaces and self” (Wearing, 1998, p. 143). To unpack her conceptualization, it is crucial to initiate the discussion by referring to how certain concepts are defined. The postmodern element refers to a celebration of difference and its possible repercussions of challenging the passive and inferiorized femininity (Wearing, 1998). When one talks about women, it is not a single, universal or monolithic category, but rather a diverse range of women who embodies “multiple, complex and potentially contradictory sets of experiences” (Braidotti, 1993). Drawing on Foucault’s (1980, 1982) articulation of the possibility of resistance and struggle, Wearing (1998) comes up with suggesting the struggle for feminine subjectivities that “are not inferiorized to masculine subjectivities which leisure as space can help to achieve” (p.145).

In this sense, Wearing’s (1998) leisure is a “heterotopia”, a personal space for “resistance to domination, space where there is room for the self to expand beyond what it is told it should be” (p.146). In other words, leisure is a space where one chooses to utilize for herself/himself in a way that she/he prefers to use it. Rather than necessarily meaning oppression or expansion, it can be both at the same time or relate to each at different times. Hence, women’s leisure spaces provide “spaces for rewriting the script of what it is to be a woman, beyond definitions” in contemporary societies (Wearing, 1998, p.143). In this line of thought, leisure is no longer defined as the opposition to work or defined as non-work time, space, experience, or space. Leisure is “re-signified to mean personal spaces, physical and metaphorical, where women can explore their own desires and pleasures and perform acts which allow them to become women in their own right” (Wearing, 1998, p.149). The expanded and conjoined conceptualization and theorization of leisure Wearing (1998) suggests is one’s own space, in which one has control over her choosing, without dismissing the structural or societal constraints altogether yet acknowledging the hybridity. As examples of these tasks, Wearing (1998) lists: “a mental space in the midst of a routine household task; a time space when obligatory tasks are done; an activity space where no activity, familiar and loved activities or

new and challenging activities are pursued, or a pleasure space for experience of pure pleasure” (p.150). Especially the last aspect is linked with the focus of this study, exploring women’s self-recovery, self-help, self-actualization, and healing practices. In leisure research, there are also examples of women’s use of such spaces for meeting with other women (McRobbie, 1978).

Rojek (2000) critiques the way in which socialist feminist leisure studies have ignored to consider the post-structural and postmodern influences on gender and leisure. He also challenges feminist leisure researchers of “being stuck in 1970s’ problematic of liberating the subject with a single mentality” in which debates tend to create defensive reactions rather than productive formations (Rojek, 2000, p.111). On the other hand, contemporary feminist leisure studies’ criticisms are found somewhat ungrounded; refuting the concern that poststructuralism has introduced “a predominantly male gaze” into the public arena (Watson & Scraton, 1998, p.125). Aitchison (2003) offers a more optimistic stance on the postmodern concern for opening up a new debate ground for diversity and difference previously neglected by 1970s and 1980’s feminist leisure theorists. Moreover, two significant advances of the 1990s contribute to the expansion and deepening of feminist leisure research: namely the adoption of feminist leisure studies by a variety of disciplines within the United Kingdom and increase of leisure research in the US, Australia, and New Zealand and Canada (Aitchison, 2003). In Wearing’s (1996) terms, these contributions enable a shift from thinking in terms of “patriarchy” to “phallocentrism” (p.39). Adding another significant layer to this shift is also evident in Butler’s (1990) perception of post-structural feminism as portraying a challenge not only to phallocentrism but also to “compulsory heterosexuality”, constantly refuting the binary divides and modernist dualistic thinking in social theory (Aitchison, 2003).

Post-structuralism remains the popular theoretical perspective among prominent feminist leisure scholars like Aitchison and Wearing (Henderson, 2013). Recent writings and advocates of poststructuralism focus on offering a way of studying

knowledge production by presenting a critique of structuralist premises related to the assumption of one scientific truth. For instance, a post-structuralist approach questions the meanings of being a woman, which would all have influences on woman's leisure. Henderson (2013) adds that biases and misinterpretations caused by conditioning on history and culture are what post-structuralists are aiming to overcome. Moreover, gender-power relations are essential to consider from post-structuralist perspectives (Aitchison, 2005). A post-structuralist approach also mandates that "to understand a concept such as leisure requires questioning the systems that produced the knowledge" (Henderson, 2013, p.51). Hence, the significance of questioning is at the heart of feminist research on leisure over the last decades. One step further, Henderson (2013) states that feminist analysis since the early 80's "has served as the conscience of Leisure Studies" in terms of challenging the taken-for-granted concepts, revealing the unseen, and exploring new areas of research (p.54).

Within leisure literature, feminist scholarship has an essential history of offering "critical insights, correcting androcentric biases, identifying future areas of research, advocating innovative methodologies, and addressing key gaps in knowledge" mainly around the issues of empowerment, equity, and social justice (Johnson et al., 2018, p.151). As shown in the previous discussions, feminist scholars have contributed to the field around the gendered nature of leisure experiences. Likewise, contemporary feminists like Berbery, Johnson, and Parry continued this tradition of entangling the relations of how leisure influences gender and vice versa by referring to the fourth wave of feminism and its repercussions on leisure. This scholarship utilizes multiple ways of knowing, in line with the main aim of this thesis, and resulted in more nuanced understandings of the complex phenomenon of leisure, highlighting various new ways of studying and representing the issue. Even though wave metaphor is criticized by Fullagar (2013), Parry's (2018) book "Feminisms in Leisure Studies Advancing A Fourth Wave" captures the essence of contemporary feminist influences on leisure studies and utilizes the

metaphor to define a particular framework. The fourth wave, in this context, is defined as everyday feminism, and its main topics revolve around the blurred boundaries across feminist waves, technological mobilization, interconnectedness through globalization, and multivocal response to sexual violence (Parry, 2018).

For contextualizing the components of fourth-wave feminism, Berbary (2018) utilizes the example of poststructural feminism's attempt towards creating alternative theorizations of gender in leisure research. The 'post' part implies a theoretical position that requires "a constant critique or deconstruction, an afterthought or a revisiting of that which already exists or will exist" (Berbary, 2018, p.416). In this line of thought, all post theories, including post-structuralism, which has a significant impression on de-constructing the category of women as stated at the beginning of this chapter, are all related by their general critique of humanist theoretical opinions and its binary structures, defining of the truth, metanarratives or epistemology of objectivity. In this attempt, there is an effort to de-essentialize the subject of women and moving towards opening up spaces for substitute meanings and disruptive narratives of gender in leisure studies research. In other words, post-structuralism rejects the idea of a stable definition of 'woman' and puts forward local and partial pieces of knowledge about gendered leisure experiences. One can no longer rely on the traditional notions of the purpose of research, but rather primary focus is on explaining what exists. "No longer can we depend on humanist concepts like gender, identity, power or even leisure within our analysis or conclusions" (Berbary, 2018, p.417). Poststructural work focusing on gender relations provides space to illuminate not just how things are but how they come to be what they are and continue to do so. The researcher's mission has become constantly to question and think differently than humanist conceptualizations.

In recent theorization of leisure studies, Australian, British and Canadian feminists (Wearing, Scraton, Aitchison, Shaw, Fullagar) whose works are represented in this chapter started to engage with post-structuralist and postcolonial theories within the

realm of earlier feminist critiques of binary models of work and leisure, the notion of choice or agency debates. In these works, leisure is understood as more relational. What is proposed with Parry (2018) adds a new layer of exploring and challenging the very notions humanism provides and relies more on interacting with concepts of race, ethnicity, class, religion, and age. In this line of thought, with the prevalence of post-structuralist and postmodernist critiques of hegemonic feminist conceptions of womanhood and subjectivity, third-wave feminism's pluralist commitment also shapes the discussion. Parry and Fullagar (2013, p.577) summarize these tendencies as "plurality and inclusivity, personal narrative, self-determination, gender equality, sexual freedom, and popular culture." As a result, these tendencies of third-wave feminism and feminist debates, in general, have opened up a space on how we deliberate about gendered leisure practices and areas, enabling us to critically question the utility of the concept of leisure like the early feminists once critiqued the dualism of work-leisure dynamic. Leisure as a concept has been long considered problematic, as it is used to universalize masculine experiences as the focus and trivialize women's everyday lives. This approach moves us away from "one size fits all" conceptualization and instead moves us through relationality and interconnections (Parry & Fullagar, 2013). Interconnections refer to "more movement and fluidity than lies in the metaphor of intersection as well as offering a way of thinking about how not only race and gender, but also nation, sexuality, and wealth all interconnect, configure and reshape each other" (Bhavni & Talcot, 2012, p.137). Interconnectivity opens up a room to navigate feminist consciousness that results in showing intellectual and emotional spaces for all women to enunciate their relations to one another and areas where personal becomes the political (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

In this formulation, empowerment through leisure practices is not seen as pure freedom, yet there is an emerging interest in strategies women developed to create alternative modes of leisure within and against patriarchal design. Alternatively, it is an attempt to "reconfigure the notions of empowerment, moving discourse about empowerment from a quality of being to one that explores the relationality of

becoming”, that dismantles the notion of agency as well (Fullager et al., 2018). In addition, the study of leisure “is and will always be incomplete and fluid” according to the post-structural framework (Henderson, 2013, p.53). Even though “the world is largely postmodern, and the possibilities of grand theory are remote”, feminists remind the researchers to be aware of the inequalities and the significance of the past (p. 47).

Recalling the offerings of the presented theoretical framework, I would like to summarize the principal coordinates of this chapter to shed light on the *raison d’être* for utilizing a unique framework and its implications on methodology. Experience and expansion are the two key elements in Wearing’s (1998) “feminist postmodern interactionist perspective”, placing the everyday narratives of women at the heart of the conversation. Leisure as social spaces in post-structural perspective, like the building block of the theory, acts as an indispensable component, providing a flexible ground for understanding both women and leisure in their multiplicity within and amongst themselves. Moreover, current debates on leisure studies, mostly revolving around the digital side of leisure, do not block feminist concerns, yet studies concerning women are more scattered and few in numbers. Hence, I aim to provide by this dissertation is to pick up the pieces that are already on leisure and feminist domains and bind them in a novel way by adding recognizing the significance of digital. The novelty of this study is formed by its recognition of the digital sphere as a part of leisure studies whilst acknowledging the personal accounts of women from a postmodern interactionist perspective.

Where I stand as a feminist researcher is portrayed throughout the whole discussion, yet I would like to summarize the main coordinates for further clarification: Acknowledging the multiplicity of subjectivities and its related outcomes, I intend to recognize women as experts of their own multifaceted experiences. Those experiences concentrating on leisure are filtered through a theory which recognizes its multi-dimensional, interactive and gendered nature. Moreover, current and past trends of feminist outlooks are taken into consideration is this unique blend to

acknowledge the historization of knowledge and of the utilized concepts. Rather than defining the actual experiences taking place in a vacuum, I aim to scrutinize the social and cultural markers that shape the coordinates of everyday life routines, simulating transnational feminist efforts to move beyond the monolithic categories to focus on interconnectedness of such experiences and the situatedness of the produced knowledge. Hence, this stance in itself is also dynamic, interactive and indefinite as in the case of the concept of leisure, builds up with the collaborative process of learning and reflecting with the help of the participants.

Within this process, as the emerging feminist concerns evolve within leisure studies, the struggles and emerging paradoxes become more visible. Feminist leisure research resumes to question the gendered context of both women's and men's experiences, engaging with broader feminist theoretical trajectories to rethink the status quo and contextualize its repercussions. This specific choice led me as a researcher to utilize a methodological approach in line with the theoretical concerns. Even though there is a range of feminist methodologies emerging within gendered leisure experiences (like auto-ethnography, duo ethnography), this research privileges personal and group narratives to embody the multivocality of feminism and represent women's lived experiences. The politics of everyday life will remain a feminist concern (Fixmer & Wood, 2005), shedding light on one's story through personal narratives as a part of feminist ways of living and knowing.

4.RE-CONSIDERING LEISURE THROUGH MULTI-METHOD: FEMINIST RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

Identifying myself as a feminist researcher, I intend to “recognize the participants as experts of their own experiences” and value the significance of generating knowledge by listening to their perspectives (DeVault & Gross, 2012, p.32). As such, my study aims to place a critical focus on women’s leisure experiences, by highlighting the digital aspects that intervene into our daily lives in the format of screens and contextualize the results within the socio-cultural dynamics of Turkey. This research incorporates a variety of perspectives, resulting in a more detailed and comprehensive view of the dynamic phenomenon of leisure, as well as how it can be researched and interpreted. In contrast to traditional ways of knowing, feminist research’s epistemological and methodological focus seeks to “recognize the importance of women’s lived experiences with the goal of unearthing subjugated knowledge” (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p.3).

Within that knowledge making process, feminism is often conceptualized as a theoretical framework, yet it can also be regarded “as a way of building knowledge, methodology” (Hawkesworth, 2012, p.22). There are some basic principles such as “reflexivity, social change, recognizing power dynamics and positionality” that are not only explored in this chapter yet also immersed in the building blocks of this study as a wholistic effort (Hesse-Biber, 2012). As for Lather (1982), the methodological duty of the feminist researcher is to generate “more interactive, contextualized methods so that patterns and meanings of behavior can be discerned” (p.22). In parallel, a multi-method approach is preferred in this study to seek more of an understanding, exploration and change if possible, rather than prediction and control.

Feminist research is one of the many ways to make the worlds of women more visible (Henderson et.al, 1996). Experience at the heart of the research, it refers to a systematic process for changing “the invisibility and distortion of female

experience” (Lather, 1982, p.102). Lather (1982) identifies five layers of feminist research which will be utilized in this study: “it must integrate consciousness, women must benefit from the research, it must deal with the issue of getting women to speak in their own voices, it must not contribute to the ideology of sex differences, and it must be collaborative and interdisciplinary” (p.3). In an effort to integrate the listed layers, this study is initiated with the recognition of the undervalued relations of the gender-leisure spectrum through the lens of feminist research in Turkey. It aims to create a space of co-construction of knowledge driving from the everyday life experiences of the participants whilst acknowledging the gendered nature of leisure domain. Driving from and constituted by diverse yet related fields of leisure, gender and new media technologies, it embraces an interdisciplinary approach to offer a unique toolset to study the listed research areas.

4.1. Conversational Interviews, Focus Groups and Participant Observation as Multi Methods

Within several feminist research methods, conversational interviews, focus groups and participant observation became the most suitable tools to carry out the process for several reasons. Participants of the study, Meditation Chics group members, are already a formed group with its unique dynamics and group interactions. Hence, as the main tool, focus groups are critical in terms of generating an environment where the participants feel safe and open to share. Since the participants form a group of their own prior to research, their interaction as a group is not curated during the research process but it is a continuation of their experience. Besides underlining the significance of interactive data and the group dynamics, conversational in-depth interviews are preferred to cover each participants’ story in detail or to underline the intentional or unintentional forms of missed out information during focus group sessions. On top of all, being a member of the group for several years, my role as a participant allows room for observing the dynamics and relatedly reflect on the research process as an insider, which becomes a supplementary tool providing valuable insights.

Focus groups are often utilized in feminist qualitative research based on the idea that if feminist research is to be change-oriented, it should also facilitate an environment for women to perform collective identities and solidarities (Rose, 2001). Focus groups facilitate such connections since they enable to uncover “already existing meanings produced by already constituted subjectivities and bring into being new meanings and new subjectivities” (Montell,1999, p.54). In this regard, participants benefit from contacting with new information as well as new ways of thinking, to experience that they have the space to speak and act, in a manner a feeling of emancipation (Goss & Leinbach, 1996). One of the differences of a focus group and an interview is the expansion of participants’ roles beyond the typical interview setting; “each woman can not only tell her own story, but she can also question and challenge the other participants in an effort to gain understanding” (Montell, 1999, p.51). Stewart & Shamdasani (1990) point out that “what is known as a focus group today takes many forms” (p.9), but centrally it involves a discussion of participants around a selected topic, as in the case of this thesis with providing a set of questions. Crucially focus groups invite the participants to form conversations with each other as well as the moderator of the group. What is distinctive about utilizing focus groups lies in its way of collecting data and insights through interaction (Stewart & Shamdasani,1990). Presenting consensus or contrast, generating richer responses and enhanced reliability are also amongst the contributing factors in illustrating focus group’s potential to feminist research (Denscombe, 1995).

The practice of conversational interviewing is one of components of feminist research process in qualitative research method discussions (DeVault & Gross, 2007). It is basically a form of flexible interviewing, which primarily inspires an interactive conversation between the researcher and the participant (Currivan, 2008). Within this tradition, the researchers invite the participants to reflect and provide feedback during the process, to articulate on their own meanings (Charmaz, 2006). In general, the main interest of the interviewer is to understand how women

perceive their everyday life practices of leisure and the social phenomenon that surround them (Holstein and Gubrium, 2016). Thus, interviews have the capacity to enable the participants to reveal their feelings, expectations, experiences and desires among many other concerns that are constitutive of their everyday life practices.

Alternatively, this effort is a collaborative production of knowledge, which requires active listening. In active listening, it is crucial to let the information “affect you, baffle you, haunt you, make you uncomfortable and take you on unexpected detours” (Valchatanov, 2013, p.40). For this section, I used an interview guide to lead the conversation yet not to lean on questions per se (See Appendix). Patton (2002) describes an interview guide as having a particular focus and subject area but letting to create questions spontaneously. Since the interview process occurs in between peers (as group members), there emerges more subtle boundaries of hierarchies, which in turn influenced the nature and process of disclosure in a positive manner. Rather than implementing a rigid interviewer-interviewee boundary, this aspect contributes to a more intimate environment in which the participants feel the influences of a safe space.

Moreover, this study also demonstrates the reciprocity of qualitative interviews in such manner that the interview is not framed as simply data collection from the informant but is co-authored by both participants (Kvale, 1996). Instead of being a one-way conversation between the informant and the researcher, the interview becomes a “two-way conversation” in which both parties have the possibility and room to ask questions (Coar and Sim, 2006). Hence, the interview turns into a “social situation” like any other, displaying a certain type of reflexivity where the participants are mostly concerned with providing a description of attitudes and beliefs rather than being restricted by concrete and hierarchical boundaries of a formal interview. In a similar fashion the interview is not curated and treated as a “static event”, but as an active and dynamic process where both parties are co-constructing knowledge and meaning (Holstein and Gubrium, 2016). Both parties

involved in the process become inevitably active, hence the meaning is being communicatively constructed in the interview encounter.

Participant observation as a tool to collect data in qualitative research studies is “the process of enabling the researchers to learn deeply about the activities of participants under study” by the means of observing and participating in the activities (Kawulich, 2005, p. 31). Using the five senses, the researchers are enabled to describe the situations like a “written photograph” (Erlandson et al., 1993) Taken a more insider point of view, participant observation requires to be a careful observer and a good listener to be open to expect the unexpected (DeWalt and DeWalt, 1998) Both being an active member of the group and also major contributing factors of this specific method like checking the nonverbal expressions, better understanding the interactions and communication dynamics of the participants contributed to the decision of utilizing participant observation as a supplementary tool. Prior to research phase, I was already accustomed with the group dynamics based on our involvement within the past five years. Hence participants observation becomes an integral part of the research design from the very beginning, influencing my role as a participant and as a researcher at the same time.

Participant observation also affords to access to the “backstage culture” which is not alien yet can vary in this novel situation of becoming a part of this research process (DeMunck and Sobo, 1998). In addition, it adds to the quality of data collection and interpretation, which in turn can facilitate to ask new questions or explore new topics of interest. Within that framework, my role becomes the “participant as observer” stance where the researcher is a member of the group under study and the group is well aware of the research activity. In this stance, I am more interested in observing than participating as my participation becomes a given by the membership to the group (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, familiarity with the group dynamics, being able to read between the sentences and influences of specific comprehension and interpretation allowances enable to reflexively present the

outcomes of the study. At the same time, there emerges the possibility of overreading the statements as a drawback, which I aimed to balance with concentrating on the interview and focus group data as the primary source.

Concurring with the statement that “where to begin looking depends on the research question, but where to focus or stop action cannot be determined ahead of time”, my involvement as an observer was not pre-defined by strict rules (Merriam, 1998, p.97). Looking through what is happening and why, I tried to focus on both the regular and irregular activities as offered by DeWalt and DeWalt (2002), mainly seeking to observe the reactions and behavior patterns of the participants during the focus group and interview sessions in addition to prior observations during meditation meetings. As in the case of conducting conversational interviews, I aimed to view the participants as collaborators, trying to build an active relationship rather than solely concentrating on the mechanics of observation. As Whyte (1979) notes, there is no one way that is best for conducting research utilizing participant observation, so I allowed myself to be immersed in the flow of the research, transcending the dogmatic boundaries of the method. Keeping field notes in a diary format, I tried to be flexible and reflexive as possible, actively observing and attending to details to record. Looking at the details in the setting, like who talks to whom, bodily gestures, verbatim conversations and nonverbal gestures, I tried to seek out new insights as suggested by DeWalt and DeWalt (2002).

Prior to initiating the interview process, I contacted with the potential participants, Meditation Chic group members, to inform about the study and research process. Out of 10 members, all were willing to participate in the study. Given the timing of the commencing, which is May 2020, my plan for guiding face to face focus groups and interviews had to be altered due to Covid-19 pandemic. Hence, all the sessions had to be conducted online via Zoom, and all the participants agreed on the necessary adjustments due to safety concerns. As of the research design, I preferred to conduct the focus groups in two separate sessions for two reasons: to ensure that all group members have the sufficient time to talk about their stories in detail and

to make sure the timing of the sessions are in line with the participants' wishes. 4 members of the group were not available during May 2020 due to their enhanced work schedules caused by the pandemic, hence we decided to have 2 focus group sessions for May 2020 and August 2020 respectively.

First focus group session was carried out online on May 5th, 2020 with the participation of five group members and the conversational in-depth interviews were completed the following week. With the remaining five participants, second online focus group was conducted on August 20th, 2020, yet one of the participants could not manage to attend the session based on personal reasons. Following the focus group session, three conversational interviews were completed in the following week, and the remaining two members were not included in one-to-one interviews to maintain a coherent research design.

4.2. Qualitative Data Exploration: Combining Narratives with Thematic Analysis

The approach to narrative described in this chapter underlines that “stories do more than simply reflect or recount experience: they act in people’s lives in ways that matter deeply” (Smith, 2016). Since a narrative analysis lacks a prescribed linear procedure, this offers a new, hybrid methodological approach. At its core, narrative analysis is shaped by ontological relativism and epistemological constructionism (Smith, 2016). The former refers to the assumption that, things are not happening independently of human conceptions and interpretations. The latter underlines the fact that knowledge is constructed. In addition, amongst various approaches to narrative analysis, I intend to utilize narrative constructionism as to practice the analysis. This approach, being similar to interpretive and socio-cultural approaches, define human beings as meaning makers who use narratives to “interpret, direct and communicate life and to configure and constitute their experience and their sense of who they are” (Smith, 2016, p.204).

To configure such analysis, it is significant to mention about the slight difference between story and narrative. Whereas a story signifies tales that people tell, narratives are resources that provide people with a template. Hence a narrative in itself is not a story, and stories can be sorted into types of narratives (Frank, 2010). Following that, five building blocks exist as to understand the implications of this structure:

1. “stories that people tell are not made up by people themselves, instead they are constructed from the narratives that influence the storytellers”.
2. “People’s stories or their understanding of the stories do not directly or transparently show their private minds, since they select from a menu of narrative resources available”.
3. “Narratives are actors and they act (Frank, 2010). In other words, people utilize narratives to do things”.
4. “When a story is told by a person, there is always the possibility that their story can change over time” (Frank, 2010).
5. “Narratives are embodied (Hyden, 2013). Both telling and listening to stories include bodily processes”.

Once the stage is set for the underpinnings of narrative analysis, I would like to turn to explain what narrative analysis is within this specific process. Two different standpoints towards narrative research are “story analyst” and “storyteller” (Bochner and Riggs, 2014; Smith and Sparkes, 2008). Since a researcher does not have to choose between these two standpoints, they can also be a combination of the two approaches. Within story analyst standpoint, thematic narrative analysis is utilized in which the focus is on the content: what is said, what is not said, what topics and themes are relevant in the stories that are told. Within the storyteller

standpoint, autoethnography is utilized as to focus on the researchers' lived experiences. Once the standpoint of story analyst is adopted, three key characteristics define the process of conducting research on narratives (Sparkes and Smith, 2012). Firstly, the researcher should be almost completely absent from the finished text, such as the demolishing of usage of first person and reflections on the authors' role in creating the report, called "experiential authority". Secondly, the researcher needs to present an extensive account of data to show the participants' point of view. Thirdly, known as interpretive omnipotence, the researcher provides a theoretical account of the data as to serve as an explanation of the process. When operating as a storyteller, "analysis is the story", in which the researcher retells the participants' stories, and the end result looks more like a story rather than a report (Ellis, 2004, p.14).

The reason why narrative analysis is suited for this study is in line with the theoretical approach described in the earlier chapter. (See Chapter 2 for details) Its focus on the story itself is in line with embracing women's lived experiences in understanding their leisure practices. Keeping the stories intact and avoiding to cluster them as mere data parts is the second reason why narrative analysis is suited to analyze the participant interviews. In addition, as the theoretical framework suggests, the main aim is to focus on the what's and how's of the conversation rather than drawing any conclusions since the beginning of this research (Gubrium and Holstein, 2009). Yet, for the purposes of this study, narrative inquiry is backboned with thematic analysis at the core, in an effort to place the everyday narratives into integrated categories and compare different experiences. In line with Denscombe's (2010) principles of conducting qualitative analysis, few key principles are utilized to reach out for more efficient outcomes. For the first and second principles, that is preparing and instructing the data, I combined traditional manual methods with computer-based methods, namely NVivo. For the third principle suggesting that researchers should conclude by developing a model or improving the conceptual basis of research, I utilized the software's available tools to conduct thematic analysis, yet again benefited from manual analysis in terms of

gathering the related narratives under similar thematic expressions and deciding on the common themes. Organizing and grouping the data into similar themes is facilitated by the automated tools of the system, yet it is the researcher's responsibility to decide on the meaning making and dispersion of the stories. Manual analysis at the core, the software system served as a facilitator to better organize and cluster the data.

Thematic analysis, being a type of qualitative analysis, is mainly utilized to analyze classifications and present themes or patterns that describe the data (Alhojailan, 2012). It elucidates the data in excessive detail and deals with diverse subjects through interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). Fit for the purposes of this study in terms of locating interpretations at the core, thematic analysis stipulates a systematic element to data analysis by permitting the researcher to associate an analysis of the occurrence of a theme in connection to the entire content. This process convenes "accuracy and intricacy" and enriches the research's whole meaning by providing the opportunity to understand the latency of any topic more extensively (Marks & Yardley, 2004). Namey et al. (2008) state:

"Thematic Moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co-occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships." (p.138)

Braun and Clarke (2006) concur on the idea that if the data collection process is influenced and constructed by participant's feelings and the research is derived from more than one participant, data generating, and theory are combined with its analytical element. In other words, it is recommended to assign a narrative to the collected data to gain a well-defined perception of the participant's opinions and transfer their experiences (Crawford et al.,2008). In addition, thematic analysis

delivers the prospect for researchers to move beyond calculating unequivocal words or articulating the ideas but to develop clues and then assign them to the raw data as summary markers for compiled analysis (Alhojailan, 2012). Without engaging in pre-existing themes and in line with the afore-mentioned guidelines or milestones, I treated each statement or idea as contributing actors towards understanding the issue, which in turn leads to an appreciation of the complete picture. Thus, themes are composed to give a full picture of the participants' views and stories. Moreover, similarities and differences between the participants' standpoints becomes an assistive force to inform the readers to obtain a global view of the study.

4.3. How About the Researcher's Role?

The aim of this feminist research is multi-layered. Conjuring with Hunter's (2012) framing of research as political, this research is designed from the beginning with the accepting idea of treating the researcher as a part of the process. Researchers bring previous experiences to the process as in this study, as well as deciding on the methods utilized and findings interpreted (Deutch, 2004). Reinharz (1992) argues that feminist research's main aim "must be to create new relationships, better laws and improved institutions" (p.175), in consistent with more recent researcher's assumption that "feminist research is about improving women's lives" (Harding & Norberg, 2005, p. 2010). Yet, in this study, even though the researcher utilizes a feminist epistemology and aims to contribute to feminist research, the main goal is rather opening up a space for women to discuss about leisure opportunities, yet alone the meaning of leisure in their own contexts. "Improving women's lives" is rather an overarching assumption, hence the researcher chooses to contribute to understanding and contemplating on women's lives with the contribution of those women themselves.

As stated, this research is crucially informed by a feminist epistemology "emphasizing emotions, values, personal beliefs, empathy, multiple realities and

voices, and lived and personal experiences” (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p.121). Through this approach, the participants will be recognized as the experts of their own experiences and the significance of building knowledge by listening to their perspectives will be the key. Influenced by two prominent feminist writers Harding (2005) and Haraway (1988), the notions of “feminist objectivity” and “situated knowledges” play a crucial role in generating knowledge and also recognizing that every choice made during the research process is a personal one and reflects social positionality. Hence, the presence of the researcher and the recognition of the influences of this presence, in other words reflexivity (England,1994), becomes an inseparable part of the research design.

The researcher aims to acknowledge that the research process is infused with power inequalities. One of the main principals of feminist research is stating and acknowledging the power imbalance and putting an effort to disrupt these inequalities (Deutch 2004; Hunter, 2002; Shope, 2006). As Fitzgerald (2004) frames, the main attempt is to centralize the experiences of the participants over the interests of the researcher during the research process.

4.4. Reflexive Efforts

It is the second major component of feminist research and methodology, underlining the researcher’s examination of her selection of methods, role in the research, relationship with participants and her social role inflicted in the research process (Burman et al.,2001; Fitzgerald, 2004). Reflexivity also influences how the researcher includes herself in the writing process of the research, as well as her emotional reflections about the research (Margaret Fonow & Cook, 2005). In addition, reflexivity has the capacity to add the researcher’s biases or assumptions (Hunter, 2002). Exploring on the socioeconomic status (current and past), social conditions and categorizations do not necessarily erase biases and power inequalities, yet their existence enables a thicker description of the research context. In this study, I refrain myself from making the research all about my experiences

and drowning out the voices of the participants, but still attempts to place myself with providing crucial markers of my role. Feminist researchers, involving the debate of researcher as the outsider versus insider, underline the significance of partiality of researcher's knowledge (Rose, 2001). This partiality is due to the positionality in relation to the research questions and participants of the research. Accepting that all knowledge is socially constructed, the call is for researcher's to be reflexive in appraising how the circumstances of the interview dynamic and the focus group work might be influencing the discourse that is formed between the participant and the researcher (Maxwell, 1996).

In light of these arguments, I kept a diary during the research process to reflect on the process as a researcher and a participant as the observer. From the very beginning of the research design, transferring the research to an online environment influenced the study in several ways. First of all, online meetings, both for focus groups and interviews, enabled the participants to feel more comfortable since they were given the chance to be a part of the conversation in their homes. At the same time, even though the Zoom application has a 40-minute restriction, the time and space of the meetings were expanded in such a way that the participants and I had to express ourselves by taking additional notes. The online environment contributed to the equal participation and a balanced positionality, since the boundaries between the researcher and the participants are blurred in terms of surpassing hierarchical lines. Even the recording of the sessions became insignificant since it was conducted online rather than with a physical device, other than for each session I had to remind the participants of the initiation of the recording. As for the downsides, the instability of internet connection caused some delays in conversations, at times freezing, and in turn repetition of some questions or answers, yet overall, it did not intersect the flow of the meetings.

4.5. Ethical Considerations and Credibility

In qualitative studies, ethical considerations have a meticulous resonance based on the in-depth configuration of the study process. When conducting one-to-one interviews with an acquainted group of participants, ethical concerns become even more salient. There is an additional layer of concern in terms of applying the ethical configuration regardless of relying on the already formed of trust relationships. Within that understanding, all participants were required to provide written informed consent. At the very beginning of the research phase, the potential participants were approached individually to defer group bias and given an explanation of the purpose of the study and data collection process. They were provided with an appropriate time to ask questions and address any concerns. It was clearly clarified that their participation was voluntary, rejecting to participate or withdraw from the study while it was in progress would not disturb our personal relationships in any ways.

An informed consent sheet was provided to further explain the coordinates of the study (See Appendix for details). This process involved creating a consent form for the participants to be fully aware of the reasonings of the research, data storage, thesis writing process and presenting the results. The potential participants were given appropriate time (in this case 24 hours up to one week) to read the information sheet and decide whether or not they wanted to be involved in this study. In the meantime, there was a group meeting for meditation practices where I went over the details of the study and the informed consent form to take questions or concerns in person. Consequently, the participants were required to sign the informed consent form before the interview and focus groups to indicate their permission to be a part of the study and this signature was confirmed prior to the initial session. An explanation was clearly given to the participants that they had a right to withdraw from the study at any time after the informed consent form had been signed. Consent to record the online sessions was also asked and rearticulated at the beginning of all the online sessions.

I carefully read and reviewed the consent form with each participant before the interview and focus groups to ensure they fully understand the process, their right to not answer any questions or obtain themselves from the study. Also, the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants was preserved by not revealing their names in the data collection, analysis and discussion of the study findings. The participants' anonymity was preserved through the use of pseudonyms, which participants were asked to choose for themselves at the beginning of the research. Even in the thematic analysis enabled by NVivo, I used the pseudonyms instead of real names to ensure an intact process of anonymity.

Participants were however notified that their age, employment status and residency would be used for the purpose of reporting the data from the interview and their consent regarding the matter was obtained. In terms of privacy, transcript data (both audio and written) were stored in encrypted files and password protected. The information storage on the personal laptop, hard disk and memory sticks were protected by using passwords that were only held by me. Hard copies or written materials of the data (such as the participant observation diary) were kept in a locked cabinet with no access to others to ensure adherence to the ethical guidelines. Both written and electronic data from this study will be stored for five years, yet the interview and focus group recordings will be disposed once they are no longer needed.

I put great effort to be transparent as possible, respecting their rights as active participants throughout this thesis and research process and explain the dynamics of participant observation in detail. The research process itself sought to emancipate/ empower women in their daily lives, hence they were given the room to go over into their transcripts and provide feedback. In addition, they were asked if they were comfortable with their answers and adjustments were made accordingly.

5.POINTS OF ANALYSIS FOR DISCUSSION: A MULTI-LAYERED PERSPECTIVE

Starting with the very beginning of the inquiry, this study is for women, on women and initiated by a women's questioning of her time use in particular. The feminist theoretical framework informs its structure both as a way of thinking and crucially as a way of being and doing. Inextricably linking theory and practice, the aim is to infuse a feminist stance both as a theoretical and practical tool in conducting research and presenting the related outcomes. Within that feminist stance, the utilized theoretical framework has a multi-layered configuration, covering a feminist postmodern interactionist perspective on leisure with an addition of digitalization and a poststructuralist stance on the category of women and where I stand as a researcher. Leisure as personal and social spaces are explored through detailed and semi-flexible questions, focus groups and participant observation regarding women's daily routines, leisure definition, leisure activities, and digital habits. Placing everyday narratives of the women at the heart of the discussion, the rejection and de-construction of a stable category of women are underlined. Women's strategies deployed to create alternative modes of leisure are framed within a feminist perspective, focusing on the pluralities of identities and women's experiences.

5.1.Conducting the Thematic Analysis of The Conversation

In accordance with the described theoretical framework, the thematic analysis is conducted by merging the personal interviews and focus group transcripts to remain the stories intact and present a wholesome narrative. Delving into the data analysis requires a diligent reading of the transcripts, taking notes, and re-visiting the field notes of the interviews and focus group processes simultaneously. As the primary tool of analysis, NVivo platform is used, which is a qualitative data analysis software, in order to better cluster the data, to frame the stories in an organized

manner, and to be able to understand the bigger picture as to support and enhance the thematic narrative analysis process. In addition, participant observation is embedded in each section to deepen the understanding on women's experiences and to reflect as a researcher and a member of the group. As a result, the triangulation of data contributes to a more substantial and analytical research analysis in an effort to present the stories of the participants.

NVivo enables the users to cluster the transcripts in accordance with the speaker and add themes to the existing sentences, phrases, or paragraphs. Hence, the first step was to organize whether the texts were in line with the speakers and initiate the tagging process in accordance with the thematic analysis. Since the platform allows users to add main and child codes, the ones that are related to the superior themes, it was rather like an ongoing process of reading and re-reading the transcripts to find out the main themes, the recurring themes, and the child themes (sub-themes) repetitively. Once the coding process is completed, narrative analysis is conducted with returning to the transcripts to ensure the coding process is saturated and the main themes are sorted out to create the backbone of this analysis. In the meantime, all notes from participant observation are embedded as complementary parts of the dataset, constantly providing reflexive discussion points around the selected themes. As a reminder, the participant observation data is not included in the coding process as to focus on the narratives of the participants in a detailed manner. They are rather immersed in the way thematic data analysis is presented and discussed, in an effort to portray a more wholistic view of the research process.

Below is a chart explaining the hierarchy of the main themes within the given context, based on coding references assigned to each. In other words, below is the tree map summarizing the conversation of this analysis. The list of the main and child themes (sub-themes) based on number of coding references are as follows:

Leisure time definition

- Before and after the children,

- digital leisure,
- leisure guilt,
- leisure for progress,
- Digital's affect (the remaining two are not showcased in the graph due to the insufficient number of coding references).

Impact of Covid-19

Screen Use

- Before and after the children,
- Telephone addiction

Leisure Time Activity

Leisure Time Satisfaction

Social Media Consumption

- Social media's killing time, s
- Social media effects,
- Fear of Missing Out (Fomo),
- Tackling with time loss

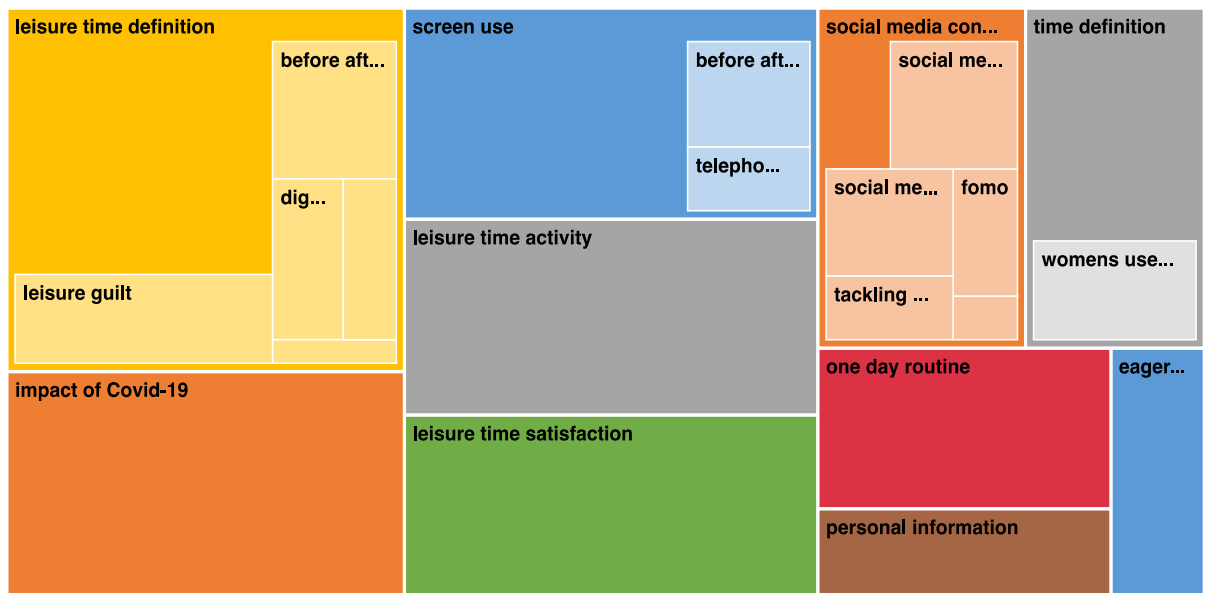
One Day Routine

Personal Information

Eagerness to Read the Thesis or Be A Part of The Process

Table 1 Thematic Tree Map

“A tree map is a diagram that shows hierarchical data as a set of nested rectangles of varying sizes. For example, use size to represent the amount of coding at each node. Size indicates amount, the number of nodes coded or amount of coding references. The tree map is scaled to best fit the available space so the sizes of the rectangles should be considered in relation to each other, rather than as an absolute number. Larger areas display at the top left of the chart, smaller rectangles display toward the bottom right.” (NVivo, 2021)



**5.2. Who Are Those Women and What Do They Do?
Leisure time activities and Routine of an Ordinary Day**

Locating everyday experiences at the core, participants are asked to reflect on their daily routines to better understand their leisure patterns and time-use management. Concentrating on the uniqueness of each woman’s experiences, the aim is to encourage the participants to talk about the mundane yet simultaneously reflect on their recurrent routines and everyday patterns to locate leisure within that realm.

Peculiarities of the experiences forge the backbone of this study in terms of presenting the interconnectivity between leisure time, new technologies, and the gendered nature of everyday lives of women. What I observed is that talking about the everyday life routines had a therapeutic effect on women, opening up a dialogical space for reflection. Not only they expressed gratitude for exploring the daily routines, but also their eagerness to share and listen to each other's accounts supported this claim. Although the group meetings prior to the research phase include small talks on the everyday struggles and aspirations of the participants, more focused meetings contributed to create an opportunity for focusing on what is generally missed out in everyday hustle: the overarching influences of the mundane.

What makes this group relevant to studying leisure within the described context is its commonality of 'exercising leisure together' in Meditation Chics group. How one experiences leisure is directly linked to one's social class, initiated by the long-lasting discussion of leisure's intertwinement with the class (Juniu & Henderson, 2001). In this case, 'Meditation Chics' gathering for the purposes of learning and practicing meditation as the core activity complies with the argument in a sense based on several factors. Women who are participating in meditation meetings as a leisure activity present a commonality in terms of their selection of certain leisure activities and creating a community. All participants are living in major cities of Turkey like Istanbul or Bodrum, holding at least one higher education degree from college and being part of a social circle resembling each other. In addition, woman's ages, socioeconomic class, and work status have major implications on planning and exercising daily schedules.

In 2018, when Turkish women's internet use in relation to socioeconomic status are studied, 36% percent of the women belong to AB, 23% of women belong to C1, 26% of women belong to C2, and 16% of women belong to DE categories (Gemius, 2018). Turkish women internet users mainly visit the video/TV, social networks, news, e-commerce, and lifestyle categories (Gemius, 2018). Within these categories, daily active time spent per user is 29 minutes 48 seconds for social

networks, 20 minutes 25 seconds for advertisement, 18 minutes 54 seconds for e-commerce, 18 minutes 31 seconds for gaming, and 17 minutes 41 seconds for news consumption (Genius, 2018). Increasing urbanization, higher levels of education, and increasing labor force participation results in the increasing penetration of new media technologies for women as well. In 2017, 86,1% of women who are participants of the workforce used the Internet, 59,9% of them also use a computer in Turkey (TUIK, 2017).

In addition, higher education means less time for leisure activities in Turkey, with an average of 1.29 minutes per day (TUIK, 2017). Women in the workforce also spend five times more than men on family responsibilities (TUIK, 2017). In a more recent countrywide report, internet usage between the ages of 16-74 is reported as 84,7% in men whereas 73,3% for women, with internet accessibility per household, is increased to 90,7% (TUIK, 2020). In the light of these statistics, gender and sociological profile play a crucial role in determining the possibilities of everyday activities available. Even though Internet accessibility is increasing, women's utilization of the Internet is still marked by socioeconomic factors, deciding on the preferable and possible activities to conduct. Yet, for those women whose profiles can be seen in further detail below, it is not only the belonging to a meditation group but also the urban and corporate backgrounds that tie them together in terms of defining certain leisure meanings and activities.

Table 2 Participants Map

Meylin	Derin	Sirius	Merve	İpek	Doğa	Selin	Leyla
34	34	35	33	32	27	36	38
Self-Employed-Mindfulness Coach	Self-Employed-Astrologer and Meditation Guide	Self-Employed-Sound Healing Therapist & Somatic Experience Practitioner	Corporate-Marketing	Corporate-Business Health Manager	Corporate-Packaging Development Engineer & Yoga Instructor	Self-Employed-Wellness Coach	Self-Employed-Florist

All self-employed women have a history of working in corporate jobs in the past. Whether self-employed or part of a corporate firm, all women have their routines when it comes to narrating their everyday lives regardless of the weekend. Their routines and one-day description also create their narratives about leisure experiences in general. Sirius and Selin, being first-time moms, have a stricter routine based on the fact that they share childbearing responsibilities with their husbands on a daily basis. Merve and Leyla, both married, utilizes a slightly different language whilst narrating their daily routine in terms of referring to themselves as ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ and include their husband’s activities as well. Whilst exploring the corporate job histories and current employment status, I noticed that all women had a negative attitude towards the strictness and time-consuming aspects of corporate lifestyles. Being part of the corporate environment is nearly framed as being part of a trap in which the leisure opportunities are also restricted by its regulations. Self-employed women expressed their contentment with being able to organize their own work schedules, whereas the rest presented an aspiration to quit corporate jobs as soon as possible.

What is striking is the way in which they referred to the meditation course as a life-changing endeavor, enabling them to question the meanings of the nature of work. Through time, I witnessed group member's influence on one another in terms of quitting corporate jobs and taking a step towards realizing their dream jobs in a self-employed context. It is not solely the practice of a spiritual activity, but its influences on self-reflection that enabled the group members, including me, to reflect on the satisfaction and expectations with employment status. My decision to start the PhD process is an outcome of many years of elaboration, yet it is shaped and kickstarted as a result of several group meetings and a thorough examination with the help of these women.

As a common practice, they all prefer to practice meditation in the mornings, and continue their day with work activities, and attain leisure practices to nighttime or Sundays. Even though leisure is attained in specific time slots within that structure, a different narrative comes into light when detailed questions are posed on their daily routines. I realized that participants had a twofold reality when it comes to organizing their daily schedules. On one hand, there emerged an eagerness to be fully organized and practicing several activities in predefined slots. Yet on the other hand, the real-life application of such a planned day became impossible by the intervention of several responsibilities and disruptions. For the latter part, participants' way of expressing these interruptions portrayed a sense of shame for being unable to complete the attained goals and leisure moments. As an overall result, it seems that leisure is very intermingled into work and housekeeping responsibilities, occurring throughout the day.

Leyla: "I spend a lot of time on social media while working."

Sirius: "On a regular day, work and personal stuff get mixed."

As for this pattern, Wajcman's (2015) depiction of leisure intermingling into everyday life is relevant since it basically refers to the evaporation of distinctive

time for work, family, or leisure yet underlines that these are all combined. As stated, leisure happens in special spheres of life rather than opposition to work. Even during the interview processes, Sirius and Selin had to multitask, feeding their children and completing household errands simultaneously. For all participants, the definition of leisure as opposition to work does not seem to work as in the case of the contemporary leisure definitions, yet intrusion of leisure activities into daily practices is presented.

Narrowing down the discussion to leisure time activities during in-depth interviews, the initial reaction of the participants was to question if these are the equivalents of real-life hobbies or a different area of interest. I purposively indicated that leisure time activities are the ones that each participant enjoys doing within the time they depicted as leisure in order to embrace any kind of activity or non-activity depending on their unique cases, in line with the post-structural take on leisure. Each participant declared various activities ranging from reading books, trying new recipes, doing yoga and Pilates, socializing, wandering on social media, spending time in nature, writing, drawing, dog walking, listening to music, cooking, watching movies & TV shows, online shopping and spending time alone. Some choices are repeated more than once, such as watching movies and TV shows, reading books, and socializing, yet there is not much of a recurrent pattern amongst group members alongside their interest in meditation, as stated. What I try to focus on is not what they do in particular, yet how they define the activity and the time spent per that activity during the interviews.

Derin: "On purpose and by all means, I try to leave out some free days for not doing anything and not working, watching Netflix, and chill."

Sirius: "And I spend my leisure time with yoga, Pilates, and meditation. I mean, these are for every day; if I don't do any of those things, I feel like I did not have any leisure time for myself, and it bothers me a lot."

5.3. How Do They Define Leisure? Definition and Implications

Defining and contextualizing leisure is still in flux (Platt, 2018), and yet it has a way of expressing the spirit of the times and carries a certain historical background. In this research, the focus is on the meanings created when individuals conduct a certain activity in which leisure is regarded as social and personal spaces as underlined in Wearing's (1998) theoretical framework. In line with the stated tools, the definition of leisure time is composed of a multi-layered discussion around certain prevailing topics raised by the moderator and participants in a combined fashion. Even though only digital leisure's meaning is posed in relation to leisure time definition during the research process, some participants had already provided a definition covering digital and non-digital leisure time in their answers to the leisure time definition question. Out of 8 participants, 7 of them find it impossible to define leisure time without mentioning the digital aspects of everyday life. Sirius states that *"For me, there is a whole lot of difference between digital leisure time and normal leisure time; digital leisure time refers to the activities that I pursue when I am physically constrained like I have a road trip to somewhere as a passenger"*. In her framework, she clearly distinguishes the activities and time allocation to those activities to be a separate realm; hence she is able to identify digital leisure as a separate part of her daily routine. For the rest of the participants, the digital aspect is intertwined in their daily routine in such a manner that it is impossible to provide an additional definition for digital leisure per se.

Leyla: "For example, it is very interesting that I am not able to dissociate digital leisure with my own leisure time. Because whenever I take time for myself, that is leisure time for me, digital is always there. (...) In fact, it is very perverse".

Doğa: "While you were discussing and when you asked the question, I realized that digital leisure time and leisure time are very interlocked."

As stated by the participants, defining leisure becomes an overarching process, with the intrusion of digital technologies into the everyday lives of individuals. In the case of defining leisure as opposition to work becomes obsolete (Snape et al., 2017), defining digital leisure as a separate realm is also irrelevant amongst the participants since its influence and impact are very intertwined with leisure activities in general. Rather than providing sets of digital leisure moments, participants prefer to discuss their leisure experiences in a holistic manner. As a result, I focused on understanding the complex definitions of leisure moments within a wholistic manner rather than putting an effort to pinpoint the digital and non-digital aspects of the realm. On top of the intertwined effect of digital on leisure, participants express mixed feelings of contempt and satisfaction regarding digital's effect on their everyday lives and leisure in particular. Referring to their leisure time before digital:

Leyla: "In fact, that was a time when we had less anxiety."

Derin: "It was a time when your body was always on the move; you spent more time being present,"

Yet, at the same time, digital's infusion into leisure activities simplifies and enhances much of their activities in terms of enabling multitasking. The first appearance of this effect is evident in the way this research is conducted. All of the participants reflect on the easiness of the Zoom connection and also the way they can conduct certain activities with the help of their smart devices, benefiting both work time and leisure time activities. In addition, with the always-on connectedness, participants are able to perform tasks online that used to require physical attendance. Reflecting on home as the main physical space of leisure in the 20th century (Tubella, 2005; Schwanen & Kwan, 2008), the disappearance of physical obligations also alters the leisure space, especially dislocating home as the main center.

Two of the participants, Selin and Sirius, who are new mothers, reflected on their experiences as a mom whilst defining their leisure time and also displayed its effects during the interview and focus group sessions. In that regard, their way of positioning motherhood as a key indicator of leisure opportunities became a defining factor, enabling the rest of the participants to reflect on the possible changes they might encounter when/ if they decide to become mothers themselves.

Selin: “When you ask about this, I realize that my leisure time is split as before and after the child. Because before I was pregnant, I had a structured timeline.”

Sirius: “My definition of leisure time definitely changed after my son was born. It has become more and more specific. In fact, life and time have changed drastically after the child.”

During the focus group session, Selin had stated that she had to dedicate this time as leisure time as well and feed her baby and wash the dishes simultaneously. Likewise, Sirius tries to calm her baby while attending the focus group session, skips some of the questions when her baby cries out, and does the laundry as we speak. Rather than being interruptions to the research process, these instances created a real-life like environment, contributing to the efforts of creating a comfortable space for sharing and exploring altogether. As stated by both participants, the definition and usage of leisure time heavily depend on the requirements of household duties and childbearing activities, underlining the social factors that determine leisure constraints.

Another theme that is recurrent in most of the participant’s answers for leisure time definition is leisure guilt. In this framework, leisure guilt refers to the times that one finds herself feeling guilty of doing nothing or meaningless activities during leisure time slots.

Merve: “This time, there is a constant feeling of guilt; I mean when I assign meaning to leisure time, it is also creating guilt. What happened to doing meditation or yoga or taking a half an hour of walk? I did not do any of these things.”

İpek: “In fact, we do not necessarily have to blame ourselves or feel guilty about anything; this is everyone’s need of some sort. For instance, we need to watch a documentary, yet we also need to watch meaningless stuff or to pass the time too.”

Sirius: “I mean you can even be idle, yet you need to do it mindfully, not with a mentality like I do not know how the time has passed. That’s a loss of time, and it is highly related to the issue of guilt, I guess”.

This feeling of guilt, mentioned by each participant, is mostly relevant if they feel like they do not meet up with their expectations of what leisure time should consist of or when they feel like time is passing without any meaningful activity. For the latter part, even though they each have different leisure time activities, which I will mention further on, digital time activities are mostly blamed as being senseless or invaluable if they are not tied to completing any tasks. Whilst mentioning about those activities, focus group discussions became a valuable tool for deepening the discussion and opening up a space for co-construction of knowledge. All participants felt free and safe to share the most embarrassing digital activities they conduct, ranging from stalking a celebrity to keeping up with a social media influencer’s daily routine. I noticed that once the issue of guilt is mentioned, all participants felt some sort of a relief by its commonality and persistence.

In relation, leisure for progress becomes one of the discussion points where the participants convey leisure’s meaning in their lives. “To improve oneself, to add value, learning new stuff, reading something, spending quality time” are amongst the frequently utilized responses once defining leisure time activities. All of the participants display some sort of concern over the fact that if these listed qualities are not met, they might be in danger of “killing time”. There is a constant self-check

for at least incorporating one of the progressive activities in their daily routine, and if that's not possible, leisure guilt intervenes. Both leisure guilt and leisure for progress imply a certain parallel between the way in which leisure is defined by Mokhtarian et al. (2004, p. 23) as "freely chosen, intrinsically satisfying, optimally arousing and requires a sense of commitment". Leisure in and out of itself is very linked with feeling satisfied and showing a degree of progress or otherwise negative connotations infer into the narratives.

In light of these themes, participants provide their definition of leisure time in a multi-layered framework. With the help of narrative analysis, this cluster can be grouped into two main camps: One creates her leisure time by choice, and one utilizes the existing free time in life. Meylin, Selin, İpek, Sirius, and Doğa believe that they have to create the time for themselves or else leisure time will not appear in your daily agenda. Meylin states that "*There is no leisure time, yet you create leisure time*" to summarize the necessity to act on in order to build access to leisure time. On the other hand, Merve, İpek, Leyla, and Derin mostly feel that leisure time exists on its own; one has to manage her time in order to benefit from it. One step further, each participant's core accounts of leisure time will be expressed to summarize the discussion. Leisure time is:

Derin: "Doing whatever I want to do outside of work responsibilities, various alternative meanings."

Selin: "My leisure time is very empty", "doing meaningless activities"

Merve: "Times in which I have no responsibility of doing anything. If I do something out of my own will or pleasure, that's leisure time."

Meylin: "It's not something you manage and note in your calendar; I believe it is more intuitional like whatever I feel like doing".

Sirius: "Times when I don't have to take care of my child, do housework or professional work."

İpek: "Taking time for myself, outside of any work responsibilities"

Leyla: "Doing whatever you feel like, no work, no household responsibilities, no responsibilities in general"

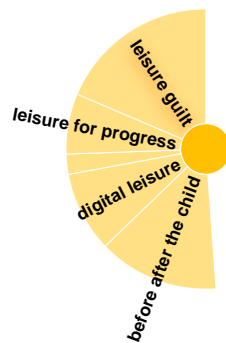
Doğa: "All the time outside of working hours"

As presented, there are some inconsistencies with the earlier arguments about the work/leisure dichotomy and responsibility aspect of leisure definition. Digital aspect of leisure also complicates the picture by intersecting into participants' narratives about leisure time definition, lifting the boundaries of time and space allocation all at once. However, what is consistent about the narratives is the fact that when participants narrate their daily routines, leisure is not defined as an opposition to work or any responsibilities in particular. On the opposite, it is very intermingled with the two, leaving one to question if there is enough time to explore leisure activities. Yet, once the participants are asked to define what leisure time means, the definitions become stricter, and context related. With a post-structural feminist twist, women's tendency to conduct such a narrative can be explored in terms of embracing grand narratives capturing the social world in dualistic terms (Rojek, 2000). Yet when experiences are discussed, there is a tendency to unlock the binary oppositions, dismissing the grand narratives and replace them with personal accounts.

Similarly, Wearing's (1998) account on rewriting the concept of leisure to reflect on women's experiences is peculiar to underline in order to realize the "spaces of negotiation, resistance and possible transformation" routes (p.157). Adding digitalization as expressed in the theoretical chapter (see Chapter 3 for details) makes the picture complete by referring to the specifics of experience and expansion. For the purposes of this study, leisure as social and personal spaces

resembled to pendulums, rotating between expansion and contraction based on women’s unique experiences. Incorporating multiple subjectivities on leisure, one size fits all model does not seem to capture the essence of the argument yet realizing that women’s leisure time is not only restricted by being a woman, yet it varies on “social, cultural and ideological constructs in the lived experiences of women” (Henderson, 1996, p.142).

Table 4 Leisure Time Definition Hierarchy Map



**5.4. How Do They See Time?
Women’s Utilization of Time**

At this point, the daily routines and leisure activities they prefer have a common theme that needs to be explored in detail. Personal accounts of time shape and re-define those women’s understanding and utilization of leisure. Even though their daily routines and leisure activities prevail commonalities, the definition of time is highly personal and unsteady amongst group members. Living in a less populated city, Bodrum, Meylin states that she has an “internal time”, a more flexible understanding based on the pace of the city she lives in, and she feels even closer

to the circadian rhythm. Selin, who is also living in Bodrum, appreciates the slower pace of the city yet also acknowledges a time shift after her son has been born.

Selin: “A lot has changed with the kid, in a good manner, though. They used to say when you have lots of free time, you certainly have less time; now I understand this phrase. Now, I learn to use time more effectively, and there is no place for flexibility”.

Derin, exploring the benefits and drawbacks of being self-employed, feels that the flexibility of arranging your own hours is worth the anxiety of being out of the regular job market. İpek, Doğa, and Merve provide nearly similar takes on time, underlining its abundance and scarcity simultaneously.

İpek: “On one hand you are always late for something, yet on the other hand there is no limit on time”.

Doğa: ‘sometimes it passes so quickly that you do not even realize, sometimes it feels like infinity.’

Leyla and Sirius have more pessimistic takes on time, Leyla referring to its fast pace and gloominess, whereas Sirius is defining time as something you eventually lose whether you spend it well or not.

On the one hand, participants refer to what Castells (2001) frames as “timeless time” by concentrating on being always on the move and catching up. Accordingly, the disappearance of linear time and even time altogether is relevant in some parts of the discussion. Yet, on the other hand, participants express a consensus that it is not technology speeding up or down on its own right, yet their preferences and choices set the tone as discussed by Wajcman (2016). Hence, the participants are not getting scarcer on time, yet the discourse around time is changing, as does the feeling revolving around the issue. This perspective, in line with the participants’

narratives, does challenge the idea of people being hostages of time yet provides women with a more empowered stance as in the case of post-structuralist feminist stance.

Fluctuating amongst different spheres of everyday life may, in fact, differ between men and women (Schwanen & Kwan, 2008; Brannen, 2005). When asked about how they define and feel about time, second focus group members initiated a conversation about women's use of time in particular. Sirius, Leyla, and Doğa all agreed that women's access to and utilization of time is different from men's experience on several accounts. Women take more responsibilities in daily life, especially in terms of housekeeping roles, and feel accustomed to complete related tasks when compared to their partners. Accordingly, the feeling of time and access to leisure differ, forcing women to struggle to open up spaces to spend time for themselves.

Doğa: "I mean when everything is done, every responsibility is completed, then we gain the right to leisure time. Although that leisure time is as valuable as the other errands you try to complete, or even more important. Men tend to easily perform the tasks they wish to do, feel more entitled to leisure time."

Sirius: "Women's leisure time is nearly a luxury."

They all agree on the fact that even though the quantity of leisure time does not necessarily vary compared to their male partners, the utilization, access, and perception of that time are definitely unique for women. The examples of their own experiences display a scheme in which they experience leisure moments in between certain responsibilities, whereas their male partners have access to more uninterrupted episodes of leisure. Complying with the current literature on leisure, it is argued that men watch television as a continuous activity, whereas women get continuously distracted (Morley, 1986). In addition, when spending time on television, women express the feeling of guilt and missing out on duties compared

to men, considering time stolen from domestic responsibilities (Frissen, 1992). In the case of this study, participants all refer to watching Netflix as a leisure activity, yet they are concerned about binge-watching since it is rather seen as a time-killing activity. Yet, they also exemplify how their male partners feel comfortable binge-watching or performing uninterrupted activities at once as their leisure practices. It is interesting to note that although none of the questions directly referred to a comparison on the gendered nature of time use, participants shaped the conversation in such a specific manner that their partners became involved in the research process. This assessment aspect is crucial to underline since women practiced a comparative analysis on their own, reflecting through their partners' utilization of time in constituting their narratives.

In line with the above-mentioned findings, core leisure studies after the 2000's present that women's peculiar experiences of time are certainly different from men's (Karayiğit, 2015). Since the traditional household roles are constantly reproduced, time becomes more fragmented, and yet leisure becomes more passive and interrupted amongst women. The issue of leisure guilt is also relevant in this comparison in such a way that all three women constantly check if the selected activities are worth the time they allocated, and they acknowledge the particularity of this mechanism for women. As a remedy, they believe awareness of such patterns is the key to overcome leisure inequalities and taking a step towards enjoying the allocated time.

Leyla: "For instance, if I meet with a friend, I try to make sure I spend quality time; it's not like his way of spending or killing time with his friends".

Sirius: "I try to allocate my leisure time without falling into lost time, which can cause anxiety at times."

5.5. Satisfaction Component: Are They Satisfied with Their Leisure Time?

Satisfaction with leisure time becomes one of the most heated conversations amongst group members due to its possibility of opening up a reflexive discussion space. Despite two participants- Leyla and Selin- being indecisive, the rest of the group members prevail that they are satisfied with their leisure time, yet there is a consensus on the constant effort to attain that level. In addition, some participants feel that leisure needs to be one's priority in order to make room for it; there is a need to put some labor on that side of the coin, too. In case leisure expectations are not met, participants feel that there is a feeling of discomfort dominating their everyday lives.

İpek: "You know it bothers me a lot when I don't have time to do whatever I wish to do that week, even it is being idle."

Merve: "If a weekend goes by and I have never felt satisfied with the time I had for myself, I try to organize the week after accordingly to make room for myself."

Satisfaction levels fluctuate with certain life changes for all participants. For Selin and Sirius, being a mom is the major factor that affects their daily routines, yet they find alternative ways to fulfill themselves, like using their babies' nap times as leisure time or switching responsibilities as the main caregiver with their husbands. Moreover, participants with flexible working hours find it easier to adjust their weekly schedules to squeeze in leisure episodes on a daily basis. Participants who work on full-time jobs mainly utilize weekends and especially Sundays for 'me time' or leisure activities. Proper planning is another issue bothering the participants, yet they are hesitant to state if they perform at their best in terms of balancing leisure and non-leisure activities. The pace of the city life, workload, and household responsibilities blur the already complicated relations of time allocation for those women, leaving them to question if being satisfied is enough in terms of allocating time to leisure activities.

Merve: “Otherwise, I have plenty of time; I mean, there is enough time for everything. Yet, sometimes digital activities take a lot of time and prevents me from doing the things that I want; I feel this a lot.”

What Merve describes as digital taking a lot of time and letting her uneasy with her time allocation is not unique to her. Each participant declared a sense of ambiguity about digital’s effects while discussing leisure satisfaction. Although at this point of the conversation, digital was not a part of the question, it appears that each woman has a complicated relationship when it comes to situating digital in relation to leisure satisfaction. As Sintas et al. (2015) have been proposing, ICT’s dynamited the time-space-activity patterns, whether for work or leisure activities are concerned.

Moreover, Chess’s (2018) argument that women’s leisure time has always been ‘problematic’ complies with the narratives of the participants in terms of leisure satisfaction levels. Overlapping of the domestic roles and spaces seems to play a role; the blurriness of work and leisure activities impact women to feel the ‘leisure gap’, leaving women with less overall leisure time compared to men. Alternatively, women’s constant effort to feel satisfied can be explored through a post-structural feminist lens, utilizing the space as offering possibilities of choice, control, self-determination, and resistance altogether. Women’s realization that if striving to feel satisfied is problematic in itself refers to their resistance to already defined roles.

5.6. What About the Digital? Screen Use and Social Media Consumption

While discussing leisure time definitions, the intertwined nature of digital and non-digital time is already presented by the participants, underlining its overpowering effects in managing daily activities. When it comes to narrowing down the argument to screen use, participants continue to discuss digital’s implications on their everyday routines by selecting more concrete relations with their devices. At

this point, all participants agree that the mobile phone is the most utilized device amongst all devices, considering its ever-present nature in daily activities. Within that realm of screen use, Instagram and WhatsApp are the top two digital applications preferred by the participants, followed by Netflix. Once the conversation starts to circle around digital's implications and screen use, in particular, the overwhelming side of digital becomes evident in most of the participant's narratives.

Merve: "At times, I feel wary of using digital in every aspect of my life. Before digital, we had leisure time in which we just sit around and wonder about things and creating memories."

Doğa: "Now we have the feeling of hastiness; before the digital, it was more like living in the moment. We may be experiencing good times right now, yet there is the constant chasing and catching up, which can make you feel tired from time to time."

Within screen use habits, all participants also reflect on the fact that screens are both for work and leisure activities in a blended fashion. Especially Instagram is one of the most blurred spaces based on its offerings as a leisure site for wandering around and as a business site to manage one's own business account or personal account for work purposes. Yet, YouTube is mostly utilized for leisure activities, especially for watching educational or practical content when it comes to spending leisure time in an effective manner. E-shopping sites are also seen as one of the major contributors of digital leisure time, enabling participants to enjoy the pleasures of shopping easily yet also provides a feeling of lingering around. Moreover, mobile phones have a dominant effect in most women's lives, even forming an addiction that infuses into daily routines. I witnessed that this addictive feeling became one the most challenging topics to discuss based on its negative connotations attributed by the participants. Yet, once the issue was out there, they presented an enormous eagerness to share and learn more about each other's stories, accompanied by joyful attributes.

Meylin: "I realize that I cannot be apart from my cell phone."

Selin: "When my son leaves the room, I get my cell phone immediately. I feel like I am glued to it sometimes."

Leyla: "I said, oh my God, this is perverted. Only 40 minutes without my cell phone makes me feel like having a panic attack."

At this point, it is crucial to realize that it is not just the tools, yet the way participants interact with them altered the way in which leisure time or time, in general, is experienced (Rainie and Wellman, 2012). Screen use, in particular, is expanded beyond the category of television as discussed in the earlier chapters (See Chapter 1 for details). Yet, it is not fair to argue that mobile phones replaced television per se, but rather the complex array of screens intrude in daily activities, resulting in influencing how one conducts daily errands. The concept of "contamination of spaces" and "crossing of borders" is evident in participants' narratives, in which they are experiencing to make sense of the activities that are taking place out of their usual context (Rainie & William, 2012). As discussed, some of the social media applications like Instagram have become a major tool for both work and leisure, blurring the boundaries for women to classify separate activities at once. Digital leisure opens up new spaces and time frames for those women to exercise several activities with their fingertips, yet it is not free of challenges. As in the case of Wearing's (1998) "heterotopia", leisure as personal or social spaces unravels a platform for the self to expand beyond the stereotypical boundaries. Rather than necessarily concentrating on the oppression or expansion parts, it can be both at the same time, or it can relate to each at different times argument validates participant's experiences with the digital. Not only is it infused throughout the discussion as one of the main facilitators of leisure activities, but also it is criticized for disassociating impacts on time management.

Alongside screen use, participants also mention social media consumption habits, especially underlining the negative feelings they have towards consuming “empty content”. What it means is explored in a common narrative, providing examples of surfing on Instagram, watching celebrity or Influencer videos, or stalking other people’s lives. Dislike for such action is common amongst group members, yet they express some sort of relief when they learn that such behavior is common in their peers and they are not alone in judging themselves. Relevant to leisure guilt, even though they feel remorseful for consuming such content, they conclude that people also need to perform such meaningless activities to clear the mind and enjoy themselves from time to time.

Doğa: “It is a weird thing that social media captures you like a vortex sometimes, and I try to actively put effort to stay out of it. Yet, I cannot say that I am successful at it.”

Sirius: “It is a hollow act, you know, just wandering around it like it is an endless tunnel.”

As seen, some participants have determinately negative attitudes towards social media in its own right, linking the time spent for that activity with being hallow and emphasize the need for one to actively resist the temptation. Another major theme regarding social media consumption is the comparison, again framed in a negative tone. Participants feel that social media enables the users to involve in active comparison of lifestyles, including and especially around how to spend leisure time, leaving one with a mission to be always on the search of something new.

Selin: “I did not want to see other people’s lives when I was pregnant because those other people do everything nice; they do sports, they cook amazing meals, they visit magnificent places, whereas I sit around wearing my pajamas.”

Fear of missing out (FOMO) is another common theme in participant's involvement with social media consumption. Once the opportunity to monitor other people's lives is open, people tend to feel insecure and insufficient, revisiting the comparison effect.

Selin: "My husband turned off all his notifications, but I cannot find the courage to do so. I am worried about missing out on something."

Sirius: "Definitely, fear of missing out enters into the picture. Because we are able to see other people's lives, at least I see that. Look what other people are doing, I say to myself, and this creates huge anxiety and change."

Like with the mobile phone addiction, some participants review their relationship with social media and portray detrimental bondage based on the time spent on that activities. Nomophobia, the abbreviation for no mobile phone phobia, and FOMO are two common themes explored by the narratives, both creating anxiety amongst the participants, and yet their realization of similar peer experiences results in relief. As in the case of leisure satisfaction, women's unique experiences develop a key tool to self-evaluate and reflect on their experiences within a given social context. At the core of this study, the aim was to enable women to express their own accounts and multiple subjectivities, and if possible, to learn from each other's stories. In this specific discussion, participants reflect on the solidarity aspect of being a part of such a community and how it has the power to transform one's most vulnerable issues. I strongly believe that the already established relations of trust contributed to the openness and willingness of the participants to share even their most intimate stories around the issue.

İpek: "I can honestly say that it is (social media) so automatic in my life that sometimes I have to turn off my account for a couple of days to elude from its impacts."

Leyla: "When I realize that I am overdoing it (social media), I try to isolate myself with all the effort I can put."

Merve: "I believe social media is like a habit of mine. When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is check my phone."

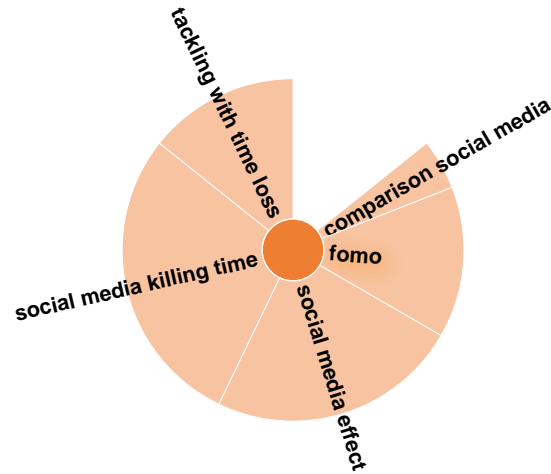
In line with the dislike of hallow content and negative connotations on social media consumption, all participants specifically refer to "killing time" whilst defining various social media activities. This particular attribute is explored in reference to wasting time on the things that participants are not necessarily content about, yet it attacks their attention so much that they cannot eschew its existence. The overwhelming effect of such actions is directly linked to this automated conduct yet learning about each other's experiences provides some kind of relief, again for not being alone.

In proportion to the theme of killing time, participants cultivate various sorts of strategies for tackling with time loss. Personal mechanisms of prohibiting unwanted behaviors include keeping away the cell phone in the mornings, turning off notifications for several applications, and limiting the time spent on social media through monitoring screen use time. As a matter of fact, the hurriedness of life in reference to digital technologies creates a new terminology amongst the users, including exercising a sort of digital detox.

Derin: "I can handle Netflix, but I do not know how to stay away from my cell phone; I basically shut it down from time to time."

Leyla: "When I think about it, I spend a lot of meaningless time on social media, and I find it useful to set some boundaries to stop wasting it."

Table 5 Social Media Hierarchy Map



5.7. Covid-19 Effects: What Happened in the “New Normal”?

Whether in a positive or negative connotation, all participants agree on the fact that Covid-19 has changed their perception of time drastically. Starting with the one-day routine, leisure time satisfaction, digital’s effect on leisure, social media consumption, and time definition have been influenced and yet re-framed within the new normal lifestyles of the participants. Within focus groups, the implications of Covid-19 have revealed themselves before I initiated the relative questions; it was as if the subject matter is already shaped by the new norms and rules. The everyday life of the participants was disturbed and altered by the implications of the lockdown starting from March 2020. Since the first focus group was initiated in May and August 2020, respectively, participants had room to reflect on their experiences in a detailed manner.

Starting with a one-day routine, participants reflected on their experiences of remote working, underlining the difficulties and confusion infused by the blurring boundaries of working hours. Without any difference between self-employed or

full-time workers, all participants felt the need to set new limits on working hours, complain about the gray area that is the never-ending workday.

Merve: “In this period of Corona, since all the boundaries are lifted, even though we stayed at home, I felt more compressed in terms of time. There are no longer definite working hours; I worked too early in the morning or too late at night, it was exhausting.”

In terms of digital’s effect on leisure, participants mostly reflect on digital’s infusion into work activities, especially through conducting business on Zoom or related digital software applications. Their work routine becomes digitalized, transferring the physical interactions to digital, yet creating a more screen-dependent work routine. At the same time, staying at home directs them to conduct more digital leisure activities, with the physical interactions being very limited. In this period of time, YouTube and Netflix consumption is on the rise, leaving participants with mixed emotions: the need to catch up on online classes and receive online support on one hand, and the realization of digital’s domination in their lives on the other. Moreover, it is stated that the “time has expanded” in terms of a reflexive exercise on realizing the slower pace of time when staying at home. Most of the participants start to get involved with cooking activities, taking care of themselves and their partners in a manner that they were not used to before. For instance, the preference of shopping from local grocery stores for fresh vegetables is a common example of finding time to exercise such an activity. Yet, in terms of leisure definition and leisure satisfaction, most of the participants with fewer exceptions remain the same in terms of the variety and intensity of activities they prefer. Those few exceptions stem from the fact that staying home and being digitally connected pave the way for engaging in new hobbies or participating in online educational seminars. When the personal implications of the quarantine period are posed, most participants convey a feeling of “being more present” and enjoying the activities they conduct.

All in all, Covid-19's influence added a new layer to this study, presenting an intensified and encapsulated version of women's everyday experiences. Starting with the changing meanings of time, remote working exacerbated the conditions for women's definition of leisure time, blurring the already mixed boundaries of working and non-working hours. Even though defining leisure against working hours has become obsolete, the new normal conditions require exploring working hours as a separate realm, once again signifying its crucial impacts on everyday routines. On the other hand, the expanded time feeling is mixed with the expanding digital activities and increasing intrusion of ICT's into activities, leaving the participants with a more nuanced feeling of questioning digital's impact. Yet the multiple subjectivities and peculiar experiences of women are again evident in discussing the new normal, presenting a twofold argument based on working conditions: participants who are self-employed find it easier to adjust to online working hours based on their already flexible schedules, whereas participants who are working remotely for the first-time tackle with more negative issues in terms of managing time.

Not only for the working conditions but also for the leisure satisfaction does the impact of the new normal varies between the participants' narratives. Again, the same distinction occurs between the participants, leaving the first-time remote workers to feel more satisfied with leisure time opportunities, whereas self-employed participants conveying that leisure satisfaction levels remain the same. Yet, the repertoire of leisure activities expanded with digital's intrusion for all, enabling the participants to focus more on the self when compared with the pre-quarantine times. "Taking care of the self" is an evident theme that is related to the idea of leisure for progress, leading the participants to be more active in enjoying online leisure activities concentrated on self-progress.

In line with that inclination, the feeling of being more present is expressed, which in turn expresses an embodiment of the activities with the help of the expanded time feeling. In other words, they feel more present while conducting leisure tasks during

the new normal, enhancing the joy and contentment they refer to in everyday lives. As in the case of ICT's, it is not the new normal per se, yet how they utilize the time and leisure activities that mainly shape the unique experiences they exert that define the coordinates of this sphere. In opposition to trivializing women's everyday lives, this approach utilized throughout the study enables to reveal the peculiarities of women's experiences whilst moving away from "one size fits all" conceptualizations and moving forward to relationality and interconnectedness (Parry & Fullagar, 2013, p.574). The interconnectedness aspect is both evident within women's self-narratives and also between participants' accounts of leisure realms. In this specific formulation, empowerment through leisure practices is far from framing as pure freedom, yet the interest is on the strategies women deployed to create alternative modes of leisure within the given social context, whether it would be pre- or post-Covid 19 times. This is an attempt to pinpoint the incompleteness and fluidity of leisure practices with underlining the real-life transactions from a post-structural framework, leaving to question the implications of such formulation for the leisure studies in general, that is the topic of the next chapter.

6. DISCUSSING THE OUTCOMES: LEISURE PRACTICES IN THE REALM OF EVERYDAY LIVES

The particular journey of the term leisure has many repercussions for locating the coordinates of the term within the current environment. The *raison d'être* for visiting its historical roots lies in the assumption that its historical underpinnings have a unique way of presenting themselves throughout current debates in leisure studies. Even though the recent arguments revolve around the digital aspects of leisure, or even digital leisure per se, the term is not utilized in a vacuum, but on the contrary, it is woven with socio-economic aspects as well as gender relations from the very beginning of this effort. In this section, the attempt is to pay close attention to the current fabric of the society in which the study is conducted, with a particular interest in women's everyday life practices and a closer attention to leisure constraints framework. Then, the findings will be discussed in relation to the web of relations presented throughout the study, with a twist of the peculiar times we live in, that is, the Covid-19 pandemic.

Definitions of the concept of leisure have a unique way of representing the spirit of the times within which it is framed. Contemporary leisure studies are shaped by various schools of thought, including functionalism, neo-Marxism, counterculture critiques, and feminism (Rojek, 2000). Current discussions of leisure have a historical background, that is, a flow of influences between social class and leisure, the latter's major role in defining the former and vice versa.

By distinguishing between free time and leisure time, the former representing the consumption of culture, whereas the creation of the latter signal of culture, Habermas (1956) envisions the former's domination resulting in the commodification of leisure. Referring to Veblen's (1899) conspicuous consumption where wasteful consumption for power and status is linked with leisure, Habermas draws a pessimistic picture in which leisure is privatized.

In this line of thought, especially the critical conceptualization of Fraser (1990) is relevant to understand not only about social class relations and the existence of alternative public spheres but also about who and what is excluded from the picture. Not only is leisure confined to a bourgeois class, and hence public concerns are their concerns only, but also it excludes women and men of color. Moreover, the stigmatization of a single homogenous public discounts the existence of alternative formations. As a second layer in this line of argument, the evaluation of the relation between social class and leisure is a significant marker. The argument that “leisure and class are inextricably intertwined” has long been discussed with referring to social class as a leisure constraint (Glover et al., 2005, p.81). As in Veblen’s (1899) utilization of a Marxist perspective, what it means to be in a particular class is directly related to how one defines leisure. Yet, in current discussions, leisure behavior is defined based on numerous factors rather than solely concentrating on social class. Gender, religion, geography, ethnicity, socio-cultural influences are amongst the main indicators to define the realm of leisure.

As an additional layer, the changing dynamics of the socialist heritage in leisure studies is another significant marker. Basically, the notions of inequality, exclusion, and injustice remain influential in explaining leisure constraints, yet post-industrial society’s failed expectations on the decreased labor and increased free time required a revised understanding of leisure (Rojek, 2001). Neither the end of work nor leisure enters the scene; rather, a more complicated picture emerges as the distinction between leisure and the rest of life becomes more blurred. The main facilitators of this blurriness can be traced to the influences of globalization and the entrance of media technologies into our everyday lives.

This whole discussion can also be framed utilizing the constraints literature that has been on the leisure agenda for several decades. Based on premise that one of the main intentions of leisure research is to recognize individuals’ behavior in the leisure realm of their lives, the thematic prominence of constraints research’s place in the leisure studies is evident. As previously stated, (Jackson, 1991), leisure

constraints research can serve three significant purposes. First, it improves our understanding of a phenomenon, the numerous ways in which leisure is confined, that had been largely ignored until the early 1980s, with only infrequent research. Second, findings from leisure constraints research have the potential to provide renewed light on previously thought-to-be well-understood components of leisure, such as involvement, motives, and enjoyment. Third, the concept of constraints can be used to aid in the perception of new connections among seemingly disparate aspects of leisure, and as a result, it can be used to facilitate communication among researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds, topical interests, and methodological orientations. Not only has the field expanded statistically, but it has also undergone some significant qualitative changes. Important terminological changes are the best way to summarize them: the transition of coining the word from "barriers to recreation participation" to "constraints to leisure" (Jackson, 1991). There are two major current challenges to summarizing and assessing the area that must be acknowledged. The first issue is that leisure constraint research is quickly evolving, and the second issue is that the challenges of what counts and does not count as constraints research. As Scott (2005) describes, almost all studies of women and leisure are constraints studies. Studies of the elderly, people with impairments, and people of diverse ethnicities and ethnic groups are primarily constraints studies. Constraints research comprises a major portion of psychological/social psychology research on leisure behavior, regardless of the naming of the titles.

Shaw (1999) makes three different theoretical definitions over the concept of leisure constraints while looking at women's leisure time. The first and dominant definition focuses on the limitations that women experience in their spare time. Shaw (1999) focuses on how women's access to and enjoyment of free time is restricted by being a woman in an androcentric society based on factors such as lack of time and money and stress levels. The second definition looks at the concept of leisure itself or leisure activities as restrictive, criticizing that the concept of leisure time is always presented as a positive field through mass media, underrepresentation of women

and stereotyping. The third definition frames women's leisure time as spaces that open up space for resistance with inducing concepts such as control, self-decision, agency and empowerment. For the purposes of this discussion, a unique blend of all three dimensions is utilized to cover the field rather than abiding to homogeneous definitions. As in the case of questioning the category of defining a stable category of women, leisure constraints are taken into account in a more flexible, rather heterogeneous form. Leisure constraints have the capacity to both hinder and expand the experiences of women at the same time as shown with the excerpts of the participants' accounts in the previous chapter. Hence, a more holistic view is preferred, bearing in mind the dualistic influences of the intrusion of new media technologies into leisure realms of the participants: in some cases, participants felt the easiness of being always on connected whereas in some cases their lives have been restricted by the very same technologies themselves.

Concurring with Shaw (1999) on the argument that "the relationship between gender and leisure is both complex and dynamic" and recognizing the fast pace of evolving literature on constraints framework, the main aim is to assess the outcomes without holding onto the predefined or static categories (p.272). Gender leisure approach to constraints literature covers the understanding that patriarchal power relations and conceptions about masculinity and femininity are inextricably related to broader social institutions, not just at the individual level. Gender is not considered as a fixed or unchanging existence, but rather as a constantly negotiated and renegotiated set of societal expectations, notions about appropriate behavior, and gender-based power relations within social institutions. Taking variety into account entails acknowledging that everyone's experiences and circumstances are unique. However, it implies that there may be recognizable groups with similar experiences, and that both shared and separate experiences are crucial in comprehending leisure. As presented in this specific study, participants are considered as unique, yet their commonalities are also acknowledged to sustain the connected and disconnected experiences of leisure. In other words, comprising a healing circle and practicing meditation is an integral part of defining participants'

leisure realm and presents some common choices amongst group members based on socio-economic resemblances. There is a relationality and interconnectedness between the social profiles of the participants and their activity choices that is not only explored through their gender, yet a combination of factors. Even within the gender dimension, there emerges threefold scheme to scrutinize the constraints framework: activity participation, gendered nature of leisure constraints and gendered outcomes of leisure (Shaw, 1999). Gender stereotypes in activities, as well as gender inequalities in opportunities, experiences, and leisure time are underlined.

Gender influences not simply the availability of time and leisure options, but also how these are perceived and experienced. As in the case selecting meditation as one of the core leisure activities, gender expectations are at play. It is reasonable to argue that spiritual healing practices are mostly framed as feminine endeavors through various media channels. Whilst forming the group under study, there was no verbal indication that this was formed as a woman only circle, yet in time it has become a self-determined choice. In addition, the majority of studies on the gendered nature of women's lives have been concentrated on women's duties in the home (Shaw, 1999). Strikingly, labor, both paid and unpaid, as well as emotional and interpersonal work, can all take place at the expense of a woman's personal time, especially for working mothers. It's not as straightforward as looking at participation, activities, or time utilization to figure out how gender affects leisure involvement. The microlevel and macrolevel social settings of individual's lives should be at the center to explore the interwoven dynamics at play. As the second layer, expectations about masculine and feminine roles determine the tone of the leisure domain. In this particular case, the reactions I received when I talk about the meditation group reflects on the societal expectations and norms. Ranging from not acknowledging meditation as a hobby to teasing the group dynamics based on its woman only structure are amongst the many reactions I received from opening up to social circles about my leisure domain. When asked to participants, their experiences presented a similar path and they underlined the burdening need for

trying to explain themselves for something they purely enjoy spending time on. As Shaw (1999) points out, sports have received special emphasis, but other leisure activities have also been stereotyped. Passive leisure activities such as reading books and periodicals, watching movies, and partaking in hobbies and crafts have received little attention in the research environment.

Lastly, reinforcing or rejecting prevalent cultural attitudes and beliefs about femininity and masculinity reproduces organized gender relations in society, yet it has not been discussed in most of the related studies (Jackson and Henderson, 1995). The majority of empirical study has focused on structural restrictions or barriers that prevent individuals from participating in activities they desire to conduct. Not surprisingly, studies have shown that women are more confined than men when it comes to household responsibilities and family commitments (Horna, 1989) and these restrictions are also heavily related to the family life cycle (Witt and Goodale, 1981). Within these studies, the most often mentioned objective constraint among women is time (Harrington et al., 1992) Economic restrictions are likely to be more closely linked to social class, income, and single parenthood than to gender. Shaw (1999) also underlines women's leisure research that has found a variety of limits, some of which are specific to women or affect them disproportionately like ethic of care. When women forgo their own leisure in order to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of their children, spouses, or friends, the ethic of care comes into play as a restraint (Henderson and Allen, 1991). The ethic of care, according to Harrington et al. (1992), is the most significant subjective limitation that limits women's leisure enjoyment. The concept of lack of sense of entitlement is philosophically and experimentally tied to the ethic of caring, a limitation that is assumed to disproportionately afflict women (Henderson and Bialeschki, 1991). Green et al. (1990) discuss how some women feel and act as though they don't have the right to personal leisure. The absence of entitlement is supposed to be linked to familism, an ideology that emphasizes women's major role as family caregivers. Yet in some cases, leisure or recreational activities do not necessarily serve to propagate dominant viewpoints.

Self-determined leisure is more likely to lead to resistance and women's empowerment than affiliative leisure (Shaw, 1999), once again signaling the influences and outcomes of being a member of a self-determined woman only group.

6.1. Everyday Lives of Urban Middle-Class Women in Turkey

What this historical heritage brings into the picture is a critical lens to envision leisure practices of today, especially in the context of exploring the everyday lives of women who participated in this study. The discussion of everyday life experiences is linked with the fabric of the society it is cultivated in, providing the coordinates of the term. As Stokes (2002) points out, the inclusiveness is its value; the everyday life practices override the dichotomies of the modernist thought by projecting a “here and now” look at the urban everyday practices located in the everyday stuff, rather than looking for answers anywhere else (p.323). Likewise, this study concentrates on the dynamics of everyday stuff narrated by the participants, in an effort to capture the interconnected influences of gender roles and new media technologies” influences. Before delving into the discussion on the experiences of the participants, this section aims to provide an understanding of the everyday practices of urban middle-class women in Turkey, with an inclusive take on many everyday(s) and many possibilities to grasp them critically.

In line with the opening arguments of leisure’s historical underpinnings in relation to consumption patterns, Kandiyoti (2002) indicates that “class cultures in Turkey are increasingly being shaped and redefined through the medium of consumption”, which are presented through detailed ethnographies (p.7). Privatization and politics of economic liberation after the 1980s brought about a renewed interest in exploring the keystones of middle-class identity in relation to the “circulation of people, technologies, images and ideas” reinforced by globalization (Kandiyoti, 2002, p.4). Hence, leisure is heavily linked with consumption patterns presenting a scheme in which individual’s consumption affordances and choices play a crucial role in

defining their leisure realm. Within this formulation, Ayata (2002) underlines the changing subjectivities and transformation of social lives as a result of the liberalized market economy “with its expansion of commercial leisure”, cultivating an important change in Turkish urban classes’ relationship to consumption (p.29). In turn, changes in consumption patterns have an altering influence on the way in which middle-class women utilize their time and labor, reframing the definitions of “female sociability” (Özyeğin, 2002, p.43). “Cultural constitution of female identity has been transformed” marked by the end of the women’s exclusion from urban public life and engaging in individualized processes of self-re-construction (Özyeğin, 2002, p.47). This self re-construction is a significant indicator in defining the new boundaries of women’s engagement with leisure realm, circulating a set of new rules and routines in terms of everyday life routines. As a result, the focus of consumption is shifted from family and class only to the emergence of new forms of femininities and related forms of activities that are taking place outside of the domestic sphere. With this transformation, gender and class relationship is re-articulated within urban middle-class women, opening up new spheres of influences for women to shape their relationship with consumption patterns.

Kandiyoti (1987) suggests that “women’s everyday life practices in Turkey are directly affected by gender-specific cultural experiences” (p.334). Leisure, as a critical part of everyday practices, has been influenced and shaped by the dynamics of cultural experiences and entails a critical power to explore the fabrics of everyday experiences of women in a given context. These cultural experiences are also shaped and defined by the rules of the government and its related discourses. With the period of modernization, there emerges a “double discourse” in relation to women in which a group of ‘elite women’ were encouraged to pursue academic educations, enter professions, and engage in public life, the bulk of women were supposed to serve the nation in the private sphere by being decent mothers and rational housewives (Arat, 1997) This double discourse carried a women's opportunity system based on majorly class. Despite the powerful feminist movement that arose in the depoliticized aftermath of the 1980 coup d'etat and

spurred the fight against patriarchy, the “double standard about sexuality” and women's primary domestic duty remained unchanged for the majority of women in Turkey (Kandiyoti, 1987). Arguing that “gender is an important determinant of social resources within social space” and utilizing McNay’s (2004) idea of “gender as a lived relation”, Alemdaroğlu (2015) puts forward a web of relations to understand the everyday life fabric for women in Turkey. She argues that femininity emerges at the junction of class, gender, and age hierarchies. Differences in family and educational backgrounds have a significant impact on women’s access to cultural and economic resources, which shape their thoughts, beliefs, expectations, and behaviors (Alemdaroğlu, 2015). Yet, access or unequal access to resources inform especially young women’s horizons of action, or the possible settings in which they act to perform their femininities.

Once the everyday life practices of Turkish women are under study, there emerges a literature covering the overarching values emphasizing that marriage and children are the national duties of women, claiming that Turkish women are “emancipated but unliberated” (Arat, 1994; Kandiyoti, 1987). Müftüler-Baç (1999) proposed that “it seems contradictory that despite modernization efforts and legal changes, Turkish women are still oppressed by the patriarchal system” (p.304). Traditional beliefs on women's gender roles are embedded in Turkish society, as they are in other patriarchal societies (Dilek, 1997), and men and women have internalized their gender roles (Kandiyoti, 1995). Salman and Bayraktar (1995) showcased that personal fulfillment was more important to women in urban regions, where they were more educated, than it was to women in rural areas, although women in both places valued their traditional household roles. Sönmez et al. (2010) underlines the overlapping of the categories of structural, intrapersonal and interpersonal restrictions whilst defining the everyday life and leisure realms of Turkish women’s experiences. All in all, the analysis of the participants’ accounts also underlines some of the recurring themes in the above-mentioned framework. To begin with, participants are able to choose an activity, meditation, that is not so common in the Turkish society yet emerges as a global trend. Their connected lifestyles enable

themselves to learn and experience a global trend, and also financially invest in its education. In addition, meditation is not the only leisure activity in their repertoires, yet they are able to choose between different hobbies and everyday life habits as they please. Even the issue of self-determination itself requires further notice since it portrays a unique positioning in the Turkish context. To put it differently, the notion and definition of leisure can be framed as problematic based on its availability amongst different women. If I were to conduct this study with a different group of women, coming from different backgrounds, the end results might have reflected diverse narratives depending on their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Hence, leisure in itself is a slippery slope not only for its scarcity amongst the everyday life hustle, yet also in its philosophical and practical roots.

In Turkish society, some individuals, especially women, still experience internal, interpersonal and structural constraints to participation in leisure activities. Previous studies on the subject have only been conducted among certain groups such as students or teacher (Koca et al., 2009). A recent study in Turkey showed that leisure time barriers negatively affect individual's life satisfaction (Turan et al., 2019). On the other hand, individuals who participate in leisure activities are more satisfied with their lives (Yerlisu et al., 2012). In studies conducted in Turkey, besides family responsibilities, religious and social barriers were also found in women's participation in leisure activities (Koca, et al., 2009). According to the authors, another major factor in women's leisure time constraints is the male figure in their lives. Another study conducted in Turkey listed the barriers that women experience more than men as access, lack of friends and lack of interest (Kara and Özdeoğlu, 2017). It was emphasized in the study that women's sense of these barriers stemmed from the social pressure on them. Similar results emerged in a study among university employees. In the study conducted by Turan et al. (2019) only among female employees, it was determined that the barriers of women in doing leisure time activities are lack of interest and individual psychology. In

summary, women of different social and economic status experience similar constraints to participating in leisure activities.

On a different note, studying leisure has the potential to not only provide women with a space to reflect on their personal experiences of being a woman, yet also enables to generate a larger discussion on the coordinates of everyday life experiences. As in the case of postmodern interactionist theory utilized throughout this study, leisure as personal or social spaces informs about women's restricted yet empowering climate of making sense of leisure domain and navigating within that environment. To reflect on this assumption, participants' experiences of leisure moments will be contextualized within the prescribed leisure environment of Turkey, not in an effort to generalize results or draw holistic conclusions, but in an attempt to locate those experiences within a local spectrum and to shine a light in possible ways of visiting leisure from a feminist perspective.

6.2. Meditation Chics Case Contextualized

As the starting point, it is crucial to understand the naming of the group, Meditation Chics, in its own terms to reflect on the group dynamics. The preference of an English name to an all-Turkish women circle presents the spirit of the times by referring to the global influence on a very local formation. The core activity of the group, practicing meditation and sharing personal experiences in relation, again points out a peculiar phase in participants' lives: self-care. Once asked, all participants concur on the fact that they attended this group for "taking time for themselves, relieve stress and anxiety, progressing and taking care of the self through women's support and spiritual doctrines." Meditation itself is not exactly novel, and it is an ancient mind and body practice known to cultivate mindfulness, increase relaxation and enhance well-being. Yet, the global increase in people meditating can be considered the newest health trend of recent times (Zuckerman, 2020). Growing popularity as a global trend, more than 35 million Americans have considered giving meditation a try, with a "global estimate of 200 to 500 million

people practicing meditation on a daily basis” (Zuckerman, 2020, p.3). Even though there are no established statistics in Turkey yet, the first Turkish meditation application launched in July 2020 has reached over ten thousand subscribers within the first two months of its presence, with an almost even distribution between man and woman users (Sabah, 2020).

With its growing global influence affecting the local dynamics, participants’ choice of a common leisure activity based on self-care represents the spirit of the times, opening up a discussion for understanding the idea of interconnectedness. Self-care is a concept that is widely used in popular culture but lacks a clear meaning in academic literature (Petty & Trussell, 2019). Orem (2001), a nursing theorist, coined the concept and proposed that self-care entails agency and requires activities required for health promotion, preservation, and management of health-deviations. Most of the self-care literature also comes from the biomedical field, and it focuses on dealing with health issues. However, there has been a rise in interest in self-care as a means of promoting well-being in the social sciences. Within that realm, even though leisure is a significant aspect of health and healthcare, it is often overlooked within the current literature on self-care. To explain the relationship between leisure activities and well-being, Son and Hutchison (2009) coined the term leisure self-care. Self-care, on the other hand, has yet to be addressed in the leisure literature. The potential for leisure self-care is contributive to understand the reproduction, resistance and maintaining gender related ideologies of motherhood and femininity. Moreover, in the recent studies, White et al. (2013), definition of self-care also includes spiritual self-care that promotes well-being. Feminist scholars (see Freysinger et al., 2013) recently emphasized the significance of leisure in relation to experiences and social contexts in defining the personal identity and an individual’s sense of self. Practices like meditation defined as passive leisure engagements that are framed as contributive to leisure realm in carving out spaces for oneself, as an addition to time spent with family and friends. Yet, alternately, leisure also provides a space to overcome gender role expectations through the acts of resistance that man include endorsed self-care practices (Shaw, 2006).

Self-care practices also belongs to a larger framework that has gotten a lot of attention in recent leisure research: the relationship between leisure and subjective well-being (SWB) (Brajsa-Zganec, Merkas, & Sverko, 2011; Mansfield, Kay, & Meads et al., 2018). SWB is generally defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life”, referring to and utilized interchangeably with concepts like quality of life, happiness, mental health and life satisfaction (Mansfield et al.,2018;). Even though it is acknowledged that leisure may also result in negative emotions like boredom or social anxiety, the utter purpose is usually linked with more positive emotions in terms of creating social connections and taking care of the self. The growing recognition in the last two decades of the feminist leisure literature's culturally and geographically confined nature (see Henderson & Gibson, 2013) has led to studies focusing on women of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds not only living in both North American and European countries but also in different parts of the world.³ Supplementing the influences of class, gender, and age, these studies have stressed the role of ethnicity and religion in determining social divisions in leisure practices, and have placed a special emphasis on the hybridity of social structures emerging from traditional and modern ways of life and reflected in women's experiences of leisure and SWB. Leisure and SWB are two new subject areas in Turkish social science literature, both developing after the 2000s and partially as a result of a growing interest among Western social science scholars in non-Western nations' experiences (see Demir, 2005; Erkip, 2009; Gürbüz & Henderson, 2014; Koca et al., 2009; Sönmez, Argan, Sabirli, & Sevil, 2010). There is no term in Turkish that is the lexeme of leisure, as there is in many other languages, the concept is translated as ‘free time activities/ boş/ serbest zaman aktiviteleri’ and studied with quantitative analysis to explore the differences between sexes. (Demirbaş, 2020).

³ Iran (Arab-Moghaddam, Henderson, & Sheikholeslami, 2007), Egypt (Saad, 2007), China (Lee & Zhang, 2010), Turkey (Koca, Henderson, Asci, & Bulgu, 2009), Japan (Iwasaki, Mackay, Mactavish, Ristock, & Barlett, 2006), Taiwan (Tsai, 2006, 2010) and India (Dilbaghi & Dilbaghi, 2007; Nagla, 2006).

Although less is known about how women rebel against gendered ideologies through the acts of leisure as self-care, it becomes a significant area of inquiry in this specific study to unpack the actions of a self-formed group. First of all, this women-only group presents an act in itself by gathering and functioning as an active formation. While not all self-care is a form of leisure (i.e. getting adequate sleep, having a balanced diet, doctor visits), meditation as a leisure activity certainly provides an important framework for self-care activities. The above-mentioned framework defining the altered forms of consumption and newly defined female sociability amongst Turkish middle-class women is evident in this presented case, which can be scrutinized through the lens of a gender-specific cultural experience. Firstly, the convenience, availability and preference of the participants to select meditation as a leisure activity presents a peculiar pattern: a shared inclination and possibility to be a part of a globally influenced local trend facilitated by newly introduced consumption patterns. Self-care as a trending part of the commercialized leisure is infused into the routines of middle-class women through various channels, underlining the significance of taking time for oneself to release the anxieties and stress generated by urban lifestyles. Hence, meditation as a popular practice can be framed as being a segment of this trend emphasizing the requirements of living a balanced/ good life rhetoric. Yet, discounting the importance of self-care based on its ties to the neo-liberal agenda fails to recognize the role of agency in well-being practices. The actions women take to handle their changing lives and expectations imposed on them become self-care strategies. Aside from being privileged to make time for meditation activities, these women consciously make a choice to take action towards forming a group dedicated to their own needs and interests. Hence, underlining the role of agency is as crucial as unpacking the influences of commercialization and neo-liberalization in scrutinizing meditation as a leisure activity.

Secondly, women's sociability options outside of the domestic environment and responsibilities are portrayed in this women-only healing circle, underlining the

changing focus on consumption and emerging forms of alternative femininities. All this formulation confirms that not only class, but also cultural and individual markers set the tone of predefined self re-construction process. Researchers interested in recognizing leisure definitions and behaviors, as well as working for gender equality in the leisure sphere, must take into account social contexts. A comprehensive perspective on the politics of leisure is possible by putting together notions of power, community, philosophies, and debate, which offers further insight into how inequities in leisure are replicated and resisted at different levels. Between the ages of 27-38, all participants have a similar background on working at corporate jobs, graduating from college, living in the populated cities of Turkey, and having English as their second language. Acknowledging the socio-cultural underpinnings of the group dynamics is crucial to untangle the why and how questions of choosing a specific leisure activity. Like in the case of contextualizing leisure within its own historicity, locating the group within the Turkish context enables to understand both the uniqueness and commonality of this particular group, contributing to a multi-layered analysis.

Thirdly, leisure contexts, particularly those with other women, are crucial spaces for women to assess their lives, measuring the “balance of satisfactions and activities through contradictory discourses which involve both mirroring of similarities and resistance to traditional feminine identities” (Green, 1998, p.178). Women’s talk, as a means of collaboration and key mechanism through which feminine subjectivities are constructed and re-shaped, is a prime site of leisure. Research areas of leisure and friendship can be connected by the concepts of identity, agency and subjectivity that are all contributive processes of becoming gendered. Furthermore, a study of women’s leisure reveals the spaces and settings in which gender relations occur and are regularly repeated. As sites of resistance and empowerment, self-formed women groups have the potential to facilitate a peculiar perspective of gender identities as a set of fluid and active processes.

The links between this network and the multiplicity of meanings attached becomes a critical point of inquiry, not only based on the formation of friendship and identification but also on resisting and creating spaces and places for empowerment. These occasions also provided a setting within which to re-think about gendered identities, especially those elements which challenge the socially acceptable womanly performances. Even though centered around a certain activity, meditation, the female kin network becomes a place to share about women's all kinds of social roles ranging from being a worker, being a mother, being a spouse. This is not equivalent of suggesting that women-only networks are always liberating or empowering in terms of gendered identity construction, yet they often have the capacity to serve effectively reflect on practicing various identities and appropriating them as in this specific case. The emphasis here upon the shared sense of belonging, a safe space and a collaborative floor in which women experience in talks and discourses offering alternate ways of being a woman. What is well-defined is that women's talk becomes a powerful medium in the process of self-formed groups, a key feature of leisure activities.

Within the scope of this study conducted with eight group members, the main goal was to revisit leisure through a feminist lens and understanding the implications of new media technologies on leisure through screen use and time management. Driving from the idea that the relationship of gender to leisure is interactive, leisure may provide a way or ways for women to embody and/or resist the discourses of gender (Shaw et al., 2013). Coming from similar yet varied backgrounds, those women met because of their interest in mediation through the group leader, Sirius, but also realized that they have been in similar friendship circles throughout the years. Once the research phase is finalized, the group has expanded with including new members who are also participants of the introductory course on meditation provided by the group leader and changed its name to 'Farkındalık Eğitimi / Mindfulness Education'.

Conducting thematic analysis of the focus groups and one-to-one interviews, supported by participant observation, women's peculiar experiences of leisure are analyzed in detail (see Chapter 5 for details) and can be summarized as follows:

- Multi-layered leisure definitions, experience matters
- Love and hate relationship with new media technologies
- Leisure for progress and leisure guilt interconnected
- Leisure time is not linear but rather cyclical and fragmented and occurs in episodes
- Spirit of the times, alongside socio-cultural markers, play a vital role in defining leisure

6.3. Multi-Layered Leisure Definitions, Experience Matters

Exploring the one-day routine, leisure practices are seemed to scatter through evenings and weekends, yet the overall experiences point out a different direction. In fact, leisure occurs throughout the day, regardless of a strict timeline, signifying the powerful effect of the experiences of the participants rather than solely concentrating on the definitions. Multi-layered and complex leisure moments are defined through exploring the narratives of the women with a mix of their daily routines and leisure time activities. Within that realm, marital status and having a child complicate the picture, enabling women to oblige to a more straightforward routine based on the added responsibilities of being a wife or a mother. In addition, once the leisure activities are in question, women tend to talk more about the strategies they deploy to find time for these activities rather than the activities themselves. Multitasking is one of the crucial reasons for this process, leaving women with a task to find ways to juggle between different roles and their related activities. Consequently, leisure definitions are closely tied with personal experiences, which challenge the grand narratives on the work/leisure dichotomy as well as incorporating multiple subjectivities. Hence, women's leisure time is not only defined and shaped by being a woman, but it also draws upon "social, cultural

and ideological constructs in the lived experiences of women” (Henderson, 1996, p.142).

The preferred term ‘experience(s)’ plays a crucial role in reconceptualizing leisure domain. Not only it covers the multi-dimensionality of women’s everyday activities, but also it enables to challenge and redefine leisure through overcoming its rigidity. The efforts to provide a universal definition of leisure has its tensions, starting from the utilization of binary categories. Even though the recent efforts overcome these binary definitions paved the way to more inclusive takes on leisure, the emphasis on experience has the prospective to add one more critical layer. One step further, it encompasses the gendered nature of conducting certain activities for fulfilling associated responsibilities as in the case of narratives of the participants. Being a mother or a wife became an experience in itself, presenting its influences on the selection and application of daily routines. In an alternative way, leisure is defined as the combination of various experiences, covering both the uniqueness and commonalities of performances shared by the participants.

Within this contextualization, the multi-layered nature of leisure is also crucial to transcend the discussions around the lack of/ the excess of leisure time. Quantitative measures certainly have an impact on the overall satisfaction with leisure opportunities, yet additional factors and discussion points are often undervalued. Once leisure is considered through a wide range of possibilities including multiple subjectivities and constraints, there emerges a more complicated picture as presented in the narratives of the participants. Including the various dimensions opens up a new way of framing leisure beyond the optimistic or pessimistic takes. Both takes are valid yet incomplete in a sense that they focus on limited sections of leisure domain. However, a more holistic view presents its advantages in terms of capturing not only the personal but also the social and political influences of leisure definitions.

6.4. Love and Hate Relationship with New Media Technologies

Once the discussion circles around the leisure time definitions, all participants also convey their views and experiences regarding digital leisure as well. All but one finds it impossible to define boundaries between leisure and digital leisure, referencing the latter's permeability into their everyday lives. New media technologies have clearly reshaped the experience of leisure for these women, not only by dislocating home as the main center of leisure but also by complicating the activities they conduct. Digital's infusion into their everyday tasks and leisure activities resulted in a contradictory feeling: neither with nor without it. Even though it seems irrelevant to define a separate realm of digital leisure for these women, there are some convergences in their experiences that shape their relationship with the screens. Utilized both for work and leisure, and most common being the cell phone, screens are linked mostly with social media consumption as a part of the leisure domain. Yet, this contextualization is not free of tension since consuming "empty content" is also linked with killing time and feeling remorseful about its consequences. In addition, the comparison effect of social media, fear of missing out, and nomophobia are also parts of the social media narrative that impose negative attitudes towards the implications of social media consumption habits. Strategies such as digital detox are common amongst the group members to dismantle the negative effects and to re-calculate the overarching effects of the digital in their lives. On the other hand, being on a multitasking mode constantly, refers to easy accessibility of certain leisure activities through screens, reflecting on the more positive influences in terms of time management.

In fact, such a techno-paradox contests most of the framings in current studies by presenting both sides of the argument at once. Studies referring to new media technologies' influences on leisure heavily rely on either the positive/progressive or negative/deteriorative sides of the spectrum. Yet, there emerges a place in between where women experience both effects simultaneously, outlining an elaborated relationship. Within this constructivist-oriented line of research,

technological and social is in a constant flux, one shaping another in a ‘seamless web’ of relations in which people/users exercise an “interpretive flexibility” in terms of handling intended and unintended consequences of technology (Bijker, et al., 2012, p.124) The push of feminist scholarship in molding with the constructivist theories of technology initiates at the level of rendering gender as an a priori category, resulting in a research branch known as the mutual shaping of gender and technology. (Williams & Edge, 1996) In essence, the premise relies on the fact that “technology is conceptualized as both a source and consequence of gender relations”, underlining the fluidity and situatedness of gender-technology relationship (Wacjman, 2004, p.58). Not only design of technologies, but also shaping and reconfiguration at various points of consumption and use are taken into account, emphasizing the concept of gender itself as a performance in its own right (Butler,1990). Thus, interpretation at the core, juxtaposition of gender and technology are “products of a moving relational process” (Lohan, 2000, p.901).

As in the case of trying to avoid a techno-determinist approach, the dynamics of new media technologies’ intrusion into daily routines provide a space to challenge the androcentric and deterministic approaches. Moreover, concentrating on screen use enables to dismantle the grand narratives circling new media technologies and substantiating more concrete arguments regarding specific experiences. The blurring boundaries of digital and non-digital leisure activities also portray the need to re-consider defining the latter as a separate category, underlining the fluidity of each sphere in women’s daily routines.

In addition, participants’ level of involvement with new media technologies is not representative of the general public. Structured leisure activities are not as common in Turkish society as in any other countries. It has been supported by some studies that the most common leisure time activity among Turkish people is activities conducted at home, such as watching television (Ekinçi, et al., 2014; Gürbüz and Henderson, 2014; Hacıoğlu et al., 2005). It has been revealed that women are more affected by interpersonal barriers (Şehlikoğlu and Karakaş, 2016). The traditional

structure of the society and its influences prevent women with low-income levels from being part of leisure activities. Yet, the significance of underlining the social and economic conditions of women play a vital role in assessing the possibilities and limitations in leisure choices.

6.5. Leisure for Progress and Leisure Guilt Interconnected

Whether for digital or non-digital leisure domains, participants invoked an argument about guilt whilst providing definitions and reconnoitering on the daily experiences. Feeling satisfied with the activity and showing a degree of progress are framed as the two prerequisites of leisure definition, connotating being idle as a counteract to leisure. Not necessarily the participants require an end result, yet they seek some sort of progressive action when it comes to questioning their leisure preferences. If the progressive element is missing from the picture, leisure guilt intervenes, and participants start to question themselves around the notion of killing time. Linked with the anxieties aroused by consuming meaningless content on social media, consuming meaningless time is demonized as opposed to completing a household task or receiving pleasure out of a hobby.

The need for the existence of a progressive element requires further discussion around the denoted responsibilities and duties of being a woman. Regardless of the activity, all participants' expression of intense emotions regarding the waste of time can be considered a postmodern phenomenon, inflicting its values of "being on the move" as the norm of the urban middle-class women. In the absence of satisfactory outcomes, the activities are labeled as "empty", as in the case of wandering around social media accounts being characterized as meaningless time consumption. Thus, there emerges a hierarchy between leisure activities based on the values and meanings attributed to the outcomes. Even though all participants present an appreciation of spending time for themselves, there are certain requirements

designating the value of such episodes that are context-related and socially constructed.

In relation to leisure for progress, leisure satisfaction levels are also explored through concentrating on the nature of the activities conducted. Overlapping domestic roles and spaces seems to play a role; the blurriness of work and leisure activities causes women to experience the ‘leisure divide’, resulting in women having less total leisure time than men. Yet as an overall reflection, despite two participants being indecisive, all participants felt satisfied with their allocated leisure time activities. Although, satisfaction component became a contested area of discussion, leaving the participants with several inferences from the research process.

Firstly, they depicted that exploring leisure activities made room to reflect on their daily routines in a detailed manner and gave space to make room for thinking further about the necessary adjustments. These alterations include a re-visit to their relationships with screens in the format of accepting the commonality of “killing time” or consuming frivolous content, making peace with such behavior. Secondly, they expressed that a re-evaluation of their time use management was made possible through reflecting on the allocated time for their leisure preferences and they felt motivated to focus more on spending time on these activities. Thirdly, discussion around the gendered nature of leisure realm opened up a dialogical space where the participants felt room to express their disappointments, aspirations and future plans. The research process became like a continuation of group meetings, presenting and facilitating solidarity and peer learning as crucial parts of the process.

6.6. Leisure Time is Not Linear but Rather Cyclical and Fragmented

Two distinctive narratives offered in terms of the philosophical roots of leisure time: some participants believe that leisure time is an already existing time to be utilized, and others believe in the necessity to consciously creating time for oneself. When it comes to investigating the notion of time, again there seems to be a split in

terms of referring to being always on the move and trying to catch up with the pace of life on one hand and having access to all the time in the world to shape on the other hand. Yet, within this split, participants all agree on their role rather than the technology itself to be shaping the speeding up or down; their utilization and preferences mainly set the tone. Concurring with Wajcman & Dodd (2016), rather than time getting scarcer with the intrusion of new technologies, the changing discourse, and perception of time influence the day-to-day interactions.

Within this realm, despite two participants being undecided as stated, all group members prevail that they are satisfied with their leisure time, yet the need to utilize that time requires constant effort. Without putting enough emphasis and thought, they agree on the fact that leisure becomes a slippery slope in which one can easily surpass their own needs. Workload, household responsibilities, the pace of city life, and socio-economic factors all contribute to a further complication of time allocation for those women, leaving them to reflect on what it means to be satisfied with leisure activities. In relation, the utilization, access, and perception of leisure time are expressed to be very different in comparison to their male counterparts. With the inclusion of experiences, narratives on these reflective processes, and real-life examples portray a picture in which leisure time is not linear yet very fragmented for these women and occurs in episodes throughout the day. In conjunction with and even more complex than the current literature on leisure, the bits and pieces of times in between completing tasks are the places and times where women enjoy daily leisure episodes. Within this cyclical structure, not only social class but also marital status, age, and employment status play a critical role in exploring the peculiarities of the experiences of each woman. On top of all, it is the spirit of the times that define and reshape the interpretations of leisure, adding new layers to the already defined boundaries of its playground.

6.7. Spirit of The Times: Covid-19 Pandemic

Before delving into the conversation regarding the changing dynamics of the leisure realms for the participants, it is crucial to reflect on its repercussions for women in general. Starting with December 2019, Covid-19 pandemic reshaped, changed, and transformed many of the personal experiences in a variety of subjects, including everyday life practices and routines. Exacerbating the already existing inequalities, women's affiliations with the pandemic require special attention in terms of exploring the deep-rooted, gender-specific struggles. Kandiyoti (2020) objects to the notion that the pandemic has an equalizing function that treats everyone as equals and thus underlines the emergence and prevalence of uneven distribution of wealth and class distinctions. With the loss of social connections and services, social distancing and total shutdowns enhance the workload of women, isolating the family or the household as a single unit (Kandiyoti, 2020). Within that unit, modern women's shifting role from being the performer to coordinator paves the way for creating spaces for themselves, even with continuing the multitasking habits (Kandiyoti, 2020). Yet, as in the cases of crisis and societal decays taking its toll, women's role has been reversed again, signaling to an "unwritten code": that women's time is less valuable in comparison to men's regardless of education levels and class distinctions (Kandiyoti, 2020, p.2). Presenting the already existing dilemma discussed throughout this study, her analysis of the current social milieu summarizes the vitalness of exploring women's time and creating a conversation around its impacts on daily life practices.

In times of economic crisis, disasters, and pandemics, women's acquisitions are the first to be bargained, not only with the increasing household and caring responsibilities and but also with the growing rates of violence against women (SU Gender Report, 2020). Conducting a study with 1.843 women from 28 different cities of Turkey, violence against women has increased by 27.8% during the pandemic season (Sosyo Politik Saha Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2020). Once the datasets from 2018 and 2020 are compared, Turkish women's household labor has

been boosted by more than double (KONDA, 2020). In parallel, in a study conducted in April 2020, women disclosed that the following activities started to take more time during the pandemic: 77.6% on house cleaning and arrangements, %28,7 on taking care of the elderly, 60% on cooking, and 41% on shopping (UN Women, 2020). In a similar vein, a study conducted with 339 corporate firms in Turkey reveals that there is a differentiation between the challenges posed by the pandemic based on gender: 74% of men struggle with income insufficiency, 69% with the limited access to information technologies and 65% with psychological stress and fatigue syndrome. 99% of women vocalize about increasing household tasks and caring responsibilities, 97% explore the increasing labor with remote working patterns, and 95% consider anxiety, psychological stress, and fatigue as the main challenges of the pandemic (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2020).

In addition there are significant datasets presenting the altering dynamics of everyday life practices of women in comparison to men in Aygün etl al.'s (2021) study Looking at the distribution of domestic responsibilities before and during the pandemic, examining the pandemic's gender-based division of domestic work, it is seen that education is generally associated with childcare among male participants, while men with higher education levels are more likely to share childcare responsibilities. It is obvious that increased housework and childcare responsibilities during the pandemic have negative effects on women's participation in the labor market and their well-being. Within the scope of social distancing measures, differences in the household production and consumption habits of individuals who spend almost all of their time at home have been observed. Even though men's responsibilities increase during the pandemic, the fact that women's responsibilities do not decrease may indicate that such shares will decrease as men return to the workforce. In other words, it can be concluded that as long as the significance of social distancing continues, women will continue to bear the increasing domestic production by staying at home, even when closed workplace are opened. The same data also confirms that housework and care responsibilities place a huge burden on women. Unfortunately, the workload of

women has not decreased even in this period when spouses and children in the household spend more time at home. In a similar vein, in the UNDP (2021) research note, it is stated that due to stay at home measures announced during the pandemic, the unpaid workload of both men and women increased, but women carry a remarkable part of this burden by spending almost four times more unpaid labor than men. According to this research, the unpaid workload that increases during the pandemic period rises from 2.9 hours to 4.5 hours a day for women and from 0.3 hours to 1.1 hours a day for men.

As for the participants of this study, the Covid-19 pandemic altered many aspects of their daily routines and reshaped related activities. First and foremost, the time definition is changed, enabling women to question their feelings in an expanded time frame whilst confined at home. Even though the expansion of time is perceived and narrated in a positive manner, the disappearance of clearly defined work hours causes women to experience never-ending workdays. Especially for those working in corporate jobs, blurring boundaries produces a more complex picture, leaving them with increased and fragmented work hours. Digital's infusion into work has also expanded with the necessity to utilize digital applications as a means to be a part of the work environment, triggering women to reflect on their relationship with new media technologies within a brand-new framework. There lies an obligation to learn and adapt to the new set of rules determined by an online work ethic, such as being equipped at all times for online meetings or crafting a workspace within the household facilities. In a similar vein, digital leisure has been on the rise based on the physical constraints stemming from the quarantine times, enabling women to relocate some of the activities to an online environment. All refer to conducting physical training online, spending more time on social media, and joining online webinars for leisure, creating a new and deepened layer in their relationship with the screens.

In fact, new media technologies' effect of dismissing the time-space constraints on leisure is reverted, with the mandatory measures circulated as quarantine

restrictions, provoking home-based activities to thrive. In terms of leisure definitions, new activities are added to the menu based on being digitally connected in line with the digitally connected arrangement of the 'new normal' routines. Household tasks and activities intensified; women tend to express a struggle to clearly define leisure boundaries compared with the pre-Covid-19 narratives. Yet, the feeling of being more present in the activities they conduct is revealed by all, prompting to question the link between the expansion of time and the embodiment of previously hurried activities. Within this more mindful act of conducting an activity, taking care of the self becomes an upcoming theme with participants' effort and will to focus more on themselves, ranging from taking long naps, creating self-care routines, and exercising. As a result, first-time remote workers feel more satisfied with leisure time opportunities, whereas self-employed participants conveying that leisure satisfaction levels remain the same.

Opposing with the general data set, participant's accounts reveal a more optimistic stance regarding the influences of the pandemic in the overall narrative. Even though there are some complaints regarding the blurred work hours and altering work settings, the general inclination is on exploring new hobbies and being more present in activities they conduct. The reasons for this controversial outcome might stem from a combination of factors: spousal support, educational background (both for women and men), flexible working schedules, socio-economic status and putting deliberate effort for spending quality time. The last component is both a factor and an end result of the other listed factors. Not all women have the means to tackle with the difficulties of the pandemic season, and not all participants are fully equipped with the necessary tools. Yet, their backgrounds and affordances enable them to experience a smoother transition to the new normal, as expressed clearly in the narratives. This framing does not exclude the difficulties participants are also experiencing, yet it signals to power of some of the contributing factors at play.

Whether in the 'new normal' or in the normal passage of everyday lives, women's narratives portray the vitality of scrutinizing leisure activities to understand the fabric of their everyday lives. Within the scope of this study, framing the everyday lives of the participants in Turkey proposes a certain suggestion: that leisure is highly contextual. Leisure definitions and experiences are induced and shaped by the very personal experiences of the intersectionality of various spheres like being a woman, a mother, a professional worker, a wife in the complex web of relations imposed by societal influences. On top of that, the very notion of leisure is highly linked the class divisions, even to the point to argue that the notion belongs a bourgeoisie. Alternatively, one can question the meanings of leisure of a blue-collar woman: is there any time left for those women that can count as leisure time? Can we state that leisure is an oxymoron in itself?

Being a part of the everyday fabric, leisure is defined within the crossings of a multi-dimensional spectrum, signifying the opportunities and limitations of its framework by its formation. In this specific effort, the main aim is not to generalize the experiences of the participants to understand leisure patterns in Turkey, yet on the contrary, to provide a toolset for examining leisure through a feminist lens in relation to new media technologies in any place at any given timeframe. This toolset, as an alternative framework, enables to make room for contemplating leisure as the main domain in reflecting the dynamics of everyday life practices, composed by the actors of the play. The implications, possibilities, and challenges opened up by conducting such research will be the topic of the next chapter.

7. CIRCLING BACK TO WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

7.1. Why Leisure Matters

The year 2016 marks the year of various milestones in my personal journey: I started working at our family business, I was newly married and learning to manage a household, I was starting my PhD studies and I was consuming an excessive amount of television series. Whether for entertainment or work purposes, screens dominated my daily activities, and juggling between various spheres became my daily routine. Within that realm, I was becoming more aware of my daily time allocation and vocalizing the concerns around the fast pace of life and entanglement of leisure domain into daily hustle in social surroundings. Realizing the prevalence of my concerns, women's experience of time, especially leisure time, concerning new media technologies with a particular interest in screen use concurs with my interest in exploring on a very personal yet also a common inquisition.

Driving from experience and positioning personal stories at the core, the foundations of this dissertation rely on the uniqueness of women's practices of and involvement with leisure time, covering the current debates by encompassing new media technologies as the facilitator. The phrase, peculiarities of the experiences, forms the backbone of this journey in terms of connecting leisure time, new media technologies, and the everyday lives of women. Meanings of leisure being "still in flux", the historicity of the definition represents a unique way of portraying the spirit of the times within the concept is framed (Platt, 2018). As shown throughout the chapters, a constructivist/interpretive approach is preferred to define leisure as "meanings created when individuals conduct a certain activity", underlining the complexity and multifaceted nature of the activities in question and the incompleteness of the term (Sintas et al., 2015, p.81). With the intrusion of new media technologies, not only the meanings and options of leisure are diversified but also the physical and time constraints transformed and evaporated, leaving an even more connected sphere of influence within everyday practices (Couclelis, 2000; Aoyama & Shepard, 2003; Urry, 2004). As the activities become more fragmented,

the boundaries between various spheres of life—paid labor, care-giving, leisure—become blurred (Whittel, 2001; Urry, 2004). Wajcman (2015) summarizes the process by implicating the distinction between leisure and the rest of life becoming blurrier than ever. More strikingly, not only do the shifting spheres of everyday life and experiences of time differ between men and women (Kwan, 2008; Brannen, 2005), but also leisure time is gendered by nature based on its influence of reproducing and underlining traditional roles (Karayığit, 2015).

Women's leisure is generally defined as home-centered and passive, reinforcing the oppressive practices at play (Frissen, 1992; Na, 2001; Kwan, 2008). What Frissen (1992) offers as women being more prone to spending time in a more divided fashion due to the vagueness of work-leisure boundaries exemplifies the differentiation of activities they prefer in comparison to men. In terms of implications, women's leisure time has always been outlined as problematic, and the leisure gap in which male leisure time is valued distinctively than female leisure time leaves women with less free time overall glance (Green et al., 1990; Aitchison, 2003; Chess, 2018). In terms of highlighting the most influential factors impacting leisure activity inclinations and participation ranks in Turkey, gender is marked as the most important factor, followed by work status and residency location (Eryasar, 2007; Aydın et al., 2014). Women's leisure activities are molded by their assigned roles in society and are more likely to be centered around the home (Eryasar, 2007). Even though several studies subsidize to a deeper understanding of women's leisure in Turkey, the inclination is to concentrate on non-digital spheres only, causing to frame leisure time in opposition digital, except few studies covering the impact of social media use in social gatherings (Iwasaki, 2001).

7.2. Initiating the Journey: How is Leisure Studied?

Building upon the intermingling of current contextualization of women's leisure domain in Turkey and individual stories, a framework is curated to concentrate on

the following main queries: new media technologies process of shaping and redefining women's experiences of leisure time, women's definitions of their relationship with leisure in line with time and space, and women's relation with screen use during their leisure time. As stated from the very beginning of this journey, this dissertation is designed to address and challenge the already existing inequalities circled women's particular use of leisure time. In concurrence with the initial purposes, a feminist theoretical framework is adopted with acknowledging its multi-layered application routes. Seeking to underline women's peculiar accounts of leisure experiences and influence the further personal and academic investigation and reflection on the area, a combination of diverse yet related feminist theories are employed. Wearing's (1998) "feminist postmodern interactionist perspective" on leisure is united with poststructuralist and transnational feminist takes on womanhood to curate a unique toolbox to disclose the unnoticed stories and make room for more visibility around these stories. With the former conceptualization, the idea of the self as pertaining to construction and liberation through leisure is re-visited, with an effort to challenge the conventional classifications of modernist influences, including the inferences of the leisure domain. Imitating a pendulum, leisure is defined as a flexible sphere where expansion and contraction of the self occurs, based on socio-economic factors and everyday life responsibilities. Within that analogy, the effects of digitalization, neoliberalism and globalization are taken into account in exploring the varying time-space allocations and nature of the activities. Referring to the correspondences of feminist and leisure theories in its historicity, poststructuralist and transnational feminist influences shape an acknowledgment of plurality, inclusiveness, interconnectedness, and relationality of womanhood by including major factors like race, ethnicity, class, religion, and age as determinants of leisure. Developing a collage of feminist theories not only paves the way for excavating the coordinates of the dissertation yet also provides a multifaceted lens to frame women's peculiar stories of leisure moments within a specific cultural context.

Contextualizing feminism not only as a theoretical toolset but also as a research method provides room for interpreting and enriching the research journey by generating linkages and possible action routes. In an endeavor to emphasize the stories of women and appreciate the “participants as the experts of their own experiences” (DeVault & Gross, 2012, p.32), once again I turned back to my journey and explored my leisure moments in a reflexive effort and realized that the largest proportion of my leisure sphere is dedicated to spending time with a women-only group called ‘Meditation Chics’ (later will be referred as the ‘Mindfulness Education’ due to a change in group name). Concurring to investigate the territory of leisure, eight members participated in interviews and focus group sessions conducted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic on May 2020 and August 2020. Between the ages of 27-38, contributing 8 participants share some commonalities despite their distinctive stories explored through the research phase: all are Turkish urbanites obtaining corporate job experiences, college degrees, English as their second language. Being members of similar social circles, participants initially gathered as a consequence of their interest in practicing meditation, regulated by the group leader’s introduction of an exploratory course. Taking time for themselves, relieving stress and anxiety, and receiving women’s support through meditation practices are the principal motives connecting the participants to create and continue to meet at this peculiar leisure sphere. Actively equipped with the incentive to share personal experiences and interact with each other’s stories, focus groups properly reflect the group dynamics, enabling to shape collective identities and solidarities with interactive data generation.

Conversational interviews play a complementary yet key role in overlaying the wholistic narratives, generating a thicker description of the everyday life practices of the participants. As a given, my membership to the group also enabled the decision to benefit from participant observation, which facilitates a more reflexive approach. Adopting participant as observer standpoint, I fully informed the participants regarding the applications of the toolset and created a set of questions for myself to be in constant check with the research goals. The way I observed the

group dynamics, the influences of being an old member of the group and possible shortcomings of being an insider are amongst the discussion points that I aimed to respond throughout the research phase. I tried to present the outcomes of this reflexive process as an integral part of this thesis, contributing to the reflexive efforts. In turn, progressing with a multi-methodology approach produced a favorable research environment for collecting richer responses, generating interactive discussions, promoting active and collective learning, and strengthening the possibilities of a reflective exercise.

Eight women's lived experiences at the center, focus groups, conversational interviews and participant observation are blended to keep the stories intact, with an effort to overcome the idea of handling the outcomes as mere data sets. Concentrating on the narrative tradition, thematic analysis is preferred in line with the key concepts and main research questions. With careful consideration of individual accounts and group dynamics, a two-fold process is implemented to combine manual and software analysis, NVivo, respectively, aiming to present a thematic description of the whole research phase. Intending to present patterns unfolding the stories, a combination of local and global views of the stories and interconnected discussions are scrutinized for augmented discussion prospects. Convolutedly involving theory and practice, the key principles of the dissertation are infused through the entire journey like a knitting pattern. Guiding the research, extracting and studying the data, and displaying the outcomes are associated parts of the same road, in which the researchers aimed to maintain a reflexive stance about her involvement and propositioned feminist stance. For the purposes of the analysis process, leisure as personal and social spaces are examined through delving into women's daily routines, leisure domains, and digital habits by addressing the plurality and variability of identities and experiences.

The thematic analysis expedites to build up the connections and diversifications of women's stories through determining the main coordinates of the journey. Leisure time definition, Impact of Covid-19, Screen Use, Leisure Time Activity, Leisure

Time Satisfaction, Social Media Consumption, One Day Routine, Personal Information, and Eagerness to Read the Thesis or Be A Part of the Process are the leading codes curating the narration of the stories. Challenging the traditional attempts to trivialize women's everyday lives, a revelation of the detailed accounts on mundane yet substantial information regarding flexible conceptualizations are depicted. "Relationality and interconnectedness" are not only manifested in women's narratives but also between the narratives of the codes, complying with the theoretical framework's underpinnings on the multiplicity of leisure realms and experiences (Parry & Fullagar, 2013, p.580). Within this formulation, excelling pinpoints are summarized and discussed utilizing the following interpretations:

Multi-layered leisure definitions, experience matters

Love and hate relationship with new media technologies

Leisure for progress and leisure guilt interconnected

Leisure time is not linear but rather cyclical and fragmented and occurs in episodes

Spirit of the times, alongside with socio-cultural markers play a vital role in defining leisure

These interpretations represent the overall outcomes of the thematic analysis of the data set, offering flexible yet interrelated point of views in understanding women's peculiar stories. Each offering is explored in detail in the previous chapter, and also reflected in the overall outcomes of this research journey.

7.3. Making Sense of The Journey: Covering the Outcomes

Routines are part of the everyday fabric of women's narratives as if they act as the keys to reveal the world of leisure activities. Although leisure episodes are appeared to occur mostly in evenings and weekends, the overall narratives disclose a dissimilar time allocation. When the details about the daily routines are scrutinized, it is discovered that leisure occurs throughout the day, irrespective of a designated timeline. Rather bewildered by this process, participants realized that their

narratives of leisure do not necessarily reflect the realities of everyday hustle. Within its complexity and multifaceted nature, leisure moments are defined as a combination of digging into one-day routines and listed leisure time activities, commonly framed as hobbies. Marital status and childbearing play a decisive role in sticking to a more up-front routine, with the introduction of a new array of responsibilities of becoming a wife, a mother, or both. More strikingly, when leisure activities themselves are enquired, women are inclined towards a conversation containing the diverse strategies to make room for leisure episodes rather than exploring the content or duration of the activities. The commonality of multi-tasking is the main reason for this formation, leaving women in a specific role pertaining a juggle between diverse roles and acclaimed responsibilities.

In line with Wajcman's (2015) depiction of the evaporation of distinctive time for family, leisure, and work in the digital age, participants experience the combination of all in a melting pot called the daily routine. Contradicting with the current literature claiming that women tend to prefer easy to learn, cheap, and timely flexible activities (Chess, 2018); participants tend to focus more on being open-minded and self-opinionated on activity choices regardless of the realization that this conduct may result in dissatisfaction with overall leisure allocation. Yet, fitting leisure in between activities captures the essence of the narratives, again signaling the fragmented nature of their time allocation (Deem, 1986; Wajcman, 2000). On a different note, Henderson's (1996) argument on leisure, "one size doesn't fit all", is still effective in terms of proposing a more inclusive approach while defining the terminology of leisure. Each participant has her unique yet related blend of tools for handling similar accountabilities and attachments of social life, resulting in different experiential outcomes even with the application of the same leisure activity: practicing meditation in a women-only circle. At this point, being a woman a solid yet incomplete factor in defining leisure time and respective activities, yet the social, ideological, and cultural practices evident in the lived experiences of women prevail (Henderson, 1996).

Similarly, factors such as age, education, social class, residency, and marital status are all contributive markers in defining and conceptualizing leisure time. How the 'Mindfulness Education' group is formed and sustained is another derivatization of the implications of the listed factors at play in shaping the everyday lives of the participants. Challenging various dichotomies like leisure/work, private/public, and men/women, contextualizing everyday experiences of women plays an instrumental role in replacing the normative, Eurocentric, and patriarchal idealizations of pre-existing categories. The re-framing of the coordinates of women-leisure spectrum opens up a discussion sphere for flexible and multiple identities and the transgressions of various spheres of everyday lives (Çaha, 2005). Post-structural feminist and neoliberal influences on defining leisure as personal spaces offering possibilities of resistance, choice, and control (Sintas, 2015) have their repercussions in participant's narratives, yet the multi-layered characterizations dominate the scene, indicating the requirement of maintaining a balanced, inclusive and flexible stance in determining the coordinates.

Leisure time definitions are also suggestive of another major element in participants' narratives: digital leisure. Defined as "time spent engaged in digital practices and spaces while in a leisurely state of mind" referring to the practices surrounding "applications, smartphones, online games, interactions on social media, downloading of films and live televised events", digital leisure has entered the scene as the recent and promising actor (Redhead, 2016, p.831; Redhead, 2017, p.14; Schults & McKeown, 2018). Similar to the varying dynamics of the home as the leading site of leisure and television as the main leisure origin at home, the very definition of leisure itself and its mechanisms are changing with the incursion of new media technologies (Rainie & Wellman, 2012; Redhead, 2017). Not just the activities yet the way individuals interact with already existing activities and each other are transformed as proposed by the same researchers, resulting in the inevitability of incorporating a new web of relations. Hence the interest in screen use is underlined throughout this dissertation in an environment in which screen studies include a vast array of sources available for conducting a multiplicity of

activities, including streaming, gaming, running errands, socializing, or killing time.

Nevertheless, incorporating new media technologies generates a challenge as to avoid putting overarching emphasis on the part of the peculiarity of technologies themselves. Hence, from the very beginning of this journey, the presentation of social and mutual shaping of new media technologies are inspected with referring to an interactive process. The overall structure of the research questions mirrors the effort by underlining the significance of the relationships formed with digital products rather than guiding the participants to solely concentrate on the devices or forms. Before the introduction of the specific questions regarding digital leisure, all participants expressed their experiences and assessments of digital's influence in their everyday practices. With one exception, all concur on the fact that boundaries between leisure and digital leisure are impossible to define, underlining the rapid and excessive penetration of the latter in molding the experiences of leisure.

The end result is utterly common for all participants: they love it, they hate it. The irrelevancy of aiming to define the coordinates of digital leisure aside, resemblances in the deployment of the screens are expressed like the popularity of mobile phones in completing work and leisure-related errands. Screens are predominantly associated with social media consumption through consuming empty content, causing to feel regretful for killing time. Nomophobia, fear of missing out, and comparison effect of social media are the main factors intruding negative attitudes towards the social media consumption practices. As a solution, strategies such as digital detox is exercised and recommended amongst group members to experience episodic reliefs and opening up spaces for re-consideration of digital habits. However, easy accessibility of all forms of online content, time-saving measures of online shopping, newly introduced leisure options, and ease of social connections with loved ones are amongst the positive drives enabling the participants to partake in digital services. Within that realm, screens are framed as the medium for conducting the listed activities, nearly utilized as an umbrella term for the intrusion

of new media technologies. Saving time stands a major concern, referred to almost in each particular activity, especially encompassing the attributes of new media technologies. The changing metrics of what, where, and how one performs daily tasks depends on the socio-cultural fabric of the group, and participants are experts in reflecting on their personal constraints and freedoms accordingly. Yet, when new media technologies are discussed in isolation, the inclination is to hold them accountable for the pace of life rather than referring to the personal and societal conditions.

For both digital and non-digital leisure domains, the feeling attached to the aforementioned processes is dominantly guilt. Whilst exploring various definitions and providing excerpts from daily experiences, circling around the idea of guilt resulted in defining the prerequisites of leisure as a twofold process: feeling satisfied with the activity and showing a degree of progress. Propounding the opposite of leisure as being idle, participants expressed a seeking to achieve some level of progressive action for evaluating leisure preferences. In compliance with one of the previously identified characteristics of leisure as “intrinsically satisfying”, participants’ multi-layered definitions do not completely comply with the textbook definitions of leisure (Mokhtarian et al., 2004, p.24). Again, the incompleteness and fluidity of the definitions prevail through lived experiences of the participants, leaving further questions for the validity and applicability of pre-existing portrayals.

In relation to the progressive element of leisure definition, participants conveyed a straightforward stance on their expectations, not necessarily end results, and circled back to the feeling of guilt in case of its incompleteness. Questioning the self around the notion of killing time is presented alongside the anxieties aroused by consuming meaningless content on social media. Alternatively, being idle is narrated as the villain of the stories as opposed to completing a household responsibility or being occupied with a hobby. Digging further on the notion of leisure time, two opposing narratives offered for contextualizing time allocation and its influences on daily

routines: leisure time is already out there to be utilized versus individuals are obliged to create time for leisure activities or time flies. Similarly, participants are divided between being always on the move mode and experiencing free access to all the time in the world. Yet, they all agree on the influences of pre-determined discourses shaping the realities of regular interactions. As a reflective activity, all participants enjoyed recognizing the intermingled nature of societal norms and personal preferences. As a consequence, all group members, despite the two, prevailed that they were satisfied with their leisure time, but still acknowledging the constant effort to attain that level of contentment.

In case of the disappearance of adequate emphasis and contemplation, all participants agreed on the slippery nature of the leisure domain where one can easily forget her own necessities. On top of all, contributing factors like workload, household responsibilities, the pace of city life, and socio-economic markers all define and complicate managing time and juggling between various activities. In turn, participants found themselves in a position questioning the meanings of being satisfied with experiencing cyclical leisure activities and their sufficiency for a balanced life. Within the depicted blurry playground, the spirit of the times reshapes the interpretations on leisure, adding one more layer to this peculiar storyline.

CONCLUSION

From the very beginning, this dissertation assesses a nominated group of women's definitions and experiences of leisure domains within a particular time, at a given context, and yet Covid-19 pandemic becomes an indispensable component of the process. Even though separate research questions (See Appendix for details) are introduced to explore the pandemic's influences, the timing of the research coincides with the mandatory lockdown, leaving all participants and the researcher to navigate within the coordinates of the new normal. Instead of physical meetings with the participants, the entire research phase was completed in an online environment, enabling them to question the familiarity of the unfamiliar. In other words, all contributors enjoyed the comfort of participating from home yet felt the transformation of synergy compared to previous group meetings. Despite the 40 minutes breaks due to Zoom's internal policies, time and space have enlarged to provide a safe space dedicated to the discussions circling around leisure moments. Equal participation and balanced positionality worked in favor of the research process by surpassing the hierarchical lines. The instability of the Internet connection triggered some delays in conversations or repetitive questions, yet the overall experience contributed to the research design effectively.

Repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic have been discussed in detail in the previous chapter, covering the transformed personal experiences in a diversity of areas, embracing everyday practices and routines. As Kandiyoti (2020) signifies, pandemic exacerbated the already existing inequalities and gender struggles, reversing women's role by underlining the demolishing importance of women's time in comparison to men. Not only women's increasing household and caring responsibilities but also the growing rates of violence against women indicated the severe outcomes of social isolation and loss of social support mechanisms (SU Gender Report, 2020). Participants of this study expressed the altered nature of daily routines and newly introduced activities during the research process.

Definition of time has been dynamited, resulting in an internal inquiry regarding the expanded yet confined nature of time within the lockdown process. Although the experiences of the participants reflect a positive attitude towards the changing dynamics, the disappearance of strictly defined work hours resulted in never-ending workdays. Especially for the participants working at corporate jobs, increased and fragmented work hours imposed an intensive workday, further complicating the already blurred boundaries. The utilization of digital applications as a part of the work environment prompted women to reconsider their dependency on new media technologies within a novel context. The obligation to adopt the newly introduced online work ethic and designating a workspace altered women's time and space allocations all at once, forcing them to implement the rules of the new normal. Accordingly, with the new set of arrangements and physical constraints, digital leisure has been on the rise, enabling women to relocate some of the previously analog activities to an online setting. Spending more time on social media, joining online webinars/ trainings, exercising through screens, and spending more time in the kitchen are amongst the newly introduced activities peculiar to the pandemic season.

Alongside the spirit of the times, contextual and geographical markers play a fundamental role in determining the positioning and implications of this journey. Contemplating on the middle-class identities of women in Turkey, an effort is presented to cover the expansion of commercial leisure, fostering a substantial change in urban classes' relationship to consumption (Ayata, 2002). Altered consumption configurations directly influenced how "female sociability" is defined based on the employment of time and labor (Özyeğin, 2002). The changing focus of consumption from class and family only to multiple areas resulted in a re-articulation of the gender leisure spectrum, opening up new spheres of influences for women. Presented in the outcomes (See Chapter 4 for details), participants' accounts of multi-layered leisure activity preferences exemplify the changing dynamics of the consumption patterns, underlining the key role of "gender-specific cultural experiences" (Kandiyoti, 1987, p.334). The potential of studying leisure as

a critical lens to investigate on everyday practices of women triggers new ways of untangling the pre-described discourses and offering diverse perspectives on the fabrics of real-life experiences. Academic interest in Turkish women's leisure patterns have been heavily relied on exploring visiting activities through sociological lenses (Aydın, 2004; Karayiğit, 2015), analyzing the principal motives of participation and role of social media use in cultural gatherings. Contributing to a deeper understanding of women's leisure patterns in Turkey, the need for diversified research initiatives is evident, especially with the incursion of new media technologies in everyday practices.

At this point, this study aims to contribute to a novel effort by combining various tools for exploring the “here and now” look on women's everyday realities. Contextualizing the realities matters in terms of including and unraveling the contributing factors in an environment where leisure is defined as highly contextual and gender dependent. Leisure definitions and experiences are shaped and presented by a critical lens that comprises the standpoint of the researcher and the participants. Being part of the everyday fabric, leisure is altered and reshaped through its constraints and expansion opportunities, as presented throughout the whole study. By contemplating on the stories of eight women, the main effort is to provide a critical toolset for exploring leisure experiences at any given coordinate and to underline the vitality of noticing the mundane yet essential aspects of leisure in understanding daily life practices. As opposed to drawing holistic conclusions or generalizing the experiences of the participants as representative datasets, this project is dedicated to generating collaborative knowledge on navigating through leisure domains. Recognizing leisure as personal and social spaces resembling a pendulum circling around restrictions and expansions, it is an effort to make room for experiencing a reflexive process driving upon personal narratives.

Within that effort, acknowledging the limitations and generating suggestions for further research areas are the remaining contributing elements to complete this journey. Although socio-economic factors and influences are discussed in terms of

outlining women's leisure prospects in the Turkish context, the composition of the group 'Mindfulness Education' presents its own dynamics and associated conclusions. The similarity of backgrounds of the group members and their already established social connections induced both opportunities and limitations based on the circumscribed nature of the conversation and experiences. The familiarity amongst group members created an inclination to share and reflect on the intimate accounts of everyday life practices, forming a safe space. My role as a participant observer contributed to this space by being accustomed to already formed group dynamics, being able to read between the sentences and providing a peculiar understanding and interpretation of the narratives. Yet, at the same time, this familiarity induces a risk of overreading results and creating a confined space of arguments. In order to overcome such possible drawbacks, I intended to diversify the discussion points and enabled a collaborative effort in defining the pace and content of the conversations.

Besides, the implications of the pandemic inevitably obliged the participants in a challenging position to differentiate between pre-and post-pandemic experiences. Blurred boundaries between the normal and new normal becomes challenging for the participants to explore separately on the daily activities and leisure preferences. For surpassing the listed challenges, a reflexive approach is operated since the initial phase of the dissertation process is to build up the research per the contextual markers and participant observation is included as a contributing methodological tool. Keeping a diary facilitates the process by being able to track observations and reflections not only on the research phase but also on the entire process as a whole. The same approach can also be encouraged for the participants by stimulating them to keep a daily activity journal for retrospective practices in future studies.

Before the closing remarks, I would like to visit Virginia Woolf's (1929) essay, "A Room of One's Own", as a landmark of the twentieth-century feminist thought to reflect on her words on exploring the history of women through the investigation of social and material circumstances necessitated for the writing of literature. I

intend to utilize these conditions as tools for reflecting on one's own leisure domain since her words encouraged me to initiate this study and reflect on my leisure moments throughout the process. Her framework includes leisure time, privacy and financial independence as precursors of all literary production and creating a room for oneself becomes the key metaphor of this process for self-actualization of women. I would like to conclude by proposing that all women need a place, "a leisure of one's own"⁴, for not only enjoying and incorporating recreational activities but also to reflect on its repercussions of being a woman and its influences on daily routines and interactions. Part as an experience, part as a pendulum of restriction and empowerment, a multi-layered understanding of leisure has the power to reflectively improve women's involvement and satisfaction with leisure domain, intermingled with various factors that shape their environment. And for the last words, opening up more space for discussions around women's everyday lives through keeping the original contributors at heart, many more new stories will unfold and shine a light on the feminist research agenda.

⁴ "A leisure of one's own" is utilized as an analogy in this context, yet there is a book titled "A Leisure of One's Own: A feminist perspective on women's leisure that needs to be recognized as part of this intertextual effort.

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APPENDIX

Conversational In-Depth Interview Questions

1. First of all, can you introduce yourself for me? Your occupation, education, family life etc.
2. Can you elaborate on an ordinary day? Or in other words, how do you spend 24 hours?
3. When you think about weekdays or weekend, is there a difference in terms of the structure of these days?
4. Do you handle personal stuff on business days? If yes, what kinds of errands do you handle?
5. When I say screen use (television, ipad, cell phone), where do you see those devices in your daily life? When you imagine in terms of functionality not hours, which hobbies do you partake with the screens?
6. When you think about your screen-use, are those generally for business purposes or for leisure time activities, or both?
7. In which parts of the day do you feel like you are using the screen the most?
8. What do you like to do on your leisure time?
9. For your leisure activities, do you find enough time on a weekly basis? Or in general?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. What do you understand from the term leisure time or free time?
 - a. What do you understand from digital leisure time?
 - b. Do you think there is any influence of digital on your free time?
(If yes, in what ways?)

2. When I talk about time in general considering your everyday activities, what does this concept mean to you?

3. Do you think you have enough time for yourself in general?

4. When I talk about screen use, which devices or activities come to mind first?
 - a. When all the screens in your life are considered, do you feel any impact of these on your leisure time? How would you describe their role?

5. Do you feel any kind of difference when you think about the days before digital? Do you feel any kind of influence on your leisure time? Is it possible to make a comparison?

6. As you know, we have been experiencing the quarantine times since the date (xxx). When you think about these times, what does leisure time mean for you?

7. What do you think about first when I say spending leisure time at home?

8. In this specific period, do you recognize any difference in your relationship with digital technologies? If yes, can you elaborate on those?

ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.