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NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT CONSTRUCTION THROUGH
GOVERNMENTALITY OF HEALTH DISCOURSES:
FOCUS ON ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMERS

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NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT CONSTRUCTION THROUGH
GOVERNMENTALITY OF HEALTH DISCOURSES:
FOCUS ON ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

NEOLIBERAL SUBJECT CONSTRUCTION THROUGH GOVERNMENTALITY OF HEALTH DISCOURCES: FOCUS ON ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMERS

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This work attempts to argue that the consumers of organic food in Turkey are subjects of neoliberalism, with women being the major consumer group. The case of organic food consumption enables us to critically approach the free market society that renders social, cultural, and political issues into economic arena which necessitates a new approach for understanding the subject formation and maintenance of social order. Through this work, it is aimed to analyze the new subjects of neoliberalism with a close focus to organic consumers and their perceptions about being healthy. Especially women as part of their traditional roles in the family are suggested to be targeted by the health consciousness trend despite the changing gender roles. It is argued that the increasing health consciousness trends and neoliberal ideologies share similar notions and as a result organic food consumption is being used as a means of governmentality that becomes an indicative behavior for health-conscious individuals. Overall, pursuit of health is intended to be analyzed while focusing on its regulatory and productive roles, benefiting from the theories of healthism, neoliberalism, and governmentality.

Keywords: Neoliberal Subject Construction, Governmentality, Organic Food Consumers

ÖZ

SAĞLIK SÖYLEMLERİNİN YÖNETİMSELLİĞİ İLE NEOLİBERAL ÖZNE İNŞASI: ORGANİK GIDA TÜKETİCİLERİ

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Bu tez çalışması Türkiye’deki organik gıda tüketicilerinin, özellikle kadınların, neoliberalizmin öznesi haline geldiğini ileri sunmaktadır. Organik gıda tüketimini incelemek, sosyal, kültürel ve politik sorunları ekonominin alanı ile açıklayan serbest piyasa düzenine eleştirel bir yaklaşıma olanak sunmaktadır. Ayrıca birey üzerindeki etkileri ve toplumsal düzeni sağlama biçimlerini de açıklamak adına yeni yaklaşımlar gerekmektedir. Bu çalışma ile organik gıda tüketicileri ve bireylerin sağlıklı olmayı algılayışlarına odaklanarak neoliberalizmin yeni özneleri analiz edilmektedir. Özellikle, değişen cinsiyet rollerine rağmen, kadınların aile içerisindeki geleneksel cinsiyet rollerinden dolayı sağlık bilinci trendinin hedefinde olduğu savunulmaktadır. Yaygınlaşan sağlık bilinci trendi ile neoliberal ideolojilerin birçok kesiştiği nokta olduğu ve sonuç olarak organik gıda tüketiminin yönetimsellik ile sağlıklı bireylerin belirleyici özelliği haline geldiği tartışılmaktadır. Özetle, sağlıklı olma arayışının beraberinde getirdiği düzenleyici ve üretken rolleri; sağlıklı olma kültürü, neoliberalizm ve yönetimsellik kavramlarından faydalanılarak analiz edilmesi hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Neoliberal Özne İnşası, Yönetimsellik, Organik Gıda Tüketicileri

To my family, boyfriend, and friends.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Buğday / BSELA	Buğday Support to Ecological Life Association
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FiBL	Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
GMF	Genetically Modified Food
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
IFOAM	The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RTMAF	Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
TSI	Turkish Statistical Institute
UN SDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to understand how organic food consumers become the new subjects of neoliberalism. It is intended to suggest that the organic food consumers adapt the characteristics of neoliberalism and continue their daily consumption practices parallel to neoliberal notions. As the organic food consumers internalize and prioritize notions like individualization, responsabilization, and rational calculations during their purchase decisions, the neoliberal subject construction is attempted to be analyzed through close focus on their consumption practices.

In societies where neoliberalism is the dominant ideology it manages all areas of life including economy, social life, and politics. The neoliberal rationality behind all these spheres consequently have an impact on the individuals. The main promoted neoliberal traits are adopted by each and every individual in various ways and different levels of intensity. However, the changing dynamics position individuals as self-interested and competitive since they prioritize personal interests, needs, and desires above all. The shift towards individualization is highly related with the responsibility that individuals have for managing all aspects of their lives successfully. Thus, having the self in the center of all decisions and actions, individuals strive for a beneficial position in the market space through the investments they make and constant betterment of the self. In addition to these specificities, consumption is the main behavior through which neoliberal subjects participate in societies. Also not being limited to means of participation, individuals become consumers of information, goods, and services which becomes an identity trait of neoliberal subjects.

Therefore, by prioritizing the personal interest and making relevant consumption choices and being responsible of themselves, individuals become the ideal subjects of neoliberalism. In the case of health maintenance neoliberal subjects search for methods or products that will keep them healthy mainly through consumption practices as a result of personal initiative for getting information about the issues and goods by

focusing on self-interest and needs. Although under neoliberalism individuals are not categorized on the basis of their gender and equally targeted to internalize neoliberalism's rationality, especially regarding health maintenance the position of women will be closely evaluated due to the association of their traditional gender role as caregivers with consumers in neoliberal societies (S. Nettleton, 1996).

This topic is very important to be analyzed first of all for understanding the new subjects of societies. As part of this transformation the definition of ideal citizens also change and by focusing on organic food consumers the new attributes of citizens can be analyzed. Secondly, as a result of subject construction towards the ideal citizens the maintenance of social order appears as a significant aspect of this discussion. While the organic food consumers by being healthy and responsible aspire to become ideal citizens, at the same time this construction process functions as a control mechanism as it produces similar individuals with neoliberal traits. Additionally, this topic is closely associated with health and food issues as organic food consumers tend to shift their consumption behaviors to organic products due to health risks and food insecurities. Thus, this work is also important for understanding the new health trends and concerns in relation to increasing interest towards organic food.

As part of new health trends, Cederström and Spicer's (2015) tend to put forward through the 'Healthy Life Syndrome' concept how the approach towards health changes to an assignment like responsibility that should be fulfilled by the individuals. While Crawford (1980) introduces the concept of 'healthism' to describe the personal preoccupation of health for achieving well-being mainly focusing on lifestyle changes. As these approaches attempt to describe the changing understandings of health, Moore (2010) criticizes how the arguments of Women's Health Movement and health promotion fail to ensure the emancipation of women. In this work these concepts and debates will be used to understand the close relation between neoliberalism, health trends, and women's position as neoliberalism provides the foundation for new health paradigm to develop. Especially the integration of Foucault's concepts power/knowledge and governmentality into the work brings the subjects of power and regulation of individuals into discussion. By focusing on daily activities, power relations and how individuals are exposed to power and at the same time exert control over their selves is being discussed.

Since health is a subject that has many dimensions, limiting the focus of this work with new health trends as well as health risks are aimed to describe the consumers' main motivations. According to the definition of the World Health Organization (WHO), "health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." As can be seen from the definition, being healthy is not limited to the prevention of illness only, as individuals also strive for mental and social well-being. The environmental factors such as pollution, genetic codes that run-in families, and chemical additives, that are being excessively used in almost all parts of food chains, can be considered as broader issues that have a critical impact on individuals.

However, rather than addressing the broad approach towards health risks, it is intended to focus health risks in relation to food insecurities. In this work through the works of scholars on risk society (Beck, 2002; Skolbekken, 1995) it is aimed to understand the factors that affect individuals' behavioral changes. With the advancement of technology, the encountered uncontrollable risks also increase. Although risk is a very broad subject due to increase of foodborne diseases and changing food production systems the focus of this work is mainly on the food insecurities. These developments affect individuals to focus on solutions that they can have control over. As part of current debates on food insecurities and health risks organic food appears as the focal point. While in many studies focusing on organic food mostly analyze the consumers' consumption motivations, some discussions dwell on the intertwined characteristics of organic food consumers and neoliberal subjects.

In light of the theoretical framework, as part of this work a field research is conducted with the participation of 20 interviewees. The interviews lasted for four months between January 2019 and April 2019. The research was conducted with organic food consumers from Istanbul, Turkey. It is intended to analyze the daily activities and discourses of consumers to understand the effects of neoliberal ideology and governmentality on their subject transformation in becoming consumers with neoliberal traits. Thus, in-depth interviews were conducted to understand the perceptions of organic food consumers. Having participants from different age and gender groups as well as with different consumption habits were important factors aimed to be achieved.

In this direction, in the theory chapter the focus is on understanding neoliberal subject construction in relation to emerging health trends, increasing health risks and food insecurities. Additionally, neoliberal governmentality is used to explain the process of subject construction and how individuals are both exposed to and active appliers of power. In the methodology part, while describing the research question of this work method used for conducting the research is also shared. Key concepts used in the research are explained also in this part as well as providing detailed explanations of the field and sample of this work. Finally, in the methodology part, limitations of the research are shared.

In the last chapter, the findings of the research are being presented. First of all, health considerations and organic consumption motivations of participants are shown in this part. The meanings attributed to organic food and it's relation to health issues are discussed based on the personal opinions of the participants. Also, changing gender roles, women being the main responsible of the health maintenance of the family and parenting in general are discussed in this part as responsibility of health is transferred to the individuals. It is also argued that the organic food consumers' consumption preferences, frequency, product range, and amount of product they buy change depending on various factors.

As a result, analyzing organic food consumptions of 20 participants is suggested to help us understand how this specific consumption behavior and consumers are subjects of neoliberalism especially with influence of the supporting ideologies like new health trends and increasing risk factors and insecurities. That being said, as a result of focusing on the organic food consumers, their perceptions on organic food, and consumption preferences it is intended to develop an analysis and argumentation on the organic food consumers as neoliberal subjects in contemporary societies. The majority of the debate in the Turkish academia evaluate organic food and consumers on the basis of market conditions, advantages of production, and motivations of consumption. Hence, this work aims to go beyond the situation analysis and add a sociological dimension to the current debate by suggesting organic food consumption as a means of subject construction, maintaining control over individuals and order in society. Additionally, the attempt of finding linkages between the organic food consumers in Istanbul, Turkey and theories like neoliberalism, governmentality, and

new health trends as well as shedding light on the gender dimension of the debate is anticipated to provide arguments that will be beneficial to the further work in this field.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Neoliberalism and the Neoliberal Subject Construction

On this part of the work, it is intended to dwell on neoliberalism, the type of subject it constructs, and its relations with healthism and new health trends. As well as being an economic ideology, neoliberalism can also be described as a discourse that has effects on individual subjectivity. Additionally, it is believed that healthism can operate conveniently with neoliberal order since they share common ideas for maintaining the order of societies and individuals which will be discussed in the coming parts.

Neoliberalism is argued to be the fundamental ideology that is governing societies, governments, economy, and health care (M. Eliason, 2015: 1). There are historical conditions and preliminary factors that paved the way for the emergence of this new ideology. The neoliberal ideas stem from the classic liberal theory that emphasizes individuals “to make a profit and accumulate wealth, consulting only their own interests” (S. Hall, 2011: 13). Also, industrialization, free trade, and urbanization in the 19th century and transition from family businesses to joint-stock companies helped the economic expansion. Rising competition for power, the emergence of the mass society, investors and executive classes are among the push factors towards the new order.

Neoliberalism, then, evolves. It borrows and appropriates extensively from classical liberal ideas, but each is given a further ‘market’ inflexion and conceptual revamp. Classical liberal principles have been radically transformed to make them applicable to a modern, global, post-industrial capitalism. (S. Hall, 2011: 16)

The crisis of the 1960s-1970s enabled the strong presence of neoliberalism that was started to be pioneered by the UK with the promotion of individualized and competitive solutions to societal problems. “In this system, economic growth is valued over any other principles, like democracy, social justice, compassion, or

sustainability.” (M. Eliason, 2015: 1). And in the 1970s and 1980s the new ideology started to change the social order that suggests a new order in which the state will not govern, regulate the free-market economy, or private property. New structuring dismantles the centralized services of the state since the neoliberal state sees the welfare state against freedom. It is crucial to understand how neoliberalism works in societies not only limited to conceptual levels of ideologies but being diffused to all levels.

Neoliberalism is not simply an ideology in the pejorative sense of the term, or a belief that one could elect to have or not have, but is itself produced by strategies, tactics, and policies that create subjects of interest, locked in competition. (J. Read, 2009: 30)

As well as changes taking place on the broader levels of society, the individuals and their relations with the state and services it provides also go through substantial alterations. It can be said that, as a result of the changing dynamics, neoliberal truth and subjectivity became important and relevant for debates focusing on contemporary societies. Neoliberal rationality intends to shape the citizens according to its strategies and priorities by emphasizing the most important traits people should have; individual responsibility, self-interest, rational and calculable decisions. This system of thought and beliefs govern the society, since neoliberalism is not solely an economic or political concept but also pervades in social and moral sites of societies. To explain in detailed “the five basic tenets of neoliberal rationality as outlined above: minimal government intervention, market fundamentalism, risk management, individual responsibility, and inevitable inequality as consequences of choice, provide the basis of a framework for understanding how neoliberalism works.” (N. Ayo, 2012: 102). The neoliberal rationality tenets shed light on how societies operate differently without the strong presence of involved welfare state being there for the individuals thus heavy responsibility is transferred to individual. Also, the prioritization of the market and the economic growth over all and the celebrated freedom of choice make individuals become isolated yet responsible of all their actions. According to some scholars neoliberalism is prescriptive as it aims to universalize the forms of agency. “Spreading neoliberalism entails convincing others that everyone should enact corporate form of agency, produced by consciously using a means-ends calculus that balances alliances, responsibility and risk. Other forms of agency are getting pushed aside.” (I. Gershon,

2011: 539). Additionally, the individual is suggested to have an innate potential for a self-development and self-realization as “neoliberal perspective presumes that people own their skills and traits” (I. Gershon, 2011: 539) to which they need continuous investment.

2.1.1. Individualization

Individualization is one of the traits that neoliberal subjects have which brings along prioritization of self-interest before anything else. Individuals focus on their desires and needs while making decisions. Having the possibility to make choices on the basis of personal interest gives the individual, freedom to autonomously practice choice. Especially the decentralization of the state and the services lead to the emergence of individualized and competitive solutions after cutting the state means. Thus, decentralization appears not only as the essential feature of neoliberalism from an economic perspective but also a crucial factor on emerging individualism. As a result of decentralization, deregulation and privatization the number of choices individuals have to make increases which are governed by interest and competition. However, according to Read (2009) “deregulation, the central term and political strategy of neoliberalism, is not the absence of governing, or regulating, but a form of governing through isolation and dispersion.” (p. 34). Thus, individualization is suggested to be a form of governing neoliberal subjects through the focus on self and self-interest. It can be argued that individuals being given the freedom to make choices on the basis of their interest is a way of empowerment. However, this can also be criticized as individuals make choices among pre-given options. Also, individuals become more interested in their interests and desires which result in isolation. Although the economy is liberalized as a result of the deregulation, society is highly regulated as individuals adopt self-regulatory means.

2.1.2. Responsibilization

The changing dynamics in societies not only resulted in self-interested and competitive individuals but at the same time lead the transfer of responsibility from

the state to individual. The withdrawal of the state positioned the individual in the center of his/her decisions. While focusing on the individual priorities before making any decision, individual now becomes responsible also for the consequences of each decision. “Correspondingly, it is argued that the remote and indirect action of the state is essentially enabled by something called ‘responsibilization’ the establishment of a form of subjectivity or self-hood – such as an ‘enterprising self’.” (J. Pyysiäinen, D. Halpin, A. Guilfoyle, 2017: 216). As part of this form of subjectivity, individuals are held responsible from all their undertakings since they depend on the decisions, actions and abilities of individuals. However, the responsibilization causes pressure on individual as it implies blaming the individual for all failures. It can also be argued that responsibilization is an essential tool of neoliberalism that transfers the tasks and responsibilities of the state to the individual as part of the new subject construction. The objectives and problems of the state is embraced by the individuals and integrated into their self-realization plans and actions. Additionally, the translation of state undertakings into individual responsibilities doesn’t take place in a process in which state is exercising authority or rule on individuals. On the contrary, the remote position yet strong regulation of the state is enabled and consolidated as individuals apply control upon their selves. Also, they are expected to work for meeting their potentials by taking the responsibility for their actions knowing that not being able to meet their potential will be the failure of the individual. In order to avoid any failure, individual applies strict discipline and surveillance monitoring each behavior and factor. However, when the failures are explained by individual lacking various factors and actual sources of problems besides the personal deficiencies can be omitted under neoliberal order.

2.1.3. Entrepreneur of the Self

In neoliberal societies, individuals are assumed to have an innate potential to be realized. In line with the neoliberal discourses of responsibilization, individuals are expected to achieve better versions of their selves by responsibility-taking, self-steering and self-care. (J. Pyysiäinen, et al., 2017: 216). The individual is described as an active agent who is ascribed of freedom and autonomy for self-realization. And the

self-realization includes making investments for self-development. Although the self-development and investing in yourself are suggested as processes of a self-growth, they reflect the neoliberal perspective on individuals in societies. “Instead this is a self that is composed of usable traits. These skills, traits, or marketable capacities are what the neoliberal agent brings to relationships.” (I. Gershon, 2011: 539). In addition to working on usable traits, individuals also make other sorts of investments in themselves such as through their consumption choices, focusing on long term results and benefits by being future oriented. (A. Dilts, 2011: 7). According to this perspective, in neoliberal societies individuals are described as entrepreneurs who are focused on self-interested conduct. As part of their continuous investments, individuals become entrepreneurs of their selves in order to take active part in the market by offering their skills and abilities. At the same time these skills and forms of capital individuals are expected to work on are described as ‘human capital’.

This capital is not capital like other forms, for the ability, skill, and knowledge cannot be separated from the person who possesses them. This ‘human capital’ is made up of two components: an inborn physical-genetic predisposition and the entirety of skills that have been acquired as the result of ‘investments’ in the corresponding stimuli: nutrition, education, training and also love, affection, etc. (T. Lemke, 2001: 199)

2.1.4. Rational Calculating Subject

As individuals become more and more concentrated on their interests and are given the responsibility to fulfill these needs, they go through rational decision making processes. These interests can include learning new skills or consuming a product for a specific reason whereas at the same time can be for creating distinctions. “The neoliberal model of agency insists that all agents are fashioned as autonomous rational calculators, with size and functional ability the primary factors for creating distinctions.” (I. Gershon, 2011: 541). Additionally, it can be argued that individuals aim to make decisions as a result of weighing the benefits and costs. This process is suggested to be a rational process as the individual compares and contrasts the drawbacks and benefits of the situation. As well as that, this rational decision making is intended to be pursued non-random and systematic way. If the individual is to make a purchase or attend a training, the rationale behind the decision is to benefit from them

and having a return. Thus, it can be argued that the neoliberal subjects go through rational evaluation processes as they make decisions with the purpose of finding the most beneficial option that will bring them to the best position in the market.

2.1.5. Consumers

In addition to all neoliberal subject traits mentioned above, it can be added that individuals participate in society as mainly consumers. Through the consumption choices they make, neoliberal subjects shape their identity and how they define themselves. “Individuals are taught to know and understand the body in ways that produce and privilege citizens as consumers (through legitimate medical knowledge) in obligatory pursuit of their own diagnoses for healthiness and vitality.” (A. L. Wiest, D. L. Andrews, M. D. Giardina, 2015: 32). While having a major impact on the individuals identity, the consumption preferences also influence other individuals and their choices. Exchanging consumer experiences about products or brands enable individuals to talk about positive and negative sides of the products which result in influencing in each other regarding the choice of products. Individuals as consumers are responsible of getting information about the products which effort is supported also by the companies that provide constant information.

The bond between consumers and a company becomes even stronger if they like its page or the page of one of its products, thus creating a permanent connection. This allows the company to supply them regularly with information and use their approval to automatically promote itself with their friends. (Castro, Julio Cesar Lemes de, 2015: 281)

As companies become stronger with the information they provide as a widely accepted information resource, individuals’ consumption choices also become critical due to attributed responsibilities. In contemporary societies, neoliberal subjects are not only given their personal responsibility but also broader societal responsibilities. Since “the logic used is that everyone can make a difference thanks to his or her choices” (Castro, Julio Cesar Lemes de, 2015: 284) individuals by changing their habits switch their consumption to other products for a responsible consumption. This alternative way of consumption enables the consumer to continue to consume without any bad conscience. Refusing to consume certain products because of their harm on

environment and choosing other products to consume don't require a change within the system or structure itself, rather modification of individual habits is presented as the solution. Therefore, it can be said that a responsible way of consumption is being celebrated.

The result is curious, because consumption starts to be seen, in practice, not as a source of pressure on the environment, but as the solution itself. Faced with the problems caused by consumption, the fix is to continue to consume. (Castro, Julio Cesar Lemes de, 2015: 284)

In neoliberal societies, the changing consumption preferences yet increasing consumption practices are not only closely related with consumption choices but they also impact the consumer identity. It can be suggested that governing consumption involves governing people and identities as consumers (C. Barnett, N. Clarke, P. Cloke, A. Malpass, 2008: 11). Especially, with the responsible/ ethical consumption promotion, individuals begin to define their selves in terms of responsible choices both on individual and collective level.

As a result of the neoliberal rationalities; individualization, responsabilization and entrepreneur of the self, rational calculating and consumer subject, it can be argued that the formerly categorized citizens are now repositioned as taxpayers, customers, and consumers.

2.2. New Health Trends

By many organizations, governments, and other relevant institutions being healthy is defined in order to be studied and to build policies about. Conditions of being healthy are affected by, not limited to, social, environmental, and economic factors. These factors include, gender or inequality fractions as well as including problems like pollution or global warming. As well as these factors that are located on a more abstract level some daily practices such as smoking, alcohol, salt, and trans-fat consumption are also being debated as significant factors affecting health and well-being of individuals. Describing well-being and being healthy in relation to various issues or a particular product intake make the field very wide and full of arguments from different perspectives. Even though health is essential for individuals for the continuation of their lives, healthy individuals are as crucial for the states since they constitute the

population. Thus, health and the well-being of people would be one of the focal areas of governments that require research to examine the current situation and work for the betterment of conditions in light of strategic priorities. In addition to governments, also NGOs, hospitals, and social policymakers are actively present as knowledge producers and actors for participation.

Supporting healthy lives and promoting well-being are located as objectives on the agendas of both individuals and global actors. The international organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) are working for causes like good health and well-being by partnering with states from all over the world. As well as other fundamental issues on their agendas; health and well-being appear to be significantly prioritized areas for societies. As well as the prevalent concentration on health and well-being at international organizations, these areas of concern are highly common and substantially focused on at individual levels. Therefore, good health and well-being at individual level might take different shapes and routes compared to the level of government or international organization. Maintaining good health and promoting well-being have various repercussions on individual lives which are related to the macro-level objectives, however the daily practices and strategies do differ on individual levels due to the involvement of challenging issues such as different income levels or gender. While the broader objectives are furthered by vast organizations and many actors, agendas of individuals regarding health and well-being are expected to solely be maintained and monitored by the individual itself. Individuals' methods of coping with this issue bring subjects like personal responsibility, anxiety, awareness, health care consumption, body and lifestyle modifications to the core of the arguments. Therefore, it can be said that "Health today is more than just a biological prescription that is about staying alive but rather a social prescription that is about status. Health is more of an attributing meaning rather than being a 'value' itself." (Baudrillard, 1970: 178).

2.2.1. Healthy Life Syndrome

There are many academic debates on how healthy living is transformed into an ideology that influences individuals to adopt ideas and beliefs for the maintenance of

a healthy life (Cederström & Spicer, 2015: 11). As Cederström and Spicer (2015) suggest the ideology “Healthy Life Syndrome” that puts forward the ethical imperative exercised in individuals’ lives, not as a choice but more of an assignment. Therefore, individuals apply behaviors in an obsessive manner that will bring them a healthy life in return. Especially during the most common activities - eating and movement- people pay less attention to the activities or products themselves but rather focus on other aspects like calorie calculations to find out the benefit of that activity. According to Metzl (2010), “Health is a desired state, but it is also a prescribed state and an ideological position” (p. 2). What can be understood through the definition Metzl provides is that there is no single word or definition that would adequately cover what being healthy is. But what should be pointed out is that health definitions are produced on the basis of our value judgments such as, smoking or having a big body size are considered bad for health. According to the value judgments, certain people are defined negatively as ‘others’ since they are not suitable for the prevalent health categorizations. Doctors, nutritionists, and chefs appear as influential leaders for the creation of definitions about what is healthy and what is not. Therefore, within the health industry there are various actors who use different mediums to convey their messages to audiences such as, television programs, social media, and women and health magazines.

Through the new actors and mediums, being healthy is mainly described over how a person looks and the food intake is reduced to numbers that are for keeping the body healthy. However, these reductions have negative impacts on individuals such as, anxiety and feeling of lacking since the recognized health norms are not universally applicable to everyone and not possible to attain. Here the argument is very significant, as stigmatizing rhetoric is being diffused to the health debates by promoting dichotomies like thin-fat. Therefore, through the practices for being healthy individuals are differentiating themselves from the unhealthy people in the society that results in designating a status over the rest of the society. Some thinkers highlight the negative impacts of excessive preoccupation with health and how industries benefited from the promotion of this preoccupation (Metzl, 2010: 5). The more people are preoccupied with health the more they consume health care products, healthy food, visit doctors more often, attend fitness clubs, and so forth. Thus, it wouldn’t be wrong

to say a new industry, that established itself as a result of the new health trend, is benefitting from these developments. Also, one of the other approaches coming from Goffmanian perspective suggests that the people by accepting themselves as healthy bring along the requirement of recognition of ill-health of others (Metzl, 2010: 5).

As a result of the choices practiced by the individuals for becoming healthy the responsibility is also given to the individuals. And this responsibility causes anxiety over individuals because the constant effort for fulfilling the potential and needs is not an easy task to complete. The individuals are expected to be planning their every behavior, making future projections, and taking risks in order to become healthier and to reach their potential. According to Cederstörn and Spicer (2015) “Thinking that each of us secretly hold a potential inside is intriguing. The idea that we can improve and transform ourselves to a better version of ourselves emotionally and spiritually is tempting.” (p. 22). It causes a constant search for a perfect self which in reality is not possible to attain. Through self-tracking and control, individuals watch their bodies for the purpose of being healthy. These methods contain calculations of food intake and calories, and schedules to eat certain products to manage the body. Through the Healthy Life Syndrome, it can be seen that individuals are overly preoccupied by health concerns in line with neoliberal notions that the new health trends embrace and impose on individuals.

2.2.2. Healthism

Despite the increasing individual preoccupation with health, it can be said that it is a national preoccupation (Crawford, 1980: 365). “Ever increasing personal effort, political attention, and consumer dollars are being expended in the name of health” (Crawford, 1980: 365). However, the main focus is still on the individual. Following that, prevention rather than curing, treating the person rather than the disease appear as some of the approaches towards health. According to these approaches, being healthy or unhealthy are not solely physical issues but also mental. Therefore, the treatment and solutions are expected to be found in the individual. In order to understand and explain the new health consciousness, Robert Crawford uses the term *healthism*. According to Crawford (1980);

Briefly, healthism is defined here as the preoccupation with personal health as a primary –often the primary- focus for the definition and achievement of well-being; a goal which is to be attained primarily through the modification of lifestyles, with or without therapeutic help. (p. 368)

Although healthism is suggested as an ideology that shapes people and societies through the preoccupation of health, new health consciousness is not limited to healthism. However, with the diffusion of healthism in societies as a dominant ideology, individuals become health conscious and focus on personal health. And Crawford (1980) defines the individuals who adopt and internalize the ideas promoted by healthism as healthist (p. 368). Even though the causes of health problems are also affected by outside factors, with this approach the solution to these problems are expected to come from the individual, through the individual choice. For example, the fast-food industry can also be positioned as one of the responsible parties for health problems, however “for the healthist, solution rests within the individual’s determination to resist culture, advertising, institutional and environmental constraints, disease agents, or simply lazy or poor personal habits.” (Crawford, 1980: 368). Individuals try to change their personal habits and concentrate on their bodies for finding solutions to health problems. Thus, it can be said that both the causes and solutions of health issues are located at the individual site.

As ideologies strongly affect the individual behavior, health and health-related ideas are now coming into prominence as determinants of well-being. The preoccupation of personal health results in behavioral changes and more broadly life-style alterations through the applications of strict control and discipline over our choices and bodies. However, as well as the control applied to individual bodies “healthism functions as dominant ideology, contributing to the protection of the social order from the examination, critique, and restructuring which would threaten those who benefit from the malaise, misery, and deaths of others.” (Crawford, 1980: 369). As Cederstörn and Spice (2015) also discussed the industries that benefit from the health industry, Crawford also emphasizes how healthism exists as a result of contradicting health forms coexisting and serving a benefit to a certain group. In addition to industries that benefit from healthism, individuals also benefit as they are able to fit into society through their attitudes and behaviors for being healthy. Thus,

health becomes a super value that sets some certain ways of behaving and feeling that shapes the experience of being healthy. Although the personal preoccupation of health results in individuals to drift apart due to concentration of personal sphere, health consciousness as an ideology also gives the feeling of belonging since each isolated individual is following similar steps and belong to the same group at the end of the day.

The uncertainties and uncontrollable risk factors lead the individuals towards making personal choices for their health. With this choice of controlling, individuals practice an alternative method that has no political value. However, as individuals believe that global change is something not achievable, healthist individuals support small-scale change as it is more likely to happen as they have the control. Thus, the feelings of hopelessness, anxieties, and inability to change the uncertainties, the uncontrollable scale of industries put individuals to the position of concentrating on themselves rather than bringing political arguments and practices. Under these circumstances, being able to apply control over the bodies through healthism might give the individual the feeling of being in control and making her/his part about being healthy. It also creates the deviant subjects in societies. Simply who smokes cigarettes, eats a burger from a fast-food chain or doesn't move on a daily basis are considered deviant. Even though the healthists don't take an active role to ensure good health conditions to the entire society there are some arguments that question whether that is necessary for a change or not. Crawford (1980) suggests that, health consciousness does not necessarily ignore social change and enough number of people following healthy lifestyles can cause change in societies (p. 383). However, healthism according to Crawford (1980), is not sufficient—also doesn't aim to be- to achieve broader change in the society regarding health conditions. Especially, concentrating on behavior changes for healthier habits and lifestyle keeps the issue limited to the individual sphere. "Healthism is a kind of elitist moralizing about what are believed to be unhealthy coping behaviors" (Crawford 1980: 385). Thus, changing personal behaviors like quitting smoking or drinking alcohol may stay exclusive to the private realm of the individual. As a result, healthism is presented as an ideology and set of behaviors that don't fully solve the risk issues in societies. Therefore, Crawford (1980) suggests a combination of political movements with the individual actions since he

believes that the “human capacity cannot be advanced in the subjective sphere alone” (p. 385).

Trisha Greenhalgh and Simon Wessely (2004), help us understand the healthists and the healthism phenomena even deeper by building arguments over Crawford’s and other thinkers’ ideas. They try to present the demographic, attitudinal and behavioral characteristics of healthism with nine characteristics that include demographic conclusions as well as attitudes and concerns related to the issues. These characteristics they provide as a result of the case studies reveal the fact that the people who apply the ideological and behavioral aspects of healthism into their lives are “health-aware middle classes” (p. 199). While benefiting from Abraham Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of human needs’, Greenhalgh and Wessely (2004) argue that his theories are very useful for understanding the reasons of pursuing perfect health, the mistrust to the information provided, the constant effort for mental and physical perfection, and how these are mainly preoccupations of health-conscious middle-class. Healthism enables the health-conscious individuals to pursue a perfect ideal which at the end is hoped to help self-actualization¹. After satisfying the first four needs, the final need that is self-actualization is very hard to be satisfied since “the experience of self-actualization stimulates the desire for more” (Greenhalgh and Wessely, 2004: 204). That is why pursuing a perfect healthy self is very much associated with the self-actualization level since that is also almost impossible to attain both from physical and mental aspects. However, for the achievement of perfect health individuals are being empowered in order to be able to understand and question the health issues. Being empowered about health goes parallel with the preoccupation of personal health. Although people become more preoccupied with their health, empowerment is limited as health issues continue to be restricted to the private sphere which omits the major societal concerns like equality, fairness, citizenship. Empowerment implies the free and conscious decisions made by individuals. However, the way individuals are becoming empowered can be questioned because of the production of some reductionist dichotomies under healthism. Recently, people have “uncritical faith in anything that

¹ The levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs include respectively; physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization.

grows out of the ground and irrational fear of anything produced in a lab” (Greenhalgh and Wessely, 2004: 208). The same applies to the case of ‘natural’ goods which is a very delicate matter since people who aim to make a profit out of this new trend use the concept natural without meeting the requirements. Thus, healthism by creating its own behavioral and ideological sets, pumps one dimensional information to the market and as a result the word empowerment loses its meaning. Some thinkers suggest that the notion of health and the products related to health have become part of capitalism’s consumption tools (E. G. Gür, 2010: 301). The changes in societies such as the transformation of health as a means of consumption, new approaches to illnesses, and increased consumption of not naturally grown products bring the necessity of working on the notion health. It is also seen that healthism shares similar ideas as neoliberalism since both describe being healthy and healthy products as part of market economy.

2.2.3. Position of Women with the New Health Consciousness

The impediments of neoliberalism and new health consciousness appear to share commonalities. Therefore, it is significant to briefly dwell on the new health paradigm with the inclusion of feminist critiques as women are the main target group. The Women’s Health Movement emerged mainly for being against the existing patriarchal order in medicine thus the social control exerted over women’s bodies in the early 1970s, in the USA and the UK. (S. E. Moore: 2010, 97). The main activities were fighting against the ways being healthy and gender were being described by the medical institutions as well as the ideals produced by medical science aiming to shape the female body. The objective was to change the knowledge production related to the female body since the medical consultants were mostly male and their practices were solely based on objective study of the body. As the female body was associated with the terms: vulnerable, uncontrollable, and unstable, the medical knowledge produced about the body also adapted these terms as their basis. By legitimizing the existing ideas about the female body, medical institutions and practitioners become the target of feminist critiques that focus on subjects like, “medicalization, medicine as a form of social control, and the structural inequalities that create or worsen women’s ill health” (S. E. Moore, 2008: 270). The male-dominated medicine was criticized by

feminists due to its suggested exertion of control over women and the female body. As an alternative to the patriarchal control applied through medicine, the self-help method was promoted by the Women's Health Movement that essentially aimed to empower women by rejecting medical control. As the new health paradigm emerged in the 1970s, the shift from the old model of health that concentrated on curing illness to the new model of health with a different concentration for preventing illness and promoting health took place (S. E. Moore, 2010: 101). As the approaches towards health and how to handle health change, women's position is also expected to change subsequently. However, the new approach of health promotion also became the target of criticisms due to its redefinition of health and prioritizing lifestyle choices as for major factors of health promotion. The focus was directed to the behavior changes such as diet, fitness, smoking, and alcohol consumption as a result, reduced to the choice of health. For individuals as a result of choosing to be healthy "health has become an ongoing task, a quotidian concern, an aspect of identity, even. It has certainly become, as government policy has it, a matter of prevention, rather than cure." (S. E. Moore, 2008: 272). As the responsibility of choosing to be healthy is given to the individual citizens, it is emphasized by the feminist thinkers that the responsibility was mainly given to women. The developments of new health paradigm and giving the responsibility to women could be analyzed as empowerment. However, as it is also criticized by feminist scholars the new paradigm can also be as harmful as the old model since it reproduces the gendered approach of health with new additions. (S. E. Moore, 2008: 273). These notions put women in a similar position which was criticized and aimed to be changed. The new requirements for being healthy citizens which are empowerment, self-awareness, and health consciousness are also listed under the principles of second-wave feminism. Therefore, health promotion is highly associated with neoliberal ideals that transfer the responsibility to the individual about life-experiences.

On top of that, on the subject of health, women are the primary actors for the achievement of healthy lives for both themselves and their families. The new health paradigm through the roles assigned to individuals against ill-health defines the healthy citizens from the approach that equates femininity with vulnerability. "Few

scholars have acknowledged that the ‘new paradigm’ of health embodies an attitude to the body that is distinctively feminine” (S. E. Moore, 2008: 273). The association of femininity with sickness is now giving its place to the association of femininity with healthiness. In addition to that, as the traditional masculinity is described with risk-taking, refusing medical advice, smoking or drinking these attributes are elements that can contribute to ill health. Therefore, it is seen that feminine associations are being used for describing healthiness. The biological attributes of women are used as distinctive characteristics that are closely associated with nature. While these associations help the separation of male and female bodies, they also create unequal descriptions since “women are seen as closer to nature, as irrational, as polluters, as sacred but as inferior because they menstruate and because of their ability to bear children” (L. McDowell, 2007: 44). Due to these associations and biological attributes women are seen as trapped in their bodies which is impossible to be kept under control and is unpredictable. The vulnerable presentation of the female body on the contrary of the “civilized, rational and superior” (L. McDowell, 2007: 44) male body causes the prioritization of one body over the stigmatization of others. Not only the association with nature also the construction of idealized female body create tension over the female body as it is described as being uncontrolled and unpredictable and at the same time urged to attain and confirm the ideal body traits.

Within femininity, the body has traditionally been conceived of as essentially uncontrollable, not simply in terms of women’s apparent physical vulnerability, but also their susceptibility to hormones, biological cycles and emotional states. Women’s apparent lack of bodily restraint has, historically, eventuated in demands that they seek to bring the body under control, as a matter of female virtue. (S. E. Moore, 2008: 275)

The traditional femininity definitions are highly prevalent in recent health ideas in neoliberal societies as the body regardless of its gender is considered to be under risks and should be governed.

In many societies the culturally and politically ‘correct’ body is the beautiful, strong, and healthy body, although the meanings given to obesity and thinness, to the form and shape of body parts, to facial and dental structures, as well as the values placed on endurance, agility, fertility, and longevity (as indicators of strength and health), vary (N. Scheper-Hughes and M. M. Lock, 1987: 25)

In addition to the caregiver role of women, under neoliberalism, a different female subject emerges. As the new health paradigm can be seen as an extension of

neoliberalism although the subject attributions are similar women are exposed to them from both sides. “Women do not only want a happy home anymore, they too want money, power and success. They are atomic, autonomous subjects of interest competing for the economic opportunities available” (J. Oksala, 2013, 39). Although the ideals of neoliberalism are not in accordance with traditional femininity the changing female subject, as a result of the effects of neoliberalism, is becoming more self-interested and self-oriented. As a result of neoliberalism, the traditional gender roles and institutions go through major changes.

As well as physical ideals, a healthy body that is also very much connected with being slim appears as another state of the body that needs to be desired and achieved by the individuals especially women. However together with the societal changes, approaches towards both female and male bodies also undergo alterations. With the increasing culture of consumption, women could start expressing new identities in new spaces as they became major actors (M. Domosh, & J. Seager, 2001:105). Women are positioned as consumers in neoliberal societies. Especially regarding health ideals, women are defined as someone who is informed and aware of the products around her and makes the right decision for herself. “The model female consumer is well versed on the latest research regarding health-promoting foods, and she has the skills to make nutritious food taste delicious. Perhaps most importantly, she understands how to control her body, but she also knows when to indulge” (K. Cairns & J. Johnston, 2015: 154). Thus, healthy eating is suggested as a choice rather than any restrictions. However, there are some criticisms stating that how the notion of choice is actually used for discipline and self-control. Despite healthy eating is argued to be a choice of the person, through that choice strict control and self-regulation is being exercised. The making of healthy choices for oneself brings along consumption preferences. The individual is “expressing freedom through consumer choice, and embodying discipline through dietary control” (K. Cairns & J. Johnston, 2015: 155) which are considered to be creating tension since the two behaviors are conflicting. The everyday food choices are shown as instances that show women’s agency thus an empowering practice. However, the self-regulation and monitoring followed by the food choices are argued to be conflicting with the objective of empowering women. Apparently expressing

freedom on one side and applying self-control on the other side can coexist as the descriptions of the new model female consumer.

From a postfeminist perspective choice is considered to be empowering regardless of its implications. According to scholars like Cairns and Johnston (2015), postfeminist approach to 'choice' removes the feminist critique from the debate and reduces the subject of choice to the personal level. Either call it beauty ideals or health ideals, working for achieving that with regulation, female bodies become disciplinary sites. However feminist Natasha Walters in her book called *The New Feminism*, describes new feminism as materialist even though theoretically no new ideas are involved (J. Oksala, 2011: 113). What is emphasized here is that the choice is emancipating if it's the person's own choice and if the women are pursuing their own interest. According to the new feminism of the 1990s women should be able to do what is considered as feminine if they want to as well as gaining economic freedom and professional success. However, as Oksala (2011) mentions this approach doesn't question the neoliberal subject on the contrary "the feminine subject too came to be seen increasingly as an egoistical subject of interest, a subject making free choices based on rational, economic calculation" (p. 114). Women reflecting the neoliberal ideals under the promotion of free choice don't help to dissolve the existing cultural meanings of femininity since appearance is still important as ever.

The idea of personal choice effectively masks the systemic aspects of power – domination, social hierarchies, economic exploitation- by relegating to subjects the freedom to choose between different options whilst denying them any real possibility for defining or shaping those options. (J. Oksala, 2011: 117)

It is very important to approach the concept of choice as it can be less empowering than suggested by the feminists from the 1990s. By limiting personal freedom to the ability to choose reduces structural issues untouched. As Oksala (2011) states, by describing liberation in terms of making the choices between becoming a manager or a prostitute is too simplistic as there are various dynamics affecting that choice (p. 117). As women are part of the neoliberal system like the rest of the society the argument of women becoming autonomous should be critically examined. The so-called liberated women who are able to choose might be becoming trapped in the already existing unequal system but this time differently as a result of their personal choice.

The belief that women are in complete control of their lives, that traditional femininity is their free choice and that they can achieve anything they want, not in spite of it, but with the help of it, makes them more compliant with normative techniques of gender. (J. Oksala, 2011: 118)

With the increasing health consciousness, the concentration on the body is changing its name from striving for being thin to healthy. The control of bodies is being exercised with the impediment of choosing to be healthy as moral citizens. As a result of doing the required behaviors for being healthy, people automatically become skinny. “In this way, weight loss is normalized as the deserved outcome of healthy (normatively thin) femininities, and health replaces ‘skinny’ as the paradigm of control” (K. Cairns & J. Johnston, 2015: 167). Keeping the same control mechanisms by only changing the name, control over female bodies continue to be predominant. Not only the physical appearance of femininity but traditional roles are also being exercised since mothers appear as the main agents of health promotion and providing. Despite the self-interested and autonomous characteristics of women under neoliberalism is being promoted, mothers are still the providers and maintainers of health for their families. Especially with the responsabilization, mothers are even more careful and anxious since not only providing a healthy lifestyle but also protecting their families from any risk is also their responsibility. In the case of a failure, it is the fault of the mother who was unable to successfully achieve the role of choosing a healthy life.

Despite many factors determining to be healthy, lifestyle practices driven by gendered body ideals are suggested to be pervasive in contemporary societies. In addition to the effort of achieving body ideals, one of the most commonly shared practices of being healthy is the food choices individuals make. The food choices are highly intertwined with lifestyles of individuals therefore integral for the analysis of individual choices for achieving healthy lives. As individuals develop coping strategies for avoiding exposure to risk factors, they tend to go towards alterations in their lifestyles. In this particular context, risk factors of contemporary societies that threaten the health of individuals appear as the main reason that lies behind the new consumption practices. In fact, the changing approaches towards health and emergent associations with the body, not only cause a change in the roles of individuals, but also

change consumption practices. In this part of the work, it is intended to elaborate on the changing approaches towards health, body, and the role of individuals while focusing on their organic food consumption practices as part of the strategies they develop for disease prevention.

According to some scholars, the new paradigm of health has detrimental consequences for women as it uses techniques like self-regulation as a result of health promotion and body consciousness. Thus, health is suggested to be used by the state as a tool for surveillance of individuals and control of populations.

It is significant, however, that the prime concern of those developing and implementing health advice was not health or the health needs of the mother but the health and health needs of her children for whom it was considered she was primarily responsible. Indeed, although health advice is oriented towards women it is the health and health needs of men and children that appear to be the goal of such activities. (S. Nettleton, 1996: 37)

Especially women are being targeted by the health promotion discourse and campaigns, since as mothers they have the sacred role of the caregiver. Thus, it could be suggested that health promotion is a gendered project since women are the main targets.

2.3. Understanding the Relation between Neoliberal Subject Construction, Governmentality and Being Healthy

2.3.1. Power/Knowledge

When making a study about a society that targets the individuals and their behaviors, according to Foucault it is important to focus on the question of what kind of body is needed in the society. While body either from the population or sexuality aspect has always been one of the major objects of studies, the priorities and strategies of maintaining the needed kind of body in societies are shaped through power. Although power is being used for controlling and managing the societies and populations Foucault doesn't limit the scope of power, neither with the state nor with repression. According to Foucault power is not functioning solely with tools like repression, censorship, exclusion. "On the contrary, power is strong this is because, as

we are beginning to realize, it produces effects at the level of desire – and also at the level of knowledge. Far from preventing knowledge, power produces it.” (M. Foucault, 1980: 59). Therefore, it is crucial to focus on how power produces these effects and how power is exercised. Because as Foucault argues “we have in the first place the assertion that power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and it only exists in action.” (M. Foucault, 1980: 89).

Foucault prefers to concentrate on micro-powers that are exercised at all levels of daily life for understanding the changing dynamics and relations in societies in addition to state apparatuses. The reason is that he suggests that if power is limited with the state apparatuses only, it will not be diffused to the everyday level and change the course of life. Therefore, how power is being exercised on a minute level is significant for gaining a better understanding of its effects on knowledge production and individuals.

In a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (M. Foucault, 1980: 93)

Therefore, through the production of truth, power is diffused to all levels of the social body which influences how to live, how to behave and how to interact as true discourses. In order to understand how power operates, it is crucial to abandon the viewpoint that power is something that can be possessed. On the contrary, for understanding how society and individuals are being shaped and affected by it, it must be handled as “something which only functions in the form of a chain.” (M. Foucault, 1980: 98). Meaning that it doesn’t operate on the basis of localities or can be appropriated like a commodity.

In this context, individuals are not represented to be subdued by power since “power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.” (M. Foucault, 1980: 98). As the individuals are not described as passive and both undergo and exercise power the

relation can't be limited to repression and crushing of the individuals. However, individuals are among the effects of power "as certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be defined and constituted as individuals." (M. Foucault, 1980: 98). The truth and knowledge produced to constitute the social body and individuals through the methods like observation, control, and registration organize how the knowledge is diffused and regulates both the constitution and regulation of individuals.

The new type of power in contemporary societies is suggested to be constantly exercised through its tactics and methods. By exercising power on themselves individuals take part in the constitution and cohesion of the social body. As it can be seen the new mechanism of power is the main reason for individuals' role and internalization of these discourses. However, it is significant to understand how power is being accepted.

It doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (M. Foucault, 1980: 119)

Thus, through the new aspects of power as a productive network, it produces knowledge and discourse which are more effective than repressive techniques as individuals become part of this process. Since these techniques aim to occupy all power relations through focusing on the lives of individuals and their daily activities. As a result of this omnipresence, power could access to individuals' lives, bodies, behaviors, attitudes and so forth. Although on individual level these techniques were useful, the population became a major subject to be handled due to problems related to demography, public health, fertility, etc. With the increasing population numbers, a closer look and control of people and capital become necessary. Along with the increasing number of people, the new techniques emerged as more efficient and less costly.

There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. (M. Foucault, 1980: 155)

Hence, through the normalization of knowledge and having it become a perception thus, a way of conduct can be stated as to how power in modern states work from Foucault's perspective.

2.3.2. Governmentality

As well as focusing on classic liberalism Foucault concentrates on two schools of neoliberalism: Ordo-liberals and Chicago School. In the system suggested by the Ordo-liberals for maintaining a successfully operating market, state or political interventions should be very limited. However, through legal measures, the market and competition must be maintained, and an environment should be provided for them to operate. According to the Ordo-liberals, an autonomous domain of economy operating through its own rules is not meaningful since politico-institutional 'inventions' can solve dysfunctionalities of capitalist societies (T. Lemke, 2001: 195). They bring forward the idea that capitalism can take different shapes and include different political thoughts since it wouldn't be appropriate to expect one capitalism existing in all societies. Chicago School, like the Ordo-liberals, is against state intervention for the purpose of achieving economic liberty. Ordo-liberals propose a social market economy that privileges the market, regulations and interventions to support it. On the other hand, "Chicago School's approach is their consistent expansion of the economic form to apply to the social sphere, thus eliding any difference between the economy and the social" (T. Lemke, 2001: 197). The ideas of Ordo-liberals emphasized a society governed by the economy, whereas the Chicago School offers a more radical change in the society by re-defining the social sphere as an economic realm. At this point, the rational-economic action model is emphasized as governmental action to maintain competition and shape individuals according to market ideals. With this argument, the economy becomes the social itself and covers all human activities under it. All the human activities and decisions are suggested to be made through the scope of the economy. Individuals are also affected by those developments. Theory of human capital, brought forward by Foucault, focuses on how individuals become entrepreneurs with full responsibility of existing in the competitive market as a result of constant investments such as training, education, and so forth. Thus, individuals by

turning into entrepreneurs of self, practice rational-economic actions by each of the investments they make. “By encoding the social domain as a form of the economic domain, cost-benefit calculations and market criteria can be applied to decision-making processes within family, married life, professional life, etc.” (T. Lemke, 2001: 200). The free actions and choices of individuals are expected to take place by adapting entrepreneurial and competitive behavior traits and finally making the decisions based on rational choice. However, emphasizing no state intervention within neoliberalism doesn’t mean a new form of governing is being exercised. “An examination of neoliberalism entails a reexamination of the fundamental problematic of ideology, the intersection of power, concepts, modes of existence and subjectivity” (J. Read, 2009: 26). Therefore, it is crucial to analyze and understand neoliberalism more than just an economic system but rather a social order which consists subject transformations and means to achieve it.

“The neoliberal forms of government feature not only direct intervention by means of empowered and specialized state apparatuses, but also characteristically develop indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them.” (T. Lemke, 2001: 201). As the government is a form of exercising power that can be found in all levels of society not being limited to institutions or direct techniques in order to maintain order, it can use both direct and indirect techniques. “Power is not something that is acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations.” (M. Foucault, 1976: 33). The exercise of power takes many forms and in the case of creating subjects, the neoliberal ideal is seen as a new way of creating subjects. The government is not limited to state institutions or a particular technique but refers to various methods from guiding to shaping as well as including all social institutions and groups. It is a process of being governed in addition to governing yourself. Thus, focusing on practices and tactics revolving around the conduct of conduct is offered to be more beneficial to understand how these government practices are shaping the conduct. “To govern humans is not to crush their capacity to act, but to acknowledge it and to utilize it for one’s own objectives.” (N. Rose: 2010, 4).

The concept panopticon used to describe our society represents many aspects of governmentality over one example. The way power and surveillance are being integrated into Bentham's panopticon is helpful for understanding how individuals exercise control on themselves. Panopticon is an architectural figure that suggests new principles of disciplining inmates with the constant visibility that makes the inmates feel under constant surveillance (M. Foucault, 1995).

So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (M. Foucault, 1995: 201)

Although prison is an example and can be expanded by giving more examples of apparatuses such as schools and police, the major role of these institutions is assuring discipline over the people. "Disciplines are techniques for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities" (M. Foucault, 1995: 218). Through surveillance and control, bodies and behaviors are being governed in a way that conforms to the expected outcomes. Attributing individuals, certain characteristics as being rational and ethical, neoliberal governance expects individuals to make choices and govern themselves. Individualism and self-governing result in high concentration on the self which results in isolated, like in the case of Bentham's panopticon, and self-interested individuals.

Increasing health concerns was first embodied by the professionalizing middle class in the late 19th-20th century. Integrating health and fitness into their lives professional middle class aimed to differentiate themselves from the others through their choices. With the rising new health consciousness during those times, in the 1970s to be exact, new awareness regarding environmental, occupational, and lifestyle risks to which individuals sought a solution by changing their behaviors. (R. Crawford, 2006: 407). The quest for living a healthier life and taking the responsibility cannot be examined separated from the historical and political developments and it can be suggested that the promotion of health and the behaviors individuals are embracing are very much in parallel with neoliberal ideals. The neoliberal social order and the individual responsibility for health became influential reciprocally and coexisted dominantly. "The success of privatized, market solutions to public problems cannot be

grasped without a clear understanding of how personal responsibility triumphed over a political morality premised on collective responsibility for economic and social well-being.” (R. Crawford, 2006: 409). With the health-care reforms privatized services turned the citizens into active health consumers as well as being self-determining about their health. The effects of neoliberal governmentality should be examined broadly since it reveals new categorizations of the rational and irrational neoliberal subjects also new dynamics regarding domination and exploitation which necessitate the closer examination.

Over the years the way human body is being disciplined showed significant changes. What Foucault calls as disciplinary technology is the power exercised on the human body in the contemporary world. While going back in history to analyze the different forms of methods that lead the way to the emergence of disciplinary power, he explains the transition from more brutal forms of displaying power, torture, to more humanist approaches. “The body was no longer tortured and dismembered, but trained, exercised and supervised.” (C. Macleod, & K. Durrheim, 2002: 47). By closely supervising the individual, it was aimed to regulate and normalize the individual with the disciplinary technology.

As part of disciplinary power, surveillance is the major tool for the control of the individuals through the gaze that works to change the behaviors of the subjects. “Surveillance becomes powerful by extending itself to self-reflection and self-consciousness and, in this way, becomes one of the mechanisms linking the macro-issues of gendered oppression with the micro-level of gendered practices and relations.” (C. Macleod, & K. Durrheim, 2002: 48). Through the internalization of surveillance, individuals regulate and monitor themselves in order to fit the norms. Therefore, in contemporary societies, physical punishments containing violence are not being practiced anymore since surveillance as the production of disciplinary power is effective for individuals to normalize the judgments in society and internalize it by exercising surveillance to her/himself. When it is about the health concerns in contemporary societies individuals tend to focus on their bodies and apply strict regulation methods.

Bio-power is used by Foucault to describe the exercise of disciplinary power over the body. “It has two inter-related aspects. The first is the control of the human species

in the form of the population (i.e. the macro-level); the second is control of the body (i.e. on the micro-level).” (C. Macleod, & K. Durrheim, 2002: 49,50). The first type focuses on macro-level issues related to population like birth rate which requires the implementation of regulations and policies in order to manage the population in the most optimized way. The second type of bio-power focuses on the control of the body through training for efficiency. These two types of power are used to maintain order and avoid deviance both at micro and macro levels. By focusing on the individuals, the aim is to exercise power on each person aiming them to govern themselves within their daily mundane activities. The concentration on population, in general, requires larger involvement with institutions and regulations again for governing the citizens. Individuals are expected to govern themselves while internalizing the discourses and judgments around them. The internalization process requires the person to invest, train, self-regulate in short to exercise technologies of responsabilization as a result of neoliberal governance. “Thus, neoliberal governance is not externally imposed onto bodies, but operates through the embodied actions of free subjects –often by exercising choice in the market.” (K. Cairns & J. Johnston, 2015: 155). That being said, both neoliberalism and governmentality give the opportunity to focus the embodied surveillance and discipline and also the everyday life of individuals which now includes structural problems categorized as personal.

2.3.3. Relation Between Governmentality and Being Healthy

Health and sickness have been problematized until and even today as they characterize and categorize individuals or groups according to certain traits or information. Over the years, the necessity of controlling the population through various methods such as surveillance or intervention emerged. “The biological traits of a population become relevant factors for economic management, and it becomes necessary to organize around them an apparatus which will ensure not only their subjection but the constant increase of their utility.” (M. Foucault, 1980: 172). At this point, family as an institution emerged as the agent of medicalization with the role and responsibility of the maintenance of health especially the health of children.

At all events, from the eighteenth century onwards the healthy, clean, fit body, a purified, cleansed aerated domestic space, beds and utensils, and the interplay of the 'caring' and the 'cared for' figure among the family's essential laws. (M. Foucault, 1980: 173)

Families are given the role of following the general objectives of having good health as well as individual needs and desires. In addition to the individual responsibility of health, issues like increasing medical care supply and demand, interventions regarding illnesses in societies such as policies about vaccinations, affected and accelerated the politics of health. However according to Foucault, "this program of hygiene as a regime of health for populations entails a certain number of authoritarian medical interventions and controls." (M. Foucault, 1980: 175). Compared to the old notion of health, which was mainly about momentary curing cases, the focus is now on the population in order to manage the death-rates and life expectations. Foucault suggests that social control takes place through the control of urban space which includes not limited to the infrastructural aspects such as sewage, drainage systems as well as environmental issues like humidity, and population density. Doctors here appear as important actors who are responsible for informing individuals about the basic rules of hygiene for food, living spaces, and so forth in order to avoid the uncontrollable increase of unwanted cases in the society. Doctors become very influential and gain social power as a 'medico-administrative' a new form of knowledge is being formulated regarding society, health, illness, and so on. Not being limited to health, this knowledge also included a broader sense of living on issues like what to eat or drink, what to wear or sexuality. Although this type of social control seems to be limited with individual health it is actually outspread to daily activities of individuals. Through its role as the responsible hygiene and health "the doctor becomes the great advisor and expert, if not in the art of governing, at least in that of observing, correcting and improving the social 'body' and maintaining it in a permanent state of health." (M. Foucault, p. 177).

The idea that family is the main locus of medicalization as a cheaper, temporary, and personal alternative to hospitals can still be seen widely in societies. Today, the development of knowledge about the health of the population is not solely limited to hospitals and doctors, although they are still considered as major sources of knowledge production. Dietitians, trainers, social media influencers, chefs are a couple of

examples of newly emerged sources for knowledge production about the population's health that result in governing bodies. For example, training and going to the gym is considered an activity that is good for health. The morally acceptable notions about being healthy shape the decisions and actions of individuals as they follow the dominant ideas about being healthy. According to the dominant notions, individuals apply power to their bodies in order to achieve the ideal body. Here it can be said that the knowledge about the ideal body is being produced by groups of people for individuals to reach. This requires the government of the body as individuals apply strict control over their bodies for achieving that ideal. And guidance of how to get healthy and existing dominant discourses, produced by experts, influence individuals and their choices.

Health is a subject that is at the center of both approaches aiming at macro and micro level of control and regulation for the totality of the social body and individuals at the same time. As the dominant knowledge about what is normal and what is not being produced and internalized by the individuals as a result of the power that indicates these as moral or right behaviors, individuals desire to conform to these norms. Thus, individuals voluntarily apply techniques of power such as self-regulation and surveillance at all stages of their daily lives which serves for the maintenance of cohesion.

As a result of discourses on being healthy, produced either through medical sources or as a result of media and advertising industry the knowledge and notion about the 'normal' fit and healthy body become accepted by the individuals which are followed by behaviors in parallel with these discourses for conforming the dominant notions. As a result of the desire for being healthy individuals govern themselves and are governed by experts like doctors or trainers. Therefore, the control over the body both for masses and individuals is a technique that produces cohesive and 'normal' bodies through disciplinary power rather than the repressive power. Hence, the process of knowledge production about being healthy regarding the government of bodies works as individuals conceive and internalize the dominant notions and apply those into their bodies which results in the reproduction of the discourses.

2.4. Dimensions of Association between Being Healthy and Organic Food

2.4.1. Health Risks

In contemporary societies, risk has been a concept that is used for describing the existing threats experienced by the individuals. As Beck (2002) puts it the current situation in the 21st century can be defined with the concept ‘world risk society’ that is consisted of various threats and crisis from different areas. In premodern times it wasn’t risk but the danger that was used to describe the existing threats for humans. Back in those times, dangerous situations were being described by nature and gods. Thus, the term risk can be described as a modern concept since it emerged due to anxieties caused by technological developments.

Substantial changes in the beliefs regarding risks and the handling of them have come about in the past three centuries, due to scientific and technological developments within medicine and other disciplines. Nature may no longer be the main reason for risks to our health. Most present risks can be seen as created by humans, being side effects of developments that are mainly viewed as benefits to humans. (J.A. Skolbekken, 1995: 297)

As Skolbekken (1995) states, the uncontrollable risks come into existence as unintentional consequences of developments that aim to be beneficial for the societies. In order to avoid as many side effects as possible, the risk approach brings along the use of modern tools like calculations and decision making since forecasting and controlling the risk factors are vital for modern societies. With the technological developments, medicine underwent a lot of change which gave rise to focus on how to maintain health rather than preventing disease.

The elimination of various infectious diseases as the major cause of death in the western world in the first half of this century, has undoubtedly generated such optimism, and may be seen as one of the reasons for the raise of health promotion as an important ideology of health. (J.A. Skolbekken, 1995: 298)

Although the focus shifts towards maintenance of health in modern societies it can be said that the technological developments didn’t result in the abolishment of health as one of the biggest preoccupations for the individuals. With the increasing number of information channels and sources, individuals are bombarded by the continuous production of information about the risk factors that should be watched out. Media is

one of the most influential means, with the greatest communication network that reaches the entire society, conveys the dangers and risks to the individuals. With the continuous sharing of news, reports, and research that falsify most of the previously published data cause an immense accumulation of information shared without applying any filter for the individuals. Although individuals are expected to be responsible for their personal health, also by following closely to expert knowledge regarding health risks and to-dos, the information overload becomes unavoidable. Thus, while they are expected to make the best choices for themselves, under these circumstances, the decision-making processes are mostly interrupted because of the confusion experienced by the individual as a result of the constant publication of news. Being constantly exposed to medical studies or recommendations force the health-conscious individual to become an expert for identifying useful information to benefit from. However, due to the great number of sources and lack of competence regarding the field of health, individuals mostly experience insecurities rather than the confidence of an expert. Some scholars emphasize the positive impacts of the ever-expanding medical culture and knowledge sharing on individuals, as they would become more aware of the risk factors and take measures against it. On the other hand, Crawford (2006) for instance, suggests the opposite;

The continuing expansion of knowledge about health hazards, the information deluge, the frequent exaggerations of risk and insatiable consumption of medical news, all framed by the professional and lay mandate to protect and improve health, aggravate the very insecurities they are designed to quell. (p. 415)

In addition to the insecurities caused by the expansion of knowledge, it is important to emphasize the other impacts of the risk awareness as well as the insecurities. The expansion of knowledge about the risks that the individuals are exposed to operate with the purpose of motivating individuals for lifestyle changes. Although the risk factors could be a medical condition like the negative effects of high cholesterol levels to individual's health, the solution provided for this problem usually contains lifestyle modifications such as less consumption of red meat. Many uncertainties and unpredictable risks are intended to be controlled with policies focusing on population planning, education, and health for the purpose of maintaining order in society. While the urge to control all the risks in society remains, death and disease appear as threats that are still not being able to be controlled in modern societies. As these are not fully

controlled, the individual responsibility becomes important more than ever for the achievement of health. As personal health becomes closely associated with self-regulation, reaching the ideal state of health becomes more and more impossible to attain. Therefore, while the general conditions of health may be improved the personal satisfaction with personal health may decline as a result of failures. (O. H. Førde, 1998: 1156).

As Beck (2002) describes, despite the everyday life becomes more dangerous it is not due to the increasing risk factors but due to de-bounding of uncontrollable risks. He continues by mentioning three dimensions of de-bounding which are: spatial, temporal, and social dimensions, that make individuals feel the risks and be exposed to them more than ever. The risk factors that are beyond human control become widely expanded without being restricted to nations anymore. While environmental concerns like air pollution are being more prominent in many societies, these risk factors occur and affect societies regardless of national borders. The temporal aspect of de-bounding can be explained through the long-term consequences of certain human activities that are considered to have benefits at the time being. For instance, the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) can be given as an example to this dimension, as their effects on people are not being revealed yet despite the ongoing researches about the subject that point out the detrimental effects of GMO use. Lastly, the social dimension is used to explain the emergence of uncontrollable risks as a result of multiple actors and effects that lead to the dissolution of a single liable agent for the causes. The information provided by the de-bounding approach, can be useful in better understanding and analyzing the increasing health concerns and the focus on the self. These dimensions of risks, experienced intensely by the individuals, cause self-oriented health solutions.

Further, it may also exacerbate an already prevalent sense of powerlessness about controlling the forces which impinge on individuals by promoting a concept of control which may be viewed as an alternative to political efficacy: 'I can't change the world, but at least I can change myself'. (R. Crawford, 1980: 377)

The more the risks become to be perceived as uncontrollable by the individuals the more they focus on individual maneuvers and modifications in their lifestyles as the single area that they have control over. As a result of the unremitting production of medical knowledge through research, awareness of risk factors that affect human

health is being raised. While resulting in significant improvements with the ever-growing knowledge on health, the risk factors and health issues remain to be major issues in societies. “Research in recent years has made us aware of more risk factors than ever before in history. This does not automatically make us healthier and happier human beings.” (J.A. Skolbekken, 1995: 302). The increasing exposure to risk creates insecurities.

Being healthy, while being a biological matter, is also a socio-cultural concept that can be explained in various ways depending on different time and space dimensions. As well as that, since it is closely associated with the body and the individual practices, health is also described with personal meanings and experiences. As neoliberalism secures its position more and more in societies, health and other societal issues started to be described as medical and personal issues. As the long-term detrimental effects of health risk factors stay in obscurity, insecurities are tried to be compensated by concentrating on health-conscious activities which include food as the fundamental subject of area that individuals take action. The fear of catching disease or fear of not having a healthy life become the driving force for people for integrating healthy practices into their lives due to various crises that affect the ideas about food security. As one of the vital determinants of health, food choices and dietary habits are being the primary areas to be worked on, in order to avoid health risks and threats that exist in societies. With the close focus on these areas, individuals are being introduced to new needs, products, and habits for the maintenance of health while restricting health and particularly food security concerns into individual responsibility as medical or personal anxieties rather than social problems. In addition to that, with the emergence of new needs, products, and habits new insecurities also come to existence.

“Food security can be defined as a food product that is appropriate to be consumed from physical, chemical, and microbiological aspects and hasn’t lost its nutritive value.” (H., Gülse Bal, Z., Göktolga, O., Karkacier, 2006: 10). However, with the increasing population and industrialization processes, priorities regarding food production thus the subject of security underwent changes. Focusing on meeting the needs of increasing populations with the most efficient solutions lead the integration of industrialized production methods into food production chains. As a result of the adaptation of technological developments into agriculture and food production

systems, as well as increasing productivity, also increased the health risks. Since the foodborne illnesses arose and rapidly dispersed in societies, food security became a critical issue for consumers. Although food security being highly related to production processes that require strict supervision, with the individual's involvement as the responsible for handling health issues, individuals become in charge of filtering out the detrimental products. With the fear of getting affected by foodborne illness in the short or long run directs the health-conscious individual to make healthier choices. Thus, it can be said that the organic food consumption is a strategic behavior for the health-conscious consumer, in order to protect her/himself while at the same time consolidating the idea that the organic consumption is one of many regular consumption behaviors that is the choice of the individual. As a result of the increasing concern over new ways for decreasing production costs with the motivation of feeding the rising population, jeopardizes the health of people as it focuses on productivity and profitability rather than the health of people. Fabrication and mass production of food with the chemical additives lead to the emergence and spread of the question about food security. As the insecurities and risk factors show, quite an increase it enhances the individuals' health care consumption (O. H. Førde, 1998).

2.4.2. Food Insecurities

At this point in the work, it is intended to elaborate on the concept of food in relation to health and how it has been defined. As one of the most essential human activities, food is a product that is necessary for human survival. The biological and nutritional factors are crucial for a functioning body. However, food intake is not solely about survival for human beings, rather it involves various practices, preferences, and meanings. It can be said that food is one of the integral components of our culture due to the reciprocal relation between culture and food. Thus, it is aimed to analyze the culturally constructed nature of food in order to suggest some viewpoints for understanding how and why food choices particularly organic food choices are being practiced by the individuals. "These are interlarded with issues of classification, religion, identity, civility, pleasure, economics, and the environment." (C. L. Delaney, & D. D. Kaspin, 2011: 248). Thus, food can be defined or explained

differently depending on the context. For example, the places where people buy their food can be a determinant of many things. Obtaining it from a farmer's market, supermarket, or online stores would tell the type of food consumed and the preferences of consumers. The meanings attributed and the behaviors related to food from regulation to language, spatial dimensions to relations with other people show that food is more than an anatomical need but an activity that is embedded into societies and human practices with cultural reflections.

For being healthy, consumption of certain products is emphasized and presented as healthy which causes the unhealthy options to become like taboos in societies. In addition to that, the unhealthy fast food system is suggested to have negative effects not only towards personal health by consumption, but also due to its production steps. In order to keep up with the fast consumption, the production also had to go through changes which made the process last shorter with more yields. The chemical additives being used for bigger numbers of product yields and enhancing the taste according to the preferences of consumers affect the nutrients and taste of the foods. With the growing concern regarding the chemicals and genetically modified foods (GMFs), another category of food enters the market. From different perspectives, the GMFs can be explained differently. One perspective may focus and highlight the benefits of the technology, while another approach criticizes the modifications because of health concerns. From a producers' perspective, the new technologies standardize the food growing processes which eliminates the possibility of financial loss for farmers. However, the long-term effects on the environment, farmers, and consumers create anxiety within societies. "At a deeper level, the anxiety may be related to the belief that we are what we eat; if we eat transgenic food, the question looms: what will we become?" (C. L. Delaney, & D. D. Kaspian, 2011: 272). The food we consume as a social construct enables the reproduction of identities through that particular activity. However, in the case of GMFs, the anxiety is mainly due to the possible effects of these food on human health as well as the environment and natural resources. Although anxiety and attention towards this issue are increasing, the demands of transparent labeling and marketing in order to understand what we eat don't show similar tendency. The new technological developments are being shown as a biological revolution by the industry, as they will have positive impacts on sustainable

agriculture, undernourishment, and hunger levels. Thus, uncertainties about the food we wish to consume become the reasons of the anxieties as a result of the new technologies. “The new plants are novel enough to be patented, yet not so novel as to warrant a label telling us what we it is we are eating.” (M. Pollan, 2001: 184). In addition to the personal health concerns, genetic engineering changes the independence of farmers through the patents, therefore, a new power distribution among the food production industry takes place. The relation between the plants and the human is changing as the processes of production changes rapidly. According to Pollan (2001), “now we are about to find out what happens when people began approaching the genes of our food plants as software.” (p. 185). There is no doubt that the relation with plants and the purpose of the production undergo major changes. The approaches towards food such as standardization reflects the desire to control nature, calculate the outcomes, and manage it for optimized and efficient land use and product yield. Although some scholars suggest that the argument is being used to support the increasing number of production output because there is the need to feed the people of the world, “roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year — approximately 1.3 billion tonnes — gets lost or wasted.” (FAO). That is why the suggested argument is not serving its aim as the produced food is not being consumed by all the people and the unequal distribution of food is leaving millions of people undernourished.

2.4.3. Organic Food as a Healthy Alternative

In contemporary societies, organic food is being increasingly consumed as food choices are proven to be one of the most influential factors of personal health. The personal health is being directly affected by the food intake whereas the production systems are suggested to have negative impacts on the environment and farmers as well as on human.

As farming practices are a vital part of food production for populations, the policies about farming went through some changes throughout the years. Globalization, neoliberal policies, technological advancements, and population growth can be given as factors affecting these agricultural policy changes. Consequently, as policies change

from production to consumption, the change started to have its repercussions on every level of society. The policy changes focusing on farmers, their working conditions, environmental issues, changing ideas and concerns about food and nutrition resulted in emergence of various new ideas and approaches on each dimension. With the privatization processes and the collaborations with the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the European Union (EU) have affected the agricultural policies (Ç. Çağlayan, 2010: 9). As a result of the collaborations with international organizations, the agricultural policies and practices were aimed to be changed in the 1980s that included limiting the state supports and promoting foreign trade. These changes constitute the ideological and political side of the story from which the agricultural practices were affected and underwent changes regarding the production methods, inputs, working conditions, and nutritive value of the crops.

As the traditional agricultural methods became less effective new methods and solutions were requested. The uncertainties of nature were aimed to be overcome for the achievement of standard, predictable, calculable, and fast production. In order to increase productivity and speed up the process of maturation, for plants and animals, new technological developments were required (Ç. Çağlayan, 2010: 9). These new technologies for increasing productivity included the excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides, chemical additives, and genetically modified seeds. These technological developments while striving for increased productivity and standardization, are suggested to take the economic pressure away from the farmers in cases of uncontrollable situations that yield economic loss. However, despite the suggested benefits the new technologies are known to harm the soil and pollute water due to use of chemicals. As well as the environmental damages, farmers are being damaged by these chemicals as they are responsible for the implementation. In addition to the harmful effects on farmers, concerns related to food security are also on the rise. As a result of the changing production methods and additives used, the content of food is also changing that consequent in not knowing what is being consumed anymore. “Safe food can be defined as food that is appropriate to be consumed based on its physical, chemical and microbiological characteristics and nutritive values.” (Ç. Çağlayan, 2010: 11). However, because of the use of chemicals and pesticides, people become

more and more anxious about food security. Pesticides are very dangerous and can directly harm an individual as it can cause poisoning. It is known that around the globe, roughly 3 million pesticide poisoning cases are suggested to take place, among which more than 220.000 cases end with death. (Ç. Çağlayan, 2010: 12). Besides the direct harms of pesticides, they also cause chronic illnesses such as toxic effects on the nervous system, respiratory problems, and carcinogenic effects. Also, for the animal farms, the situation is very similar since additives are used for the rapid growth of animals and the use of antibiotics cause hormonal dysfunctions on the human body as well as resistance to antibiotics. Concerns about food security is increasing as it gets harder and harder to see what the food is comprised of as a result of the new technologies. At the same time, the damages on the human body and health are accompanied by the damages on the environment. Due to bad agricultural practices, big number of lands have become inappropriate for farming. Chemical fertilizers, irrigation practices, pesticides, extensive mechanization can be mentioned among bad practices that are damaging the soil, organisms, water resources, biodiversity, and so forth. With the overemphasis on the productivity and efficiency resulting in an industry like agriculture system caused socio-economic shifts, health, and environmental concerns. As a result of these concerns, alternative farming methods and consciousness towards food security have been popularly discussed and integrated into local systems. Thus, organic agriculture is suggested as an alternative that can provide better conditions and healthier practices for all the respective actors and areas of this subject.

Organic market was developed in Europe and North America and, later spread to all other nations around the world, due to health and environmental concerns as mentioned above (K. Demiryürek, 2011:29). As the demand for organic food increased both locally and internationally it triggered the organic food trade for organic products that are produced in other parts of the world.

The characteristic development has been the rise in demand and consumption in Europe and North America, while the rise in organic production and in number of organic farmers was in the South – the South in particular supplying tropical products and out-of-season products for Northern consumers. (J. E. Hermansen, & M. T. Knudsen, & C. Schader, 2013: 51)

After the establishment of the organic market and trade, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) became the first organization

to define organic agriculture principles. (E. S. Kurtar & A.K. Ayan, 2004: 59). And they define organic agriculture;

As a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people; relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects; and combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved. (The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements [IFOAM], n.d.)

By clarifying the definition and principles of organic agriculture, international trade standards could be applied easier in addition to the collaborations with governments and international organizations. The demand coming from North America and Europe was considered as an opportunity to join the global trade by exporting organic products for the developing countries. With the rising demand and interest in the organic foods, the organic food market is growing steadily. “Organic food and drink sales reached 97 billion US dollars in 2007 according to Ecovia Intelligence.” (FiBL & IFOAM, 2019: 27). And again, nearly 90 percent of sales take place in North America and Europe. In addition to market growth, the number of organic producers is also increasing. “In 2017, 69.8 million hectares were under organic agricultural management worldwide. Organic farmland increased by 11.7 million hectares or 20 percent in 2017. Currently, 1.4 percent of the world’s agricultural land is organic.” (FiBL & IFOAM, 2019: 25). Despite the growing numbers of the market, still, a concentrated consumption can be observed as a result of the number of sales. In developing countries, organic food consumption seems to be limited for the internal markets due to the export-oriented production.

2.5. Development of Organic Agriculture in Turkey

In Europe and North America, organic agriculture was initiated by farmers and volunteering organizations whereas in Turkey organic agriculture was initiated through the demand for organic food from European companies. Thus, in the years 1984-1985 farmers started growing crops by organic agriculture methods. At the beginning, the organic agriculture in Turkey was on-demand however over the years Turkey became an important exporter to the European markets also with the help of

establishment of NGOs and involvement of government through bringing regulations into force that are in line with the regulations of the European Union (EU) regarding the production, labeling, and certification processes. In 2004, the first national organic laws came into force in order to meet the standards and comply with the EU². Thus, it can be said that Turkey is following the EU standards closely and implementing the standards, policies, and legislations to all organic agricultural processes to be listed among the third countries that export organic food to EU.³ With the increasing number of producers in Turkey, the organic shares of total agricultural land also have gone up and the organic share is 1.4 percent in 2017 (FiBL & IFOAM, 2019: 46). Not only in Turkey but the number of producers all around the world is increasing due to the growing demand. “There were over 2.9 million organic producers worldwide. According to the data obtained, over 80 percent of the producers are in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The country with the most organic producers is India, followed by Uganda and Mexico.” (FiBL & IFOAM, 2019: 62). Turkey is also listed in the top ten countries with large numbers of producers in the 8th place⁴. According to the numbers provided by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), in 2017 among Europe, Turkey is the top country with the greatest number of organic producers which shows the focus on organic production and export continues to increase. These numbers also show that organic production in Turkey is mainly focused on export and on-demand production since the market growth, per capita spending, and market share are still at the development stage. In accordance with the slowly progressing development stage, the organic market growth and consumption are also expanding very slowly due to various reasons such as limited access to and information about organic food, limited government support, export-oriented production, high prices, and distrust (G. A., Eryılmaz, K. Demiryürek, and M. Emir, 2015).

² <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2004/12/20041203.htm>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

³ <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/BUGEM/Belgeler/Bitkisel%20C3%9Cretim/Organik%20Tar%C4%B1m/UlusalEylemPlan-2013-2016.pdf>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

⁴ It can be seen from the Figure 1, page 46.

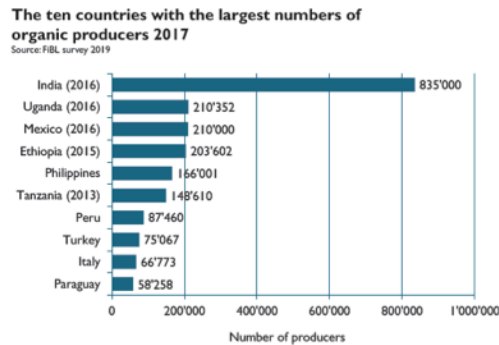


Figure 10: World: The ten countries with the largest numbers of organic producers 2017

Source: FiBL survey 2019, based on information from the private sector, certifiers, and governments. For detailed data sources see annex, page 331

Figure 1: The ten countries with the largest numbers of organic producers 2017

Source: About organic farming (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.organic-world.net/yearbook/yearbook-2019/infographics.html>, 10.06.2019

Despite the increasing number of organic producers, the domestic market is still in the development phase since the focus is mainly on the export. As the producers make contracts, they have safer conditions in terms of receiving the money and selling all the crops. That is one of the motivations for producers to enter this market mainly for export. With the changing behavior of consumers, organic products in the domestic market are also expanding, however, both from the side of producers and consumers there are several issues that make the expansion proceed at a slow rate.

The researches and debates on organic food in Turkey are mostly about the growth of the market and consumer behaviors. As it is still in the development phase researches focus on understanding the motivations and preferences of organic consumers. As well as that, there are other researches that provide information about the current production conditions of organic agriculture and projections for the future.

According to Kurtar and Ayan (2004), the integration of organic agriculture in Turkey has both advantages and disadvantages. While having a positive impact on savings for the farmer, because of less use of additives and contract farming, they also raise some concerns about whether the product yield would be enough for the increasing demand due to the increasing population. However, according to the article of Aslan and Demir (2016), organic agriculture not only is an alternative production system that protects us from the damages of conventional agriculture but also is able

to be productive enough to feed the populations. They come up with an organic agriculture planning that includes 81 cities, 106 crops, 12 different fresh herb, and 4 animal products. The planning aims to minimize both the kilometers traveled by food products and minimizing the amount of missing food products in cities. As a result, if the model is implemented consumption of fossil fuel will decrease in addition to providing organic food to all consumers in Turkey. However, as Demiryürek (2011) in his article states, Turkey is still focused more on the export of organic food and that is the reason for not having a thorough model and planning for expanding the domestic organic food market.

The concept of organic which is used synonymously with biological and ecological in Turkey according to the organic law is not highly embraced by the consumers due to lack of knowledge and confusion. As well as the synonym words for organic, there are various terms being used for marketing purposes as organic food become to represent a lifestyle. The words used for marketing purposes such as natural and produce from the village are not organic despite the extensive use in the domestic market. The Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (RTMAF) authorizes certification and control institutions⁵ and as a result of these processes of control and certification, producers become eligible to attain the organic agriculture logo from the RTMAF as a result of the successful evaluations. That is the only way an organic product can enter the domestic market. Despite the well-accepted definitions, strict regulations and certification processes, organic agriculture and organic food consumption can be defined differently by the consumers as a result of their personal experiences.

⁵ According to the information provided on the webpage of RTMAF there are 34 authorized institutions, currently. See <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/Konular/Bitkisel-Uretim/Organik-Tarim/Yetkili-Kuruluslar-KSK?Ziyaretci=Ciftci,04.05.2019>

According to Eryılmaz, G. A., Demiryürek, K. and Emir, M. (2015), the purchase of organic food requires the effort of getting information about these products, understanding the differences from conventional goods, and expanding awareness (p. 200). Therefore, lack of awareness in the domestic market regarding organic products can be given as a major reason for the limited demand. However, Eryılmaz, et al. (2015), suggest in their work that associating organic food with notions like harmless for human health, food security, animal welfare, protection of environment, and certifications are among factors that motivate organic food consumption of individuals (p. 200). They also add that the sense of responsibility is what determines the purchase decision of consumers in European countries who choose organic food over conventional one because they trust the way food is grown. Thus, education level appears as the main factor for European consumers whereas in Turkey consumer behavior towards organic food varies depending on gender, age, education, number of kids but the main determinant is suggested to be the level of income (G. A. Eryılmaz, et al., 2015).

Another research conducted by Çelik (2013) with the participation of 200 interviewees, shows that the consumers choose to buy organic products because those are healthier, more nutritious, and environmentally conscious (p. 102). As being healthy appears as the strongest determinant of the organic purchase, other factors like taste, environment, food safety, animal welfare, supporting the local economy, nostalgia/authenticity, and trends are also very significant as some of them go hand in hand towards the purchase decision (S. Çelik, 2013). The interviewees participated in the research were reached through organic markets in Istanbul and the consumers were between the ages of 35-40, married with two kids, and university graduates. As this work tries to show an overall idea about the organic consumers in Istanbul, it does provide information about the motivations of the consumers regarding their organic consumption. A different research conducted by İlyasoğlu, Temel, and Özçelik (2010) for understanding the consumer perceptions of organic food included 383 interviews with consumers from Istanbul. According to the findings, despite the positive attitude towards organic food, consumption is found to be low in Turkey. That is mainly because of the high prices of organic food. Also, depending on gender, job, and education organic food consumption practices show alterations. Women and more

educated consumers are more likely to consume organic food compare to others. In line with the research of Çelik (2013), consumers in the work of İlyasoğlu et al., (2010) have similar motivations for buying organic food as they are perceived to be healthier, environmentally friendly, and more nutritious.

The wide range of factors that affect the organic purchase decisions of individuals can be analyzed under two categories: egoistic and altruistic. While the egoistic consumers are expected to focus on subjects like health, food safety, and taste, the altruistic consumers would focus on animal welfare and environmental concerns. (N. Michaelidou & L. M. Hassan, 2008: 163). Although the interest for organic foods is increasing, not all positive attitudes end in product purchase. Especially in the case of ethical consumption which doesn't focus on personal issues, positive attitudes might not always end in product purchase. "More recently, though, there has been recognition that a hedonistic or 'me-centric' element in organic food consumption is increasingly becoming a yardstick against which purchase decisions are made." (T. Anisimova, 2016: 2). Prioritizing personal preferences and well-being are shared by many of the consumers as they are the force behind the growth of the domestic organic market in Turkey. The increasing demand for consuming healthy, nutritious, and tasty food, as well as the increasing interest towards these products, and lastly the technological developments that enable communication of the products to more consumers can be listed as the main reasons of the growth in domestic organic market in Turkey (Y. Ataseven & E. Güneş, 2008, 31). In addition to the positive factors that help the rise of interest and demand, the concerns regarding food safety is also escalating. As organic agriculture is being suggested as an alternative to the extensive agricultural methods and excessive use of chemicals, fertilizers, hormones, and genetically modified organisms (GMO) seeds the individuals are taking over the responsibility of their health by choosing organic over conventional food. Although food choices are affected by patterns like class or gender "food choice is always modulated by at least some recognition of the anxiety involved" (J. Guthman, 2002: 301). Because of the increasing incidents like mad cow, the effects of extensive production methods become visible thus causes consumers to get more anxious. Since the individuals in contemporary neoliberal societies are responsible for themselves what drives the organic consumption is "the need to relieve social anxiety by doing

the right thing.” (J. Guthman, 2002: 305). Even though through the control and certification processes the entire process of organic food production is aimed to be transparent and trustworthy, still trust appears to be a major concern for consumers. The growing organic market, the number of organic brands, and competition impact the perceptions about the organic food market as it starts to resemble the conventional food market. To describe oneself as a healthy eater and ethical consumer all the details and changes in the organic market becomes significant. As the food choices determine the consumer identity it wouldn't be wrong to say people who choose to consume organic food not only perform a regular purchase but rather shape their identities.

The mutually shaping relationship that identities had with eating existing over a person's life course and was influenced by the environments in which the person lived. The types of identities that a person held related to eating, the stability or transition in these identities, and the processes whereby these identities were involved in eating were shaped by the person's life course events and experiences through which the person constructed meanings and categories for food and eating. (C. A. Bisogni, M. Connors, C. M. Devine, & J. Sobal, 2002: 131).

In the case of organic food consumption in Turkey, due to concerns originated from the use of chemicals in foods, the identity of healthy eaters emerges as choices based on 'me-centric' elements. As for some people making healthy choices can be a source of self-esteem, self-expression, and accomplishment these require certain behavior practices. Through the consumption choices, people also associate themselves with certain groups as they share similar or common practices. Even though the actions seem to reflect personal identity it is not only shaped by individuals. “Thus, identities reveal how people judge themselves and how they feel judged by others.” (C. A. Bisogni, M. Connors, C. M. Devine, & J. Sobal, 2002: 135). In Turkey, mothers, as the caregivers, with the joining of a new member of the family, feel the responsibility of providing healthy options. Most of the time families start consuming organic food after having a baby (S. Çelik, 2013: 97). These changes bring them closer with people who share a similar lifestyle while separating them from unhealthy others. This is also what some of the organic consumers experience as they live a healthy life as they interact with people sharing similar lifestyles and concerns. Although the principles of organic agriculture present a holistic approach by focusing not only on individual health and well-being but also by emphasizing ecosystems, fair work,

environment, and animal welfare, consumers of organic food are suggested to practice their consumption activities as a result of mostly hedonistic elements.

The development of organic production and its entrance into the Turkish market go hand in hand with the emerging actors and authorities that spread particular discourses on that issue. As each party focuses and puts an emphasis on different aspects of the issue, individuals are expected to conduct their selves differently from the ones who adopt other discourses. Within the scope of this work, it is suggested that knowledge production on organic food is being done by three main channels: government NGOs, and social media. The language used to describe organic agriculture and food as well as the social practices that accompany the ideas change depending on the knowledge producer. Accordingly, the way individuals think about that and what kinds of practices they follow are shaped by the discourses.

The RTMAF is the government entity that is responsible of all law making, production and control processes of organic food in Turkey. In order to align with the developments of organic products in Europe, RTMAF had to start adopting regulations in 1994. Starting with that process, after the adoption of organic agriculture law in 2004, the final regulation that is in force currently is adopted in 2010 following the changes in EU laws. For paying closer attention to the organic food issue, RTMAF also initiated the establishment of Organic Agriculture Committee and Organic Agriculture Units that works on control and certification issues. The ministry also aims at making organic products widespread all around Turkey and focuses on the domestic market by supporting farmers through loans, trainings, and other promotion methods. Also, through the trainings and awareness campaigns government works on domestic market in order to increase awareness and access to organic products. In addition to the domestic market, organic food export has always been a major focus point as it is the way organic agriculture was initiated in Turkey in the first place. Therefore, being included in the lists of exporters to EU and increasing the volume of export to EU countries are one of the main priorities of the ministry. This requires close monitoring of European regulations and policies regarding organic food and modifications on existing regulations to continue exporting activities. Although organic agriculture started upon European demand, ministry aims at achieving sustainable use of natural resources and enabling consumers to find safe food through the focus on organic

agriculture in Turkey. As well as that, increasing the income of the producers, meeting the consumer demand, environment conservation, promoting eco agriculture-tourism, development of service and organic agriculture industry, and increasing the foreign market share became important factors (Organik Tarım Ulusal Eylem Planı, 2013).

In addition to organic agriculture, good agricultural practices are also being promoted in Turkey which is limiting the excessive use of chemicals. As this alternative provides visibility on production and use of substances it aims at accountability. However, in the consumers' eyes, the co-existence of both organic and good agriculture practices in the markets cause confusion as a result of lack of communication from government channels.

Withdrawal of state interventions with the influence of neoliberal ideals lead to the emergence of pressure groups as individuals become weaker to strive after their rights. Therefore, the increasing appearances of NGOs took over the role of the state regarding the welfare services (D. Harvey: 2005, 186). The first organic agriculture movement in Turkey was born with the establishment of Ekolojik Tarım Organizasyonu Derneği⁸ in 1992 as a result of the European demand on organic products. They have been organizing conferences, trainings, and informative materials on various aspects of organic agriculture in order to raise awareness as well as partnering with the EU on different organic agriculture projects. Following them, other organizations like Buğday Support to Ecological Life Association (Buğday)⁹, Slow Food¹⁰ and several other organizations that focus on permaculture¹¹ started to take part in sustainable agriculture discussions and activities. Generally, these organizations have the objective of making organic agriculture and other sustainable alternatives become common and adapted by the farmers in Turkey by organizing trainings. As well as that, they aim to raise awareness about organic agriculture and environmental issues by promoting consumption of organic products.

⁸ <https://www.eto.org.tr/>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

⁹ <http://www.bugday.org>, date of access: 04.10.2019

¹⁰ <https://tr-tr.facebook.com/fikirsahibidamaklar/>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

¹¹ <http://istanbulpermakulturkolektifi.org/>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

In the case of organic food, Buğday works not only for expanding organic food production and consumption in Turkey but also aims to inform individuals about organic products and raise awareness about it. They initiated a campaign in order to ban the use of the term natural in labels as part of marketing strategies and collected 53 thousand signatures. While the signatures and demands are shared with the ministry officials and will be evaluated, Buğday announced that they will continue with the campaign in 2019 as well (“Doğal” kampanyasında toplanan imzalar Bakanlığa sunuldu, 2019). Although the campaigns and other projects that are run by Buğday help raising awareness and informing both the consumers and farmers it is a long process that requires a lot of work since we see from the respondents that terms like natural are still very significant and effective on their consumption choices. They established the first organic markets in Turkey in cooperation with local governments.

Social media channels and popular accounts on these channels become main sources for gaining information on organic products in addition to the government and NGOs.

The privately owned media has established close ties with the entertainment industry, where fashion models, night life characters, business people, soccer players, and ‘high society’ have been transformed into new role-models of Turkish society – based on their ‘signs’ of consumption and media-centered fame. (C. Emrence, 2008: 56)

Especially Instagram in contemporary societies appear as the main source to follow in order to get information on any issue. Therefore, it can be suggested that the consumers use these channels and follow brands or popular people/ influencers (chefs, models, business people) who promote certain way of consuming these products. In the case of organic products, individuals mostly follow popular lifestyle accounts that promote healthy living and include random information on organic products. Also, by following brands with organic products, consumers receive information mostly focusing on specific products.

As individuals are exposed to information coming from all sources, their ideas and behaviors are also shaped by these. However, which source has more influence and affect more dominantly depend on how individuals adopt different discourses into their daily lives.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Problem of the Study

The research question of this thesis is aimed at understanding how organic food consumers in Turkey become subjects of neoliberalism. As it is discussed in previous parts of the work, the subject construction is argued to take place along with tactics and strategies of governmentality. While the source of power can directly be state apparatuses it can also be exerted through indirect techniques such as discipline and surveillance that shape and control individuals. It is also significant to emphasize that the discipline and control as techniques of governmentality are also exercised by the individual through daily behaviors and choices. Therefore, focusing on the behaviors and practices of individuals become crucial to observe and understand the techniques applied for the subject construction. Also, with this research problem, it is attempted to develop a deep understanding of different perceptions of being healthy and to suggest that organic food consumption is a means of neoliberal governmentality that shapes the individual through techniques and procedures for internalization of neoliberal rationalities. Within the scope of this work, organic food consumption will be the focal point through which various understandings, discourses, practices, preferences, and concerns regarding being healthy will be studied. In order to explain the relation between organic food consumption and how it is positioned and practiced as governmentality for subject construction by prioritizing the notion of being healthy, some specific concepts are being used throughout the thesis which need to be explained and defined.

3.2. Definition of Specific Concepts

In this work, *organic food* is used as the outcome product of organic agriculture defined by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). Organic agriculture as a production system is agreed to be defined with four principles: health, fairness, ecology, and care. While working for sustaining the health of soil, plants, animals, humans and the planet it is suggested that the health of individuals and communities is not separated and indivisibly connected to each other. As a result, organic food production is aimed to be of high quality and to be nutritious. Fairness on the other hand, emphasizes the fair relationship between people and all other living beings. Through the principle of ecology, it is aimed to apply organic agriculture while prioritizing ecological cycles and paying close attention to biodiversity and local conditions. Finally, with the principle of care, the protection of future generations and the environment is emphasized especially due to technological developments.

Organic agriculture is intended to produce high quality, nutritious food that contributes to preventive health care and well-being. In view of this, it should avoid the use of fertilizers, pesticides, animal drugs and food additives that may have adverse health effects. (The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements [IFOAM], n.d.)

Organic food consumption is used as a consumption behavior that individuals adapt and as a condition to be interviewed for this work. Here, individuals are not expected to consume all food products as organic but consuming even one organic food item makes them eligible to be interviewed. While organic consumption is a very broad subject which includes not only food but also clothing, cosmetics, and so on the focus is limited to organic food consumption.

Health risks in this work are used to generally describe the negative impacts of food consumed by the individuals. The negative impact occurs as a result of the production processes and the use of undesirable substances which are known to have a negative effect on the health of individuals as developing allergies, hormonal disorders. Organic food, due to its production principles, is considered to be an alternative for avoiding health risks.

Governmentality is “understood in the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing men’s conduct” (M. Foucault, 1997: 321). In this work, it is aimed to

understand how the individuals undergo fundamental changes regarding perceiving society through neoliberal lenses and adopting neoliberal consumption practices as well as self-regulation techniques through close focus on food consumption preferences and perceptions of being healthy. With the use of this concept, it is suggested that the perceptions of individuals can be affected and shaped by dominant discourses and power relations in addition to internalization of techniques to conduct their self.

Neoliberal subject in this work is used to describe the individuals who engage in neoliberal rationality and are made into particular subjects as a result of adoption of neoliberal ideology. The neoliberal subject is expected to make decisions on the basis of personal interests by taking the responsibility of any self-development possibility and to complement these making investments with high beneficial return as a result of rational means-ends calculation. Especially this work focuses on how health conscious individuals are brought about as neoliberal subjects.

3.3. Research Method

In this study, it was aimed to reach the personal perceptions of the interviewees, therefore, qualitative method was used for analyzing the perceptions of being healthy. As open-ended questions were asked as part of the interviews, participants were able to share their opinions easily.

For data collection face-to-face in-depth interview method was used. The format of the interviews was semi-structured including both previously prepared questions and random dialogues within the flow of the interviews. The research focuses on the personal experiences and discourses of interviewees, therefore, collecting data through face-to-face interviews with semi-structured format gave the possibility to deeply understand the subjective viewpoints and personal experiences of the consumer.

The semi-structured interview questionnaire consists of four parts. The first part asks the interviewees demographic questions in order to categorize the consumers depending on variables such as: their gender, age, income, marital status, education level, and employment status. Following this, the questions about organic food are asked to understand what the interviewees know about organic food, what types of

products they purchase, and their purpose of consumption. The next part focuses on the subject health, how it is described and experienced. As well as that, behaviors exercised towards being healthy and personal choices are also included in this section. Finally, the last part concentrates on the organic food market in Turkey and what interviewees know about the market in general rather than the particular products or brands they are familiar with. During the interviews, various additional questions arose, and relevant points were made besides the previously prepared questions.

3.4. Research Field and Sample

The organic food consumers who took part in this research reside in Istanbul. Therefore, the scope of the study is limited to the preferences and practices of organic food consumers from Istanbul. The research was conducted with the participation of 20 organic food consumers. In this research, the interviewees were chosen through the mixed sampling methods. Both random and snowball sampling methods were used. Although a group of interviewees was randomly selected, the choice of markets and condition of being organic consumer were some filters used for finding respondents during the process. Also, snowball sampling enabled to move from one person to another as a result of the direction of the interviewee.

In order to reduce bias and increase diversity, distribution of gender, age, level of organic consumption, and different socioeconomic statuses were taken into consideration, among the participants. As a result of the sampling processes, 13 interviewees out of 20 are female and 7 are male between the ages of 27-60. The socioeconomic status of the interviewees is measured according to their income. Having below 2,000 TL monthly income determines low, above 4,000 TL high and between 2,000-4,000 determines middle income. The income levels of the group are middle and high with holding a minimum university degree as an education level indicator.

In addition to the 20 organic food consumers interviewed for the research, opinions, and comments of 3 experts in different fields were received. One of the expert opinions was provided by Buğday Chairman of the Board, who is at the same time responsible for the ecological markets. The other expert opinion was received from an organic farming entrepreneur who grows organic products according to yearly

orders and exports the organic goods. The final expert opinion was given by a professor whose area of interest includes agriculture and rural sociology. These meetings were also realized as semi-structured interviews that included several previously prepared questions in addition to the natural flow of the conversations.

The study focuses on consumers in Istanbul mainly due to limited resources of time and economic factors as this study is not funded. Also knowing that Istanbul has the greatest number of 100% Ecological Markets as well as newly opened small organic shops and online alternatives supports the focus on Istanbul¹². The first ever organic market in Istanbul was established in 2006 in the Şişli district. The market still operates today, what can be seen as an indicator that organic and ecological wholesalers have become known and are getting stronger.

The fieldwork of this study lasted for four months, starting from January 2019 till April 2019. The interviews were conducted after informing the participants and getting the consent. The interviews were conducted either at homes, cafes of the participants' choices, or organic market. Organic markets, big supermarkets, small organic shops, and online stores appeared as the places where organic food consumption took place most of the time. For finding random interviewees to participate in the research, doing observation for approximately 20 minutes both in the organic market and supermarket was required. In order to find interviewees randomly, the organic market in Şişli was visited 3 consecutive weeks between 10:00-12:00. The reason why the organic market in Şişli was chosen is that it is the first, most established, and widely known organic market in Istanbul. It is open since 2006 and has an increasing growth with regards to the product range, number of farmers, and consumers. Also, due to its central location, it is easily reached by many consumers. Besides visiting the organic market, 2 supermarkets were also selected as a site to randomly find interviewees. The supermarkets in Ortaklar Street/Mecidiyeköy and in a shopping mall¹³ were chosen due to their size, accessibility, product range, and also different pricing strategies. The supermarket in Ortaklar Street/Mecidiyeköy offers a very little organic food product

¹²<https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/BUGEM/Belgeler/Bitkisel%20%C3%9Cretim/Organik%20Tar%C4%B1m/OT%20Genel%20Bilgiler/t%C3%BCketici%20bilgileri%20web.docx>, date of access: 04.10.2019.

¹³ Located in Besiktas district in Istanbul.

varieties especially in fresh good segment, compared to the supermarket in the shopping mall. Both supermarkets are big, however the distribution of organic foods is not equal with their sizes as mentioned the supermarket in shopping mall offers more alternatives. Concentration on certain product groups is highly related to the demand of the consumers. The shopping mall is located in one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Istanbul with higher socioeconomic development levels compare to Ortaklar/Mecidiyekoy.¹⁴ As a result, 6 out of 20 interviews were completed with randomly sampled consumers from organic markets and supermarkets after giving informed consent to each of them. In order not to cause any ethical issues, all interviewees approached were informed through the given informed consent form which includes the details about the research. The random sampling enabled the research to become more diverse and reliable. However, 14 interviewees out of 20 were found as a result of snowball sampling and were also beneficial for the research since the initial interviewees did not lead to interviewees with unfruitful and repetitive content.

The interviews lasted minimum of 25 minutes and maximum of 60 minutes depending on the flow of the conversation. All the interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants in order to be transcribed and analyzed. In order to systematically analyze all interviews, after the transcription, the qualitative data analysis program called MAXQDA was used for thematic analysis.

3.5. Limitations of the Study

Since grocery shopping is considered as a household errand by many of the consumers, it is an activity that is not wished to take longer than the time spared for that activity. Therefore, people in supermarkets were not very approachable as they were mostly in a tight schedule. Furthermore, according to the observations done in the organic markets most of the consumers come to the organic market with their families as a family activity, some people come with a group of friends, and a little number of people come alone. People who come with their families tend not to spare

¹⁴ See <http://mahallemistanbul.com/Mahalleminfo-web/>

time for an interview since it is a family activity for them. Because of similar reasons, people who come with friend groups also don't tend to take part in other activities besides shopping and walking around. Finally, people who come alone were more approachable than the other two groups even though they were also not very enthusiastic to participate.

As supermarkets and organic market were the locations to find random participants for the study, the interviews that took place in those locations were challenging due to physical conditions. The organic market is very crowded and hard to find a seating arrangement in order to successfully complete the interview as there are few seating areas which are mainly for eating. Additionally, as a result of the interviews it is seen that participants who choose to buy organic food from an alternative place other than supermarkets tend to go to organic market initiated and managed by Buğday. Therefore, it can be said that the majority of the participants know or only heard of Buğday as an alternative source of getting organic food and this lead to not mentioning other alternative initiatives and organizations that provide organic food. As well as that, since the participants highly and solely associate Buğday with organic markets this result in paying no attention to the role and responsibilities of local governments.

Finding a good fitting sample appears as one of the obstacles in the way of conducting research, for this work the similar challenges were experienced. However, even with the 20 participants, this work attempts to share the significant insights collected from the field through the interviews for further and future studies.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIOLOGICAL DYNAMICS OF ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION

In this part of the work the findings from the field work will be presented under six parts focusing on different aspects of consumers' motivations and perceptions about organic food. First of all, the focus will be on understanding the motivations of consuming organic food in which part health considerations, shifting notion of responsibility, making investments to self and moderated consumption will be presented. Following that, the economic aspect of organic food will be discussed through consumers' concerns towards high prices. On the next part, the changing gender aspect of caregivers in the contemporary families and increasing concentration on maintenance of fit body by male respondents will be included. After this part, the focus will shift towards finding out the information channels used by the respondents about organic food while the following part will show the spaces of organic consumption. Finally, in the last part trust issue will be explained by focusing on participants' past experiences and concerns.

4.1. Individually Oriented Motivations of Consuming Organic Food

4.1.1. Considerations of 'Good Health'

Seeking healthy food options is becoming more and more vital for individuals as being healthy becomes one of the main concerns of individuals. According to the organic food consumers who participated in this research, health concerns are the main factor that affect their organic food consumption practices. The majority of the respondents shared their consumption reason of organic food as for being healthy and that was mentioned 17 times, followed by avoidance of chemical intake that was mentioned 7 times. This shows that the organic food products are perceived as a healthy alternative to the conventional food especially due to increasing concerns

towards chemicals added to the conventional food. Consequently, the association of organic food with nonchemical, no additives, and natural products emerges as the main drive of consumption decision.

As a result of the development of the idea that good health can be maintained through consumption of certain products, individuals focus on personal behaviors and lifestyle practices while describing what is to be healthy and what should be done for being healthy. At this point, it can be said that the organic food consumption appears as one of the major daily activities and consumption choices that serve the aim of being healthy. 18 respondents closely associated organic food consumption with one of the strong preconditions of being healthy as it is assumed to be more nutritive while being less harmful compare to conventional products. However, despite the general understanding shared by the respondents about organic food being good for your health, they also have their own way of describing organic food as well as having different consumption preferences depending on various factors such as economic background or having children. Thus, it becomes blatant that health has become more and more individualized as respondents prioritize personal health along with personal needs accompanied by strategies to achieve them both successfully.

To my understanding, organic foods are products that are produced without any chemical preservation methods, etc. If we accept the idea that the chemicals will have a harmful impact on our body, organic foods not containing these substances will not cause any harm to my body. I would think that I will only get the sustenance in the food that my body needs. That's how I associate the two.¹⁵ (P18, male, white collar high skilled).

As a result of the promotion of health maintenance through lifestyle changes adopted by individuals, various approaches towards health and healthy products have been emerging. These approaches and daily strategies also cause confusions about the organic products. Especially the individualization of health and meanings attributed to organic by different sources serve as further reasons for confusions about organic food. In addition to that, with the promotion of individualized health and self-interested

¹⁵ Organik üründen benim anladığım şey içinde kimyasal koruyucu yöntem vs. kullanılmadan üretilen ürünler. Eğer şeyi kabul edersek; kimyasalların vücudumuzda olumsuz bir etkisi olacağı var sayımıyla, kabul edersek bunu o zaman organik ürünlerin içinde bunların olmaması demek aslında benim vücuduma negatif bir olumsuz bir etki olmayacak sadece ben yediğim üründen vücudumun alması gereken faydalı şeyleri alacak diye düşünürüm. Böyle ilişkilendiririm.

consumers, getting informed about and finding healthy food stay in the personal realm of the individuals. In this case, a shared definition of organic food by the consumers could help to solve the confusion (J. Read, 2009: 34) as individuals have concerns and hesitations because of various approaches and definitions of organic food. However, despite the confusions as it can be seen from the interviews, consumers of organic food continue with their purchase for maintaining good health through consumption of organic thus healthy products.

4.1.2. Considerations of Health as a Personal Responsibility

As health appears as the main motivation for the participants in this study through the concentration of personal needs and well-being, the process of health maintenance is shown to be the responsibility of the individuals. When asked to understand the perceptions of the participants whether health is associated with personal responsibility or not, 9 of the interviewees stated that health is a personal responsibility, while 5 of them said it is both a personal responsibility and about genetics, 2 of them said health is both personal and public responsibility and only 1 of them stated that it is a public responsibility referring to the state. With the majority of the answers highlighting the individual as the only responsible for health issues and maintenance, it can be said that the answers of the interviewees are parallel with the idea of neoliberalism's ideal citizens; as they work "in minimizing their contribution to health care costs by becoming more responsible health care 'consumers,' and appropriate practices of prevention." (K. LeBesco, 2011: 156). Mostly, being healthy is associated with personal responsibility and making the right choices. And in this case, making the right choices for health-conscious consumers are highly related to the type of food consumed as well as being active. "Health as a responsibility, rather than a right, repositions subjects as at fault if they are deemed unhealthy, particularly if they had the information about how to achieve health." (K. LeBesco, 2011: 156). Thus, by emphasizing being healthy is the responsibility of the individual, interviewees also put the responsibility of being unhealthy to the individual. When asked if the respondent thinks the personal behaviors and preferences have an influence on being healthy or

unhealthy the answers emphasize personal responsibility and mention unhealthy choices as the fault of the individual.

Yes, they are affecting, let me put it this way. My dad passed away because he had cancer. He used to be a heavy smoker. He smoked for so many years although we asked him not to. He was eating unhealthy food, ate at midnight, and was very fat... there were too many factors and what he went through at the end was the accumulation of all. And the last four years of his life were very difficult of course. He had poor quality of life for the last four years of his life. And this made both him and us very sad. That is why the more we take good care of ourselves the better it is for both ourselves and for the happiness of people around us. Our own health doesn't affect us only especially for people like us living in countries like ours, because we don't live an individualistic life.¹⁶ (P9, female, self-employed).

As it is seen from the quote above, especially smoking is one of the most commonly agreed substances that has negative effects on the health of individuals. Therefore, as the individual makes the choice of smoking it is expected that the individual bears the consequences of this decision. And recently, like smoking, the chemicals in food and GMOs have become a huge concern in societies that is why not choosing healthy food alternatives and consuming unhealthy options are also suggested to have a negative impact on human health which is again placed under individual responsibility and fault. Therefore, choosing what type of food to consume and what to avoid become very vital for individuals. Especially, in the case of making healthy food choices through the consumption of organic food is moralized and responsabilized as making unhealthy choices label individuals irresponsible. Therefore, as it can be seen from the interviews when making healthy choices respondents feel happy, and energetic as well as having a clean conscience about the choices they make. The idea of 'doing the right thing' enables the individuals to feel that they do their part and responsibility for their health. Therefore, organic food consumption appears as a major activity adapted by individuals for the promotion of health. However, although many respondents try to buy organic food as much as possible, individuals with limited economic resources are

¹⁶ Var, yani şöyle söyleyeyim. Babam kanserden vefat etti. İnanılmaz inanılmaz çok sigara içiyordu, yıllarca içti ve içme lütfen vs. dememize rağmen içti. Çok sağlıksız beslendi, gece yarısı yedi, çok kiloluydu... o kadar çok faktör vardı ki sonunda yaşadığı şey de aslında bunların bir birikimiydi. Ve sonunda yaşadığı son 4 seneyi de çok zor geçirdi tabii ki. Hayatının 4 senesi aslında çok kalitesiz ve çok kötü geçti. O yüzden bu da ne oldu hem ona üzüntü oldu hem hepimize o yüzden ne kadar iyi bakarsak kendimize hem kendimiz için hem de çevremizdeki insanların da mutluluğu için yani. Bizim kendi sağlığımız sadece bizi bağlamıyor çünkü özellikle bizim ülkemiz gibi yerlerde bireysel yaşamıyoruz çünkü.

unable to participate in this consumption practice compare to others. Even so, respondents with limited consumption also internalize the responsibility of maintaining health.

4.1.3. Considerations for Responsibility of the Children

As individuals become more and more interested in their self, their bodies become one of the main sites to focus in regard to keeping the self healthy. As it is discussed above, individuals tend to make conscious food choices that will have positive impact on their health. While individuals can be more flexible about their consumption choices when it is about their children, they are less tolerable towards unhealthy alternatives. Supporting that argument, according to the interview conducted with the chairman of board of Buğday, majority of the consumers of organic food, switch to organic from conventional food, because of their kids. Young couples with small kids are suggested to be one of the major consumer groups of organic food as parents particularly mothers are responsible for health of their children. Similar answers were given by the participants as they also mentioned having children as an important reason of their organic consumption. Eleven respondents out of twenty stated that having kids is a supporting factor for organic consumption while especially for women it is a process that starts with pregnancy and never lasts. When asked how they evaluate the responsibility of health many of the female respondents not only emphasized the responsibility for themselves but also for their families.

Being healthy is my responsibility. I believe that every person who has the means and awareness, according to their budget, should act consciously about healthy eating. This doesn't apply only for myself but also for my family. I have a husband and a son. For example, I don't let them eat chicken besides at home. I warn them about eating healthy as much as possible. I am careful about both my and my family's health.¹⁷ (P12, female, white collar high skilled).

For many respondents, pregnancy or supplementary food phases of their babies are crucial for the integration of organic food into their existing consumption practices.

¹⁷ Kendi sorumluluğum. Herkesin gücü yettiğinde, bilinçli ve imkânı olan insanların sağlıklı beslenmek konusunda bilinçli davranmaları gerektiğine inanıyorum. Bir tek kendim için de değil, ailem için de aynı şey söz konusu. Eşim var, çocuğum var. Onlara da dışarıda tavuk yemeyi yasaklamışımdır mesela. Mümkün olduğu kadar sağlıklı gıdalarla beslenmeleri konusunda onları da uyarırım. Kendim ve ailemin sağlığı konusunda özenliyim.

For instance, one respondent who started organic consumption with her pregnancy shares that their organic consumption behaviors show a change as the baby grows.

I will definitely start using organic again as my daughter starts supplementary food. But at that time, I can't separate the food and get organic for my daughter and normal for us. It's a gradual transition. At the moment fruits and cleaning products at home are organic. We order regular yogurt from a shopping app. But eggs and chicken are organic of course.¹⁸ (P5, female, white collar semi-skilled).

Like in these examples, some families consume organic products without limiting the consumption only to their kids while for some families, organic food consumption is only being done for the child and parents don't consume any organic good. This can be explained mainly because parents in this case are not concerned of their conventional food intake since they don't have a strong opinion about neither effect of conventional nor organic food.

The reason why I buy organic is mainly because of my son. I buy it to have all of his products in an organic version. When I buy for him sometimes, I buy it for me and my husband too. But I can't say that I pay attention to buy all products as organic when it comes to me and my husband. But all the products my son use or consume are organic such as all the vegetables. I get daily fresh milk, and organic eggs. Whatever he eats is organic.¹⁹ (P10, female, white collar high skilled).

From these examples, it can be suggested that despite the different coping techniques and levels of consumption, mothers position themselves as the health provider and responsible for the health of their children more than their own health.

4.1.4. Considerations for Betterment of the Self

Many of the respondents describe health in accordance with the explanation provided by the human capital theory as they emphasize the physical-genetic predispositions as well as pointing out the personal effort that is required for successful

¹⁸ Döneceğim tabii ki, Leyla'nın yediği şeyleri almam yani zannetmiyorum. Ama o zaman da şeyi de ayıramam biz kendimize normal alalım Leyla'ya organik alalım onu da ayıramazsın. Biraz peyderpey geçiyorsun. Şu anda bizim evde meyveler organik, temizlik malzemeleri organik. Getirden normal yoğurtla süt söylüyoruz. Ama yumurta ve tavuk tabii ki de organik.

¹⁹ Benim organik alma sebebim ağırlıklı oğlumdan kaynaklı. Onun bütün ürünleri organik olsun diye alıyorum. Ona alırken bazen eve de alıyorum. Ama evdeki bütün ürünlerin organik olmasına dikkat ediyorum diyemem. Çocuktaki her şey, sebze patates, soğan, her şey. Sütü günlük süt kullanıyorum. Yumurtası organik. Onun yediği her şey.

personal development and for holding one's position in the society. New concepts become important for a neoliberal citizen as not only the society, but their decision-making processes are also affected by the expanding neoliberal ideals. "Salary or wages become the revenue that is earned on an initial investment, an investment in one's skills or abilities." (J. Read, 2009: 28). While the investments occur for improving skills for a better revenue return, nutrition is also considered as an investment to the self not for a revenue return but for satisfying other needs such as achievement of health through the consumption of specific food types and attaining a certain body type through exercise. According to the respondents, being health conscious and doing the right things for being healthy are considered as investments for the body and for future years of the individual. Many of the interviewees shared their ideas when I asked what should be done for being healthy. Doing sports (18 people), healthy food intake (17 people), and regular sleeping pattern (6 people) are stated by the respondents as steps to follow for being healthy. Also, despite the high prices, respondents consider consumption of organic food as a good investment. For instance, one respondent explains how health is a personal responsibility that is part of the investments that the individual should make for keeping her/himself healthy.

Health is not only a personal responsibility. But honestly, the personal side is very strong because we don't have to make expensive investments for living a healthy life. Sleep is for free. It is up to you to choose to go to bed at 11 p.m. About the food intake, I think even though we say organic food is expensive by consuming them we are preventing illnesses, therefore, balancing the spending. Because if you eat cheap, unhealthy food, and live an unhealthy lifestyle trust me, the money you will spend on doctors and medications will cost way more than the organic food.²⁰ (P16, male, self-employed).

The rhetoric of health promotion encourages individuals to take measures by making investments for their bodies and for their lives. Consequently, a general behavior pattern of a health-conscious individual is being formulated as we see from the respondents. According to the respondents, a health-conscious consumer should

²⁰ Sadece bireysel bir sorumluluk değil. Bireysel ayağı çok güçlü çünkü açıkçası sağlıklı yaşamak için inanılmaz yatırımlar yapmamıza gerek yok. Uyku ücretli bir şey değil. 11'de uymayı seçmek biraz bize kalmış. Orada gıda ayağı işin içine giriyor. Orada da ben biraz şöyle düşünüyorum. Aslında organik gıdaya işte doğal besinlere pahalı diyoruz fakat onları tüketerek aslında birçok hastalıktan korunarak maddi meseleleri dengelemiş oluyoruz. Çünkü ucuz bir şey tüketirseniz sağlıksız bir şey tüketirseniz sağlıksız yaşarsanız emin olun ilaçlara ya da doktora harcadığınız para organik gıdaya harcadığınız paradan daha fazla tutuyor.

make good research to get the right information and also expected to act as an investor -forward-thinking, supported by the consumption choices they make. According to a respondent, a health-conscious person is:

Someone who wants to be positive, wishing to live a longer life and when gets old to have an easy and comfortable life, those are things forward-thinking people would do.²¹ (P19, male, white collar semi-skilled).

The responses are in accordance with the health promotion discourse which encourages individuals to become health-conscious while adapting consumption practices that are considered as investments for the future and preventing diseases. As organic food consumption is situated as a disease prevention behavior the cost of organic food can be tolerated because of its natural outcomes meaning not getting sick.

4.1.5. Considerations for a Balanced and Moderate Food Intake

Knowing our bodies, consuming in moderation with a balanced diet that categorizes the food as calories and components like protein or carbohydrate require a different approach to food and consumption practices. Emphasizing moderation and balance necessitate the application of discipline over choices and bodies in order to fulfill the objective. While discipline regulates both the way individuals interact with others and with one's self, it primarily serves the transformation of the individual for internalizing the proper way of behaving. By laying emphasis on moderation and balance, the deviant behaviors and indulgences are being kept limited as a result of the strict self-monitoring and self-regulation applied by the individual regarding consumption choices.

I think knowing what to consume and how much to consume is very important. Without eating too much getting the real nutritional value of the food is very important. In our society we have the habit of eating too much, that's why we may eat big portions. I think for a person; the most important thing is to know how much to eat from each food. It is important to balance the amount of protein and carbohydrate. I think a person should know their body and act according to that. It

²¹ Hayata daha güzel bakmak isteyen, daha uzun ve ileride yaşlandığında daha rahat bir yaşam geçirebilmek için, ileriye düşünen insanların yapacağı işler bence.

also doesn't work with only proteins or carbohydrate.²² (P1, female, white collar semi-skilled).

As it can be seen from the quote above, for some respondents concentrating closely to the body and understanding the individual needs is crucial for making the balanced choices. However, despite the disseminating adaptation of moderation and balance within the eating habits, these behaviors are hardly fully integrated into consumers' lives. On the contrary, regardless of the product, individuals become more and more focused and interested in consumption of goods instead of cutting the excessive consumption habit. Even though the frequency of unhealthy food consumption of individuals who are actively consuming organic food shows an alteration, each respondent stated that they consume unhealthy food from time to time. With the effort of keeping the frequency of unhealthy food consumption on a limited scale, consumers come up with various solutions for balancing the conflicting consumption practices. This defines the unhealthy food consumption an irresponsible behavior and as a result the regular excessive consumption is being overlooked since none of the consumption choices include questioning the amount of consumption in general.

I consume, I can't say that I don't. For example, my husband likes ordering food from outside. After several days he would say enough with celery I will eat something unhealthy. We would eat Turkish pizza filled with meat (lahmacun), noodles, kebab, etc. During weekdays we definitely have homemade food and one day of the weekends we may order some food in.²³ (P5, female, white collar semi-skilled).

Having the division between weekday and weekend food consumption, eating unhealthy on special days or events only, to spoil oneself occasionally can be suggested as ways of handling the consumption in moderation. According to the respondents' perceptions, food choices like eating fast food, sweets or food with high sugar percentage, salty and fatty food, packaged food are considered unhealthy. Also,

²² Bence neyi ne kadar tüketeceğini bilmek çok önemli. Çok fazla kitlik bilincine girmeden gerçekten kendi besin değerini almak çok önemli. Bizim toplumda çok yeme alışkanlığı olduğu için o miktarı da çok abartıyoruz ya. Bence gerçekten her şeyden ne miktarda yiyeceğini bilmesi bir insan için çok önemli. Ne kadar protein alıp ne kadar karbonhidrat alacağı o dengeyi sağlaması önemli. Vücudunu tanıması ve ona göre hareket etmesi lazım gibi geliyor kişinin. Yani sırf protein de olmuyor karbonhidratta.

²³ Tüketiyorum ya tüketmiyorum değilim. Mesela benim eşim dışarıdan yemek söylemeye çok meraklıdır. Birkaç gün sonra yeter artık kereviz ben zararlı bir şey yiyeceğim der. Dışarıdan lahmacun, noodle, kebab vs yeriz. Hafta içi mutlaka ev yemeği, hafta sonu 1 gün dışarıdan söyleyebiliyoruz.

respondents believe that either not eating these types of food or only consuming little portions -occasionally- would be considered as a healthy diet and responsible behavior for the achievement of good health.

4.2. Economic Criteria for Organic Food Consumers

4.2.1. Organic Food Has High Prices

Having a balanced diet and limiting unhealthy food consumption are suggested as important ways of keeping a healthy lifestyle as well as maintaining order as indulgences also take place in a controlled manner. While the sizes of portions are aimed to be made smaller compared to super sizes of fast food menus, the healthy options in the market are not as budget-friendly as the bigger and unhealthier alternatives. For organic food consumers, the high prices are the main issue that affects their no or limited consumption practices. Despite the quest for smaller portions, healthy eaters are not excluded from the marketplace since “the neoliberal citizen is charged with wanting less but at the same time spending more.” (K. LeBesco, 2011: 156). Especially with the growing market of organic products, individuals direct their attention to organic consumption as part of their healthy consumption practices. Each respondent stated that they find the organic food prices expensive, while 12 of them mentioned it being very high, 8 of them mentioned the prices are slightly more expensive than the standard products especially due to increasing prices in overall food market. Consequently, the organic consumers in spite of their effort of eating slightly less and having a more balanced diet, they are unable to reduce their spending when it comes to eating organic food due to high prices. On top of that, eating less is neither promoted nor prioritized as the individual continues regular consumption habits and amounts with eating healthy as well. While some individuals are able to continue consuming organic food despite the high prices, for some respondents, the high prices of organic food are not as tolerable.

If the price difference between the organic and conventional food would be low then I would buy it. I would be relieved although I am not that informed about it.

But at the moment I feel like they ask too much money for a quality I don't believe.²⁴ (P1, female, white collar semi-skilled).

As a result, it can be said that having limited economic resources appear as a strong factor that determines organic food consumption. If a person or family has limited budget to spend on food products organic consumption appears as a luxury consumption.

4.2.2. Organic Food Consumption Based on Means-Ends Calculus

Individuals conceive organic food consumption in terms of cost-benefit ratio expecting the benefits to be worth the money spent on that good. Although respondents share a common idea about organic food as being harmless compared to conventional alternatives that exist in the market, their purchase decisions show some variations depending on the income levels as consumers seek a purchase decision to yield the most profit with the least loss. People with this approach towards food make choices on the basis of nutritive values and calories in order to make the most out of that consumption. Describing food according to those elements position food not only as a product to be consumed for survival needs, but, as a product that can ensure the health of an individual while avoiding getting ill. For example, a respondent shared their ideas about the association of health and organic food while comparing it with exercising since exercise yields physical results unlike organic consumption. As it has been stated, the benefits of organic foods are expected to be visibly clear according to some respondents to be sure that it serves its purpose.

I feel like it is a bit psychological. I think like when you quit smoking the other day you start breathing better. But when I eat one no organic egg nothing happens to my health actually. Thus, I think the effect of it is nothing more than a placebo effect. But maybe after 50 years, we will be able to find the number of people who ate organic food and didn't have cancer²⁵ (P7, female, white collar high skilled).

²⁴ Çok fazla zaten dediğim gibi o marj biraz daha düşük olsa organiğe gidebilir elim. Çok fazla bilinçli olmasam da içimi rahatlatırım. Şu an çok da fazla inanmadığım bir kaliteye çok fazla para istiyorlar gibi geliyor.

²⁵ Yani birazcık psikolojik gibi hissediyorum su andaki etkilerini. Şöyle düşünüyorum sigara içmeyi bırakırsın yârin daha rahat nefes alırsın. Ama organik bir tane 3 tavuk yumurtası yiyince benim sağlığımda bir bozulma olmuyor aslında. Dolayısıyla su andaki etkisinin placebo etkisinden çok öte

The long-term effects organic food that are hard to identify is what makes even harder for consumers to make decisions whether to buy organic food or not. In the case of organic food consumption not giving apparent results, either benefit or harm, causes a though decision process for the consumers. While the general decision-making processes are run on the basis of cost-benefit approach which enables the process to proceed smoothly with the rational result of the individual, with the uncertainties getting involved, consumers experience difficulties during the decision-making processes.

As rational individuals prioritize making the most optimum choices to realize their ends, uncertainties and distrust along with high prices strongly affect their decisions of organic food consumption. For some of the respondents who have a family with kids the investment is not limited to their own bodies but also include their kids. Thus, for them, the long term effects of organic food on health is not conceived as a negative value in the cost-benefit equation. However, not all the families with kids integrate organic food consumption into their regular market shopping equally. Limiting the organic food purchases with few products which are considered to be the most harmful seems to be a good decision for families who are on a limited budget and have deep insecurities regarding the quality of organic food. For example, chicken and egg are the most frequently stated products that the respondents choose to buy in organic alternatives. Many of the respondents within the scope of this research also share similar concerns regarding these products and they especially put an emphasis on their changing chicken consumption habits during the interviews. Even the respondents with the highest distrust towards the organic market choose to eat organic chicken either for themselves or for their kids.

Honestly, I only buy the organic chicken and it is only for the kids. I boil it and use the broth for cooking. Otherwise, I don't pay attention to myself. As I said, as long as we don't live in rural areas I don't believe in the organic products in the city.²⁶ (P6, female, white collar semi-skilled).

olmadığını düşünüyorum. Ama belki de bundan 50 yıl sonra sunu ölçebileceğiz; organik gıdalla beslenenlerin yüzde bilmem kaç kansere yakalanıyordu.

²⁶ Açıkçası organik tavuğu sadece çocuklar için alıyorum, haşlıyorum suyunu kullanıyorum yemeğe falan. Yoksa ben çok fazla bakmıyorum kendim için. Dediğim gibi çok da inanmadığım için köyde büyümediğimiz sürece ben şehirdekilere inanmıyorum.

As it can be seen, in general, organic products are found very expensive by the consumers and as the quotation provided above reflects that concern, people are not willing to pay for something that they are not sure of and its benefits. As a result of this drawback, choosing the most widely accepted dangerous product to consume in the organic version appears as a very rational strategy. In this case, chicken is assumed to be the most dangerous food. By switching the conventional chicken with the organic alternative, consumer aims to prevent the heavy intake of chemicals and other dangerous substances. With this strategy of choosing the most dangerous product, the consumer seeks maximum benefit from the organic consumption by keeping the expenditure on minimum levels.

4.3. Gender Aspect in Organic Food Consumption

While the respondents shared a common notion regarding health by highly associating it with the body and bodily activities, they also mentioned body as an object that can be modified and in return represent certain ideas about the self. Many of the respondents describe what is to be healthy referenced to bodily practices such as living without any pain, being able to move, and not being fat. At the same time, health is defined in terms of both physical and mental aspects by 8 people which brings the argument that illness prevention is possible with lifestyle changes and a positive attitude. It is aimed to elaborate on how ideals about the healthy body are being defined and internalized by the organic food consumers as part of health promotion and healthy living trends. Even though health and health maintenance are highly associated with women “feminists now recognize that both women and men are subject to disciplinary power and regimes of corporeal production, albeit to different degrees and in different ways” (L. McDowell, 2007: 51). According to the respondents who took part in the study regardless of their sexes, in order to be healthy watching what to eat and exercising are the two main factors need to be done. As a matter of fact, all seven male respondents shared that they observe their bodies in order to consciously monitor and regulate the changes. However, not all seven of them are willing to take medical advice unless they think their condition is very urgent. Despite the different attitudes towards

taking medical advice it can be said that all the male respondents have applied diets at least once in their lives and are sensitive about the shape of their bodies as they see it as an important factor of being healthy.

Yes, I have done diets before. But I don't have very strict things. But from time to time especially about my weight I say I should control it because it is going too far. I don't do very strict diets. Usually, with sports, I eat smaller portions in the evenings. I do it not with a strict diet but with controlled food intake.²⁷ (P17, male, white collar semi-skilled).

While maintaining the healthy body has always been a responsibility for women it can be said that "like women, men have also become too focused on their bodies, dieting, and working out to pursue other projects and goals." (C. L. Delaney, & D. D. Kaspin, 2011: 217). Male respondents also share concerns regarding their bodies and as a result of the interviews it is clear that being unhealthy is highly associated with being fat or oversized.

If I should mention; the main definition of being unhealthy -besides the genetic diseases- is being fat. And not moving enough is the second definition of being unhealthy.²⁸ (P20, male, white collar semi-skilled).

As a result of the interviews, it can be said that being healthy is highly associated with having a fit body. Since individuals aim to maintain that shape, they closely monitor the changes their bodies might go through. Also, due to becoming deeply concentrated on the body individuals become the ones who know their body and needs the most. Therefore, as we saw from the answers of the participants, they don't feel the need of seeing a doctor since they believe they can solve their problems unless it is a very urgent matter.

In addition to changing approach of male respondents as being more concerned with their body and shape their role as parents also change. Although female respondents who have kids naturalize the mother role as providers of health male respondents also share their organic food consumption motivations mentioning their

²⁷ Evet. Çok böyle sert şeylerim yok. Ama zaman zaman, çoğunlukla hatta kilomu kontrol etmeliyim fazla gitti, dediğim oldu. çok katı bir şeye girmedim genellikle sporla, akşam yemeklerini azaltma şeklinde, katı bir diyet değil ama kontrollü yeme şeklinde oluyor.

²⁸ Dile getirmek gerekirse; sağlıksız olmanın ilk genetik gelen rahatsızlıklar dışında kilolu olmak bence sağlıksızlığın en büyük tanımı. Hareketi az yapmak sağlıksızlığın en büyük ikinci tanımı.

kids first. When asked to a male organic consumer the reason for their organic food consumption the answer is similar to the female respondents.

We started consuming organic after my first child was born. It started with the concern of eating healthy products, and not giving products that have pesticides or chemicals in them or products we don't know what is in it to our daughter. But after starting with her and entering the kitchen, we also started eating organic. So, the primary reason for my consumption is health.²⁹ (P18, male, white collar high skilled).

With the changing notions of parenthood, it can be seen that both parents take responsibility by modifying the consumption habits and providing healthy options to their kids. Despite the inclination of sharing the responsibility equally about the health of their kids, the intensity of responsibility reflected through the interviews is experienced more by the female respondents. The intensity can be seen through the answer provided by a female respondent who doesn't have kids. According to her, her organic food consumption motivations may change after having kids as she prioritizes herself and her preferences only for the time being.

I buy organic eggs, sometimes green tea, I especially pay attention to lentils and chicken. And the main reason for that is actually the taste. Well, health can be the primary reason when I have a kid but when it is for me it's the taste. The taste really changes I suppose that's why I consume organic as a very unconscious consumer.³⁰ (P7, female, white collar high skilled).

Thus, the role of mothers as caregivers is given to all women in society and affects them to make choices by internalizing the traditional roles. At this point, the outcomes of the interviews once again can be associated with Nettleton's (1996) argument that health consciousness and promotion is directed at women and mothers not for their own needs but for the needs of their children. For many respondents, organic food consumption is a new practice that starts with the pregnancy and continues only for the children which means the organic consumption stays limited with the products for children. It can be suggested that this way of integrating organic products into regular consumption practices are mostly done by the respondents who use social media

²⁹ İlk çocuğum doğduktan sonra başladı bu iş. Daha sağlıklı gıda tüketelim, ilaçlı kimyasal kullanılan ya da ne olduğunu bilmediğim ürünleri çocuğumuza vermeyelim diye başladı. Ama sonra onunla başlayınca mutfağa girdikten sonra hepimiz için geçerli oldu. Yani birinci şeyim yani sağlık.

³⁰ Yumurta, bazen yeşil çay, özellikle dikkat ettiğim şey olabilir mercimek, tavuk. Bunların da en büyük nedeni bir yandan kötü ama lezzet aslında. Yani sağlık belki bir çocuğum olsa öncelikli şeyim sağlık olur ama kendim olunca zaten lezzeti değişiyor diye galiba yapıyorum. Baya bilinçsiz bir tüketici olarak.

channels or peers to be informed about the products and their influences on the human body, environment, and societies. As these sources are in parallel with health promotion arguments -emphasizing the consumption of certain products in contemporary societies- organic food consumption for these respondents stays limited with consumption practices and lifestyles. However, the changing dynamics shouldn't be overlooked as fathers become more active and share the responsibility of mothers even though mothers are still primarily responsible for the health needs of the children and the men in the family.

4.4. Information Channels about Organic Food

4.4.1. Social Media & Experts of the Self

Individuals as the investors are expected to make the right choices for a good and healthy life over the long run. While the expert knowledge helps the re-description of good health as an individualized lifestyle, it encourages consumers to take actions in this direction by applying lifestyle modifications and integrating alternative consumption practices into their lives.

In contemporary societies, expert knowledge becomes very widespread for helping consumers with guidance, providing various suggestions and requirements for the achievement of healthy living. Many of the respondents stated that they don't follow an organization or an official source of information to get informed about organic food, but they follow several Instagram accounts of organic brands and some influencers. While Instagram is suggested as the main source of information according to the respondents, it can be argued that by mostly following organic brands, their knowledge and perception about organic industry are shaped by these sources. As these sources prioritize health as something that can be achieved through consumption practices and lifestyle, individuals also adapt this notion of health since they take companies as the authority.

Rather than the state focusing on the determinants of health, 'experts' and corporations alike are encouraged to offer their goods and services through the free market, whereby, it is expected that the responsible, health conscious, neoliberal citizen will buy into them. (N. Ayo, 2012: 102)

Many respondents choose to be informed over social media regarding organic food through which they are mostly exposed to marketing campaigns in addition to some superficial information. Generally, accounts on social media or influencers don't exist for bringing the latest updates or information about the issue. However, it is seen from the interviews that the respondents use these channels and information they provide as the basis for their opinion.

In addition to receiving information about health and how to be healthy from various sources, individuals are also expected to become experts of their own. By exercising strict monitoring and regulation over the body while at the same time getting the latest information about the issue, individuals become experts knowing what is best for their selves. As a result, for some respondents the more the individual becomes health-conscious the less they visit a doctor. This behavior is suggested to take place as the responsibility of health shifts to the individual and increasing awareness campaigns for disease prevention. As the idea of health promotion is becoming widely internalized, with the vital role of the individuals, health is suggested to be something that can be achieved via certain strategies. As individuals become the entrepreneurs of their lives and bodies, they observe the changes that occur in their bodies and take actions accordingly. Among the respondents, 16 of them stated that they monitor their bodies and anomalies which also includes watching weight gain for 3 respondents. However, despite the great number of responses that state they observe their bodies, not as much answer is given when asked the frequency of doctor visits.

Very seldom. I could have a yearly check-up, but I don't even go to that. I don't like it. I try to solve my problems with my own observations. I try to find my own medicine or solution. I must be in really terrible condition to go to a doctor.³¹ (P4, female, white collar high skilled).

It can be said that the individuals get information about health related issues which result in positioning themselves as the expert who can diagnose and solve any personal health matters. Thus, the number of doctor visits decline as a result of shift in responsibility towards the individual. Especially respondents who use Instagram as the

³¹ Çok nadiren. Senede 1 check up hakkım var ama ona bile gitmiyorum. Hiç sevmem. Ben gözlemlerimle deal etmeye çalışıyorum. Kendi çapımda bir ilaç bulma, ölüp bitiyor olmam lazım doktora gitmek için.

main source of information can be suggested to be more likely to concentrate on their bodies and self-remedies.

4.4.2. Recommendation of Trusted Others & Personal Judgment

Respondents who make their organic consumption choices based on organic certifications, a brand to hold the certification is the most important factor determining their purchasing action. While for respondents who focus on personal evaluation on the basis of personal preferences and taste, it appears as a secondary factor.

Well, it is all about trial and error. I can check that brandx is organic only over the comments on Instagram and it is recommended to me by someone I trust. Recommendation is already very important to me. But I will decide if I will continue using this product. First, I will use it, make yogurt from that milk. And if I would be satisfied with the outcome, I will continue using it.³² (P5, female, white collar semi-skilled).

It can be said that the respondents who make consumption choices on the basis of recommendation and personal evaluation mostly use limited number of sources of information about organic food, as they associate organic with its appearance and taste. Also, the participant mentions in the quote above that by checking the comments on the page it can be seen if the product is organic or not rather than getting in touch with the brand or checking if they hold any documentation. However, as we can see, individuals appear to be more concentrated on their health while prioritizing immediate and convenient solutions. In spite of getting information through various channels about the products, it can be argued that the increasing concerns and mistrust is not due to obtaining information but rather concerns about healthy living (I. H. Kaya, N. Konar, E. S. Poyrazoğlu, N. Artık, 2013: 219).

³² Yani şöyle aslında her şey deneme yanılma. Ben şimdi taze sütçünün organik olduğuna dair sadece instagram üzerindeki yorumları görüyorum ve güvendiğim birinin tavsiyesini görüyorum. Tavsiye zaten benim için baya önemli. Ama bunu ne zaman ben kullanmaya devam edeceğim: bunu ben söyleyeceğim, o sütü kullanacağım, o süttten yaptığım yoğurdun tipinden de tadından da memnun kalırsam devam edeceğim.

4.5. Spaces of Organic Consumption

4.5.1. Convenience

Convenience appears as a significant factor for some respondents. While 6 respondents stating that they buy organic food over websites, 9 respondents shared that they go to organic markets, 5 respondents mentioned going to small organic stores and 13 respondents prefer going to supermarkets. Websites for reaching directly to producers appear as a popular and convenient solution although not all the websites provide documentation that shows the products are organic. After looking deeper, it can be seen that the respondents who use social media to get information about organic products are more likely to buy natural foods or products from villages assuming those would also be organic. That's why it can be said that the respondents who equate organic with natural products don't put extra emphasis on shopping from the organic market or organic brands that hold official organic logo.

During my pregnancy, we went to the Feriköy market with my husband. It was on Saturdays. But that's also not very sustainable. Every Saturday going from İstinye to the market in Bomonti, carry the things back home. At the beginning, we went there for seven or eight times and liked it very much. It was like an activity going around eating griddlecakes. Also, you feel better psychologically as well for making efforts for your health. But after a certain point either because of bad weather or some other plans with friends you don't go anymore. I think online shopping is very motivating about this.³³ (P5, female, white collar semi-skilled).

For the respondents who prefer to use websites suggest that going to organic market is not very convenient especially due to weather conditions. Also having the market only on one day requires the consumers to wait for that day for shopping. That is why respondents prefer not to wait for the day of market and do the shopping online.

³³ Ben hamileyken Feriköy pazarına gidiyorduk eşimle. Cumartesi günleriydi. O da çok sürdürülebilir değil. Yani her cumartesi İstinye'den kalkıp Bomonti'deki pazara gideceğim, oradan onları taşıyacağım. İlk bir 7-8 kere gittik, çok hoşumuza gitti, dolaşıyorduk kenarda gözleme yiyoruz o aktivite gibiydi. Bir de insan kendini psikolojik olarak da sağlığım için çaba sarfediyorum iyi bir psikoloji yani insana iyi geliyor. Ama bir yerden sonra hava çok soğuk çıkamam diyorsun ya da planın oluyor arkadaşlarınla. Ama bence online bu konuda çok çok çok motive edici.

4.5.2. Known Producers & Brands

As a result of the interviews it is seen that respondents use online shopping websites, commonly known organic brands, supermarkets, small organic producers in other cities, and organic markets for making their organic purchases. In the case of non-packed fresh food purchases, respondents prioritize making their choices on the basis of familiar and known producers/farmers and brands. Preferring consumption practices over the known producers/farmers or brands help consumers develop strategies to cope with the trust issue. As a result of the trust relationship consumers build with the brands or producers/farmers, they become less concerned about the organic logo and certification for the products. In order to build this trust, respondents attach importance to taking advice from friends and family as a result of their previous consumption experiences. In that case, it can be said that the organic consumption choices are shaped by subjective relations, the guidance of peers, and personal evaluations. When asked the respondents how they decide to buy and evaluate the recommended products they mostly state that the person who recommends it is a reliable person they trust regarding their choices and they also mention that they give weight on personal assessment of the product.

In addition to that, respondents who go to organic markets also buy organic products from the producers they know as they test and trust their products over the time. Also, several organic brands become very well known by the respondents and can be found in many supermarkets that's why they continue buying the same brand as they frequently use the product.

4.6. Trust Issue in Organic Food Consumption

4.6.1. Past Experiences

The detrimental effects of the food products with chemical and other substances become more and more known by the consumers which lead the inclination of a strong association between health and food choices. For example, Chernobyl nuclear accident

is considered to have negative impacts on human health. The respondents share their concerns about risk factors which help us understand how they formulate associations between accidents or highly modified and processed food, their association with organic food and health.

I don't know if you remember Chernobyl due to your age. As a direct effect of nutrition, death and cancer cases increased in the Black Sea region. This is the biggest example of the connection between healthy eating and a healthy life. That's why the healthier you eat healthier your body will be.³⁴ (P12, female, white collar high skilled).

While the risk factors like Chernobyl lead the emergence of a strong association between healthy eating habits that don't contain remains from risk factors with being healthy, they also cause distrust experienced by the individuals.

When we were little, hazelnut packages were distributed in schools every day. And later we found out those hazelnuts that were given out to children were from the Black Sea region produced in who knows what conditions after being exposed to radioactive contamination.³⁵ (P9, personal female, self-employed).

Since the detrimental side effects of consuming food that is grown in risky environments become documented over the years, consumers with the increasing awareness about the effects of these matters begin to have trust issues regarding food production standards and supervision. With the increasing news reports, documentaries, and campaigns the awareness about the bad and dangerous production conditions was expanded in society. "The media, having joined the helping professions and having studied audience and reader response, dutifully report every medical study and recommendation." (R. Crawford, 2006: 415). As a reflection of these developments and diffusion of health knowledge, the controversial case of chicken and egg have become popular subjects of the dialogues during the interviews. Some of the respondents stopped eating chicken whereas some of them eat only organic products.

³⁴ Hatırlar mısın bilmiyorum, senin yaşı'n Çernobil olayı olmuştu. Direkt beslenmeyle ilgili olarak, Karadeniz'de biliyorsun, ölümler ve kanser vakaları arttı. Bu en büyük örnektir sağlıklı beslenmeyle sağlıklı yaşam arasındaki bağlantıya. O yüzden ne kadar sağlıklı beslenirseniz vücudunuz da o kadar sağlıklı olur.

³⁵ Biz küçükken okullarda fındık verilirdi bize paket paket her gün. Sonra mesela o fındığın aslında Karadeniz'den bilmem nereden geldiğini kim bilir hangi şartlarda kim bilir hangi radyo aktif şeylere maruz kalıp çocuklara dağıtıldığını falan öğrendik.

Meeting the production and quality standards as well as the integration of strict supervision to all processes are issues that still give consumers worry also in the case of organic food production. As consumers choose to consume organic food in order to prevent chemical intakes and consume healthier food, having doubts about the production processes cause consumers to become hesitant about organic consumption. The hesitation and mistrust stem from the previous experiences of uncontrolled food production that is shown to be detrimental to human health.

4.6.2. Privatization of Control Mechanisms

As a result of the trust issue and concerns of respondents, their opinions about the organic production is asked and only one person stated that the production is assumed to be done properly in Turkey. The rest nineteen respondents shared similar hesitations as they stated that the majority of the organic food in the market is not eligible to be labeled and sold as organic food. The lack of control during the production processes believed to be one of the main reasons why respondents have trust issues. Especially with references to old health-related incidents like Chernobyl, the promotion of products like margarine and milk powder show the control concerns of consumers are strongly linked to previous experiences. In addition to the past experiences the current cases of anthrax, usage of prohibited types of pesticides and chemicals with limit excess, also the close interest of media towards these issues make consumers become aware of the risk factors as well as concerned about the food they consume. While some of the respondents suggested lack of laws as one of the reasons for distrust, some believed this issue is being misused by people who take part in these processes.

I think lack of inspection and control is the most important reason for this. I believe the most important problem in Turkey is the lack of inspection. There are laws but the control of these laws whether they are put into practice or not is not being done good enough. That's why like in many other issues, lack of inspection and control is also a major problem in the case of organic food.³⁶ (P14, male, self-employed).

³⁶ Bence denetimsizlik bunun en önemli sebebi. Ben Türkiye’de en önemli problemin denetimsizlik olduğuna inanıyorum. Kanunlar var ama kanunların uygulandığının kontrolü bence doğru yapılamıyor o yüzden genel olarak birçok konuyla ilgili denetimsizlik nasıl sorunsu bence organik gıdada da denetimsizlik en önemli problem.

Both the respondents who buy all food products organic and the respondents who choose only certain organic products for consumption have similar concerns regarding eating healthy. The individuals choosing to consume organic for all products, accept the organic alternative as better than the conventional products that is why they continue their consumption. Many of the respondents mentioned that organic markets abroad are more trustworthy with stricter control mechanisms of certification processes. Although they couldn't provide any solid explanation or reason for that assumption, through the examples they gave from Turkey show that lack of inspection is the main reason for mistrust. As the authorities put the recalled export goods on the domestic market, don't work on campaigns for promoting organic food and raising awareness, and not changing the confusing uses of terms like natural as part of marketing methods are given as examples why respondents have trust issues. In order for a product to be labeled as organic it needs to go through inspections starting from the production till the packaging processes by the certification companies authorized by the RTMAF. While these certifications indicate that the products with the label are produced as a result of meeting the requirements and standards of organic food production, consumers still have hesitations regarding both the processes and the certification companies. One of the reasons for the distrust appears to be the privatization of the certification companies through which state is no longer the direct authority which makes make the consumers uneasy (A. Kırğız, 2014: 4). As the private companies that are authorized for the certification processes essentially aim to gain economic profit, consumers are concerned as the well-being of individuals could be overlooked while giving services with the focus of economic gain. Despite the distrust towards the organic production processes and certifications many of the respondents are also aware of the fact that this is the only method of separating organic food from the products that already exist in the market. Even though respondents don't fully trust the production and inspection processes, they do look for the organic product logo and the certification logo when buying packed food as these provide assurance indicating the products are organic.

4.6.3. Role of NGOs

After asking the sources of information they use to get information about organic food, respondents were asked if they get information from an NGO or they are member of one. Although 15 out of 20 said they have heard of Buğday, only 5 of them closely follows the association whereas the remaining 10 stated that they only heard of them. Therefore, it can be said that both these 10 respondents and the 5 who don't follow any NGO or Buğday in particular are usually more likely to use terms natural, village products, and pure while describing organic food, whereas respondents who closely follow the association refrain from using these terms for describing organic products. The usage of these terms not only manifest themselves through language but also with the consumption practices as consumers buy the products that they consider natural without showing over-sensitivity towards the certification and logo that are the key determinants of organic products according to government sources. There are some consumers who choose to buy certain products from certain producers as they find out that the products are organic but don't hold certifications. Respondents participated in this study buying from certain producers without certifications don't know whether the products are organic or not, but they choose to buy because they are grown near villages and are assumed to be natural. It is not suggested that the respondents should only buy organic products with certifications however it is important to understand according to what criteria they evaluate the products they buy assuming to be organic.

For some of the respondents, the state appears as the main authority to be involved in the process for providing safe food, however, in the current situation of organic food, respondents believe that state is not as involved as it is expected to be. As a result, becoming informed about organic food and choosing which source of information to follow become a personal decision as part of healthy lifestyle practices. As mentioned previously, many of the respondents follow organic brands and healthy lifestyle promoters on Instagram. Here, it can be seen that many consumers receive constant information regarding organic products however they are limited to daily consumption practices. Keeping the issue within the lifestyle framework limits gaining awareness and information about the subject from different sources. After the intervi-

ew with the chairman of the board of Buğday as part of the study, it was shared that even the majority of the people who come for shopping to the organic market don't fully know what organic stands for. (P21, personal communication, January 19, 2019). In this case, these consumers who choose to consume organic food can be said to adapt it along with their other healthy lifestyle practices without being fully aware of the meanings and implications of their organic consumption choices. Also, it can be said that they are more likely to easily switch their shopping site from the organic market to online or regular markets as the organic market doesn't offer something irreplaceable.

Among the respondents who closely follow the updates from various sources about the organic food, some do pay attention to certificates and logos. However, they also have doubts about the way these certificates are given out as they distrust the control mechanisms throughout the production processes as the state authorizes private companies for that role while becoming less involved. Therefore, Buğday becomes substantial for the respondents who believe the dissolving presence of the state is being taken over by the association for the protection and providing safe food.

We trust Buğday. I hope they continue being there. They make frequent inspections; we saw their pop-up inspections all of a sudden in Feriköy. We also went to the market in Göztepe park and saw that they asked the certificates of farmers. That's why we follow them but no other channel besides them. For example, at the market in Hadımköy that is not under the control of Buğday, the city police make the controls and found some problematic products. So that means when Buğday is not present they make sloppy things.³⁷ (P8, female, white collar semi-skilled).

Respondents who emphasize the role of Buğday, prefer to make their shopping at the organic market that is under their control since they trust the control mechanisms applied for providing safe food. Although respondents tend to trust the farmers and products that are available in organic markets under Buğday's control they still have some hesitations due to previous examples they experienced at first hand that include the infraction of rules by the farmers.

³⁷ Buğday Derneği'ne güveniyoruz. İnşallah hep olurlar. Çok denetliyorlar, Feriköy'de orada arada aniden denetlemelerini görüyoruz. Göztepe parkındaki pazara da gittik birkaç kere orada da aniden gelip göster bakalım sertifikanı diye. O yüzden onu takip ediyoruz ama onun dışında bir kanal yok. Örneğin Hadımköy'de Buğday'ın denetiminde olmayan bir Pazar var zabıta gelip bakıyor ve ürünler sorunlu çıkmış. Yani demek ki Buğday olmadığı zaman kendileri uyduruk şeyler yapıyormuş.

I think I have sympathy towards Buğday. That's why I trust them. But besides that, since I witnessed fraud of people who said they produce organic food, I don't trust people regarding this issue.³⁸ (P16, male, self-employed).

As organic has become a marketing tool, many of the consumers approach organic products with suspicion. In addition to the misuse of the term organic for marketing purposes, not meeting the required standards of production is another argument brought forward by the respondents as one of the reasons for their distrust. Especially because of the problems with the inspections, consumers share that they can't fully trust the producers and quality of the products. Therefore, according to some respondents, active presence and control of Buğday is a significant factor that reassures consumers about the quality and safety of the products.

During my purchase, at the moment going to the organic market enables me to make the filtering. Many products there go through the certification things of Buğday. But despite that, I know there are some attempts of cheating.³⁹ (P17, male, white collar semi-skilled).

In the case of organic food and consequently food security, individuals and respective NGOs become integral actors on this issue. While individuals are mostly influential within their personal environment mainly focusing on lifestyle changes by modifying consumption practices, respective NGOs like Buğday, in this case, works for making broader changes for enhancing the conditions of organic production by addressing the concerns and suggestions to the municipalities. Especially when asked the respondents if they take active role in any NGO or other organizations to work on organic food issue, only 3 of the respondents said that they try to inform and convince their friends to buy organic products and only 1 person said they try to support the producers by buying their products. Thus, it can be argued that organic food is mostly considered as a personal consumption issue by the respondents of this study.

³⁸ Galiba Buğday Derneğine bir sempatim olduğu için onlara inanıyorum. Bunun dışında organik gıda, doğal gıda ürettiğini söyleyen insanların çeşitli sahtekârlıklarına tanık olduğum ve bunların yüzde yüz sağlamasını yaptığımdan dolayı bu konularda çok böyle bir güvenim yok.

³⁹ Satın alırken, şu anda organik pazara gitmek benim için filtreyi oluşturuyor. Oradaki birçok ürün Buğday Derneği'nin sertifikasyon şeylerinden geçiyor. Ama buna rağmen bir takım yerlerde kurnazlıklar olduğunu biliyorum.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Through this work it was intended to show that the consumers of organic food in Turkey are subjects of neoliberalism especially women being the major target group due to their constructed gender roles. Through focusing on the daily consumption practices and perceptions of consumers, the changing consumer traits and adoption of neoliberal rationality was explained. As well as that, motivations of their organic food consumption, changing gender roles, information channels and spaces of consumption are also explained and analyzed as a result of the findings from the field work.

Organic agriculture is suggested to be a holistic approach towards environment, ecosystem, animal welfare and humans promoting well-being for each pillar at the same time for a sustainable system. Due to its clean content and production processes, organic food is considered to be a healthy alternative to the conventional products that are likely to contain chemicals and additives. As a result of increasing concentration on personal health, organic food consumption is adopted by consumers along with other consumption practices prioritizing personal health and needs.

In parallel with the theoretical discussion that was provided in the previous chapters, organic food consumers who have participated in this study share similarities with other studies in which consumers decide to consume organic food mainly because of personal health concerns. Some studies focusing on organic consumption practices argue that consuming organic food can be a means of self-interest. In addition, individuals who share individual health concerns also support concerns about environment, animals, and ecosystems. Although some studies focusing on the European consumers show that consumers there also have altruistic motivations meaning having concerns about environment and animal welfare as well, that is not commonly seen in the Turkish context. The analysis of the interviews indicate that the main motivation of consuming organic food is for health reasons and avoiding risks. In the Turkish case individuals are concerned with self-interest of personal good

health, personal wellbeing or the wellbeing of their children rather than collective interests for humanity. Also, the price calculations, convenient accessibility, are important factors for Turkish consumers of organic food.

As well as the strong focus on me-centric organic consumption motivations, according to the participants, having children is as effective as personal health considerations that becomes one of the main motivations of consumption. While for mothers their family in general is shown to be protected from risk factors they position themselves as the health provider. In some cases, having children and providing healthy options and maintaining their health becomes even more important than their own conditions for many parents. Thus, it can be said that participants who have children are likely to modify their consumption habits and choices as they have a child. Also, many parents prioritize providing organic alternative of each product their children consume. However, as it was presented earlier, depending on factors like level of income and trust issues, parents have different strategies of organic food consumption and adoption. While some tries to buy everything as organic for the entire household, some parents only buy for their kids, and others choose to buy particular products only. In any case, parents also show an egoistic motivation for their organic consumption by prioritizing health of their children and not mentioning other positive effects of organic agricultural production processes and standards. As a result of taking all participants into account, it can be said that the organic food consumers participated in this study perform their purchase decisions on the basis of me-centric motivations both in the case of individuals with no child and parents with children as they paid attention to personal or family interest and didn't address organic agriculture as a holistic approach with broader commitments.

The research question of this study suggests that women are the main group of organic food consumers due to the traditional gender role as caregivers. In the theory part, this argument was supported by scholars who also argued that women especially mothers are the main health-conscious consumers in societies as family is positioned as the main responsible of health promotion. Thus, mothers due to their caregiver and health provider roles are discussed to be the main target also in the case of organic food consumption. Female respondents who participated in this study, shared similar motivations and concerns in line with traditional roles by prioritizing their family and

children's health and positioning themselves as the responsible person to maintain health. However, the motivations and changing roles of fathers should be mentioned at this point as they share similarities with the female participants. Male respondents who have children also share that their main motivation for organic consumption is to provide healthy food options for their kids. In order to avoid consumption of any harmful substance by their children, regardless of sexes, parents, modify their consumption and shift to organic food. However, while female respondents not only mention their children but family as a whole to be taken care of, male respondents solely refer their children as the ones to be cared. Thus, despite the changing parenting roles and responsibilities and men becoming more involved, women still express more responsibility.

In addition to that, according to the answers collected from the male respondents, it can be said that they also become very much focused on their bodies and concerned about their own health. Although women were expected to be the main group to be health-conscious consumers men also become very much interested in these issues. As we can see from the interviews, having a fit body, being in shape, eating healthy, and being health-conscious are also expressed by male respondents. As a result, the changing approaches towards body and health issues can be observed due to health becoming a general concern for every individual not being restricted to women only. This shift is argued to happen as individuals are positioned as consumers in contemporary societies and their main role is to be consumers which trivializes the gender difference since they are expected to be active consumers. Hence, according to the interviews, the respondents in this study also position themselves as consumers.

It is also intended to reflect the perceptions of respondents about the roles of Buğday and the government or local governments through this work. First of all, majority of the respondents have limited understanding of structures behind the organic markets and associations working on this area. Many of the participants know the organic markets and relate it with Buğday. And they position Buğday as the owner or only responsible of the markets. However, the organic markets are examples of NGO-local government cooperation from the day one. Respondents don't know this information therefore canalize their trust into Buğday as the provider of safe food. This situation makes the individuals unaware of the other actors in this area and result in

having limited information about the overall organic industry in Turkey. As well as that, becoming aware of the role of local governments in organic markets could help solving the trust issues respondents have towards the government sources and institutions. However, not only individuals but local governments may also need to increase awareness by working on communicating their roles and responsibilities as individuals only know their co-partner in organic markets.

Despite the broad commitments of organic agriculture to environment, animal welfare, and humans, organic food in contemporary societies is being promoted as any other consumer good. On top of that, it can be argued that organic food is offered as a consumption solution to the existing problems in food market. As organic food consumers adopt the traits of neoliberal rationality; self-regulation, individualization, responsabilization and rational calculations these become main traits to describe organic food consumers. Also, these attributes have impact on how individuals perceive goods and what they prioritize before making a decision. Thus, it can be said that while through the changing notions about responsibility and health promotion, organic food becomes a consumption practice, organic food consumers, through their behaviors, practices, and preferences become good examples for the ideal citizen neoliberalism asserts. Thus, focusing on this specific group and their daily activities of consumption enable us to understand me-centric new subject formations and ways of maintaining social order as a result of the intertwined characteristics of neoliberal subjects with healthy and responsible consumers.

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APPENDICES

A: ETİK KURUL ONAYI

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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30 OCAK 2019

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. Sibel KALAYCIOĞLU

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Venis KALDERON'un "Neoliberal aracı olarak Sağlıklı Olma Bilinci: Organik Gıda Tüketimi Örneği" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 047-ODTÜ-2019 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımla bilgilerinize sunarım.



Prof. Dr. Tülin GENÇÖZ

Başkan


Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL
Üye


Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR (4.)
Üye

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI
Üye


Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
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Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
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B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEES

Table I. Demographic Information about Participants

	Age	Gender	Education Level	Private/ Public Sector	Employment Status	Marital Status	#of Children
P1	28	Female	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Single	-
P2	28	Female	University	Private	White collar high skilled	Single	-
P3	27	Female	Master	Private	White collar semi skilled	Single	-
P4	30	Female	Master	Private	White collar high skilled	Single	-
P5	32	Female	University	Private	White collar high skilled	Married	1
P6	33	Female	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Married	2
P7	36	Female	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Single	-
P8	36	Female	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Married	1
P9	39	Female	University	Private	Self-employed professional	Married	Pregnant
P10	39	Female	University	Private	White collar high skilled	Married	1
P11	54	Female	University	Public	Actress	Divorced	1
P12	55	Female	University	Public	White collar high skilled	Married	1
P13	61	Female	PhD	Private	White collar high skilled	Single	-
P14	28	Male	University	Private	Self-employed professional	Single	-
P15	29	Male	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Single	-

Table I. Continued

P16	34	Male	University	Private	Self-employed professional	Single	-
P17	36	Male	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Married	1
P18	38	Male	Master	Private	White collar high skilled	Married	2
P19	38	Male	High School	Private	White collar semi skilled	Married	1
P20	48	Male	University	Private	White collar semi skilled	Married	1

Table II. Information About the Interviewees

	Experts/ Institutions	Role/ Position	Areas
P21	Buğday Support to Ecological Life Association	Chairman of the Board	Organic Markets
P22	Boğaziçi University	Professor	Sociology of consumption, sociology of food, rural sociology, historical sociology
P23	Organic Food Producer	Self-Employed	Growing and exporting organic food on a yearly contract basis

C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS

1. Demographic Questions

Name & Surname:

Date of Birth:

Current neighborhood:

Sex: ☐Female ☐Male ☐I don't want to specify

Educational Background: ☐Elementary School ☐Middle School ☐High School

☐University Degree ☐Master's Degree/Doctorate

Marital Status: ☐Married ☐Single ☐Divorced ☐Widower

Do you have any children? ☐Yes ☐No

If yes, how many? ____

Do you work? ____

Professional Status: ☐Self-employed ☐Public Employee ☐Private Sector

Employee

Level of income: ☐Low ☐Middle ☐High

2. Organic Food

2.1. What do you think is organic food?

2.2. What makes a food organic?

2.3. Are there any particular things you consider when purchasing organic food?

2.4. Do you pay attention whether a product is organic \ ecological \ natural when purchasing it?

2.5. Do you think the use of these terms are important?

2.6. Which channels or authorities do you gather information regarding organic food?

2.7. What kind of organic food do you purchase?

2.8. How often do you consume organic food?

2.9. Are you able to find organic food whenever you want?

2.10. From where do you buy organic food the most, (If you are living with a partner or if you are married) who is responsible for the shopping of these goods?

2.11. How do you evaluate the pricing of organic foods?

2.12. If you think it's expensive why do you think it is?

2.13. What are your motivations for consuming organic food?

3. Health

3.1. What do you think we have to do in order to be healthy?

3.2. Is it important for you to be healthy?

3.3. What do you think is being healthy? What makes a person healthy?

3.4. How do you define your nutritional habits?

3.5. Do you think your nutritional habits are effective on your health?

3.6. How do you associate being healthy and organic food?

3.7. What does it mean to be unhealthy/sick?

- 3.8. Do your personal behaviors and preferences have effect on you being healthy or unhealthy?
 - 3.9. Do you think you are making conscious/healthy choices regarding the food you consume in order to be healthy?
 - 3.10. What do you think is the characteristics of a person who makes healthy/ conscious choices?
 - 3.11. Have you ever been on a diet? If yes, how often do you start dieting?
 - 3.12. What kind of products do you consume besides organic food?
 - 3.13. Do you consume slightly unhealthy i.e. packaged/oily/sweet products?
 - 3.14. If yes, how often?
 - 3.15. When do you consume these products? (to treat yourself etc.)
 - 3.16. Do you regularly observe any changes or abnormality on your body?
 - 3.17. How often do you go to doctor?
4. Organic Food in Turkey
 - 4.1. Do you think organic food is produced properly in our country?
 - 4.2. Do you know the organic food production processes?
 - 4.3. What do you think would be the differences between the conventional and organic production?
 - 4.4. Do you think organic food is being widely consumed in our country?
 - 4.5. Do you follow any association or institution that works on subjects organic food production or consumption?
 - 4.6. Have you heard before ‘Buğday Ekolojik Yaşamı Koruma Derneği (Bugday Association for Supporting Ecological Living’ or ‘Ekolojik Tarım Organizasyonu Derneği’?
 - 4.7. Are you supporting any campaign or work that aims proliferation of organic products?

B. EXPERT QUESTIONS

1. What do you think about the production of organic food in Turkey?
2. What do you think about the attitudes of consumers in Turkey regarding organic food?
3. What are the effects of certification processes on producers?
4. What are the effects of the organic certificates and use of logos on consumer confidence?
5. Do you think consumers are informed enough regarding organic foods?
6. How do you define the people consuming organic food in Turkey?
7. From where consumers can or should reach to the organic food?

D: TÜRKÇE ÖZET / TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu tez çalışması, organik gıda tüketicilerinin nasıl neoliberalizmin yeni öznesi haline geldiğini incelemektedir. Bu çalışma ile organik gıda tüketicilerinin neoliberalizmin özelliklerini benimseyerek günlük tüketim pratiklerini bu doğrultuda sürdürdükleri öne sürülmektedir. Neoliberalizm, hâkim olduğu toplumlarda yalnızca ekonominin değil alanını sosyal yaşam ve siyaset de dahil olarak toplumun her alanını kapsar. Bu nedenle bu çalışma ile bireyler üzerindeki etkisi incelenmektedir. Paralel olarak artan sağlık söylemleri ve trendlerinin neoliberal özne oluşumu üzerindeki etkilerini ele almaktadır. Organik gıda tüketicilerine odaklanarak günlük davranış ve tercihler üzerinden tüketicilerin söylem ve bakış açıları incelenmiştir. Özellikle kadınların sağlık konusunda öne çıkan rolü nedeniyle, organik gıda tüketicileri arasında yine kadınların konuya daha hassas olabilecekleri öne sunulmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, sağlıklı olma arayışının birey ve toplum üzerindeki etkileri özellikle organik gıda tüketimi ile sınırlı tutularak tartışılmaktadır.

Bu çalışma günümüz toplumlarındaki özne oluşumunu ve öznelere benimsediği yeni özellikleri anlamak adına oldukça önemlidir. Ayrıca bu dönüşümün bir parçası olarak toplumdaki ideal vatandaş tanımlarının da değiştiği görülmektedir. Bu sebeple organik gıda tüketicilerine odaklanarak yeni vatandaş özelliklerinin analiz edilmesi hedeflenmektedir. Buna ek olarak, bireylerin ideal vatandaş özelliklerini benimsemesi toplumsal düzenin sağlandığı da tartışmanın önemli bir boyutudur. Özellikle organik gıda tüketicilerine odaklanıldığında, neoliberalizmin öne sunduğu ideal birey özelliklerini sağlıklı olma amacı ile benimsedikleri görülmektedir. Sağlıklarından sorumlu bireyler ideal vatandaşlar olmak için cabalarken bu süreç aynı zamanda bir kontrol mekanizması işlevini görmektedir. Bireylerin neoliberalizmin özelliklerini sahip olmasını önceliklendirerek toplumda birbirine benzer bireylerin oluşmasına sebep olmaktadır. Bu da tabii ki toplumda düzen sağlarken sapkın veya olağan dışı özelliklerde bireylerin var olmasının önüne geçmeyi amaçlar. Özellikle organik gıda tüketicilerinin sağlık riskleri ve gıda güvensizlikleri sebebiyle organik ürün tüketmeye başlamasından dolayı bu konu gıda ve risk konuları ile yakından alakalıdır. Bu nedenle değişen sağlık trendleri ve bireylerin sağlık konusundaki

endişelerine odaklanmak organik gıdaya yönelik artan ilgiyi anlamak açısından faydalı olacaktır.

Çalışmanın teori kısmında öncelikle neoliberalizm üzerinde durulmaktadır. Özellikle ne tür bireyler ürettiği ve healthism (sağlıklı olma bilinci) ve yeni sağlık trendleri ile arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir. Neoliberalizm, ekonomik bir ideoloji olmanın yanında bir söylem olarak da düşünüldüğünden bireylerin öznellikleri üzerinde etkisi olduğu öne sürülmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra neoliberalizmin toplumları, devletleri, ekonomiyi ve sağlık alanlarını yönetmekteki temel ideoloji olduğu tartışılmaktadır (M. Eliason, 2015: 1). Neoliberalizmin ideolojisi, klasik liberal teorinin vurguladığı bireylerin kar ve birikim odaklı yalnızca bireysel çıkarlarını önceliklendirdikleri görüşlerin üzerine oluşmuştur (S. Hall, 2011: 13). Neoliberal rasyonalite bireyi kendi önceliklendirdiği strateji ve özelliklere göre şekillendirmeye çalışır. Bu özellikler; bireysel sorumluluk, bireysel çıkar, rasyonel ve hesaplanabilir kararları içermektedir. Bunlara ek olarak bireyselleşme neoliberal öznelere sahip olduğu ve bireysel çıkarın her şeyin önünde olduğu durumu nitelemektedir. Bireyler karar alım süreçlerinde yalnızca kendi ihtiyaç ve arzularına odaklanmaktadır. Özellikle devletin merkezi sosyal hak ve servislerini azaltmasıyla bireysel ve rekabetçi çözüm arayışları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bireyselleşme beraberinde izolasyonu getirme riskini taşısa da, bireylerin kendilerine odaklanmaları üzerinden yönetim ve kontrolü sağlanmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra bireyler önceliklendirdikleri bireysel ihtiyaç ve arzuları sonucunda tüm kararları ve sonuçlarından sorumlu hale gelmektedirler. Devletin sahip olduğu hedef ve sorunları artık birey tarafından benimsenmekte ve kendilerini gerçekleştirme hedefleri arasında yerini almaktadır. Bireyler herhangi bir başarısızlığı önlemek adına kati disiplin ve gözlem ile tüm davranışlarını ve faktörleri incelemektedir. Bunun sonucunda bireyler, kendi girişimcileri haline gelerek kendilerini gerçekleştirmek adına kararlar almaktadır. Kişisel gelişim adına birçok yatırım yapmaları beklenen bireyler girişimci rolüyle piyasada iyi bir pozisyona sahip olabilmek adına kendilerine sürekli yatırım yaparak yeni yetenek ve özellikler katmaları beklenmektedir. Bu kararlar rasyonel karar alma süreçlerinden geçmektedir. Çünkü her kararın ve yatırımın bireye faydası olması beklenmektedir. Bir ürün satın alınmış veya bir eğitim alınmış ise bireyin bunlardan maksimum fayda alması hedeflenmektedir. Genel anlamıyla bireylerin kendileri üzerine yaptıkları tüm

yatırımlar ve diğer aktiviteleri bireyleri toplumda tüketici olarak konumlamaktadır. Tüketilecek ürün ve hizmetler konusunda bilgi alma sorumluluğu tamamen bireye verilmişken şirketlerden gelen sürekli bilgi akışı da bu sürecin bir parçasıdır. Bireyler aldıkları bilgiler doğrultusunda tüketim tercihlerinde değişiklik yapabilirler. Özellikle sağlık ve organik tüketim konusunda bireyler organik ürünleri tercih ederek sorumlu bir tüketim davranışı sergilemektedirler. Özellikle sorumlu veya ahlaki tüketim ile bireyler kendilerini de bu tercihler üzerinden tanımlamaktadırlar.

Bireylerin değişen özellikleri ile günlük davranış ve endişelerinin sağlık konusunda yoğunlaşmasının ortaya çıkan yeni sağlık trendleri ile yakından ilgisi görülmektedir. ‘Sağlıklı Yaşam Sendromu’ kavramı ile Cederström ve Spicer (2015) sağlıklı olma konusunun bir tercihten çok etik bir zorunluluk haline geldiği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda bireylerin sağlıkları ile aşırı ilgilenmeleri ve bu hassasiyet sağlık konusunun bireyler için en öncelikli hale gelmesine neden olmuştur. Ancak sağlık veya sağlıklı olmak hakkında kullanılan tanımlar değer yargıları üzerine kurulmaktadır. Birçok farklı aktör farklı iletişim kanalları aracılığıyla sağlık konusundaki mesajlarını bireylere aktarmaya çalışmaktadır. Örneğin televizyon programları, sosyal medya veya dergiler bunlara örnek verilebilir. Günümüzde mesajlar ile sağlıklı olmak daha çok bireylerin nasıl görüldüğü veya ne tükettiği ile ilişkilendirilmektedir. Ancak bu ilişkilendirme sonucu bireylerin erişmesi gereken sağlık normları ve vücut şekilleri ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bunlar da bireylerde anksiyeteye sebep olmaktadır çünkü bu ideallerin evrenselliği olmadığı gibi bireylerin erişmesi mümkün olmayan niteliktedirler. Healthism (Sağlıklı olma bilinci) ise Crawford (1980) tarafından kullanılan ve bireylerin refahları için bireysel sağlığı önceliklendirdikleri ve bunun ile aşırı derecede ilgilendikleri durumu açıklamak için kullanılmıştır. Burada bireylerin yaşam tarzlarında yaptıkları değişikliklerle sağlıklı bir hayat mümkün görülerek bireylerin sağlık sorunlarının çözümleri yine bireylerde aranmaktadır. Böylece dış etkenler görmezden gelinerek sağlık sorunları ve çözümleri bireysel sorumluluk alanına konumlanmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, bireysel tercih ve yaşam tarzı değişiklikleri ile kararlar alınmaktadır. Bireylerin kendilerine odaklanmaları ve çözümleri kendilerinde aramaları, üzerinde etkisi olamayacağı büyük toplumsal riskler konusunda endişelerinin azalmasına sebep olmaktadır. Trisha Greenhalgh ve Simon Wessely (2004), sağlıklı olma bilincinin bireyler üzerindeki

etkilerini önceki düşünürlerin fikirlerinden yararlanarak ele almaktadırlar. Sağlıklı olma bilinci ile hareket eden bireylerin kendilerini gerçekleştirmek adına ideal sağlık normlarına ulaşmaya çalıştıkları söylenmektedir. Bireyler ortaya çıkan sağlık ideallerini sorgulamadan kabul ederken bir yandan da tükettikleri gıdalar konusunda da bazı görüşleri benimsemektedirler. Günümüzde sağlık konusunda endişesi olan birçok tüketicinin topraktan çıkan herhangi bir şeye hiçbir eleştirisiz inancı, laboratuvarı üretilmiş bir ürüne karşı ise aşırı bir korkusu olduğu söylenmektedir (Greenhalgh ve Wessely, 2004: 208). Burada bireylerin indirgemeci ikiliklere, topraktan ve laboratuvarıdan yani doğal ve işlenmiş gibi ikilikleri sorgulamadan kabul ettikleri görülmektedir. Bu davranış biçimi, bu tez çalışmasına katılan birçok katılımcı tarafından da sergilenmektedir. Piyasada doğal adı altında birçok ürün satılmaktadır. Bu ürünlerin bazıları içeriğinden ötürü olurken bazıları yalnızca pazarlama motivasyonu ile bu kelimeleri kullanmaktadır. Organik ürünlerin tohumundan girdi kullanımına, üretimin yapıldığı alandan, paketlemeye ve tedarik zincirine kadar birçok konuda sıkı üretim ve kontrol yöntemleri kullanılmaktadır. Bu nedenle bu süreçleri kontrol edilmeden üretimi yapılan ürünlere organik demek mümkün değildir. Ancak birçok marka veya küçük üretici doğal kelimesini kullanarak tüketicilere doğal olmayan ürün de satıyor olabilir. Dolayısıyla tüketicilerin doğal yazan her ürünü doğal olarak kabul etmektense sorgulaması ve aldığı bilgiler doğrultusunda kararını vermesi beklenmektedir.

Kadınların artan sağlık trendi ve bilinci ile toplumda nasıl bir konumda olduğuna odaklanmak gerekmektedir. Erkek egemen tip biliminin kadınlar ve vücutları üzerinde uyguladıkları kontrolü eleştirmek adına Kadın Sağlık Hareketi ortaya çıkmıştır (S. E. Moore: 2010, 97). Bu kontrole karşı kadınların kendi çözümlerine odaklanacakları metotlar savunularak medikal kontrol reddedilmiştir. Günümüzde sağlık teşviki de yine eleştirilere maruz kalmaktadır çünkü sağlığı yaşam tarzı tercihleri üzerinden tanımlamaktadır. Burada bireysel tercihler örneğin diyet, spor, belli ürünlerin tüketimi gibi konular ön plana çıkmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, bireyler için sağlıklı olmak sürekli takip etmeleri gereken bir görev haline gelmektedir. Bu görevin daha çok kadınlara yöneltildiği özellikle aileleri için sağlıklı olma rolünü üstlendikleri görülmektedir. Geçmişte kullanılan kadın bedeni ve hasta veya kontrol edilmesi gereken özellikleri günümüzde sağlıklı beden ve yine kontrol edilmesi gereken olarak görülmektedir.

Özellikle sağlık konusunda tüm bilgilere sahip sorumlu konumunda olan kadınlar tüketici olarak da bu sorumluluklarını tükettikleri ürünler aracılığıyla gerçekleştirmektedirler.

Bu tercihler farklı söylemler ve bilgi kaynakları tarafından da etkilenmektedir. Bu süreçte güç ve bilgi ilişkisi öne çıkmaktadır. Bireyler yalnızca fiziksel baskı veya sansür aracılığıyla değil üretilen ve benimsenen bilgiler aracılığıyla da kontrol edilmektedir. Organik tüketicilerin olduğu gibi bireylerin gündelik aktivitelerine odaklanarak etraflarındaki söylem ve bilgilerin bireyler üzerindeki etkilerini anlamak mümkündür. Böylece bireyler üzerinde nasıl yaşayacaklarına, davranacaklarına kadar etkisi görülmektedir. Bireyler gözlem, kontrol gibi yöntemleri uygulayarak bu bir parçası haline gelmektedir. Buradan da anlaşılacağı gibi, bireyler kendilerini yönetmek ve kontrol etmek adına sorumluluğu üstlenmektedirler. Bu yöntemleri benimseyerek kendilerini gözlemekte ve normlara yönelik şekillendirmektedirler. Sağlık ve sağlıklı olma konusunda özellikle ailenin rolü öne çıkarken birçok yeni aktör de bilgilendirme konusunda ortaya çıkmaktadır. Örneğin doktorlar, diyetisyenler, sosyal medya influencerları, şefler günümüzde sağlık konularında bilgi kaynakları haline gelmiştir. Bu bilgiler ve sağlık idealleri doğrultusunda ortaya genellenen sağlıklı davranışlar ve erişilmesi gereken sağlık hedefleri çıkmaktadır. Bireyler de bu normal ve ideal olarak kabul edilen davranışları gönüllü olarak uyguladıkları kontrol ve güç taktikleri ile yaşamlarına sokmaya çalışmaktadırlar.

Sağlık riskleri de bireylerin bu konuda endişelerinin artması ve sağlıkları üzerine odaklanmalarının nedenlerindendir. Sağlık riskleri, topluma faydalı olması adına gerçekleştirilen teknolojik gelişmelerin yan etkileri olarak da görülmektedir. Teknolojinin gelişmesiyle tıp da özellikle hastalıkların önlenmesi konusunda yenilikler görülmüştür. Ancak teknoloji, bireylerin hastalıklar konusundaki endişelerini henüz ortadan kaldıramamıştır. Özellikle medya, bireylere sağlık riskleri hakkında bilgilerin sürekli ulaştığı en temel kaynak olarak görülmektedir. Sağlık riskleri hakkında bilgilerin artması da bireylerin yaşam tarzlarında değişiklik yapmalarına sebep olmaktadır. Ayrıca, bireyin çevresindeki riskler kontrol edilemez bir durumda oldukça bireylerin kendilerine odaklanması daha olasılıklı görülmektedir. Böylece üzerinde kontrolü olduğu için değişiklik yapabilir riskleri hafifletebilir diye düşünülmektedir. Artan popülasyon için efektif çözümler arayışı sonucu ortaya çıkan

endüstriyel gıda üretim biçimleri üretimde verimliliği arttırırken sağlık risklerini de beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu nedenle bireyler gıda kaynaklı hastalık ve riskleri önlemek adına daha sağlıklı seçenekleri tercih etmektedirler. Özellikle üretimi hızlandırmak ve verimi arttırmak için kullanılan kimyasallar bir yandan standart ürün üretimi için olumlu görünürken öte yandan toplumsal sağlık için riskleri içermektedir. Ürünlerin içerisinde bulunan maddeler bireylerin tükettikleri ürüne dair hissettikleri belirsizlik farklı tercihler yapmalarına sebep olmaktadır. Bu durumda organik gıda ürünleri bireylerin tercih ettikleri bir ürün grubu olarak görülmektedir. Endüstriyel üretim metotlarının zararlı yönlerini ortadan kaldırıp sağlıklı ürünler sunmayı hedefleyen organik üretim biçimi ile bireyler kendilerini sağlık risklerinden korumayı amaçlamaktadırlar. Organik piyasası Avrupa ve Kuzey Amerika’da başladıktan sonra yükselen sağlık ve çevresel endişelerden dolayı dünyaya yayılmıştır (K. Demiryürek, 2011:29). International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) yaygınlaşan organik piyasasına düzen ve standart getirmek adına kurulmuş ilk kuruluştur. Organik tarımı, tarım alanlarının, ekosistemlerin ve bireylerin sağlığının devamlılığını sağlayan bütünsel bir yöntem olarak tanımlamaktadırlar. Günümüzde, artan talep doğrultusunda organik gıda piyasası giderek büyümektedir. Türkiye’de ise Avrupa ülkelerinin talebi üzerinde başlayan üretim ardından devletin Avrupa Birliği standartlarını benimsemesi ve sivil toplum örgütlerinin çalışmaları ile yaygınlaşmıştır. Daha çok ihracat üzerine odaklanan üretim politikalarının yani sıra iç piyasada organik gıda talepleri de artmaktadır. Ancak sınırlı destekler, ihracat odaklı politikalar, yüksek fiyatlar ve güvensizlik konuları bu sürecin yavaş olmasına sebep olmaktadır (G. A., Eryılmaz, K. Demiryürek, ve M. Emir, 2015). Türkiye’de tüketicilerin organik gıda konusunda devlet kanalları, sivil toplum örgütleri ve sosyal medyayı kullandıkları öne sürülmektedir. Farklı kanallardan alınan bilgilerin tüketicilerin ürünlere dair yaklaşımını ve tüketim alışkanlıklarını etkilendikleri de tartışılmaktadır. Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı yasalar, üretim ve kontrol şartları konusunda birincil yetkili kuruluştur ve Avrupa Birliği ile uyum konusu yakından takip edilmektedir. Öte yandan sundukları eğitim ve kredi destekleriyle organik tarımı teşvik etmektedirler. Türkiye’de başlayan ilk organik üretim ve organik hareketi Ekolojik Tarım

Organizasyonu Derneği⁴⁰'nin kurulmasıyla gerçekleşmiştir. Bu dernek de organize ettikleri konferans, eğitim ve bilgilendirici kaynaklar ile farkındalığı artırmayı hedeflerken bir yandan da Avrupa Birliği ortak projelerini yürütmektedir. Kurulan ilk derneğin ardından, Buğday Ekolojik Yaşamı Koruma Derneği (Buğday)⁴¹, Slow Food⁴² ve permakültür konusuna odaklanan birçok dernek⁴³ de kurulmuştur. Bu dernekler sundukları eğitim ve projelerle çiftçileri bilinçlendirmeyi ve sürdürülebilir tarım yöntemlerini yaygınlaştırmayı hedeflemektedirler. Sosyal medya kanalları ve popüler hesaplar da bireylerin organik konusunda bilgi aldığı kaynaklar haline gelmiştir. Tüketiciler burada belli markaları veya popüler hesaplar aracılığıyla daha çok bu ürünlerin tüketimi konusunda bilgi almaktadırlar. Daha çok yaşam tarzı niteliğinde paylaşımları içeren bu platformlar sağlıklı yaşamı teşvik ederken organik ürünler hakkında genel bazı bilgilere yer vermektedirler. Bu farklı kaynakların bireyleri farklı davranış tercihlerine yönelttiği düşünülmektedir.

Yukarıda paylaşılan teorik arka plan göz önünde bulundurularak İstanbul'da yaşayan 20 organik tüketicinin katıldığı bir saha çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yüz yüze gerçekleşen mülakatlara katılımcılar rastgele ve kar topu yöntemleri ile seçilmiştir. 20 katılımcının 13'u kadın 7'si erkek iken katılımcılar 27-60 yaş aralığında yer almaktadır. Katılımcılar üniversite mezunu ve gelirleri orta ve orta üst olarak görülmektedir. Katılımcıların sosyo-ekonomik statüsü gelirlerine göre belirlenmiştir. 2,000 TL'nin altında gelirli kişiler düşük, 4,000 TL'nin üzerinde gelirli kişiler yüksek, 2,000-4,000 TL arasındaki gelirli kişiler ise orta geliri temsil etmektedir. Saha çalışması için Türkiye'de kurulan ilk organik Pazar seçilmiştir. Burası Şişli'de yer almaktadır ve en yaygın olarak bilinen pazarlardan biridir. Aynı zamanda artan ürün seçenekleri, çiftçi sayısı ve tüketici sayısı da yine buranın önemini göstermektedir. Organik pazara ek olarak, rastgele görüşmeci bulabilmek için iki market de seçilmiştir.

⁴⁰ <https://www.eto.org.tr/>, erişim tarihi: 04.10.2019.

⁴¹ <http://www.bugday.org>, erişim tarihi: 04.10.2019.

⁴² <https://tr-tr.facebook.com/fikirsahibidamaklar/>, erişim tarihi: 04.10.2019.

⁴³ <http://istanbulpermakulturkolektifi.org/>, erişim tarihi: 04.10.20

Bunlardan biri Ortaklar Caddesi/Mecidiyeköy’de diğeri ise bir alışveriş merkezinin⁴⁴ içinde bulunmaktadır. Marketin boyutu ve organik ürün seçeneği, markete ulaşım ve fiyat politikalarındaki farklılıklar da bu marketlerin seçilmesinin sebepleri olarak gösterilebilir. Çalışmada yer alan 20 organik gıda tüketicisine ek olarak 3 uzman ile görüşme yapılmıştır. Uzman görüşü olarak Buğday Derneği’nin Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı ile görüşüldü. Kendisi aynı zamanda ekolojik pazarlardan da sorumlu. Kendisi pazarların yıllar içerisindeki gelişimi, alışverişe gelen tüketici profili ve genel olarak sektöre dair fikirlerini paylaştı. Ona ek olarak, yıllık talepler doğrultusunda ihracat yapan organik tarım girişimcisi ile yapılan görüşmede tarımsal destekler, ihracat şartları, denetimler gibi konular görüşüldü. Son olarak çalışma alanı tarım ve kırsal sosyoloji olan bir profesör ile görüşüldü ve fikirleri alındı. Bu görüşmeler de yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat şeklinde gerçekleştirildi. Bu tez çalışması için yapılan saha araştırmasının İstanbul’da gerçekleşmesinin temel nedeni bu çalışmanın herhangi bir burs ile finanse edilmemesi ve dolayısıyla kısıtlı kaynakların olması olarak açıklanabilir. Ayrıca, en çok organik pazarın, küçük organik dükkânların ve internet satış sitelerinin İstanbul’da olması da saha çalışmasının İstanbul’da olmasını desteklemektedir⁴⁵. Saha çalışması Ocak 2019 ile Nisan 2019 arası toplam 4 ay sürmüştür. Görüşmeler minimum 25 maksimum 60 dakika içerisinde tamamlanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada yer alan katılımcıların çoğunun organik gıda tüketme sebeplerinin benzer olduğu görülmektedir. Tüketicilerin çoğu bireysel sağlık endişeleri sebebiyle organik ürün tükettiklerini söylemektedirler. Bireysel sebeplere odaklanan tüketiciler bunun yanında çocuk sahibi olmanın da önemli bir etken olduğunu iletmektedirler. Gelir düzeyi gibi faktörlere de bağlı olarak, çocuk sahibi bireylerin ya sadece çocukları ya da tüm aile için tüketim alışkanlıklarını değiştirdikleri görülmektedir. Hem bireysel hem de ebeveyn olarak katılımcıların organik tüketme sebepleri bireysel çıkarlar amacıyla olduğu gözlemlenmektedir çünkü tüketiciler organik tarımın bütüncül yaklaşım ve faydalarından söz etmemektedir.

⁴⁴ İstanbul’un Beşiktaş ilçesinde yer alıyor.

⁴⁵ <https://www.tarimorman.gov.tr/BUGEM/Belgeler/Bitkisel%20C3%9Cretim/Organik%20Tar%C4%B1m/OT%20Genel%20Bilgiler/t%C3%BCketici%20bilgileri%20web.docx>, erişim tarihi: 04.10.2019.

Çalışmada yer alan kadın tüketiciler, bakım görevini üstlenen geleneksel rolleri ile paralel olarak aile ve çocuklarının sağlığını önceliklendirmekteler. Ailelerinin sağlığı konusunda kendilerini sorumlu gören kadınlar bazı durumlarda çocuklarının sağlığını dolayısıyla organik tüketimini kendilerinininkinden daha önemseddiği görülmektedir. Ancak burada, değişen cinsiyet rolleri ve babaların aile içerisindeki rollerinden de bahsetmek gerekmektedir. Kadın katılımcılarla benzer motivasyon ve endişeler paylasan erkek katılımcıların da organik tüketme amaçları çocuklarına sağlıklı ürün seçenekleri sunabilmek olduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Her ne kadar kadın katılımcılar çocuklarının yanında kendilerini eşlerinden de sorumlu hissetseler de erkek katılımcılar daha çok sadece çocuklarını tüketim sebebi olarak sunmuşlardır. Burada değişen ebeveyn rollerine dikkat çekerken kadınların hala sağlık konusunda ailedeki temel sorumlu kişi olduğu görülmektedir. Kadın katılımcıların bazıları henüz çocuk sahibi olmamalarına rağmen ileride organik tüketme sebebinin çocuğu için olacağını belirtmektedir burada da kadınların bu sorumluluğu kendilerinde gördüklerini açıklamaktadır. Değişen ebeveyn rollerinin yani sıra erkek katılımcıların görüşmelerdeki yanıtlarına bakarak sağlık ve bedenleri konusunda daha ilgili hale geldikleri de söylenebilir. Çalışmaya katılan tüm erkek katılımcılar vücutları ve kiloları ile yakından ilgilendiklerini belirttiler. Dolayısıyla araştırma sorusunda sağlık konusunda kadınların temel hedef kitle olduğu varsayımının aslında günümüzde değişiklik gösterdiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu durumun hazırlayıcı etkenlerinden olarak bireylerin toplumdaki tüketici rolleri sunulabilir. Çünkü bireylerin tüketici olarak tüketim aktivitelerine sürekli olarak devam etmeleri piyasa tarafından beklenirken artık cinsiyet fark etmeksizin herkesin tüketici olarak kendini tanımlaması beklenmektedir. Dolayısıyla geleneksel cinsiyet rollerinin değişen tüketici konumuyla farklılaştığını ve erkeklerin de sağlık ve bakım konusunda tüketiciler olarak kadınların yanında yer aldığını görebiliyoruz.

Bireylerin farklı kaynaklardan bilgi almasının organik gıda konusunda tüketim tercihlerini etkileyeceği düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca, tüketim tercihlerinin yanında organik gıda piyasası hakkında ne tür bilgilere sahip olduğu ve hangi aktörleri bildiği de yine takip ettikleri bilgi kaynakları sonucunda belirlenmektedir. Bu sebeple, katılımcıların çoğu sosyal medya kaynaklarından bilgi aldıkları için organik gıda konusundaki fikir ve davranışları da günlük hayat pratikleri ve tüketim tercihleri ile

sinirli kalmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, birçok katılımcının da gittiği organik pazarlar sivil toplum yerel yönetim is birliğine bir örnektir. Organik pazarlar bu is birliği ile kurulmuş ve yürütülmektedir. Ancak katılımcılar organik pazarların belediyelerin is birliği ile kurulduğunu bilmemektedirler. Dolayısıyla devlet kaynaklarına duyulan güvensizlik bu bilgi eksikliğinin de etkisiyle sürmektedir. Böylece bireyler organik pazar ile sadece Buğday'ı bağdaştırarak güvenli gıda konusunda yalnızca onlara güven duymaktadırlar.

Teknolojik gelişmeler ve endüstriyel yöntemlerin ortaya çıkardığı sağlık sorunları ve gıda konusundaki endişelere çözüm olarak organik tarımın bir alternatif olarak sunulduğu bilinmektedir. Ancak günümüzde organik tarımın beraberinde hedeflediği çevresel ve hayvan refahı gibi önceliklerin sağlık trendleri ile arka plana itildiği düşünülmektedir. Bireyler sağlıklı olma kültürü ve trendleri ile bireysel ihtiyaç ve taleplerini önceliklendirerek organik tüketimin bir parçası haline gelmektedir. Ancak bu durumda organik gıdanın, gıda konusunda piyasada var olan sorunlara karşı bir tüketim çözümü olarak konumlandırıldığı görülmektedir. Bireyler, organik tarımın çevresel veya toplumsal faydalarını değil tükettikleri ürünlerin kendilerine veya ailelerine olan faydasını önceliklendirdiklerinden dolayı, organik gıda da herhangi bir sağlık harcaması gibi karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu durumda bireylerin, neoliberal özne özelliklerini benimsedikleri görülmektedir. Bireysel arzu ve ihtiyaçların önceliklendirilmesi, tüketim ürünlerinin birer yatırım olarak görülmesi ve maksimum fayda beklentisi ile tüketilmesi organik gıda tüketicilerinin de beklentileri arasındadır. Ayrıca, sağlık konusunda tüm sorumluluğu bireysel caba ve dikkat ile kendinde gören organik gıda tüketicileri piyasada yer alan sağlıksız alternatiflere karşı organik ürün tüketerek sorumluluk sahibi ve bilinçli bir davranış sergilediği düşünülmektedir.

Her ne kadar çalışmaya katılan tüm katılımcılar organik gıda tüketse de, tüketim miktarları ve alışkanlıkları birbirlerinden farklılık göstermektedir. Bu durumun en temel sebebi organik gıda ürünlerinin pahalı fiyatları olarak paylaşılmaktadır. Ancak pahalı fiyatlara rağmen bireyler sağlıklı gıdaya erişimi bireysel bir sorumluluk olarak algıladıklarından dolayı az da olsa en azından belli ürünleri organik tüketmeye çalışmaktadır. Böylece bireyler sağlıklı olmayı belirli ürünleri tüketmek ile yakından ilişkilendirirken aynı zamanda vatandaşlık rollerinin tüketici olarak değişiklik gösterdiği anlaşılmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, değişen roller ve sağlık için yapılan

tüketim tercihleri sağlık konusunu bireysel alan ile sınırlamaktadır. Bireyin dışında gerçekleşen ve sağlığı üzerinde etkisi olabilecek dış faktörler göz ardı edilerek sağlık tamamen bireylerin yaşam tarzı ve tüketim tercihleri ile açıklanmaktadır. Organik gıda tüketen bireyler de sağlıklı olmayı yaşam tarzı ve tükettikleri ürünler ile ilişkilendirdiklerinden dolayı neoliberalizmin sunduğu birçok özelliği benimsemiş özneler olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadırlar.

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