



8 Construction of Identity

This chapter will discuss ‘Citizenship’, ‘Religion’ and ‘Ethnicity’.

8.1 Citizenship

The girls immediately conceptualized citizenship as a problematic aspect of their life. In the data, a significant number of girls were German citizens and at least one of their parents were born and raised in Germany. The girls felt like ‘foreigners’ in German society as they revealed in the following quotes:

Interviewer: Sizin iyi bir hayat ve de iyi bir okul eğitimine sahip olabilmeniz için var olan engeller nelerdir?

Interviewer: *What would be the most challenging obstacle for you all in having a good school education and a good life in Germany?*

Ayça: Vatandaşlık.

Ayça: *Citizenship.*

Ceren: Ben başvurudum.

Ceren: *I have applied.*

From the participants’ point of view, German citizenship was limited to a ‘paper’ because they experienced various vulnerabilities in their life even when they were officially German citizens. The data revealed that the problem for the girls was the tension between the materialistic value and the emotional value of the concept of citizenship. I interpreted that for the girls, the materialistic value of citizenship was about having access to the opportunities available to every citizen in Germany, such as having better access to education and job market opportunities.

For the girls, the emotional value of citizenship was having ties with a country, feeling accepted, appreciated and valued together with the other German citizens. It was obvious that German citizenship provided various opportunities for a good life for the girls. The quotes explained the tension between preserving national identity and belonging. Even though all the participants were born and spent most of their lives in Germany, Turkey was a native country for them at an abstract level that they felt they belonged to.

Ayça: Seçenek var.

Ayça: There are more choices.

Ayşe: İstedğin şeylerde zorluk çıkmıyor Alman vatandaşı olduğun için.

Ayşe: When one is a German citizen, there are no difficulties with the things that you want.

Ayça: Daha çok imkan oluyor.

Ayça: More opportunities.

In the quotes below, the girls discussed the emotional value of citizenship as losing one's roots. Citizenship for some of the participants was restricted to a paper, which would make their lives easier and offer them more concrete opportunities. The participants recognized that citizenship mattered for their career paths because some jobs they valued required German citizenship. Therefore, it was important to unpack the relationship between career paths and citizenship.

Interviewer: Bir takım meslekler için Alman vatandaşlığı gerekebilir diyorsunuz.

Interviewer: You say that for some jobs, you need to have German citizenship.

Before unpacking how the girls associated citizenship rights with an empowered life, it is important to emphasize the citizenship laws for children of immigrants. With the reform of the legislation on citizenship in the year 2000, the birthright principle was extended to include second-generation immigrants (Faist, 2013).

In the next quote, at an individual interview, Nil discussed her experience of becoming a German citizen. When Nil decided to become a German citizen and started the legal process, she emotionally felt like she was separating from her roots. It is important to highlight her lack of feeling that Germany is her 'home country' after residing in Germany all her life. The grounded concepts in Nil's quotation were the lack of societal borders, stereotypes and the stigma in society created for the youths of migrant origin.

Nil: İnsan Türk konsolosluğunda bile kendini Türkiye'de hissediyor, orda şey vardı, ben Alman pasaportuna geçmek için, antrag (anlaşma) için gitmişim. İlk başta çok üzüliyordum, içim acıyordu, baba ben Türkiye'yi bırakacağım ben Türklük'ten çıkacağım Alman olacağım diye. Kendime kızıyordum, orda bir sıra vardı, Allah korusun ya, o sırada dedim yeter ben bu Türkler'den çıkacağım kurtulacağım, direkt birşey yaptım orda beni bekletiyor diye. Bekleme filan bitti, işte ben şimdi Alman olacağım, işlemler başlamıştır, orda beni hüzün kapladı.

Nil: One feels in Turkey even in the Turkish consulate, I went there to apply for a German passport. At first, I felt so much bitterness that I would be leaving Turkey, that I would quit Turkey. I would become German. I was mad at myself, in the line, I said God saves, it is enough, and I will get out of this Turkishness. I did this as they

were making me wait there. The waiting is done. Now the process has started, I will be a German, then again bitterness.

In another focus group, during the discussion related to being a citizen of a country, belonging and identity, Nil and Deniz discussed the issue of both the emotional and legal parts of citizenship. Nil's emphasis was more on leaving her roots which made her emotional. Deniz's point was that being a German citizen was important because they had lived in Germany since birth. The girls' approaches were different in terms of the perception of being German with its emotional and legal aspects.

Opening these two concepts, there was an ambivalence around the contradictory experiences of the girls. The girls felt that becoming a German citizen was like giving up their roots. The right for formal citizenship is a moral obligation for a state to provide to its citizens. From these two aspects, the ambivalent voice of the girls would be related to their contradictory experiences. The girls could blend cultures from their parents' home country and the host country. Such a blend of cultures should be supported by public and social policies that offer a variety of opportunities to realize both the emotional and legal attachment of being a citizen.

Interviewer: Neden hüzü'n kapladı?

Interviewer: Why bitterness?

Nil: Vatanımdan ayrılıyormuş gibi geldi.

Nil: I felt I was leaving my country.

Deniz: Ama orası senin vatanın değil ki? Senin burası vatanın ofiziel (kanunen) (56:16) olarak.

Deniz: But that is not your country. Your official country is here.

Nil: Ama niye orası da benim vatanım, niye öyle diyorsun ben Türk'üm ya.

Nil: But it is still my country, why do you say that, I am Turkish.

Deniz: Ama sen burada doğdun di mi?

Deniz: But you were born here, right?

Interviewer: Sen de Alman hissediyorum dedin az önce.

Interviewer: You also said you feel like you are German.

Nil: Dedim ya az önce oradan oraya çektiştirildik. Çok zor Allah kimsenin başına vermesin.

Nil: I said, we were pulled from here to there. It is so difficult. God gives it to no one.

Deniz: Mecbursun buranın düzeni senin beynine sokulmuş.

Deniz: You are obliged to, you have the structure of it here in your brain.

Interviewer: Sizler için en büyük engel ne olabilir iyi bir okul eğitimi ve iyi bir hayata sahip olmak için Almanya'da?

Interviewer: What would be the biggest obstacle to you having a good life and a good school education in Germany?

Genç Kızlar: Vatandaşlık ve çifte vatandaşlık.

Girls: Citizenship and dual citizenship.

The challenge in accessing citizenship was associated with their unwanted situation. As a result, they interpreted that German society was treating them as being a burden on Germany. Also, obtaining German citizenship might be challenged by their parents' value of German citizenship. Some parents do not think that their children should obtain German citizenship as they would go back to Turkey one day. The parents may not want their children to lose their ethnic and cultural ties with their homeland as they assimilate into German society.

Connected to their parents' values with respect to citizenship, in various focus and individual interviews, the girls discussed the conflicting value of citizenship among the generations. The parents' ideas of leaving Germany, and their discouraging discussions about obtaining a German citizenship, contribute to the girl's dilemma of belonging to wider Germany society in order to have a better life by making their presence visible and their voices heard.

Ayşe: Benim babam istemiyor.

Ayşe: My father doesn't want me to.

Interviewer: Neden baban istemiyor Alman vatandaşı olmanı?

Interviewer: Why doesn't your father want you to become a German citizen?

Ayşe: Babam diyor ki sen Türk'sün (), bir ara Türkiye'ye gidersin. Alman pasaportun olacaktaki ne olacak diyor. Ama erkek kardeşim Alman vatandaşı oldu. Bilmiyorum annem istiyor Alman pasaportu olunca üniversitelerde daha çok imkan var.

Ayşe: My father says because you are Turkish, you will go to Turkey at some point. What will you do with a German passport? But my brother became a German citizen. I don't know, my mother wants this because there are more opportunities in universities once one is a German citizen.

For the girls, citizenship, belonging and identity are tensions to be negotiated. I interpreted that, for the girls, the concepts remained invisible under the rhetoric of citizenship, which is related to the discriminative practices they come across in their everyday life, that already makes them feel 'other'. The participants were aware that they would have more chances in their lives in Germany if they obtained German citizenship. Besides the emotional discussion of 'being

German or not', in various focus group interviews and individual interviews, the girls emphasized the idea of 'becoming Germanized' after obtaining German citizenship. In the grounded analysis, 'becoming Germanized' was consistent with losing one's values and adopting the negative sides of German culture.

An in-depth interpretation revealed that for the girls 'Germanized' meant losing their roots, being from 'nowhere' and not knowing their own roots. The girls stated that German citizenship was not necessary due to the reason of not losing one's ethnic and cultural roots. I interpreted this as the girls having difficulty finding a public space to develop an identity because citizenship allows human beings to be associated with an ethnicity and culture, which the participating girls could not relate to in Germany.

Buse: Aslında hem istiyorum hem de istemiyorum.

Buse: Actually, I want it and I don't want it at the same time.

Interviewer: Neden hem istiyorsun hem de istemiyorsun?

Interviewer: Why do you want it and not want it at the same time?

The girls may not feel like they would like to obtain German citizenship because of their unwanted situation which makes them feel like an outsider. I interpret that the issue is grounded in the girls' discussion on societal mechanisms rather than political reasons of citizenship. The girls interpreted societal constraints as influential in their lives.

Buse: Kalpten istemiyorum, Türk olduğum için, Türk vatandaşı olduğum için, bilmiyorum.

Buse: I don't want it from my heart, because I am a Turk and I am a Turkish citizen.

Interviewer: Kalbinden neden gelmiyor?

Interviewer: Why doesn't it come from your heart?

(Silence)

Buse: Bilmiyorum, çok karmaşık, anlatmak çok zor.

Buse: I don't know, it is complicated, it is very difficult to explain.

Ayşe: Çok engeller var aslında, kuzenim oluyor, o da okuyor, o da çok, Alman vatandaşı olması gerekiyordu, Alman vatandaşı olması çok uzun sürdü, ara sıra böyle engeller oluyor.

Ayşe: There are so many obstacles actually. There is my cousin, in the university, she was supposed to get German citizenship, to obtain German citizenship. It took so long, sometimes there are such obstacles.

Elif#00:31:24-9# Yada işte diyelim polis olmak istiyorum. Türk vatandaşıyız onu da olamıyoruz, bazı meslekleri de. #00:31:36-1#

Elif: I would like to become a policewoman. We are Turkish citizens, we cannot enter some professions.

The participants of the research who were already officially German citizens didn't feel that they were part of German society. The girls emphasized the materialistic value of being a German citizen, but they highlighted that they didn't accept being a German citizen in their heart. The research illustrated how sensitive the children of immigrants are to the harm created by this public discourse, despite the fact they are citizens and most of them are fellow Muslims or other visible minorities. There is a young generation that cannot identify with German citizenship (Wilpert, 2013, p.126).

Society's exclusionary discourses on citizenship for young people of migrant origin, in addition to the views of family members regarding German citizenship, has shaped the girls' interpretation of the emotional and rational value of being a German citizen. Citizenship was seen as a problematic issue by the participants, not because access to citizenship was problematic, but because their perception of belonging, being accepted and being an active part of the wider society were problematized. As a result, their self-belonging is strongly rooted in how they interpret and experience belonging as a citizen.

8.2 Religion

According to the data obtained during the research, religion is an important aspect of girls' identity construction. In the quote below, Nil felt awkward about being banned from wearing her headscarf in public as it is as normal for her as other people wearing hairclips in their hair. As a result, Nil could not understand why the headscarf was highly politicized in Germany. Nil was wondering why wearing a headscarf was such a disturbance for the German public and why others associated the headscarf with political Islam or marginalization. She was clear that she wore a headscarf as a religious obligation which did not have any other meaning.

Nil: Ben onu anlamıyorum, bizim başımızdaki başörtüye birşeyleri varsa başlarındaki tokaları da çıkarsınlar, ha toka takmışım ha eşarp yani ikisinin de aynı.

Nil: That is what I don't understand, if they have something to say about a headscarf on our heads, they must take hairclips away too, it is the same if you wear a hair clip or a headscarf.

The findings of the OSI (Open Society Institute) supported other research in this field, showing the high relevance of the issue of discrimination against women wearing headscarves to Muslims in Berlin. "Discrimination of any kind is a barrier to a common future, especially when, in this case, the withdrawal of

women from the public sphere is a common reaction to discrimination rather than civil resistance” (2010, p. 97).

In the next quotes, Deniz adds that the headscarf was a greater obstacle than being from an immigrant background. Being of Turkish origin added to their vulnerable situation in terms of accessing to a meaningful life in Germany. The grounded concepts in the girls’ discussion are the societal mechanisms associated with a lack of civil rights. In a society where civil rights are obligatory and provided by the state through legislation, girls should not be confronted with such barriers to living a good life. The girls emphasized the intersectionality of migrant background, ethnicity, and gendered treatments. The grounded concepts in the data revealed a lack of fundamental rights which constrain the opportunities for socially vulnerable girls to have a good life.

Deniz: Başörtü daha engel, en engel, migration (göç) engelinden daha çok.

Deniz: The headscarf was more of an obstacle, more than our migrant background.

Mücelle: Türk olmak yetiyor zaten.

Nil: It is enough to be Turkish.

Interviewer: O zaman en büyük hangisi engel?

Interviewer: Which one is the biggest obstacle?

Deniz: Kopftuch (başörtü), Arkasından da Türk olmak. Yani bütün kombinasyon bizde () ((gülüşmeler)).

Deniz: Headscarf. Later to be a Turk, we have all the combinations ((laughs)).

Extending the discussion, the next quotes highlight the borderline aspects of wearing a headscarf. Wearing a headscarf contradicts German society’s expectations of girls of migrant origin. The girls may value wearing a headscarf for the love of their religion, values, and traditions. From the quotes below, it became apparent that wearing a headscarf is a lifestyle and, more specifically, it provides them with space, belonging and an identity.

Deniz: Hauptschule (ilkokulda) baş örtü takmaya başladım.

Deniz: I started to wear a headscarf in Hauptschule¹ (Level of schools in Germany)

1 **The German Gymnasium** (grades 5-12 or 5-13) is an academic secondary school that prepares pupils for a university education. It begins with the fifth grade (seventh in Berlin/Brandenburg). After grade 12 or 13 (depending on the state), students earn a diploma called *das Abitur* by passing an oral and written examination.

The Realschule (grades 5-10) may be a step below the *Gymnasium*.

Hauptschule (grades 5-9 or 5-10. The *Hauptschule* is generally considered the least demanding secondary school. The *Hauptschule* prepares pupils for vocational education, and most of the pupils work part-time as apprentices. Upon completion of the final *Hauptschulabschluss* examina-

Interviewer: Neden?

Interviewer: Why?

Deniz: Çok istiyordum.

Deniz: I really wanted to.

Interviewer: Neden istiyordun peki?

Interviewer: Why did you want to?

Deniz: Bunlar beni çok çekiyordu çok, bunlara çok imreniyordum, Aşırı derecede.

Deniz: These were (referring to her friend) attractive to me, I was so envious of them, so much.

The girls emphasized that religious practices were important and dominant in the lives of Turks living in Germany. The grounded concepts of this data revolve around Germany's discourse for a democratic society, which may be considered ignorant in terms of making policy for Turks, who were framed only as 'guest workers' in Germany. As a consequence, Turks as a sub-group were not considered when making welfare and social policies in Germany.

In the following quotes, the girls highlighted the fact that mosque-related activities might have had an influence in uniting Turks living in Germany. Mosques may serve as necessary welfare support to enable community belonging in a foreign country. Also, associating the quotes below with the quotes above, the mosques might represent a place for unity in which people unite with other diverse Turks, who are from the same nation-state but different in terms of their sub-cultures.

Interviewer: Neden Almanya'da yaşayan Türkler'in Türkiye'deki Türkler'den daha dindar olduğunu düşünüyorsun?

Interviewer: Why do you think Turks living in Germany are more religious than the Turks in Turkey?

Deniz: Evet çünkü burada çok çevre var, İslami çevreler var. Biz mesela Türkiye'den daha religiösüs (dindarız) 20:16-5

Deniz: Because there are environments here, Islamic environments. For instance us, we are more religious than people in Turkey.

tion, after grade 9 or 10. They also have the option of earning the more prestigious *Realschulabschluss* after grade 10. With that, the next step is often *Berufsschule*; an advanced technical/vocational school with a two-year course of apprenticeship and study.

Gesamtschule (grades 5-12 or 5-13) Some German states have this kind of school, which combines the three school types into a comprehensive school that is similar to an American high school.

Interviewer: Neden?

Interviewer: Why?

Deniz: Çünkü bilmiyorum yani. Eskiden öyle değildi.

Deniz: Because I don't know, it wasn't like that before.

Nil: Zamanında benim düşüncem bu, zamanında ilk generasyon ikinci generayson da aman biz Türk'üz aman kültürümüzü eğitimimizi kaybetmeyelim diye birbirleriyle hep kenetlenmişler, kenetlenecek ne kalmış ne bileyim Türklerin ülkü ocakları, Kürtler'in Kürt ocakları hepsini toplayan bir yer varmış o da camiler. İnsanlar camide toplanmışlar ve çoğu aile ben hala görüyorum çocuklarını zorla camiye sokuyorlar.

Nil: In the meantime, the first generation, the second generation too, we are Turks, we shouldn't be losing our culture. They attached to each other, what else remained to attach to, it was Turks' Ülkü Ocak (Turkish Nationalist gatherings), and Kurdish Ocak (Kurdish Nationalist gathering). What made us all come together were the mosques. People gathered in the mosques. I see many families that still pressure their children to be a member of a mosque.

The grounded concepts that emerged from this data are 'seeking meaning in one's migrant status', 'looking for a meaning in belonging' and 'finding a place for acceptance with one's differences and diversities and belong to a diverse community'. This situation continued for other generations, who were born, raised and educated in Germany, because the social and public policy making in Germany gradually developed towards building an inclusive society.

In both the focus group and individual interviews, the girls frequently mentioned 'dirty Germans'. Nil might be referring to extreme cultural differences and an intolerance of her difference to Germans. In the lives of young, Turkish women, mosques play a role in preserving their cultural background. Islam is not only a religion in their lives, wearing a headscarf as a religious practice is a tool of agency to build resilience and stand up against being excluded. As a result, wearing a headscarf might be a form of resistance to social exclusion, i.e. threat from prejudice, xenophobia, racism, and discrimination, that the girls are confronted with in their everyday life.

In the next quote, Deniz talked of mosque activities and stated that she had been influenced on the importance of wearing a headscarf from an early age. It is another quote which would ground concepts for 'finding a space to belong to a community', 'belonging' and most importantly 'being accepted and valued' in a community which tolerates difference.

Deniz: Ben mesela anlatamam ki, bilmiyorum ki anlatamam. Ben nasıl diyeyim sana, anlatamıyorum ki, çok güzel geliyordu bana, çok güzel geliyordu bana, giyinmesi, uyması, rengarenk uymaları çok hoşuma gidiyordu. Güzel geldi, bir de biz çok camiye giderdik, çok camiiye giderdik, biz buraya gelince, yatılı kaldık, biz hep camide büyüdük, ben buraya geldim, camiye gitmeye başladık. Mesela biz Frankfurt'tan tatile filan geliyorduk, ben camiye yatılı filan geliyordum, şey

medreseye filan, ondan sonra ben bunları görürdüm ben çok özenirdim, anlatamam niye. Ben buna İslam aşkı diyorum.

Deniz: I cannot explain, I don't know how I can explain. How can I tell you? I cannot explain, it was so pretty, it seemed to me to be so pretty, to wear, to match, a color match, I really liked it. It was pretty. Also we were going to the mosque, we went to the mosque a lot. When we came here, we stayed overnight. We grew up in the mosque, when I came here we started to go to the mosque. For instance, we came for the holidays from Frankfurt, I stayed at the mosque overnight, in the Medrese (Islamic learning center). Then I saw them, I was so envious of them, I cannot explain. I say it is an Islamic love.

In the next quotes, the interviewer analyzed how religion was influential in the girls' lives. Was religion an adoptive preference to find meaning in their social vulnerabilities and disadvantaged situation or was religion a concept in the girls' lives that they had prioritized to identify their fundamental value? The grounded concepts show the abstract conceptualization of the girls, having roots to exist, being valuable, finding meaning in their lives and resisting the development of an identity and belonging.

Nil: Bence Almanlar Türk deyince Müslüman, Müslüman deyince terörist anlıyor yani. Ben camide doğup büyüdüm (). Orada doğdum büyüdüm, beni atmışlar yani ((gülerek)) yok gerçekten ciddi söylüyorum yani. Ben kendimi bildim bileli camideydim ().

Nil: I think Germans understand us as Muslims when they hear that we are Turkish, they believe that we are terrorists when they hear that we are Muslim. I was born and grew up in the mosque, they threw me there (smiling). No, I am serious. Since I have known myself, I was in the mosque.

The quotes above also reveal that Nil found many answers to her questions about her belonging and identity through reading the religious book, which she couldn't find in German society. A lack of social support in the community made her attach to Islam. The girls might have identity problems relating to not knowing where they really belong to. The grounded concepts show that they attend mosque activities to be religious and to get answers to their questions about their lives.

According to the grounded concepts, I claim that Islam was not marginalized because Islam itself was threatening non-Muslim societies. Islam was marginalized because these young people could not identify themselves with Turkish-ness or German-ness. Islam, or being Muslim, functioned in identity formation and belonging in a country where diversities, such as identities, nationalities and ethnicities, were excluded in policymaking. Although wearing a headscarf is marginalized, it manifested itself as a resistance to not being welcomed in Germany even when they had been living there all their lives.

Opportunities and challenges might present themselves together in the girls' lives. For example, belonging to the religion of Islam, and wearing a headscarf, provides the girls with identity and a feeling of belonging. In addition to identity and belonging, wearing a headscarf is a resistance to societal challenges, such as exclusion, which the girls are confronted with in German society. The Turks are diverse and are also divided into various sub-groups in Germany. I interpreted that religious organizations functioned in gathering these diverse people from Turkey. I claim that the term 'integration into German society' emphasizes becoming part of Germany and adhering to German traditions and culture, rather than living in a society of cohesion and diversity.

On the other hand, being affiliated with Islam and wearing a headscarf, which is gendered, intersected with the girls' Turkish ethnicity to establish good life opportunities. The grounded concepts are a lack of healthy identity formation and a lack of healthy belonging, which would be a blend of different cultures, such as Turkish, German and Islam in this case.

Gül: Çünkü biz daha çok kısıtlamıyoruz, Türkiye'de nasılsa Türk'tür kimse kimseye birşey yapmaz diye, milli gururumuz oluyor ya hani milli sevgimiz filan. Çocuklarını bırakabiliyorlar ama Almanya'da aman Almanlar pis onlar, ama birşey yaparlar, diye diye çocukları eve kapatıyorlar kapatmışlar. Ve bu jenerasyonlarca böyle devam ettirilmiş. Türkiye'de böyle değil, benim kuzenlerim hem saat ne olursa olsun çıkıyorlar dışarıya, ama burda kısıtlamıyorlar çocuklar, ne kadar kısıtlanırsa o kadar daha kötü şeylere meyilli olurlar.

Gül: Because we are limited. In Turkey everyone is Turkish, no one is going to do anything to one another. We have a national pride, we like each other, we can leave kids alone, but in Germany families constrain their children in case the dirty Germans do something to their kids, they keep them at home. It has continued through the generations. It is not like that in Turkey, my cousins go out at whatever time, but here they are limited, more kids are limited, there is more potential for bad things.

Interviewer: Sizce, bu bir hayali soru, bunu bilemeyiz. Siz Türkiye'de olsaydınız Türkiye'de büyümüş kızlar olsaydınız yine böyle çok dindar olur muydunuz?

Interviewer: This is a hypothetical question. If you were born and grew up in Turkey, would you be as religious as you are now?

Deniz: Olmazdım (hemen söyledi) sanmıyorum, çünkü biz camiye Almanya'da Türklü'ğümüzü kaybetmemek için, kültürümüzü kaybetmemek için, Alman'laşmayalım diye daha çok kenetleniyoruz. Burda mesela, Türk deyince Müslüman geliyor aklına anlıyormusun was ich meine (ne dediğimi) (1:50:38-6) öyle mi çünkü fast jeder Türke hier (herkes Türk) (1:50:42-8)

Deniz: I wouldn't (she said immediately). I think because we go to the mosque in Germany, not to lose our Turkishness, not to lose our culture, not to become

German. That is why we attach more. Here for instance, Turks mean Muslim in peoples' mind. Do you understand what I mean? Everyone is a Turk here.

In another focus group, being affiliated with Islam and wearing a headscarf contributed to their social vulnerability as the grounded concepts reveal. Islam as a religion was associated with the recent terrorist attacks in the world, which caused a disadvantaged situation for the girls. In the grounded concepts, Islam, as a religion, provided an identity and mosques, that serve as a space of belonging, which they could not find in the wider German society. In this regard, a 'mainstream identity' was necessary for the girls to identify themselves with the majority and with other sub-groups living in Germany. From this perspective, the girls might have two main challenges. The first main challenge was isolation from the majority identity, i.e. not being a 'proper' German, because of a lack of relating to the majority society. In Germany, there is not a strong discourse that Muslim youth are also part of Germany.

The second main challenge for the girls was relating to other sub-groups in Germany. This situation might create confusion for the girls, as they were isolating themselves within their own sub-group, to identify themselves with their own culture and traditions and find answers to the challenges to their religion.

Grounding the dilemmas of the girls from existing literature, Islam is expressed as the hallmark of identity by some immigrant women, and it has been rediscovered and reconstructed in this context. In this way, the religion provided a general framework that helped individuals to understand the world and find an answer for the unexplainable (Altuntaş, 2009, p. 345).

Wearing a headscarf in Germany has been a contradictory issue, both in politics and the public rhetoric. Analyzing the roots of the headscarf, the rhetoric surrounding the wearing of the headscarf became a political discourse in 1997. "The president of the German office for the protection of the Constitution, Peter Frisch, said that Islam would probably become the biggest problem for Germany's internal security. Peter Frisch discussed that wearing headscarves could be interpreted as a sign of Muslims' deliberate self-exclusion from German society" (Collet, 2004, p. 131).

The girls might be experiencing exclusion because of their headscarves in the public sphere. According to stereotypes, these girls may be associated with fundamental Islamist women who are forced to wear headscarves, are oppressed by men and do not have basic rights in their lives. The girls in this research highlighted such stereotypes very often during the interviews. The girls might be confronted as a 'threat to Germany' because of the lack of structures, which would allow them to be active equal agents in the public sphere. The grounded

concepts revealed that girls of Turkish origin had an ambivalent voice when they defined their identity and belonging in Germany society. The interpretation of the data on girls' plural identity was that it was not visible and accepted in German society. It is this invisibility that causes ambivalence for the girls.

The participants found it challenging to find appropriate places for socializing and building identities. Altuntaş (2009, p. 345) had a similar analysis. In her research she claimed immigrant women who were born in Germany, and those who came to Germany at a young age, could adopt neither a Turkish or German identity. For them, the Islamic identity was more acceptable and provided them with a way out. I claimed that being Turkish at the same time as being German was contradictory. Their plural identity has not been accepted or acknowledged by Germany society, that is why girls might choose to be Muslim, as being Muslim was more inclusive of people with diversities.

Research into the identity of immigrants revealed results similar to those found in this doctoral research project (Koç, 2009, p. 114). The integration problem was an identity problem. The participants' ambivalent ideas, discussions, views, discourses, identities, and belonging needed in-depth research. In various focus and individual interviews, an ambivalent discussion occurred. As described above, the girls were negotiating with identities such as Muslim, Turkish and German. As a result, they built themselves an identity related to religion and ethnicity.

As a result, the girls were shaping their identity and at the same time positioning themselves to belong in Germany. The following chapters will discuss cultural ambivalences connected with the ethnicity of the girls. The girls had to deal with their families or communities' expectations of being Turkish. In contrast, the girls experienced contradictory expectations from German society for girls of migrant origin to be German. The contradiction of their ethnic experiences could be one reason for the ambivalence in their voice and actions.

8.3 Ethnicity

The participants positioned themselves the way German society was positioning them. The following quotes described how the societal perceptions about their identities were contributing to their vulnerabilities. The girls may have confusion in their identity and sense of belonging, as described above, but both German and Turkish societies may not see these young people as 'proper Turkish' or 'proper Germans'. It may be that these girls do not know who they are as a result of where they are.

In the quote below, the participants discuss living in such a tense society that they might have problems acknowledging ethnicity. The formation of the girls' plural identity could be more challenging in the midst of the tense integration, migration, belonging and citizenship discourses in Germany. For example, in the quote below, Ayça highlights her experiences of being seen as a Turkish girl living in Germany, in Germany, and also of being seen as a Turkish girl living in Germany, in Turkey. She defined herself as 'foreign'. Being foreign made them feel as if they were not sure who they were and where they belonged. In her opinion saying only 'I am Turkish' is not correct, as they were born, grew up and lived all their lives in Germany. Such discourses challenge their ethnicity in constructing an identity.

In the quotes below, Nil highlights how to 'survive' in the extreme diversity of Germany, where many religions, backgrounds, and ethnicities live together. In Nil's quotation, she focuses on the emotional reasoning that makes Turkey her home. Her quote could be interpreted as being valued and accepted because of her cultural background.

Nil: Ama orda hepsi Türk. Orda göze batmıyor, orası kendi vatanımız kendi milletimiz birşey olsun ta, devlet nedir, onun en üst bakanına kadar çıkabiliriz, neden çünkü dilleri var orda yetişmişler

Nil: But there everyone is Turkish, you do not attract any attention. There it is your own country, if something happens to you there is a state and you can go to the highest parliament because you have the language.

Aynur in her quote continues to highlight the contradictory dual experience they have in their lives. Having a Turkish migrant background and living in Germany permanently contributes to their ambivalent experiences. She emphasized she felt divided between the two cultures and traditions. She highlighted that when she is in Turkey, she misses Germany and when she is in Germany, she misses Turkey. Aynur finishes by saying, "I hope, God does not give this situation to anyone". It could be interpreted as it being difficult at her age to make sense of the experiences she has had.

Aynur: İkili hayat oluyor, ikiye bölünüyorsun. Demek istediğim, biz burada doğduk büyüdük, burdaki insanların kültürleriyle büyüdük, yetiştik onlarla piştik diyelim ne, aynı zamanda ailemiz elinden gelen kadar kendi Türklüğümüzü kendi traditsyonlarımızı Sippe'ermizi (akrabalık ilişkisi) (39:06) şunumuzu bunumuzu öğretti, ama bir yanın oraya gidiyor bir yanın buraya gidiyor. Ben burdayken Türkiye Türkiye diye ağlıyorum, Türkiye'deyken de Almanya Almanya diye ağlıyorum, ben kalmam burda diyorum (). İkiye ayrılıyorz, çok zor bir durum, Allah kimseye vermesin.

Aynur: There are two lives, you are divided into two. What I want to say is, we were born here and grew up here, we were nurtured with the culture of the people here, grew up, we grew up (she uses an expression in Turkish). At the same time our families taught us as much as possible, our traditions and kinships, but one side of you is going here, one side of you is going there. When I am here, I cry for Turkey, Turkey and when I am in Turkey I cry for Germany, Germany. I say I cannot stay here. We are divided into two. It is such a difficult situation. God gives it to no one.

Deniz: Ya. Wir sind zwischen zwei Sachen, zwei Ufern (iki birşeyin ve iki ülkenin arasındayız) diyebiliriz (39:25) Biz Türkiye'ye gidiyoruz aha Almanca buraya geliyoruz aha Türk, biz kaldık ortada biz yeni bir vatan mı kuralım ()

Deniz: Yes, we are in between, two things, two lands. When we go to Turkey, they say look she is German, we come here, they say look she is a Turk, we stay in between. We should build a country.

The girls were negotiating how to structure and define themselves in a country where they hear negative comments about people of immigrant origin. They are stigmatized in Germany and they interpret that their pluralism is not accepted. In the below quotes, being 'foreign' and 'ambivalent' as a result of assimilating and 'becoming German' are the main issues for the girls. All these quotes gathered from various focus and individual interviews revealed the need for the presentation of diverse ethnicities in everyday life in the public sphere.

Interviewer: Sizi ne Alman hissettiriyor kendinizi?

Interviewer: What makes you feel German?

Nil: Herşey, burda doğduk burda büyüdük. Sonuçta onların kültürleriyle büyüdük büyümedik diyemeyiz.

Nil: Everything, we were born here and grew up here. In the end, we grew up with their culture, we cannot say we didn't.

Deniz: Biz kindergarten Uwe, Sara, Maria hepsi deutsch tamam mı, Türk'te var yakın görüyoruz ama, tabi daha yakın Almanlar'dan ama (3) eem Almanlar'sız olmuyor.

Deniz: In kindergarten, we had Uwe, Sara, Marie, all German. Okay, we feel Turkish is closer than German but we cannot stay without Germans.

Interviewer: Neden Almanlar'sız olmuyor?

Interviewer: Why it is not possible without Germans?

The girls had difficulty to identify themselves with German-ness. There are dominant factors in their lives demanding that they feel mostly German as they were socialized in Germany. The girls predominantly responded that they were Turkish even though they had been highlighting that they were German. This

ambivalent voice could be a result of not having policies in place to create opportunities for diversity and to support the development of plural identities.

Nil: Alıştık çünkü, çok afedersin bizi çekiştirdiler (zorladılar) büyütürken Almanlar çekiştirdi kindergarten da, grunschule de, hauptschule de şimdiki okullarda hala çekiştiriyorlar ki böyle düşünelim, beynimizi bir şekilde yıkamaya çalışıyorlar. Kötü anlamda değil, bakış açısı, başka hayatta var, başka düşünce de var diyorlar. Onlar, o yönü gösteriyor size, o yönü gösteriyor sana. Türkler’de diyor ki sakın bakma orası kötüdür bu tarafa bakın. Türkler seni şuraya buraya çekiştiriyor. Almanlar seni çekiştiriyor, mecburen kiliseye girmek zorundasın, mecbursun ben Katolische ben Evangelische kindergartende büyüdüm. Hani onların dinine göre yetiştim, ordan çıktım camiye gittim camiden çıktım kiliseye gittim derken, yani her dinde alaturka (46:16) olduk biz ().

Nil: We got used to, sorry, but they pressured us when we were growing up. Germans pulled us in Kindergarten, grunschule, and hauptschule, in the current school. We are still pulled to think like that, they are trying to brainwash us. Not in a bad way, it is a perspective, there is another life, there are other thoughts. They show this way to you, Turks show you another way and tell you not to look at the other side. It is bad. The Turks pull you here and there. Germans are pulling you here and there. You are obliged to go to church, you are obliged. I grew up in a Catholic, Evangelic kindergarten. I grew up according to their religion, I got out of there. I went to a mosque, I got out of the mosque. I went to church, that is in every religion, we became Alaturka (people who are envious for the past).

Deniz: Fifty-fifty her ülkeden kötülerini de var, ben öyle birşey değilim, ben Türk’üm.
Deniz: It is fifty-fifty, in every country, there are bad people, I am not like that, and I am Turkish.

Nil: Tarih dersinde bir ara, diskusyonlar (tartışmalar) vardı, birden bire durdum dedim biz Almanlar diye başladım cümleye ama spontan oldu, yanımda Türk bir arkadaş vardı bana bir baktı biz Almanlar mı dedi, durdum dedim ki siz Alman’lar dedim.
Nil: In history lesson, there was a discussion. I stopped and started the sentence with “we Germans”, it was so spontaneous. There was a Turkish friend next to me, he looked at me and said “we Germans?” I stopped and said “you Germans”.

Nil has also discussed the changes from the time her parents lived in Turkey. She was aware that she is more familiar with her parents’ experiences from the past. She loved these stories. These experiences from her parents and experiences from her own life in Germany would contradict each other. Nil highlighted that her ‘parents’ time’ was visible in their lives. At the same time, she was attached to Germany. Nil’s feeling of being between two cultures and her ambivalent voice could be grounded in ‘being foreign everywhere’, ‘Turkish communities’

isolation from mainstream culture’ and ‘a lack of developing a plural identity and belonging’.

Nil: Senin ailen zamanındaki Türkiye’nin düzeni de senin beynine sokulmuş. Kalbimi yarıya ayırmişlar, ben Alman arkadaşlarıma kötü diyemem onlar benim canlarım. Öğretmenlerim var bana o kadar yardım etmiş, o kadar çok Alman insan var çok şey borçlu olduğum. Ben onları satamam ki, ben onlarla büyüdüm, bana birşey olsa bana yine Alman devleti bakacak. Ben onları atıp ben Türk’üm diyemem, sadece Alman’ım diyemem. Bir yanım Alman çünkü bir gün ben Türkiye’de ebediyen yaşarım diyemiyorum çünkü ben, ileriki hayatımı garantiye almadan Türkiye’ye giderim diyemem, neden diyemem, 10-15 sene sonra diyorum.

Nil: The structure of Turkey is your family’s time in Turkey. I feel like my heart is divided into two, I cannot say anything bad about my German friends, they are in my heart. I have teachers who helped me so much, there are so many German people I feel so thankful for. I cannot give them up. If something happens to me, the German state will take care of me. I cannot throw them away and say I am Turkish, I cannot say I am only German. One part of me is Turkish and one part of me is German because I cannot go to Turkey without guaranteeing my life. I can say, maybe in 10-15 years time.

Deniz: Peki senin düşüncen ne? Anlayamıyorsun di mi?

Deniz: Okay, what is your idea? You don’t understand, right?

The data obtained during the project revealed the young people narrowly defined being German or European as something in which they didn’t fit or belong. The German Turks, however, fostered an affinity towards creating cosmopolitan, hybrid, global and reflexive identities that refined their European identities, stated differently, although at the outset they may be prone to be perceived as communal (Kaya, 2009, p. 399).

Society contributes to their ambivalent life experiences. In Nil’s example when she starts her discussion in a history lesson with “we Germans”, she was corrected with the reaction of a few other fellow colleagues that she was ‘Turkish’. Ethnicity drives strong divisions in society. At the conceptual level, society contributes such ambivalent experiences because diversities and plural identities are not accepted in society, ethnicity determines opportunities and obstacles for the girls.