



WORKING MOTHERS: INTENSIVE MOTHERING AND MOMISM*

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ABSTRACT

This literature review provides background information about the definition and historical context of mothering experiences. The concept of motherhood and meaning making have been intensively studied within both feminist and existential psychological perspectives, which are used in this paper to provide an in-depth understanding of different aspects of becoming educated, working educated mothers within the context of Turkey. According to the recently emerging momism concept, mother is redefined as an 'expert' who should predict and understand all the emotional, cognitive and physiological needs of their children. Mothers should be simultaneously therapists, pediatricians, teachers and best friends for their children. Similarly, intensive mothering suggests that child-rearing is construed as child-centered, expert guided, emotionally and economically absorbing, and labor intensive. Intensive mothering and momism appears to be common among well-educated working women. The aim of this paper is to draw attention to the intensive mothering experiences of working mothers particularly in Turkey and facilitate the much needed research for in this realm.

Key Words

Intensive Mothering, Momism, Working Mothers, Motherhood

ÇALIŞAN ANNELER: UZMAN ANNELİK VE YOĞUN ANNELİK

ÖZ

Bu literatür incelemesi, değişen annelik deneyimleri ve annelik tanımının tarihsel bağlamı hakkında bilgileri sunmaktadır. Annelik kavramı ve anneliğin anlamı feminist ve varoluşçu yaklaşımlar tarafından derinlemesine incelenmiştir. Türkiye bağlamında eğitilmiş çalışan anne olmanın farklı yönlerinin derinlemesine anlaşılmasını sağlamak için bu yaklaşımların perspektifi bu incelemede sunulmuştur. Son zamanlarda ortaya çıkan momizm kavramına göre anne, çocuklarının tüm duygusal, bilişsel ve fizyolojik ihtiyaçlarını tahmin etmesi ve anlaması gereken bir 'uzman' olarak yeniden tanımlanmaktadır. Anneler aynı anda terapist, çocuk doktoru, öğretmen ve çocukları için en iyi arkadaş olmalıdır. Benzer şekilde, yoğun annelik, çocuk yetiştirmenin çocuk merkezli, uzman görüşü destekli, çocuk üzerinde yoğunlaşmış duygusal, fiziksel ve ekonomik bir emek olarak tartışılmaktadır. Yoğun annelik ve annelik iyi eğitilmiş çalışan kadınlar arasında yaygın görünmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı özellikle Türkiye'de çalışan annelerin yoğun annelik ve uzman annelik olarak adlandırılan deneyimlerine dikkat çekmek ve bu alanda ihtiyaç duyulan araştırmalara öncülük etmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Uzman Annelik, Yoğun Annelik, Çalışan Anneler, Anne Olma

*This article is a summary of the master's thesis completed by Fatma Senem SAHLAR under the consultancy of Assistant Professor Ayşe Meltem BUDAK

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Citation: Sahlar, F.S., Ustundag Budak, A.M. (2020). Working mothers: Intensive mothering and momism. *Life Skills Journal of Psychology*, 4(7), 115-125.

Introduction

Current Debates in Mothering

Considering both the historical context and contemporary mothering debates provide an opportunity to evaluate in depth how definitions and practices of mothering have changed during 19th century. Although it has always been difficult to agree on a definition of mothering (Arendell, 2000), one shared theme is that mothering refers to “The social practices of nurturing and caring for dependent children” (Arendell 2000, p.1192). By definition, mothering includes dynamic activities to meet the needs of a dependent child while not necessarily being limited to being female or being a woman.

According to Sara Ruddick (1994), the meaning of mothering or motherhood dramatically changed during the 19th century. Mothering became associated with womanhood and the perceived primary identity of a young adult woman. Although mothering only concerns nurturing and caring for a child, and is only one part of the representation of the identity of a woman who has a child, this concept was reconstructed as synonymous with motherhood.

Chodorow (1978) widened the debate by asking: “How does woman become a mother today?” Like Ruddick (1994), she also claimed that, for centuries, it has been assumed that becoming a mother equates to becoming a woman. Even when the biological mother of a child cannot provide this caring, it is generally another woman, and only rarely a man, that takes responsibility for childcare. In many societies, women not men are seen as children’s primary caregivers. Even in recent decades, the same situation can be observed, even though many women’s social status, socio-economic, educational or cultural backgrounds have changed dramatically. Although patterns of childcare practice, time for child-bearing, and bearing a child alone or collectively have changed, the nearly universal assumption that childcare is the primary duty of a woman has not changed. Chodorow (1978) argued that, two centuries ago, childcare was the essential reason for marriage, which was the primary duty of women. The basic productive unit of society was the household so having a child, especially having a boy, meant providing a new productive entity. While childcare was the primary duty of women, it did not dominate all their time since they also had other production responsibilities beyond reproduction. In addition, childcare was traditionally more of a collective act in many societies.

Over the last two centuries, radical economic and social changes have taken place, particularly the industrial revolution, mass production and capitalism, along with changes in family size, infant mortality rates and types of fertility. Society’s basic productive unit and workplace are no longer the household, with the workplace and the home becoming clearly separated.

This has led to two different, polarized spheres being constructed within societies: the private and public spheres. This dichotomy especially affected the position of women in the household and also the meaning of the family. Household became a relational and personal institution of society while losing its economic meaning. The family’s private educational and religious functions, and its role in caring for old or sick family members decreased, with these being responsibilities distributed among different elements, such as schools, hospitals, old-age people’s homes, within the public sphere. Women’s family responsibilities became dominated by caring for her children and her husband. That is, with the development of capitalism, women’s reproduction function became more dominant while their production responsibility decreased. In addition to this, families became divided into smaller units as nuclear family, normally comprising a mother, father and children. Because other older relatives, servants, and older children were excluded from the family unit, the traditional collective child-bearing and housework system also drastically changed in that the biological mother’s family responsibility for childcare increased, along with housework and looking after the men in the household (Chodorow, 1978).

Women’s status regarding both reproduction and production changed, both in the family and society in the last few decades. As more women became independent earners their economic independence allowed them to choose whether to stay or end

their marital relationships, leading to increased numbers of single or divorced mothers, marrying later and having fewer children in recent decades. This new economic, political and historical era has also reconstructed mothering practices and ideologies. Although woman's struggles and the feminist movement have achieved significant successes regarding woman rights, these rights have been manipulated by new mothering ideologies (Hays, 1996; Douglas & Michaels, 2004).

According to Douglas and Michaels (2004), the media have helped construct a new type of mothering, especially for upper class, working mothers, since the 1980s. This new ideology was promoted to increase white-collar working women's economic efficiency in terms of free-market ideology, labelled as new momism": *"A set of ideals, norms, and practices most frequently and powerfully represented in the media, that seem on the surface to celebrate motherhood, but which in reality promulgate standards of perfection that are beyond your reach"* (p. 620).

It has been noted that since the 1980s, mothers are the most profitable consumers in the mother-child product market, with mothering exploited by media marketing, child caring programming and child-mother product advertisements. The idea of 'How a woman can be an ideal, good mother' has been widely promoted by the media (Douglas and Michaels, 2004).

During this period, such motherhood myths have also been promoted in Turkey's mainstream media in Turkey (Türkdoğan, 2013), with the media being the most important dynamic for inculcating postmodern consumerism in Turkish society, alongside a new trend called "the society of the spectacle". According to Türkdoğan (2013), mothering has become a part that "spectacle", in which authentic mothering experiences are replaced by their representations.

Türkdoğan (2013) argues that the media has promoted these myths of 'good' mothering, which reflect the ideals of new momism, through the appearance of popular singers, famous actress and models on childcare TV shows, in child-mother product advertisements that advise what a 'good' mother should use to ensure the well-being of her child or which type of mothering is the best. Thus, modern mothering experiences in Turkey have become coupled with an ideology of 'good' mothering while the various products promoted by these famous mothers help construct a new kind of consumerist desire (Türkdoğan, 2013).

Woman's active agency, free will, self-control and autonomy are controversial concepts within the feminist movement, and exploited in contradictory ways. For example, women are encouraged to be both successful, independent professionals in their jobs and spontaneous, relaxed, insightful and self-sacrificing mothers for their children, and to do this willingly rather than because their husband forces them to. As Douglas & Michaels (2004) put it that you can be both a sacrificing mother for your kid and a successful manager in your job.

Under new momism, the mother is redefined as an 'expert' who should predict and understand all the emotional, cognitive and physiological needs of their children. Professional mothers should be simultaneously therapists, pediatricians, teachers and best friends for their children. This idealized representation of mothering also creates powerful competition with other mothers while the clusters of best mothering myths determine the behaviors, feelings and thoughts of 'good' mothers, who should be loving, protective, patient, caring and satisfying all their children's needs at any given moment (Douglas & Michaels, 2004).

Sharon Hays (1996, p.8) labeled this kind of mothering "intensive mothering": "The method of appropriate child-rearing is construed as child-centered, expert guided, emotionally absorbing, labor intensive and financially expensive." All infants are vulnerable, depending on their care-giver for both their physical and psychological needs in order to survive until they are at least 6-7 years old (Rogolf et al., 1976). Hays (1996) supports this argument but adds that discussion of childcare rarely go on to consider the father's contribution. Instead, there is a silent consensus that the mother is or should be the infant's primary caregiver. If the mother is unavailable for care-giving then usually another woman, such as a grandmother or babysitter, takes over,

but generally not a man. This cannot only be explained in terms of media manipulation or economic imposition; rather, it is an effect of the wider patriarchal system.

For modern mothers, there is a deep, ambivalent and confusing contradiction between highly emotionally absorbing, child-centered mothering at home and being a rational, competitive, hard-working woman in the workplace (Hays, 1996). Under these contradictory demands of new momism, the question of how a mother makes sense of her own experiences of becoming the mother of her own child get lost.

Becoming a mother in fact becoming significant other of a human child, does not literally means that one's intrinsic competencies or capabilities affect negatively. However, contemporary cultural attitudes construct their discourses opposite of it. Becoming a mother associates with a lessening of capacity. In that sense, working mothers are left in a heavy conflict between "Work devotion" and "family devotion", (Corrinaldi, 2019). Ladge and Greenberg (2015) argue that a time of uncertainty for working mothers arise whenever they return their jobs back after the birth of a first child. They feel sense of loneliness and confusion between roles of "ideal worker" and "good mother".

Intensive mothering

According to Weingarten (1997), intensive mothering (Hays, 1996) has become increasingly prevalent culturally for well-educated working mothers. This concept of mothering constructs several dichotomies regarding mothering experiences, such dependency versus intimacy towards child and self-sacrificing for the child versus maintaining a balanced relationship regarding separate mother and child subjectivity. Nadal and Sevilla's (2015) study supports Weingarten's (1997) perspective. They found that better educated, middle-class mothers experience less happiness and meaning and more fatigue and stress than less educated mothers. The temporary negative states experienced by educated mothers, such as sadness, stress and tiredness, are strongly associated with social pressure and expectations derived from "intensive mothering" ideology. Similarly, Miller (2007) also found that well-educated, middle-class women meet all the stereotypes of mothering myths in western societies. The participants in her study were white, heterosexual, educated, professional, upper middle-class women located at the centre of perfectionistic mothering practices. She found that many of them felt disappointed, confused and helpless during their early mothering experiences.

A feminist view of definitions of motherhood and mothering experience

O'Reilly (2004), author of an anniversary book on Rich's "Of Born Woman", argues that two different meanings of motherhood have provided the analytical tools for thinking about and studying motherhood. One definition of motherhood is more 'male defined', which implicitly aims at the control and oppression of woman's reproduction within patriarchal social codes. That is, "the potential relationship of any woman to her powers of reproduction- and to children; and the institution-which aims at ensuring that potential- and all women-shall remain under male control" (Rich 1995, cited in O'Reilly 2004, p. 2). The second definition, which refers to 'mothering' rather than 'motherhood', includes women's own agency and subjective experiences as 'a mother' to claim that "mothering refers to women's experiences of mothering that are female-defined and centered and potentially empowering to women" (Rich 1995, cited in O'Reilly 2004, p. 2). The former definition of motherhood as an institution is male-dominant and gender blind, while oppressing woman. In contrast, the latter one refers to mothering as a source of power for women, drawing on feminist, phenomenological perspectives and women's empowering, subjective experiences. In this sense, the title of the current study is consciously based on the latter definition due to its reference to 'mothering experiences' rather than 'experiences of motherhood'.

According to Arendell (2000), feminist constructionism has expanded within the social sciences over recent decades, leading to a problematization of concepts like mothering, motherhood, family and childhood by feminist scholars. Within

constructivist theory, two different approaches have developed to conceptualize mothering experiences, namely the universalist and particularistic paradigms. According to the universalist approach, while there are individual and cultural variations, mothers also share some commonalities of “maternal practice”, such as nurturing, protecting and training their infants (Leonard, 1996; Ruddick, 1994). Because mothering experiences are shaped by the interaction of mother and child, mothering is a learning process shaped by maternal practices (Barnett, Brennan, & Marshall, 1994). On the other hand, from the particularistic approach view, mothering cannot be the same universally given that each mother-child unit is unique. Each woman has self-agency in her unique mothering experience through her cognitive, emotional and behavioral abilities. Besides this self-agency, a woman’s mothering experience should be interpreted within a specific historical, socio-cultural and economic context that shapes the mothering experiences (Collins, 1991; Arendell, 2000). Consequently, the standpoints of individual mothers living in different contextual frameworks should be taken into account (Glenn, 1992).

Becoming a mother as existential questioning and self-transformation

Becoming a new mother is an experience that can trigger questions about the meaning of life, which is a fundamental concept for existential psychology in giving motivation for living (Frankl, 1978; Van Duzen, 2007). The important existential philosopher Heidegger argued that, to understand a human being’s motivation for living, requires a focus on her/his immediate actions; that is, an account of their immediate experiences (Rendtorff, 2004 cited in Prinds et al., 2013). Thus, a woman’s questions about becoming a mother relate to questions about the meaning of life, and explicitly to the meaning of her mothering experiences. Becoming a mother, particularly the first experience of mothering is perhaps the most powerful change in a woman’s life, entailing a self transformation that is both physiological and psychological (Barclay, Everlitt, Rogan, Schmied V. & Wyllie, 1997; Trad, 1990). Regarding physiological changes, Benedek (1995) suggests that external transformations during pregnancy, such as enlarged breasts and body size, and raised progesterone levels, play a key role in the woman’s internal transformation. This internal transformation in turn dramatically alters her sense of self and her sense of others. Bibring (1959) labelled this ambivalent process the onset of the “maturational crisis” that lasts throughout pregnancy through delivery and into early motherhood (Lester & Notman, 1988). In many societies, cultural stereotypes about mothering emphasize only the positive aspects of this experience, such as enthusiastic breastfeeding or ‘magical’ maternal love, whereas it is considered inappropriate for new mothers to express their ambivalent impulses, conflicted feelings, especially after becoming a first-time mother, and the negative effects of this self-transformation (Trad, 1990).

According to Davis-Floyd (2003), women’s mothering experiences have to be understood in relation to the core values of the society in which the woman was born. More specifically, the values surrounding the new mother may reflect two different value systems regarding care: the technocratic or wholistic model. The former tends to predominate in the healthcare systems of many societies, which unfortunately entails a positivistic, patriarchal approach that excludes the authentic experiences of new mothers by considering the body as a machine rather than a living organism. In contrast, the wholistic model acknowledges and values the authentic experiences and feelings of women as new mothers.

From their study of 55 first-time mothers, Barclay et al. (1997) showed that psychological adaptation to the idea of becoming a mother takes some time because the woman’s realization that she has a child involves shocking experiences in terms of radical changes to her own life. First-time mothers may experience a kind of unpreparedness to have a child despite having prepared themselves mentally and psychologically during pregnancy. In particular, they may experience loneliness and a lack of support from their partners, healthcare workers and society; a drastic sense of feeling drained because of sleepless nights and endless childcare tasks; and a sense of loss for their lives before having a child.

Trad’s (1990) study of five new mothers identified themes of ambivalence, over-

identification, regression, hostility and separation that are implicit during the internal transformation of pregnancy and first-time mothering. Tina Miller (2007) conducted a longitudinal, qualitative study of 17 middle-class, white, North American women's mothering experiences during the transition to first-time motherhood. She revealed various powerful but unrealistic 'good mothering' discourses surrounding these women from the beginning of their pregnancies. She found that their personal experiences of mothering and motherhood were largely dominated by the discourse of women's 'natural and "instinctive" care capacities (Hays, 1996). These unrealistic expectations about motherhood are constructed especially by medical experts, who promote optimistic stories about birth and child rearing, which prevent women from preparing realistically for birth and early mothering (Cosslett, 1994).

Miller (2007) reported that many of her participants experienced deep disappointment when they encountered so many difficulties in childbirth and mothering, which destroyed their expectations of being ready to become good mothers. They felt confused, disappointed and helpless because of the contradiction between the supposedly natural, instinctive approach to mothering promoted before their child's birth and the difficult realities of becoming a mother after delivery. Many cultures cloak first-time mothering experiences in optimistic, instinctual myths about good mothering. In contrast, the other side, the dark side, which also belongs to a woman's authentic mothering experiences are generally unacceptable and unspoken, particularly feelings of unreadiness, loneliness, hostility, disappointment, loss and helplessness (Barclay et al., 1997; Miller, 2007; Trad, 1990).

Becoming a working mother

Undoubtedly, giving birth to become both a first-time and working mother significantly affects life cycle of a woman in terms of changes to family dynamics, life style, couple relations and career. In particular, the well-being of the child is a serious concern for women as they resume their careers after taking maternity leave for the birth. In addition to other complicated care-giving decisions, a woman who is supposed to continue her career also has to decide how best to ensure her child's welfare (Hock et al., 1980).

Johnston and Swanson (2006) examined the relationship between the good mothering constructs of 95 working mothers and their choices to work full time, part time or remain at home. They found that this choice of work status was influenced by their mothering perspectives, particularly in the idea that good mothering means "happy mothers and happy children". The participants reported that their maternal happiness and the well-being of their children depended on their work decisions. For example, the mothering perspectives of the stay-at-home mothers was related to "always being there" for their children whereas full-time working mothers defined their mothering perspectives in terms of retaining a personal sphere for themselves outside of the home and their children.

Maternal employment has various effects on the mother-child relationship. De Meis et al.'s (1986) maternal belief system approach and Benn's (1986) focus on women's emotional functioning to integrate mothering and working provide two useful ways to understand the experiences of working mothers. According to DeMeis et al. (1986), a woman evaluates her mother-child dyad through three different belief systems as a working mother, which in turn affect her mothering experience. The first is "maternal separation anxiety", comprising feelings of guilt, worry and anxiety about leaving her child to go to work. This belief system originates in the idea that the child-mother dyad is unique and that she, the mother, is the best carer of her child. The second belief system concerns the effects of separation on her child because the child's positive or negative reactions affect the mother's relationship with her child. The third belief system relates to the balance between mothering and working, particularly the mother's commitment to and investment in her career and maternal roles.

The second perspective (Benn, 1986) focuses on women's emotional functioning, whereby three different maternal affects influence the mother's ability to integrate her maternal role with employment. According to Benn, women who report a high level of maternal integration with employment have warmer and more satisfying

mothering experiences, and are more sensitive to their child's needs. A moderate level of emotional functioning causes a sense of ambivalence and frustration regarding their mothering experiences whereas a low level of emotional functioning is associated with a sense of anger and frustration with the maternal role, and a sense of mothering as a burden of childcare work and dependence on the child.

According to psychoanalytical feminist constructivist perspectives, women's socialization in many societies includes feelings of guilt. Women are particularly encouraged to take responsibility for childcare tasks, with women's identity and relationship patterns constructed around taking responsibility and caring for others. The resulting conflicts about taking responsibility for others, for instance a conflict between caring for a child and working in a job create feelings of guilt in women (Chodorow, 1978; Gillian, 1982).

Elvin Nowak (1999) explored the experiences of guilt in 13 working mothers with young children from a feminist socio-psychological perspective using phenomenological methodology. She found that all the participants described maternal guilt in relation to their sense of responsibility for their children. When other life duties, such as jobs or careers became more demanding, they felt that they had failed in their childcare responsibilities, which led to feelings of guilt. Nowak (1999) also argued that, although modern women are assumed to have many choices and to have free will to choose whatever they want, they face many obstacles, including implicit socialization that taking responsibility for a child is a woman's primary duty. Thus, despite having many alternatives for care-giving for their child, women must still decide which is best, both for that child's welfare and her own career.

The following sections review the literature on how well-being, social support mechanisms and women's educational and economic status affect their experiences as working mothers. This is followed by a historical outline of the context of women's employment in Turkey in order to understand the background to becoming a working mother in Turkey and its cultural implications.

Becoming a working mother in Turkey

Historically, women have long been a significant part of labor force in Anatolia. Women first joined the public labor in 1843 as midwives, before becoming paid workers in 1897. With the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, women gained new rights in education, employment and politics, with employment permitted and encouraged as a national policy. Women's employment and social status of have been the basic focus of the Ministry of Family and Social Politics since 2011 (Yatkil, 2011).

The existing rights for working mothers and the working environment of working mothers were legislated in 2013. According to current labor law, "woman employees have rights regarding paid leave before and 8 weeks after delivery. These rights can be changed by a doctor's view in support of a woman employee. Companies must supply a breastfeeding room. Women employees have permission to breastfeed for 90 minutes per day until their child is 12 months old. Mothers can use their rights whenever they want during the day" (Gül, et al., 2014 p.170).

Although the law stipulates many reformist and supportive rights regarding the employment conditions of working mothers, the law is not implemented adequately in practice. As Gökdemir et al. (2008) showed from their study of the breastfeeding experiences of 10 working mothers, women unfortunately do not benefit from their mothering rights because of patriarchal working environments and psychological pressures. Instead, they are afraid of bullying negative effects on their careers or being fired. Women can only benefit from their rights at the personal whim of companies or employers.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), women's employment rate was only 27.5 % in Turkey in 2016, compared to 74% in Sweden, which had the highest percentage of EU countries, and 42.5 % in Greece, with the lowest. The average rate of women's employment across 28 EU countries was 60.4%. This gap between Turkey

and EU states is only smaller for well-educated (university graduated) women, whose employment rate was 71.6%. According to family structure research, even if they are working mothers, women remain more responsible for everyday and long-term housework tasks, such as cleaning, cooking and childcare. Men are more responsible temporary or short-term household tasks, such as repairs or paying bills (TUİK, 2016).

According to the Turkish Population and Health (TNSA, 2013), 64% of Turkish women first give birth when they are 30 years old, with the most frequent childbearing ages between 25 and 29. This age was between 20 and 24 years old four years ago. Thus, fertility patterns have changed, in that Turkish women are delaying childbirth (TNSA, 2013). Women in western Turkey tend to breastfeed for longer and have better health, as women with better education and high SES (TNSA, 2013).

In Turkey, 70% of working women have a child under the age of 6 while 30% have more than one child under 6 years old, which makes childcare a critical issue for women's employment. The primary care-giver for a child under 6 is usually a woman, with 27% of caring for their own child while working at the same time. Many women are therefore forced to take their children to work or change their job and work from home. The percentage of working mothers whose own mother or mother-in law took responsibility for childcare was 16%. The percentage of working mothers who use pre-schools or kindergartens for childcare was 15% (TNSA, 2013). Although well-educated, high-achieving women in Turkey constitute a significant proportion of mothers in Turkey, there are few studies of their experience of mothering. As Miller (2007) noted, these mothers match all the stereotypes of "good mothering myths" in western societies as they are white, heterosexual, educated, professional, upper middle-class women located at the centre of perfectionistic mothering practices. Unfortunately, however, many feel disappointed, confused and helpless because of deep contradictions between their own authentic mothering experiences and the expected but unrealistic ones (Miller, 2007). Overall, women's employment rate was 27.5% in Turkey in 2016, while that of well-educated university-graduated women was 71.6%. Although exact figures for the percentage of working mothers who are both well-educated, with higher SES and have a child under 6 years old are not available, it is known that 70% of working mothers overall have a child under the age of 6 (TUİK, 2016).

The well-being of working mothers

The social sciences offer two different approaches to defining well-being. One derives from a disease framework, whereby a "reduction in maladaptive functioning or psychological distress (Wall, 2007). The second perspective originated in positive psychology, whereby well-being refers to not having any illness (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Wall (2007) notes that working mothers have greater access to the psychological, social and economic resources that undisputedly contribute towards maternal well-being. Working women have more opportunities to develop self-confidence, have fewer physical and psychological problems, and greater self-efficacy than stay-at-home mothers (Rout et al., 1997). However, employment does not contribute to maternal well-being in isolation because other dynamics, such as length of working time, flexibility of the working environment or internalized maternal ideology also directly determine maternal well-being.

According to Benedek (1949), it is essential that women experience fulfillment and pleasure within the child-mother dyad in order to feel confident about their mothering ability. The quality and quantity of employment, meaning the working environment and working time, directly affects these women's well-being and can be an obstacle to an intimate, fulfilling mothering experience. Hays (1996) pointed out that intensive mothering, which has become a widespread ideology in western societies, promotes high expectations of mothering as if a mother can only be 'good' by being 'perfect'. Rizzo et al. (2013) studied the relationship between intensive mothering and women's negative mental health outcomes using the Intensive Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (IPAQ). They found that highly intensive mothering was associated with more negative mental health outcomes, such as depression,

reduced life satisfaction and more psychological distress. Henderson et al. (2016) also found that mothers who internalized intensive mothering practices are at risk of increased stress, anxiety and low self-efficacy. Such perfectionistic mothering experiences not only increase stress and anxiety but also provoke maternal guilt as if these mothers feel that they can never be 'adequate', regardless of how much they do to satisfy their child's needs.

Social support for working mothers

According to social support theory, social support resources are particularly significant for a person's well-being during major life changes such as becoming a mother (Caplan & Killilea, 1976). Social support refers to "continuing social aggregates (namely, continuing interactions with another individual, a network, a group, or an organization) that provide individuals with opportunities for feedback about themselves and for validation of their expectations about others which may offset deficiencies in these communications within the larger community context" (Caplan, 1976 p. 200). Jacobson identified three kinds of social support: emotional, instrumental and informational (Jacobson, 1986). Emotional support is the emotional sources or reactions from others towards the person who needs support. Instrumental social support includes all financial, service and material goods needed for dealing with an issue. Informational support refers to advice, knowledge and experience that others share with the person regarding a problem.

From their study of the experience of social support of 10 working Korean mothers, Phang and Lee (2009) found that these women needed more support from their husbands rather than family members, child or government. The most critical factor to avoid feeling mothering as a burden and maternal guilt was emotional support, which included feelings of belongingness, love and acceptance by their husbands. Thus, their study supports Jacobson's (1976) arguments that emotional support is the most useful form, especially during transitions or critical life changes. Given that first-time mothering and becoming a working mother both affect a woman's life dramatically, a woman in this situation initially needs emotional support from significant others.

Conclusion

This review draws attention to the experiences of mothers who are educated working upper class women and introduces the concept of intensive mothering. Although there is some research interest on this subject there is limited understanding of such experiences. Previous studies have investigated the mothering experiences of low income and single parent mothers or those who have children with disabilities, but not highly educated or high-income mothers, which are also important dimensions for understanding mothering experiences. This gap may be rooted in assumptions that well-educated, working mothers may have easy access to social support mechanisms, freeing them from the usual vulnerabilities or difficulties of mothering. Particularly for Turkish educated working mothers' experiences needs to be understood from their experiences. The intensive mothering appears to have negative consequences for mother for their children. Further research is needed to understand this phenomenon so that women can be supported by relevant policy and services for work environment improvements as well as their mental health and well-being needs.

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