

# Representation of Turkish Family and Women in Stories and Novels of Secondary Education Turkish Language and Literature Textbooks<sup>1</sup>

Seyhan Bayram<sup>2</sup>

Mesut Bulut<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

The purpose of education is to cultivate desirable and acceptable behaviors in individuals. Social sciences are one of the most suitable fields to serve this purpose. Raising individuals who embrace the national and moral values of their society, develop themselves, and are sensitive to the environment and all living things is one of the fundamental goals of education. The texts in the Turkish Language and Literature textbook are the most important foundation for achieving these goals. Based on this, this study examined the Turkish family structure and perspective on women in the story and novel texts in the 10th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook. In summary, this study examined a total of 38 stories and novel texts in secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbooks, focusing on the context of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women. The research results indicate that the roles of “ideal mother” and “ideal wife” are most frequently highlighted in the texts, while representations of educated, strong, and socially active women are inadequate. It has been determined

- 1 This study is a revised version, with certain simplifications and expansions, of the master's seminar titled *“Analysis of the Texts in the Story and Novel Units of the Ministry of National Education Secondary School Turkish Language and Literature Textbooks in Terms of Turkish Family Structure and Perspective on Women”* presented in 2021 by Seyhan Bayram, a master's student in the Department of Turkish Language and Literature Education, under the Division of Turkish and Social Sciences Education, at the Institute of Educational Sciences of Atatürk University, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Mesut Bulut.
- 2 Master of Science, Turkish Language and Literature Teacher, e-mail: seyhan.bayram@gsb.gov.tr,
- 3 Prof. Dr., Atatürk University, Department of Turkish and Social Sciences Education, Department of Turkish Language and Literature Education, e-mail: mesutbulut@atauni.edu.tr, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0733-0964>

that examples of alp women, such as Selcen Hatun in Dede Korkut, are limited, and that negative female stereotypes are also represented in the texts. Despite the emphasis on family solidarity and national values in the texts, the multifaceted identity of women in modern society is not adequately reflected. In light of these findings, it is essential to reorganize course materials to align with cultural values, support gender equality, and reflect the multidimensional identity of women.

## Introduction

As a requirement of social life, individuals inevitably change within the society in which they live. Since the establishment of the first Turkic states, Turkish society has undergone a constant state of change. This has been achieved through both cultural interactions with surrounding countries and religious beliefs. Despite all these changes, women and the family have always been given importance in Turkish society. A look at the history of the first Turkic states reveals that women had a voice, served in the state's administrative bodies, and always stood by their khans. Turkish civilization similarly placed great value on women after embracing Islam. Because Islam's command to respect women and protect their rights is a value in keeping with Turkish culture, assimilating and embracing them was not difficult. According to Tanrıver (2025), Islamic family law, centered on the principle of protecting human dignity, provides a solid foundation for family unity and protects individual rights through justice and compassion. Within this framework, the importance placed on human dignity demonstrates how Islamic law shapes social order and individual rights.

In pre-Islamic Turkish societies, despite the patriarchal structure, women held a powerful position in social, legal, and political spheres. There was no gender discrimination among children, and women chose their spouses and received a share of the inheritance upon marriage. After becoming mothers, they gained additional rights, had the right to dispose of joint property, and were not forced to stay in a marriage by the right to divorce. Among the Huns, Göktürks, Bulgars, and Sabirs, women served at all levels of government, acting independently in diplomatic relations and serving as judges in courts. Examples of rulers like Boğarık Hatun demonstrate that women could reach the highest political positions. This demonstrates their status as women in contemporary societies (Tellioglu, 2016: 221-222).

It is a fact that, from the ancient Turks to the present day, women have held a significant place in Turkish culture and state tradition, playing a critical role in strengthening the foundations of society and preserving the family structure (Acar, 2019: 395).

Throughout history, women in the Turkic states have played important roles in both social and political life, carrying significant responsibilities as wives and mothers, establishing families, and forming the foundation of society. Women's role, particularly in raising children and providing primary education, is critical to the happiness of society. Among the Turks, the family has been viewed and protected as the fundamental core of society. A strong family structure has enabled the Turks to survive throughout history despite wars and migrations (Gündüz, 2012:130).

As members of society, women differ from men in certain ways. Women have always held a specific place in society, sometimes praised and sometimes oppressed. This fundamental and indispensable presence in society is also an important literary motif. Women are discussed from different perspectives in numerous literary works, including novels, fairy tales, epics, and folkloric works (Bars, 2014: 123). In Turkish social life and state tradition, women, unlike other societies, have not been in a secondary position, but rather have assumed a primary role. This stems from the lifestyle shaped by the equestrian nomadic culture. While societies generally experience evolution in their social structures with changes in production methods, in Turkish societies, women have partially maintained the beliefs and values inherited from foraging societies in line with the requirements of social life. In this context, women stand out as a central element in the formation of family and social order (Çolak, 2016: 60).

In literary works, women are generally classified into three basic categories: verse/poetry, fiction, and informational texts (memoirs, travelogues, diaries, biographies, letters, etc.). In verse/poetry, women are often addressed by male poets, their beauty extolled, and the desired "target object". In fictional texts (novels, short stories, plays), however, they are incorporated into the texts with their weight in real life. In informational texts, women also appear with their real-life status and influence. In Turkish literature, women are important figures influenced by their familial and social roles. With the changes in time and life, the image of women in literature has also transformed; the depiction of women shooting arrows and wielding swords before Islam was shaped by themes of love and pleasure in later periods (Kaya ve Goncagül, 2023).

There were also women poets, such as Zeynep Hatun and Mihrî Hatun, who grew up and produced works during the Divan Literature Period. During the Tanzimat Period, Fatma Aliye Hanım made a name for herself with her prose works. During the Ottoman period, Fatma Aliye Hanım was a pioneering writer in the fields of novels, philosophy, and translation,

and played a significant role in the struggle for women's rights. She wrote for women's magazines and founded women's associations. Her father was Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, a high-ranking Ottoman official, a lawyer, and a renowned historian. Fatma Aliye was an intellectual shaped both by the intellectual education she received in the mansion of a high-ranking bureaucratic family and by the influences of social and legal Westernization in the Ottoman Empire after the Tanzimat (Çakır, 2011). In literary texts from the Republican period, women are portrayed as receiving education and, as a result, pursuing a career. In Reşat Nuri Güntekin's "Çalıkuşu (Wren)" Feride is a teacher. She travels alone throughout Anatolia, teaching in various villages and towns, and possesses a strong character. Halide Edip Adıvar's works also feature strong female characters. Women also appear as powerful figures in literary works from the Republican era.

Women poets and writers hold a significant position in Turkish literature, particularly in the fields of classical Turkish poetry and post-Tanzimat literature. The most frequently studied names in this field are Fatma Âliye Hanım, Mihrî, Leylâ Hanım, Şeref Hanım, and Zeyneb Hatun; Fatma Âliye Hanım stands out for her dissertations, books, and articles, while Mihrî is noted for her presentations at symposiums. Among the poets featured in encyclopedia entries and book chapters are Fitnat Hanım, Şeref Hanım, and Zeyneb Hatun. On the other hand, many women poets have not been the subject of an independent study (Âfîâtâbî, Afife Kadın, Fâtıma Fâize Hanım, Nesîbe Safvet Hanım, Nesibâ Tevfika Hanım, Fasiha Hanım, Hatice İffet Hanım, Münire Hanım, Maide [Hasibe] Hanım, Fatma Nerîme Hanım, Ayşe Vuslat Hanım, Emîne İkbal Hanım, Sa'ide Hanım, Habîbe, Hamiyet Zehrâ Hanım, Fatma Fâzıla Hanım, Nâciye Hanım, Sâliha Suâd Hanım, Lütfiye Hanım, Şerife Zîbâ Hanım, Fatma Hanım, Kevser Hanım, Fatma Müzeyyen Hanım, Hatice İffet Hanım, Cevriye Banu Hanım, Suâd Hanım, Tal'at Hanım, Zafer Hanım, Seher Hanım, Fatma Servet Hanım, Mihrünnisa, Seniye Hanım, Cemîle Hanım, İhsan Raif Hanım, Arife Hanım). This situation demonstrates that more than half of the 67 known women poets have not been the subject of scholarly studies (Çelik, 2020: 209-210). Despite this, Fatma Âliye Hanım, Mihrî, Leylâ Hanım, Zeyneb Hatun, Şeref Hanım, and Fitnat Hanım demonstrate that women made significant contributions to Turkish literature in the fields of poetry, fiction, philosophy, and translation, and played a central role in the historical development of women's literature. In this context, Ziya Gökalp's views are very valuable.

According to Ziya Gökalp, the strength of the family is directly proportional to the strength of the nation, and women shape the family.

Women's lack of adequate education weakens the family structure, and as a result, the nation falls behind. Therefore, the foundation of social development lies in women's education and the proper upbringing of girls; well-educated women ensure the formation of strong families and, consequently, a strong nation ( Tansel, 1965: 414-415).

The technological, economic, social, and cultural transformation process taking place on a global scale is profoundly impacting social structure. The family is among the institutions most affected by this transformation. In Turkish cultural and social history, the family has held a significant position as a protective and encompassing structure, serving a fundamental function in the construction of individuals' identities and ensuring social continuity. Throughout history, Turkish society has been able to preserve its cultural identity and maintain a strong social fabric thanks to the value it places on the institution of family. In fact, the Turkish family structure stands out as an idealized model in many Western societies. However, phenomena such as industrialization, rapid urbanization, and internal migration have led to a disintegration of the traditional family structure in Turkey. Recent increases in divorce rates, the rise in the number of single-parent or broken families, the prevalence of substance abuse among young people, and the rise in criminal offenses are concrete indicators of this process. In particular, the broadcast content of mass media, which relegates familial and spiritual values to the background, paves the way for a moral and cultural erosion. Economic instability and poverty are also significant factors negatively affecting family dynamics. However, the institution of the family It plays a decisive role in preparing children and young people for social life, caring for the elderly, and combating crime and harmful habits. Therefore, supporting and strengthening the family is vital for social welfare (Kabaklı Çimen, 2008: 22).

It is the woman who holds the family together and makes it whole. She is the mother of the children, the companion of her husband, and the one who gathers and gathers the family together physically and spiritually. Growing up and living in a good and peaceful family environment brings happiness and makes one successful in life's struggles. The value attributed to women in Turkish mythological texts demonstrates that it surpasses even many understandings in contemporary societies. For example, in the Oğuz Kağan Epic, women characters occupy a central position, both socially and symbolically. Similarly, in the Orkhon Inscriptions, the founding and unifying role of women is emphasized through the Grey Wolf (Asena) motif during the Göktürk resurrection process. These narratives reveal how respectful and advanced Turkish society's view of women was in the early

periods. According to the principles of Shamanism, women's rights are very similar to today's understanding. Equality between men and women is a fundamental principle. Shamanism's respect for women was so profound that they considered them sacred. Therefore, women held a very high position in society. Ziya Gökalp also touched upon the same subject in his work "*Türkçülüğün Esasları (The Fundamentals of Turkism)*." According to him, Turkish women are entities that have a say and are respected in every aspect of society (Göksel, 1988: 113).

Despite the nomadic lifestyle of Turkish society, the identity bestowed upon women by their natural and traditional national culture is extremely vibrant and dynamic. Women are valued for their horseback riding, weapon use, and fighting skills, and they play an active role in social life. Historical sources indicate that the Turks referred to certain sacred and highly valued rights as "*Mother's Rights*", equating them with "*God's Rights*". In the ancient Turkish state tradition, the khan and the khan are seen together in ambassadorial receptions and credential presentation ceremonies organized within the context of interstate relations. It is also known that the khan was a member of the councils where war decisions were made (Göksel, 1988: 115)

With the advent of Islam, the value attributed to women gained even greater significance. According to Islamic belief, "*Paradise lies at the feet of mothers*". Islamic scholars have described the Prophet's (peace be upon him) behavior toward his wives and stated that this was an example to follow.

The new religious and cultural elements that came with the adoption of Islam did not significantly alter or restrict Turkish women's active role in social, political, and economic life. Indeed, prominent examples from the Seljuk period clearly reflect this continuity. For example, founders of charitable foundations like Gevher Nesibe Hatun, women who played active roles in politics like Altun-Can Hatun, Tuğrul Bey's wife, and Terken Hatun, Melikşah's mother, as well as pioneering figures like Fatma Bacı, who founded social organizations, demonstrate that Turkish women remained at the center of social life even in the post-Islamic period (Kurnaz, 2015: 17).

In Turkish social life and state tradition, women, unlike other societies, hold a primary, not secondary, position; this stems from the lifestyle shaped by equestrian nomadic culture. Women stand out as a central element that sustains the family and ensures the continuity of social life. Women, held in high social prestige due to their motherhood, have played a critical role in maintaining family and social structure throughout history (Yılmaz, 2003: 3). This most sacred unit, the cornerstone of Turkish social life and

possessing immense cultural value, cannot exist without women. Women play a significant role in Turkish society, fulfilling responsibilities within the family such as mother, wife, and sister, as well as possessing their own identities. Under the influence of equestrian nomadic culture, women assumed a significant role in social life. They became indispensable for the maintenance of family and society, and for the continuity of social life. Throughout history, women have played an indispensable role in maintaining family and social order due to their high social status as mothers (Yılmaz, 2004: 112).

During the Ottoman period, sultans' mothers and wives were active in political life. In social life, women in rural areas worked in the jobs required by village life. Women living in cities led more secluded lives, with restrictions on their outings and dress codes. In later years, with the influence of modernization, Girls' Teacher Training Schools were established, and Turkish women began to take a greater part in social life. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, women, like men, joined the War of Independence, demonstrating the honor of sacrificing everything for their homeland. During the Republican Era, women were granted social and political rights, and these rights were secured by law.

Today, increasing incidents of violence against women have become a social problem, and violence in all its forms must be prevented. The most effective way to achieve this is education, which aims to develop acceptable and desirable behaviors in individuals. Social sciences stand out as one of the most suitable fields to serve this purpose. In this context, Turkish language and literature courses and textbooks provide an important educational foundation that supports students in developing individuals who embrace national and moral values and are sensitive to the environment and all living things.

Turkish language and literature textbooks play a critical role in conveying social values. It is crucial that these textbooks reflect the multidimensional identity of women and the dynamic structure of the family in Turkish culture in a balanced manner, both for the preservation of national values and the development of a universal human rights perspective.

This study examined the texts of stories and novels in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks, focusing on the Turkish family structure and perspective on women, within the framework of current course outcomes and core values. This study aims to understand both the historical and cultural position of women in literary texts and to shed light on the transmission of social values through education. It is crucial to find



a solution through education to address the increasing incidence of violence against women today and to prevent violence. Women have always been valued in our culture. It is crucial to re instill this value in society and prevent violence. This can only be achieved through education. For this purpose, the texts in the unit stories and novels in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks were examined in terms of Turkish family structure and perspective on women. The study analyzed how these texts reflect Turkish family structure and perspective on women, and systematically examined how the perception of family and women in our culture is transmitted to future generations through literary texts. In this context, the ways in which texts in textbooks reflect gender roles and family dynamics are examined from an educational and cultural perspective. This aspect of the study demonstrates the importance of text selection in both Turkish language and literature education and the transmission of social values.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Research**

The primary purpose of this research is to examine how the texts included in the story and novel units of secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks reflect the Turkish family structure and perspective on women, within the framework of the objectives and core values specified in the Ministry of National Education's Secondary Education Turkish Language and Literature Curriculum (2018). In Turkish culture, the family institution, and women as one of its cornerstones, have always been highly valued and respected throughout history and society. A woman's role as a mother stands out as a significant element reinforcing her social status. However, today's increasing violence against women has become a serious problem threatening the social fabric. Preventing violence not only against women but against all living beings seems possible through education. The fundamental function of education is to develop behavioral patterns in individuals compatible with social values and to raise sensitive individuals committed to national and spiritual values. In this context, the texts in Turkish language and literature textbooks play a critical role in conveying social values. This study aims to analyze the extent to which the stories and novels in these textbooks represent the Turkish family structure and perspectives on women. Furthermore, it aims to assess the contribution of these representations to the ideal of gender equality and a society free of violence.



## 1.1. Research Problem

How and in what way are the Turkish family structure and perspective on women addressed in the texts in the story and novel units in the secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbooks?

### 1.1.1. Sub-Problems

**1.1.1.1.** How and in what way are the Turkish family structure and perspective on women addressed in the texts in the story and novel units in the secondary school 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade Turkish Language and Literature textbooks?

**1.1.1.2.** How are the values placed on family and women in Turkish culture reflected in the texts in the story and novel units in the secondary school 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade Turkish Language and Literature textbooks?

**1.1.1.3.** Do the family structure and perspective on women in the texts in the story and novel units in the secondary school 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade Turkish Language and Literature textbooks align with the Turkish family structure and perspective on women in Turkish culture?

**1.1.1.4.** How and through which type of woman are the Turkish family structure and perspective on women discussed in the texts in the story and novel unit in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook for secondary education?

## 1.2. Limitations of the Research

The study was limited to the story and novel texts in the 2nd and 5th units of the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade Turkish Language and Literature textbooks for secondary education.

## 2. CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1. The Importance of Women in Turkish Culture and State Tradition

Although the position of women in Turkish culture and state tradition has undergone some changes throughout history, Turkish women have always held a privileged role in social and state life. Women, distinguished by their motherhood, have been recognized as figures accorded supreme value in Turkish society. A woman's existence is directly related to the continuity of the family, and family continuity is fundamental to the survival of the

state. It is observed that individuals are also valued in societies that value women. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between the importance attributed to women and the value placed on individuals within society. In this context, the importance placed on women is an indicator of respect for the family, and the importance placed on the family is an indicator of respect for society. Protecting the cultural and traditional fabric of society is essential for the continuity of the state (Acar, 2019). Turkish society is an interactive structure comprised of women and men; therefore, it is impossible to evaluate the roles of women and men from a single perspective. While a male-dominated structure prevails in state administration, women's influence has been significant throughout history. Sociological and historical examples demonstrate that women in Turkish societies have assumed a variety of roles, from the lowest to the highest levels of government. The concept of sacredness before Islam and the understanding of sacred upbringing after Islam facilitated women's direct or indirect influence in government. In this context, it can be demonstrated that Turkish women made significant contributions to social and administrative spheres (Peker, 2017: 161-162). Turkish women held an active position in both social and state life. There were no restrictive practices such as flight or migration, and women directly participated in social life. Girls were able to wield weapons equally with boys and, when necessary, participate in war (Gündüz, 2012: 144).

## **2.2. Women in Turkish Society Before and After Islam**

While women were not valued in ancient Europe, in Turkish society, they were valued, had a say in state administration, and were active in social life (Bayat, 2018). The following statement from the Orkhon Inscriptions is extremely significant in understanding the status of women in Turkish culture: The Bilge Khagan inscription states, "God raised my father İlderiş Khagan and my mother İlbilge Hatun so that the Turkish nation would not perish," demonstrating the central role of women in the Turkish political and social order. This narrative emphasizes not only the high status of women but also the co-founding role of women and men in protecting the existence of the state and the nation (Kafesoğlu, 2015: 240). Women held a significant position in pre-Islamic Turkish society, and despite the patriarchal structure, there was no gender discrimination among children. It is a fact that Turkish girls had the right to choose their husbands in marriage and inherit from their fathers. After becoming a mother, she gained various new rights, including the right to dispose of her home and wealth. These rights also manifested themselves in state administration, allowing some women to assume state administration after the death of their husbands.

Furthermore, women's right to divorce freed them from forced marriage, demonstrating that Turkish women held a higher status than many women in contemporary societies and today's society (Tellioğlu, 2016: 221-222). According to Sevinç (2007), in pre-Islamic Turkish societies and states, the khan and the khan always stood side by side. They welcomed ambassadors from foreign states together, and the khan shared his political views with them khan. Nuclear families were more common in Central Asian Turkish societies: families consisting of a mother, father, and unmarried children. In these families, men and women held the same position, and the principles of mutual respect and love prevailed. Due to nomadic lifestyles, women, like men, were warriors, rode horses, and shot arrows. According to Bars (2014:139), in the Turkish epic tradition, women, like male heroes, actively participated in the struggle and were depicted as warriors, intelligent, and knowledgeable. Physical strength and strong character are important characteristics of woman heroes. Under the influence of nomadic culture, women held equal status with men in terms of governance and legal status, riding horses, wielding swords, and fighting. Although women assumed more passive roles with the transition to settled life, various female characters representing reflections of social life, historical events, and cultural values are still seen in epics and folk tales. The value placed on women remained unchanged even after the Turks embraced Islam. The society, taking the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) behavior towards women as an example, continued this. Even after Islam, women's right to a say in state governance continued.

### **2.3. Women in the Ottoman and Constitutional Monarchy Periods**

During the Ottoman Empire, women were excluded from social life. They were allowed to receive education at home. With the Constitutional Monarchy Period, women were granted the right to education and inheritance rights. During this period, women who had the right to education gradually entered the workforce, and women were appointed to civil service positions instead of men who had to serve on the front lines (Çakmak, 2011). The Second Constitutional Monarchy Period was characterized by radical transformations in education and law in Ottoman society. The change in women's social status, which began with the Tanzimat reforms, gained significant momentum during this period. The expansion of women's educational opportunities allowed them to assume more active roles in social life. During this period, Ottoman women experienced a transition between modernization and traditional values; ultimately, the Second Constitutional Monarchy took its place in history as a period when the modern woman

model began to take shape and educated women struggled for their social existence (Özkiraz & Arslanel, 2011). In the period beginning with the 1839 Tanzimat Edict, writers such as Ahmet Midhat, Şemseddin Sami, and Namık Kemal generally portrayed working women in traditional roles; however, Ahmet Midhat, in particular, introduced Western and productive female characters representing a variety of professions to literature. During the Servet-i Fünun period, writers such as Halid Ziya and Mehmet Rauf highlighted women as more educated individuals, particularly as teachers (Uğurcan, 1983). In the Ottoman Empire, issues such as women's education and legal rights were raised by men who had created a free space for their expression. Consequently, the first proposed solutions were shaped by a masculine perspective and implemented according to their benefits to the state. Especially after the Second Constitutional Era, the approach to women's issues was shaped around women's education, their right to leave home while entering the workforce, and regulations that favored women in inheritance and divorce cases (Özakın, 2019: 273).

#### **2.4. Women in the National Struggle and the Republican Period**

In Turkish literature, between 1908 and 1923, female characters became figures who actively participated in social struggles and pursued working life as both an individual and a social form of existence. The common view in these three periods, starting with the Tanzimat, continuing with Servet-i Fünun, and encompassing the National Struggle Period, is that women's education, participation in social life, and recognition of their rights are of vital importance for the future of society (Uğurcan, 1983). Turkish women maintained their social value from the founding of the Ottoman Empire to the National Struggle phase of the Turkish War of Independence; particularly during the National Struggle, they played a decisive role in laying the foundations of the Republic of Turkey through their heroism. During this period, women not only maintained their motherly role towards their children, but also produced supplies for soldiers on the front lines and, by participating directly in the struggle, became weapons against the enemy. The sacred quality of motherhood held by Turkish women was reinforced and gained significance through the extraordinary courage and sacrifices they demonstrated on the front lines. After the proclamation of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, systematically emphasized the value that should be given to Turkish women and took radical steps to ensure that women gained freedom in social, political, and legal spheres. Thanks to Atatürk's strategic emphasis on women's rights, which were not even found in many Western societies of

the time, they were brought to Turkish society and the state structure. Thus, women gained a voice in all segments of society (Acar, 2019). It is known that esteemed Turkish women have played a significant role in the glorious formation and development of Turkish history. The contributions of Turkish women, always respected in our social life, in the family economy, in raising the Turkish generation, and also in politics and state administration, are documented in historical documents. Turkish women, renowned for their chastity and striving alongside men in every stage of life, have also undertaken and succeeded in defending the homeland in a way unseen in other nations. Therefore, it is crucial to remember heroic figures of our recent history, such as Nene Hatun, Kara Fatma, and Ayşe Kadın (Kafesoğlu, 1969: 113). Throughout history, women have been at times exalted in terms of social status and at other times exploited. In the modern era, particularly under the influence of the consumer economy and popular culture, women have been commodified and turned into objects of the advertising and entertainment industries. While there have been periods when women and men were positioned as rivals in the context of gender relations, in reality, these two genders are complementary. The continuity of humankind is ensured through the family institution, based on the unity of men and women. In Turkish culture and tradition, women have been viewed as complementary to men, and cooperation is essential in social organization. Indeed, proverbs such as *"A mother's right cannot be paid"* reveal the value attributed to women. In this context, women's social position must be strengthened, they must gain self-sufficiency through education, and they must receive the respect they deserve in society. Women's role in socialization and raising the next generation is of central importance (Gündüz, 2012: 145). The family, the smallest social unit in society, has survived through various structural and functional transformations from primitive societies to the present day. The historical continuity of the family demonstrates that this institution lies at the foundation of social structure. Turkish society, like other societies, has been shaped around the family structure in parallel with the changes it has undergone in different periods. Throughout the process extending from a nomadic lifestyle to the transition to a settled order after the adoption of Islam, the Turkish family structure, while undergoing formal changes, has maintained its central position in social life (Düzenli, 2011).

## 2.5. Women and Family in Turkish Literature

Family and women hold a significant place in the Dede Korkut Stories, one of the most important works of Turkish literature.

The family structure in the Dede Korkut Stories consists of the father, who holds the status of a bey, his wife, whom he consults and sees as a guide, his son(s), and his daughters, whose names are often not specified. Exceptional characters such as Banı Çiçek and Selcan Hatun are more commonly represented as the fiancées of the bey's sons. In these stories, the family is depicted as a solid social institution based on mutual respect, love, and loyalty. The father figure is the leader of both the beylik and the family. Beys such as Dirse Han, Salur Kazan, Bay Büre Bey, Duha Koca, Kanlı Koca, Kazılık Koca, Begil, Uşun Koca, and Uruz Koca are notable for their heroism, as well as for being rescued by their sons when they were captured. They simultaneously hold the titles of both tribal leader and family head. The behavior of the beys towards their wives is shaped by love and respect; They consult them in difficult situations and use complimentary language. Women are described as “the fortune of the head, the throne of the house”, and men do not hesitate to consider their suggestions. This reflects a highly advanced perception of family and women compared to other societies, even at that time and even today (Kırbaçoğlu Kılıç, 2011).

In every society, marriage is shaped within the framework of cultural norms and rules, and the customs and practices during this process reflect the marital culture of that society. In ancient Turks, marriage is one of the fundamental transitional periods that enable individuals to participate in social life as a new family unit and holds universal importance because it forms the basis of social structure. In Turkish cultural landscapes, various marriage styles, such as arranged marriage, daughter-in-law abduction, the practice of bride, monogamy and polygamy, exogamy, and endogamy, are exemplified in epics such as Oğuz Kağan, Dede Korkut, and Manas. Despite the socio-cultural changes experienced throughout history, there are aspects of these marriage traditions that resonate with the present day (Eroğlu, 2023). According to Kabaklı Çimen (2008), the Turkish family underwent cultural transformation and modernization during the Republican era under the influence of “Westernization”. In the early years of the Republic, the Turkish economic and social structure was based on a rural economy, dominated by the extended, patriarchal family. Factors such as industrialization and migration led to the proliferation of nuclear families in society.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Method

The study employed a qualitative research method. “Qualitative research is defined as research that utilizes qualitative data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, and follows a qualitative process aimed at presenting perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic manner in a natural setting. In other words, qualitative research is an approach that prioritizes investigating and understanding social phenomena within their context, with an understanding based on theory.” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 45).

The types of qualitative research and qualitative data analysis are widely distributed and diverse. In this context, unlike quantitative research, there are no “standard” processes in qualitative research, particularly regarding data analysis. This should not lead to the conclusion that qualitative research is conducted haphazardly, lacking a specific system, and therefore, its designs lack scientific criteria. However, there is a systematicity in qualitative research as well. In its most general form, in qualitative research, as in quantitative research, there is a problem to be investigated. A research design is developed to investigate this problem. Data are collected and analyzed as required by the design, findings are obtained, and the results are reported. (Demirli, 2007, p. 59, as cited in Balcı, 2015, p. 38). Using the qualitative research method, the Turkish family structure and perspective on women were examined in detail in the literary texts examined in the study. In this study, existing texts from the story and novel units in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks were examined in terms of family structure and perspective on women in our culture.

#### 3.2. Study Design

Cultural analysis, a qualitative research design, was used in the study. “Cultural analysis (ethnography), reflecting the anthropological tradition, focuses on the description and analysis of cultural elements such as social behavior, structure, functioning, values, and norms, as well as individual perception and behavior” (Hancock, 2004, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 76). Culture, as a shared set of understandings and rules, influences and shapes the behavior of individuals and groups. The culture of a society, the culture of a class, or the culture formed by individuals coming together for a specific purpose or reason, constitutes an interesting and important subject of study in qualitative research as a whole of reality. The aim of studies on cultural analysis is to define and interpret the culture of a particular group.



This definition is generally made within the framework of the concepts, processes, and perceptions of that culture. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013: 76).

3.2. Study Materials

The study materials consist of the Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2018) Secondary Education Turkish Language and Literature textbooks for grades 9 (Özcan, 2019), 10 (Başaran Yılmaz ve Nasır, 2019), 11 (Yücel et al., 2018), and 12 (Filazi et al., 2021), prepared in accordance with the Turkish Language and Literature Curriculum published by the Ministry of National Education’s Board of Education in 2018.

Table 1. Textbooks and Publishers Used in the Study

Serial Number	Title of the Book	Publisher
1.	Secondary Education Grade 9 Turkish Language and Literature Textbook	Sonuç Publishing
2.	Secondary Education Grade 10 Turkish Language and Literature Textbook	Bir- Yay Publishing
3.	Secondary Education Grade 11 Turkish Language and Literature Textbook	Başak Matbaacılık Publishing
4.	Secondary Education Grade 12 Turkish Language and Literature Textbook	Ministry of National Education Publishing

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Purposive sampling methods emerged within the qualitative research tradition. According to Patton (1987), purposive sampling allows for an in-depth study of situations considered to contain rich information. In this sense, purposive sampling methods are useful in many situations in discovering and explaining phenomena and events (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013: 135).

The sample for our study consists of texts from the story and novel units in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks. In the 9th-grade Turkish language and literature textbook, the story unit includes the texts *Ellî Kuruş*( Fifty Penn), *Sicim*( String), *Birtakım İnsanlar*(Some People), *Şişman ile Zayıf*( and Fat and Slim); in the novel unit, the texts

*Acımak, Yer Demir Gök Bakır, Suç ve Ceza* (Crime and Punishment) are included. In the 10th-grade Turkish language and literature textbook, the story unit consists of the texts *Kanlı Koca Oğlu Kan Turalı, Kerem ile Aslı, İmam Ali'nin Mağrib Ejderhası ile Yaptığı Gaza, Yusuf ile Zeliha, Kediler, Forsa, Memurun Ölümü* (The Death of a Memur); and in the novel unit, *Oblomov, Sergüzeşt, Mai ve Siyah, Ateşten Gömlek* (The Shirt of Fire). In the 11th-grade Turkish language and literature textbook, the story unit includes the texts *Kamyon, Fırsatlık, Oğlumuz, Koca Oküzün Ölümü* (The Death of a Big Ox), and *Odalardan Biri* (One of the Rooms); in the novel unit, *Yaban, Huzur, Murtaza, Tutunamayanlar, Eski Adam, and Deniz*. In the 12th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, the story unit includes the texts *Bir Saatlik Telâki* (An Hourly Telâki), *Demiryolu Hikâyecileri-Bir Rüya* (The Railway Storytellers - A Dream), *Karanfilsiz, Parasız Yatılı*, and the novel unit includes the texts *Üç İstanbul, Bereketli Topraklar Üzerinde* (Fertile Lands), *Aylak Adam, Sevgili Arsız Ölüm, Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalım* (My Girl with the Red Scarf), *Bülbülü Öldürmek*. A total of thirty-eight texts, listed above, constitute the data sources/materials for the study.

### 3.4. Data Collection Tools

This study used the document analysis technique as the data collection tool. “Document analysis involves the analysis of written materials containing information about the phenomenon or events targeted for investigation. Traditionally, document analysis is known as a method used by historians, anthropologists, and linguists.” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 217). Because information cannot be collected through observation or interview in some areas of the social sciences (e.g., history, sociology, archaeology, political science), information is obtained by examining documents in those areas. Exploring written and visual documents (films, paintings, photographs) in that field requires extensive resource research (İslamoğlu & Alnaçık, 2014: 216). Texts from the story and novel unit in the secondary school Turkish language and literature textbook were examined using the document analysis technique in terms of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women, and how this perspective is addressed in these literary texts was examined. The texts in question were read, notes were taken, and data were collected in this way.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the data. “The primary goal of content analysis is to arrive at concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. Through content analysis, we attempt to define the data

and uncover hidden truths. The fundamental process of content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of specific concepts and themes, organize them in a way that the reader can understand, and interpret them.” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 259). “Content analysis is one of the most important techniques frequently used, especially in the social sciences. Content analysis can be defined as a systematic, repeatable technique in which certain words in a text are summarized into smaller content categories using coding based on specific rules.” (Büyüköztürk et al., 2010, p. 269). Story and novel texts in Turkish language and literature textbooks were read, notes were taken, and they were evaluated and interpreted in terms of how they reflect family structure and the perspective on women in Turkish culture. The woman types encountered in the analyzed texts are classified and presented in a table using the studies “*Woman Types in Turkish Heroic Epics*” by Mehmet Emin Bars (2014) and “*Woman Types in Ottoman-Turkish Novels*” by Sema Uğurcan (2002). The woman types that the relevant texts are discussed under nine headings:

**Ideal Mother Type:** Mothers who make every sacrifice for their children and raise them well represent this woman type.

**Ideal Spouse Type:** Characteristics include being an ideal wife and enduring hardships alongside their spouses.

**Educated Woman Type:** Characteristics include a working woman with a certain level of education.

**Alpine Woman Type:** Characteristics include warrior, combative, fearless, and patriotic.

**Negative Mother Type:** Characteristics include a mother who disregards her children’s happiness and acts according to her own desires and wishes.

**Strong Woman Type:** A woman who can make her own decisions and holds a respected position in the family and society.

**Negative WifeType:** The opposite of the ideal spouse. She does not support her husband or endure hardships.

**Slave Woman Type:** The type of woman hired to do housework and serve.

**Classical-Conservative Woman Type:** She embodies the qualities of a woman who is the most important support for the family, strives for its peace, is skilled in housework and handicrafts, and has undergone a religious upbringing.

### 3.6. Credibility and Consistency

Validity and reliability are necessary prerequisites for a study to be considered scientific. Given the assumption that events and phenomena occur depending on the environment and time and cannot be replicated exactly, it seems impossible to ensure reliability in qualitative research. According to this assumption, reliability in a study, as emphasized earlier, can be achieved even without validity. Repeating an incorrect measurement with an incorrect instrument several times does not guarantee that the measurement is valid in the sense of confirming the same result with multiple measurements. However, in quantitative research, reliability is a prerequisite for validity. In other words, the validity of a measurement that cannot be repeated raises doubts. In qualitative research, repeatability is impossible according to accepted assumptions because events and phenomena are constantly changing, and variation stems from the nature of reality. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 305). “Because the approach, design, and data of qualitative research differ, different criteria for validity and reliability are used.” (Büyüköztürk, et al., 2010, p. 264). “Of these concepts, they preferred to use the concepts of ‘credibility’ instead of ‘internal validity,’ ‘transferability’ instead of ‘external validity,’ ‘consistency’ instead of ‘internal reliability,’ and ‘confirmability’ instead of ‘external reliability.’” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 270).

### 3.6. Credibility and Dependability

Validity and reliability are necessary prerequisites for a study to be considered scientific. Given the assumption that events and phenomena occur depending on the environment and time and cannot be replicated exactly, it seems impossible to ensure reliability in qualitative research. According to this assumption, reliability in a study, as emphasized earlier, can be achieved even without validity. Repeating an incorrect measurement with an incorrect instrument several times does not guarantee that the measurement is valid in the sense of confirming the same result with multiple measurements. However, in quantitative research, reliability is a prerequisite for validity. In other words, the validity of a measurement that cannot be repeated raises doubts. In qualitative research, repeatability is impossible according to accepted assumptions because events and phenomena are constantly changing, and variation stems from the nature of reality. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 305). “Because the approach, design, and data of qualitative research differ, different criteria for validity and reliability are used.” (Büyüköztürk, et al., 2010, p. 264). “Of these concepts, they preferred to use the concepts of ‘credibility’ instead of ‘internal validity,’

‘transferability’ instead of ‘external validity,’ ‘consistency’ instead of ‘internal reliability,’ and ‘confirmability’ instead of ‘external reliability.’” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 270).

4. FINDINGS

Data obtained from an examination of the texts in the story and novel units in secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbooks from the perspective of the Turkish family structure and the perspective on women are presented in this section.

Table 2. Texts from the Story and Novel Unit in the 9th Grade Turkish Language and Literature Coursebook for Secondary Education

Serial Number	Title of the Text	Female Character Type
1.	Elli Kuruş (Mother)	Ideal Mother Type
2.	Elli Kuruş (Haminne/Grandmother)	Ideal Wife Type
3.	Acımak (Zehra)	Educated Woman Type

The first text in the story unit in the 9th-grade Language and Literature textbook of secondary school is Orhan Kemal’s story *Elli Kuruş (Fifty Kuruş)*.

The text recounts how a mother works selflessly to care for her children after her husband abandons her and her children and moves to another city with another woman:

*“According to what he told me, his mother was initially furious at his father, who, while working as a newspaper collector, left his home, Istanbul, to go to Izmir or something. But then she said, “What can we do? He must have found someone better than us. Good luck!” and rolled up her sleeves and went to a pharmacy in Karaköy. Her job was to wash empty medicine bottles with long wire-handled brushes. It wasn’t one, five, ten, a hundred, or a thousand bottles; perhaps tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands. If anyone had wanted her, her grandmother would have married her off right away, but no one had.” (p. 42).*

The story tells that, despite being a child himself, the protagonist left school and became a newspaper salesman because his mother and grandmother’s income wasn’t enough. This example clearly demonstrates the concept of family and family awareness:

*"His grandmother worked in a salt shop in Tahtakale. They were barely making ends meet with what his mother earned from the pharmacy, but if it weren't for these recent raises, he left school in his fifth year, desperate to supplement his mother and grandmother's earnings and at least pay for his and his son's school expenses, and started selling newspapers." (p. 42)*

In the section where the woman is described in the text, it is explained how loyal she was to her deceased husband:

The section of the text describing the grandmother (haminne) highlights her profound loyalty to her late husband.

*"... Especially my grandmother(my haminne)! I resent her too, her late husband if she has one, or her late husband if she doesn't. Was her husband, my grandfather, a police officer in the Atatiirk era, or a commissioner? My grandmother has a pencil drawing of him, a big man with a trimmed moustache." (p. 43).*

No evidence was found regarding the Turkish family structure and perspective on women in the second text, *"Sicim(String)"* (Guy de Maupassant), the third text, *"Bazı İnsanlar(Some People)"* (Sait Faik Abasıyanık), and the fourth text, *"Şişman ile Zayıf(The Fat and the Thin)"* (Anton Chekhov).

The first text in the novel unit in the 9th-grade secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbook is Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *"Acımak"*.

The section describing the novel's protagonist, Zehra, is significant from a perspective on women, as it portrays their presence in social life and their successful career pursuits:

*"Zehra, the head teacher of the school, is a hardworking, disciplined teacher who stands by her decisions. She makes many innovations in the school she works in, changing things she finds beautiful and inappropriate." (p. 134).*

Zehra's father, Mürşit Efendi, wants to find a solution to his wife Meveddet Hanım's difficulties and does everything he can to ensure her well-being. The value placed on women and family is evident here:

*"I don't hesitate to make any sacrifices to please him and ensure his comfort. Besides the maid, there's only one woman in our house, and her son, a mullah named Hafız Recep. Considering that my mother-in-law is a perfect housewife, five of us work tirelessly to ensure Meveddet's happiness. I work outside, and Hafız is busy shopping. In short, we all look Meveddet in the eye. We don't let him put his hand in hot or cold water. So, what's the reason for these crises, what's their meaning?" (p. 135)*

Zehra's father, Mürşit Efendi, wants to send Zehra to a boarding school. No matter how difficult his situation is, he thinks of his daughter and asks his friend, the governor, to save her future. Zehra is sent to boarding school. Even in his own dire situation, the father strives for his child's future. His father feels happy that he has saved Zehra:

*"My child is in school tonight. When I think of him lying in a clean bed in a clean school among innocent children and compassionate teachers, I feel joyful, proud, and joyful, as if I were wearing a crown and sitting on the throne of a king. Zehra was saved..." (p. 138).*

The second text in the novel unit is Yaşar Kemal's novel *"Yer Demir Gök Bakır"*. In the text, the protagonist, Taşbaşoğlu, is considered a saint by his family and the villagers. Due to certain circumstances, his wife and children distance themselves from him. Taşbaşoğlu is saddened to see his wife and children distance themselves from him. Humans are inherently social beings and cannot live alone. Living within a family and society is a necessity for humankind. Family is also very important in Turkish culture.

*"He loved his youngest child very much. He would take him in his arms and stroke his hair. He wanted to take the child in his arms and caress him. The moment he reached out, the child ran away screaming and threw himself into his mother's arms. Shortly after these events, he came to his senses and glanced around. His wife and other children were standing at a distance, their eyes wide, staring at him with astonishment, fear, and great respect. This touched him so much that... Here he was, completely alone." (p. 145).*

In the third text in the novel unit, *"Suç ve Ceza (Crime and Punishment)"* (Dostoevsky), we encounter Sonia, who takes care of her family, which is very poor because her father is unable to work and provide for them:

*"Sonia, who is very poor because of her father's drunkenness, takes care of her family". (p. 151).*



**Table 3. Texts from the Story and Novel Unit in the 10th Grade Turkish Language and Literature Coursebook for Secondary Education**

Serial Number	Title of the Text	Female Character Type
1.	Kanlı Koca Oğlu Kan Turalı (Selcen Hatun)	Alpine Type
2.	Kerem ile Aslı (Aslı's Mother)	Negative Mother Type
3.	İmam Ali'nin Mağrib Ejderhası ile Yaptığı Gaza (Hz. Fatma)	Ideal Wife and Mother Type
4.	Yusuf ile Zeliha (Zeliha)	Strong Woman Type
5.	Kediler (The Housewife)	Negative Wife Type
6.	Sergüzeşt (Dilber)	Captive Woman Type
7.	Sergüzeşt (Zehra Hanım)	Negative Mother Type
8.	Mai ve Siyah (İkbal)	Classical-Conservative Woman
9.	Ateşten Gömlek (Ayşe)	Alpine Type
10.	Ateşten Gömlek (Kezban)	Alpine Type

The first text in the story unit in the 10th-grade secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbook is “*Kanlı Koca Oğlu Kan Turalı*”, one of the Dede Korkut Stories. The story expresses the Turkish cultural perspective on family and the desire of parents to marry their children at a certain age, with the following words:

*“Kanlı Koca says: “Friends, my father died and I stayed, I took his place and my land, tomorrow I will die and my son will stay, there is nothing better than this (the best) I can marry you off while I can see you son, he said”. (p. 35).*

When Kan Turalı listed the qualities he sought in his future wife, he wanted her to be able to ride horses and fight, just like him. At that time, women, like men, were warriors; they rode horses, shot arrows, and fought.

*“Kan Turalı said: Father, he must have risen before I rose from my seat, he must have mounted my black ram before I mounted it, he must have brought me a head before I could reach the bloody infidel's hands.”. (p. 35).*

*"It turns out that the Tekfür (king, infidel lord, tekfür) of Tırabuzan had an extraordinarily beautiful, beautiful daughter. He would draw two pairs of bows to his right and left. The arrow he shot would not fall to the ground. ". (p. 35).*

Kan Turalı bids farewell to his parents as he leaves for Trabzon, and in this farewell speech, he first mentions his mother:

*"... woman, mother, gentleman, father, farewell." (p. 35).*

In Turkish culture, when a family goes somewhere, the hands of their parents are kissed; this is a sign of respect.

*"He kissed the hands of his father and mother." (p. 36)*

*"Here, Selcen Hatun rode a horse. She subdued her enemy."*

*"Selcen Hatun made her horse dance and stood in front of Kan Turalı. Kan Turalı said, 'My beauty, where are you going?' He said, 'Brave man, if you were to be at peace, wouldn't there be a berk? This infidel who is coming is a very infidel. Let us fight, let us fight. Let those who die die, and let those who survive come to the tent.'" (p. 38)*

When we look at the examples above, we see that women are not in the background in social life, but are active, just like men. Because the nomadic lifestyle at that time was a constant threat of attack and danger. The people living in that region were always prepared to immediately counter any attack or danger. Women, like men, possessed warrior qualities.

*In the story "Kerem and Aslı" (Ali Duymaz), Aslı's mother refuses to consent to this marriage and takes her daughter away. Kerem sets out to find Aslı.*

*"I had my coy lover taken from me,*

*I abandoned my mother and my father,*

*I beat my chest,*

*No one took a dagger and pierced it, no one did". (p. 43).*

Kerem pursued Aslı and endured various hardships to find her. This demonstrates the value placed on Aslı and the importance of love and loyalty in our culture. Aslı's mother, by separating lovers and obstructing her daughter's happiness, exemplifies the negative mother type.

The following section of the story, *"İmam Ali'nin Mağrib Ejderhası ile Yaptığı Gaza"* (İsmail Toprak), is significant in terms of his perspective on family and women. Considering the possibility of never seeing his wife again, Ali offers his greetings and asks for her forgiveness. He states that he is poor and cannot fully provide for her. He feels ashamed. These thoughts

and expressions illustrate the value and importance placed on women and spouses within the family. They perfectly summarize the love and bond between spouses within the family:

*"Send greetings to your mother, Fatima. May she forgive me for the afterlife. I was poor and did not appreciate your mother, and was not able to provide for her. You should apologize to your mother more than I did."* (p. 51).

The narratives about Zeliha in the text "*Yusuf and Zeliha*" (Şeyyad Hamza) are significant. In the text, Zeliha sees the saint of Egypt in her dream and wishes to marry him. Zeliha's father sends a letter to the saint of Egypt, expressing his desire to marry his daughter to him. As a woman, Zeliha makes her own decisions, and her family respects this. Zeliha exemplifies a strong woman.

*"Zeliha, the daughter of Taymus, the king of the Western region of Egypt, is renowned for her beauty. Zeliha has another dream. The person she sees in her dream tells her that he is the saint of Egypt. Her father says he knows the saint of Egypt. In a letter, she tells the saint of Egypt, called Kotifar, that he will marry his daughter to him."* (p. 56).

Samipaşazade Sezai's story "*Kediler (Cats)*" depicts the difficulties faced by a man who kept numerous cats at his wife's request, and how he remained resolute despite these difficulties. His wife, who loved the cats so much that their sheer number made normal life difficult, could not keep them away. Unable to bear the hardships, she left the house but returned shortly thereafter. The hero of the story realized that loneliness was difficult and that he missed the family atmosphere, so he returned home. The text presents an example of a negative spouse.

*"He had become weary of the harassment and intimidation of the twenty to thirty cats he had gathered and kept in the house where he was the governor of his harem."* (p. 62).

Upon a final decision made in the middle of the night, he rose early in the morning, put all his belongings in a chest, and took them down to the lower courtyard.

*"...Farewell! Farewell! He set out, never to return again."* (p. 63).

*"The weather was beautiful, the wind calm, the Marmara was a deep blue. He would never return; this was inevitable! A thirty-three-year marriage had been broken, and now he was alone. Isn't this loneliness a riot?"*

“... It was late, noon had returned. The decision he had made never to return home was final. That much was clear! But where would he have his lunch? Where would he spend the night?”

“A life of independence, a fixed decision, is only possible with money. Yet, he didn't even have enough money for the morning meal. The smoke from the morning meal, which his harem had laid out on the table, began to rise in his eyes.”

“He stood up and began walking back the way he had come. Apparently, he had broken his final decision. He was quickly returning home, emerging and disappearing among the pine trees. A contemplative countenance, He went home in a sad mood and went straight to his room without saying anything to his wife.” (p. 64).

Ömer Seyfettin's story “*Forsa*” tells the story of Kara Memiş, a sailor, being captured, and his son finding his father years later. Despite the passage of years, Turgut did not give up, searching for and finding his father. “*Forsa*” demonstrates the importance placed on family. Turgut resembles the son who goes to rescue his father from the enemy in the Dede Korkut Stories.

The final story is “*Memurun Ölüümü (The Death of a Government Clerk)*” (Anton Chekhov). The protagonist is deeply affected and saddened by an unpleasant event. The first person he shares this with is his wife. Family and spouse are a source of support and strength in life.

“As soon as Chervikov came home, he told his wife about his rudeness”. (p. 72).

The first text in the novel unit, “*Oblomow*” (Ivan Goncharov), also touches on the importance of family:

“Stoltz is a German teacher. He is a disciplined, hardworking, and wise man. To save Oblomow from his negative situation, he encourages him to read. He tries to help him start a family, but Oblomow is unwilling to trade his comfort for anything.” (p. 157)

The second text in the novel unit is Samipaşazâde Sezai's novel “*Sergüzeşt*”. The text recounts the life of a young captive girl. Dilber is the protagonist. She is sold into a house as a slave. The subject of slavery was explored in Tanzimat-era novels. The mentality of the period was reflected in this way in literary works. In addition to the woman who was the mistress of the house, there was also the type of slave woman taken as a maid. Women who were held captive in the home had no rights. The concept of slavery did not exist in Central Asian Turkish culture. This concept emerged during the Ottoman period. By including the subject of slavery in literary works, the

aim was to draw attention to this flawed aspect of society. The concept of slavery, considered a normal occurrence in the social life of the period, was thoroughly examined in literary texts. This approach was intended to expose the problems in society. With the establishment of the Republic, social life changed, and people were granted personal rights and freedoms, and slavery ended.

*“Dilber was a girl brought from the Caucasus and sold as a slave in Istanbul. She was sold for forty lira to a man named Mustafa Efendi, who had been dismissed from the former Harput Revenue Office. Her hard-hearted wife and the Arab concubine Taravet mistreated Dilber and made her work beyond her capacity. One day, unable to bear the harsh life in this house, Dilber escaped, but she was captured and returned to her former owners.” (p. 163)*

Dilber was subjected to violence in the house where she was held captive, unable to warm herself by the brazier in the cold. The Turkish nation is known for its compassion and helpfulness. According to our national and spiritual values, no living being is to be tortured or harmed.

*“They beat me a lot, made me serve them excessively. Then they call me a dirty Circassian, a dirty servant every minute. I’m not allowed to play games. When I’m cold, if I sit by the brazier, Taravet burns my hand with a pair of tongs, saying, Look at my arm.” (p. 164)*

In the next section of the text, it is stated that Dilber was sold to another mansion, where she lived a comfortable life and learned a foreign language.

During the Tanzimat period, with the influence of Westernization, women began to come to the fore in literary works. Women who learned foreign languages, played the piano, and other female characters appear.

*“After a while, Dilber was sold to Asaf Pasha’s mansion and began to live a comfortable life there. She was also taught French.” (p. 165).*

The novel features a class distinction between master and slave. Celal, the son of the lord in the mansion, loves Dilber, but his mother opposes it. She doesn’t want her son to marry a servant girl. Celal’s mother envisions someone from an educated, wealthy family for him. Zehra Hanım, like Ashi’s mother, exemplifies the negative mother type. She hinders her son’s happiness.

*“Zehra Hanım envisions someone from a more educated, wealthy family for her son. Unable to bear her son’s love affair with a servant girl, she secretly sells Dilber to a slave dealer and takes her away from the mansion.” (p. 165).*

The third text in the novel unit is Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's "Mai ve Siyah". In the text, Ahmet Cemil, whose father has passed away, works to support his mother and sister. Family is important in our culture, and we see this importance here. Ahmet Cemil, whose father has passed away, works for his family, ensuring their family doesn't become dependent on anyone else, and takes on his father's duties and responsibilities.

*"After his father's death, Ahmet Cemil both studies and works to support his sister and mother. He faces countless difficulties". (p. 169).*

Ahmet Cemil's sister marries İkbâl, Vehbi Efendi, but Vehbi Efendi has bad habits. He constantly abuses İkbâl, and as a result of this abuse, İkbâl loses his baby and becomes bedridden. So much so that İkbâl doesn't even share Vehbi Efendi's bad habits and unhappiness with his family. He harbors his pain. He doesn't want his family to be upset. He can't even share his experiences with his closest relatives, his family. İkbâl represents the classically conservative female type.

*"Vehbi Efendi is constantly plagued by bad habits. İkbâl is unhappy with this situation. His family senses his unhappiness, but İkbâl refuses to talk to anyone about his experiences. One night, Vehbi abuses İkbâl so much that the pregnant İkbâl miscarries her child and falls into bed." (p. 170).*

The final text for the 10th grade is Halide Edip Adıvar's novel "Ateşten Gömlek" (The Shirt of Fire). "Ateşten Gömlek" is a work from the national literature period. It deals with the War of Independence.

The novel's protagonist, Ayşe, is killed by invaders in İzmir, and she is wounded. Ayşe comes to Istanbul to join her brother and joins the War of Independence. She serves as a nurse in the war. Women were not isolated from social life; they worked tirelessly wherever necessary, including the country's liberation struggle. Women, just as men, joined this sacred struggle, sacrificing everything. They strived to protect their homeland, just as in the Dede Korkut Stories. Like Selcen Hatun in the Dede Korkut Stories, Ayşe fights against the enemy, exemplifying the heroic woman character.

*"Three friends and Ayşe cross to Anatolia to join the National Forces and support the War of Independence. Ayşe joins the war as a nurse in İhsan's unit. Kezban, a village girl whose relatives were killed by the Greeks, also falls in love with İhsan with an unrequited love and wants to join İhsan's unit voluntarily." (p. 177).*

Like Ayşe, Kezban wants to join the war.

*"I won't go, I won't go! Can't I fire a rifle? Women from other cities come here and I can't find a job, she said. (p. 177).*

Ayşe, İhsan, and Cemal are martyred in the War of Independence. Ayşe fights like a man, is on the front lines, and is martyred. She has given everything she can for her country, first her son and husband, and finally her own life.

*"Ayşe, İhsan, and Cemal are martyred in the War of Independence. Peyami was taken to the hospital, seriously wounded. He wrote his memoirs there. He died while the bullet in his brain was being removed." (p. 178).*

**Table 4. Texts from the Story and Novel Unit in the 11th Grade Turkish Language and Literature Coursebook for Secondary Education**

Serial Number	Title of the Text	Female Character Type
1.	Oğlumuz (Mother)	Ideal Mother Type
2.	Odalardan Birinde (Mother)	Ideal Mother Type
3.	Huzur (Nuran)	Classical-Conservative Woman Type
4.	Murtaza (Firdevs)	Classical-Conservative Woman Type

Sebahattin Ali's *"Kamyon (Truck)"*, the first text in the story unit in the 11th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, tells the story of a young man who wants to go to Izmir to work to support his family. Lacking money for the journey to Izmir, the young man tries to jump off the truck, loses his balance, and falls off a cliff. He loses his life on the road to support his family:

*"When the crops failed, taxes became unpaid, and the house ran out of salt and gas, and he couldn't replace them, the son took his father aside and said, 'Dad, I'll go work in the city. Look, half the village is gone, and there's plenty of work in Izmir. The factories pay a daily wage of half a lira to each man.' Instead of staying here in the winter and being a burden, I'll go and look for my bread, and come back at harvest time and work in the fields..." he said. His old father, unable to understand and unable to express a word or come up with an idea due to poverty, said okay. And the eighteen-year-old young man went to seek advice from those who had been to Izmir before." (p. 36).*



...

*"Suddenly, there was a movement behind him: the young man, eyes wide and trembling with fear, threw himself out onto the road. But this backward leap from the car, which hadn't even stopped, threw him off balance; after spinning in place several times, his foot gave way, and, struggling to hold on to bushes with his hands, he hit his head on sharp stones, and, with a painful hiss of dirt and small stones flowing behind him, he tumbled down the cliff toward the stream, whose gurgle was now more audible."* (p. 37).

In the second text, *"Pazarlık (Bargaining)"* (Memduh Şevket Esendal), no evidence was found regarding Turkish family structure and the perspective on women.

The third text in the story unit is *"Our Son"* by Tarık Buğra. The text depicts the anxiety of parents regarding their sons who have grown up and become estranged from them. Familial ties are very strong in Turkish culture. As children enter adolescence and begin to grow apart from their families and establish their own lives, both parents become deeply saddened by this situation, as their children become estranged from them. The text represents the ideal mother. In a family, parents are the epitome of love and compassion:

*"Which tomorrow?... The sky had already turned its sweet blue. The day, the day we were obliged to attend, was beginning. My wife is right. We need to emphasize this. My son was just getting into bed. I had to tell him that what he was doing was a desperate act of rebellion. I jumped out of bed suddenly. My wife was alarmed:*

*"Don't be so harsh. After all..."*

*She couldn't continue. I looked at her. The expression in her eyes was confused. Oh, my fair-skinned, gray-haired baby.*

*As she left, she put my cardigan around my shoulders."* (p. 49).

*"Then I know what you were doing outside, why you ran away from home... (...). But your mother... The poor woman is trembling, afraid you'll be taken in by someone like this. When you spend your nights outside like this, your fantasies turn the glittering streets and nightclubs into fairytale caves."* (p. 50).

In Turkish culture, mothers are very self-sacrificing. They go above and beyond for their children. In the story, his mother exchanged her wedding gold coins so her son could have a better life:

*“He finished high school, then college. Meanwhile, to give him a better life, my wife exchanged her five-a-side gold from her wedding... And he was shaken by the misfortune of his first love, and it devastated us too.” (p. 50).*

No evidence was found regarding Turkish family structure and perspectives on women in the fourth text, *“Koca Öküzün Ölümü (The Death of a Great Ox)”* (Samim Kocagöz).

The fifth story, *“Odalardan Biri (One of the Rooms)”* (Bilge Karasu), tells the story of a mother’s inability to bear her child and her compassion for him. The father, angry with his son, doesn’t want him to come home at night and bolts the door for the mother. The mother, who wouldn’t have bolted the door herself, bolts the door because her father wants her to:

*“My father is angry, and he bolts the door for my mother again.” (p. 58).*

No evidence was found regarding Turkish family structure and perspectives on women in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu’s novel *“Yaban (The wild)”*, the first text of the novel unit in the 11th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook.

The second text of the novel unit is Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s novel *“Huzur (A Mind at Peace)”*. The thoughts of Mümtaz, the protagonist of the novel, as he waits for Nuran are presented below. These thoughts are significant in demonstrating the love and respect felt for women:

*“Waiting for Nuran at the dock, keeping an eye on the clock when she was late, were distinct pleasures for our hero. He was surprised that men complained so much about women’s habit of making people wait, a staple of humorous fiction. Waiting for Nuran seemed delicious to him. Everything was delicious, as long as Nuran was at the helm.” (p. 165).*

Nuran exemplifies the classical-conservative woman type.

The third text is Orhan Kemal’s *“Murtaza”*. In the novel, a guard named Murtaza meticulously performs his duties, occasionally meddling in matters beyond his scope. The neighborhood residents complain about this situation. The Chief of Police speaks with Murtaza about these complaints, and he resigns. He begins working as a night inspector at a factory. There, he maintains his meticulousness and roughs up his young daughter, who works at the same factory, because she falls asleep from exhaustion on the job. The little girl suffers a head injury, a brain hemorrhage, and dies. Here, violence against women is also depicted in the context of a father’s excessive meticulousness about his duties:

“One night, Murtaza is told that his daughters have fallen asleep while working. Murtaza, who prioritizes duty above all else, goes there in a rage, pulls his little daughter, Firdevs, who has fallen asleep from exhaustion, by the hair, and throws her to the ground. Firdevs, who suffered a head injury and a brain hemorrhage, died a few days later” (p. 175).

Firdevs represents the classical-conservative woman type.

The fourth text, Oğuz Atay’s novel “*Tutunamayanlar (The Disconnected)*”, contains no evidence regarding Turkish family structure or perspectives on women.

*Table 5. Texts from the Story and Novel Unit in the 12th Grade Turkish Language and Literature Coursebook for Secondary Education*

Serial Number	Title of the Text	Female Character Type
1.	Bir Saatlik Telâki (Wife)	Ideal Wife Type
2.	Parasız Yatılı (Mother)	Ideal Mother Type
3.	Üç İstanbul (Belkıs)	Negative Female Type
4.	Üç İstanbul (Süheyla)	Ideal Wife-Mother Type
5.	Aylak Adam (Ayşe)	Classical-Conservative Female Type
6.	Sevgili Arsız Ölüm (Nuğber, Zekiye)	Ideal Wife-Mother Type
7.	Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalım (Aysel)	Classical-Conservative Female Type

The first text in the story unit in the 12th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook for secondary education is Mustafa Kutlu’s story “Bir Saatlik Telâki”. The story features a train station and the people there, along with their physical and spiritual descriptions. The author expresses his desire for someone to see him off at the train station and to kiss the hands of his mother and the other people present as he bids farewell. In the story “Kanlı Koca Oğlu Kan Turalı”, Kan Turalı kisses his parents’ hands as he leaves for Trabzon. In Turkish culture, the hands of the parents, the elders, are kissed when saying goodbye:

*"They never saw me off, but I understand. There should be three people, not too many. One is my mother, the others are in the middle. I should kiss their hands, they should kiss my forehead."* (p. 38).

The author imagines that the person waiting for him at the train station is his wife, and through this, he describes his love and affection for her:

*"If she were a person, she would be my wife. She would wait, hasty and timid, with a crumpled handkerchief in her hand and a single carnation. I loved seeing her from afar. She wouldn't come running; she didn't like ostentation. She would embrace me with her eyes, and no one would hear her."* (p. 38).

No evidence was found regarding Turkish family structure and the perspective on women in the second text, *"Demiryolu Hikâyecileri-Bir Rüya (Railway Stories - A Dream)"* (Oğuz Atay), and the third text, *"Karanfilsiz"* (Adalet Ağaoğlu).

The fourth text, Füzûzan's *"Parasız Yatılı"*, tells the story of a woman whose husband died at a young age and who was left alone with her eight-year-old daughter. The heroine of the story takes a job as a hospital aide to care for her child and is overjoyed to have a job. In the text, we encounter a mother left alone after the death of her husband, working and striving for her child's future. She wants her daughter to study and become a teacher, and she harbors hopes for the future. Mothers make all kinds of sacrifices for their children, enduring all kinds of hardships. We encounter such examples in social life. There are big-hearted mothers who care for their children, raise them, and educate them single-handedly after their husbands' deaths:

*"Mother and daughter walked quickly, unfamiliar, among the morning crowd. Her mother was talking incessantly. The only time she was so talkative was when they were admitted to the hospital as a nurse."* (p. 52).

In the text, we encounter a mother left alone after the death of her husband, working and striving for her child's future. These aspects represent the ideal mother type.

The first text in the novel unit is *"Üç İstanbul (Three Istanbul)"* by Mithat Cemal Kuntay. The protagonist of the novel, Adnan, is a wealthy lawyer and marries Belkıs. However, after a while, Adnan loses his wealth, falls on hard times, and they divorce. Unlike the women in our culture, Belkıs did not stand by her husband during his difficult times and left him:

*"During these good times for Adnan, Belkıs agrees to marry him. Adnan and Belkıs marry and rent a mansion in Nişantaşı. Adnan is reunited with Belkıs, whom he loves dearly, but he can't seem to enter her world; there's always a*

*distance between them. World War I is over, and the armistice has begun. Adnan is among the wanted and in hiding. During these difficult times, Adnan loses both his money and his wife. Belkis, who married Adnan for his money, becomes close to a wealthy Russian prince. Adnan and Belkis divorce.” (p. 153)*

Belkis, who didn't stand by her husband during his difficult times and left him, is an example of a negative wife type.

After their divorce, Adnan meets Süheyla, a former acquaintance, in a mansion. He marries Süheyla. He contracted tuberculosis and can't earn a living. They have a child, and Süheyla runs the business with money secretly given to her by her husband. Unlike Belkis, Süheyla does not abandon her husband, who is struggling and has lost everything. The character of Süheyla more closely resembles the woman type in Turkish culture:

*“Adnan meets Süheyla in this mansion where he is staying, and later marries her. Adnan has tuberculosis, and although he has returned to his legal career, he has lost all his clients. Süheyla manages the business with money secretly given to her by her husband. They have a child, and they name him Salim.” (p. 153).*

Süheyla does not abandon her husband, who is struggling and has lost everything; she represents the ideal wife and mother.

In Orhan Kemal's second novel, *“Bereketli Topraklar Üzerinde (Fertile Lands)”*, the story tells of Köse Hasan, who goes to Çukurova to work because he cannot make ends meet in his village. He falls ill there, realizes he will die, and cannot return to his village, his wife, or his daughter. He then gives the hairpin and comb he bought for his daughter to his fellow villager. Even on his deathbed, a father's love for his daughter and the things he did for her are described:

*“His dry hand went under his pillow. He took the ordinary green hair clip and the equally ordinary red comb he had bought and kept for his daughter for so long, and held them out:*

*“Give me these too...” (p. 158).*

The third text is Yusuf Atılgan's *“Aylak Adam (The Idle Man)”*. The protagonist, C., sees his girlfriend, Ayşe, walking down the street with a coworker and breaks up with her.

*“His breakup with his girlfriend, Ayşe, also happened with a pretext. Because he sees Ayşe walking down the street with a coworker. Ayşe becomes embarrassed and blushes. C. misinterprets this, and he and Ayşe break up.” (p. 166).*

Ayşe is so conservative that she feels embarrassed even when seen walking with a coworker, and she exemplifies the classically conservative woman type.

The fourth text is Latife Tekin's "*Seygili Arsız Ölüm*" (*Dear Shameless Death*). The novel tells the story of Nuğber, who starts working to contribute to the family's financial situation, and Zekiye, the daughter-in-law. As this example demonstrates, Turkish women are self-sacrificing and self-sacrificing. They will endure every hardship for their family and loved ones.

*"Nuğber begins working for a tailor to support her family. Meanwhile, Zekiye gives birth and names her baby Seyit. Halil goes to the army, and Zekiye begins weaving carpets for a man named Gigili Topal Aygaz to contribute financially to the household."* (pp. 174-175).

Nuğber and Zekiye strive to support their struggling family, and in this way, they represent the ideal mother and wife.

The fifth novel is Cengiz Aytmatov's "*Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalım* (*My Girl with the Red Scarf*)". In the novel, which was also adapted for Turkish cinema, İlyas abandons his wife and young child. He later returns, but his wife has remarried. One day, after an accident, he encounters his wife and child. He later tries to take her away, but his wife does not return and does not go with İlyas. He does not abandon Baytemir, who has protected them for years and with whom they have become a family. Becoming a family requires effort and sacrifice. That's why Aysel didn't leave Baytemir and go with İlyas.

*"...Samet cries and wants to return. When Aysel chooses Baytemir, İlyas is devastated; he leaves and goes to Pamir."* (p. 185).

Aysel represents the classically conservative female type by refusing to abandon Baytemir, who has taken care of her and her child and become a family for them.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the texts of stories and novels in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks within the context of Turkish family structure and the perspective on women. The research findings aimed to reveal the extent to which the value placed on women in our culture is reflected through these texts. Consequently, strengthening the social and familial role of women can only be supported through educational interventions and literary texts. In this regard, it is crucial to reorganize

course materials with an approach that aligns with cultural values, prevents violence, and supports gender equality. The research results revealed that the texts in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks are limited and stereotypical in their representation of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women. The most common female characters in the texts are relegated to the roles of “ideal mother” and “ideal wife”, and representations of educated, strong, and socially active women are insufficient. Furthermore, dynamic characters such as the “alpine woman” type, historically prominent in Turkish culture and literature (e.g., Selcen Hatun in Dede Korkut), are rarely featured. This finding, revealed by the results of the study, reveals that the role models presented to students are limited and that the perspective on gender equality is incomplete or inadequate. Furthermore, while the texts emphasize certain national and spiritual values related to the family, it is crucial that they also prioritize adequately representing the multifaceted identities of women in modern society.

Family and women, which hold great importance in Turkish culture, are valued, precious, and important. Therefore, the importance placed on women and family has continued throughout the ages. Women, who hold the family together, have always been valued in Turkish society since the earliest Turkic states. Women sustain the family, and the family sustains society. Based on this, this study examined a total of 38 story and novel texts from the 9th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, 9th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, 9th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, and 9th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, in terms of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women. The types of women in the analyzed texts were classified and presented in a table.

A scanning model was used in data collection, and the data obtained through document review were examined and evaluated in terms of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women. Three different woman types were identified in 9th-grade story and novel texts: the ideal mother, the ideal wife, and the educated woman. Eight woman types were identified in 10th-grade texts: the alp type, the negative mother type, the ideal wife and ideal mother type, the strong woman type, the negative wife type, the enslaved woman type, and the classical-conservative woman type. Two different woman types were identified in 11th-grade texts: the ideal mother and the classical-conservative woman. Four different woman types were identified in 12th-grade texts: the ideal wife type, the ideal mother type, the negative woman type, and the classical-conservative woman type. The most frequently encountered woman type in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th-



grade Turkish Language and Literature textbooks is the ideal mother type, while the least frequently mentioned woman type is the educated and strong woman. An examination of the texts in the story and novel units in secondary school Turkish Language and Literature textbooks, in terms of Turkish family structure and perspectives on women, reveals the following:

“*Elli Kuruş*”, the first text in the story unit of the 9th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, represents the ideal mother and ideal wife through the protagonist’s mother and grandmother. It depicts the difficulties faced by a mother abandoned by her husband and forced to care for her children. The protagonist’s grandmother is fiercely loyal to her deceased husband, representing the ideal wife. Meanwhile, despite her young age, the protagonist works as a newspaper vendor for her family when her mother’s work is insufficient.

The text *Zehra*, included in the 9th-grade novel unit, presents the character of an educated woman. Zehra is a teacher, like Feride in *Çalılıkusu*. Although a good teacher, she lacks compassion. By the end of the novel, she embraces this feeling and is complete, feeling nothing less.

The story “*Kanlı Koca Oğlu, Kan Turalı*”, one of the Dede Korkut Stories, the first text for 10th grade, reveals significant insights into Turkish family structure and women. The story’s parents’ desire for their children to marry when they reach a certain age, and Kan Turalı’s farewell kisses his parents’ hands before leaving for Trabzon, are all characteristics of the Turkish family structure. Kan Turalı lists the qualities he seeks in his potential spouse, stating that he wants a woman to ride a horse and fight like him. Selcen Hatun’s fight alongside her husband against the enemy demonstrates that women, like men, are active in social life. Selcen Hatun exemplifies the heroic woman. In the nomadic society of the time, both men and women had to possess warrior qualities to withstand any potential attack.

In the story “*Kerem and Aslı*”, Aslı’s mother refuses to consent to this marriage and takes her daughter to other lands. Kerem sets out on the road to find Aslı. He searches for Aslı, enduring every hardship and relentless struggle. This demonstrates the love and loyalty attributed to women in Turkish culture. Aslı’s mother exemplifies a negative mother type, tearing loved ones apart.

In the story “*İmam Ali’nin Mağrib Ejderhası ile Yaptığı Gaza*”, the words of Imam Ali regarding Fatima are significant in demonstrating the value Islam places on women and family. It is stated that men provide for women in the family, but Ali, being poor, states that he cannot fully fulfill this

obligation and apologizes to his wife for this. Fatima exemplifies the ideal wife and mother.

In the text “*Yusuf and Zeliha*”, Zeliha decides for herself who she will marry, and her family respects this. A woman is seen as an individual, capable of making her own decisions. This message in the text is crucial in the value placed on women. With this behavior, Zeliha embodies the strong woman character.

The story “*Kediler(Cats)*” depicts the difficulties faced by a man who keeps numerous cats at his wife’s request, and how he manages to remain loyal to his wife despite these difficulties. His wife, who loves the cats so much that their sheer number makes normal life difficult, is unable to keep them away. Unable to bear the hardships, she leaves the house but returns shortly thereafter. The protagonist’s wife exemplifies a negative female character.

The story “*Forsa*” tells the story of Kara Memiş, a sailor, being captured, and his son finding his father years later. Despite the passage of years, Turgut persists, searching for and finding his father. Forsa is a text that demonstrates the importance placed on family. Turgut resembles the son who rescues his father from the enemy in the Dede Korkut Stories. Intertextuality is evident.

The second text in the novel unit is “*Sergüzeşt*”. The text recounts the life of a young captive girl and her eventual suicide. By featuring the subject of captives in literary works, the aim is to highlight this flawed aspect of society. The concept of slavery, considered a normal occurrence in the social life of the period, was explored in depth in literary texts. This approach was intended to highlight the problems in society. Dilber exemplifies the type of slave woman. Celal Bey’s mother, Zehra Hanım, exemplifies the type of negative mother. Just like Aslı’s mother, she separates loved ones and hinders her child’s happiness.

The third text in the novel unit is “*Mai ve Siyah*”. In the text, Ahmet Cemil, whose father has passed away, works to support his mother and sister. Family is important in our culture, and we see this importance here as well. Ahmet Cemil works for his family, ensuring his family doesn’t become dependent on anyone else, and taking on his father’s duties and responsibilities. Ahmet Cemil’s sister, İkbâl, is unhappy in her marriage and doesn’t even share this with her family. She doesn’t want them to be sad. İkbâl, like Dilber, loses her life. When family and women are not valued and when women are not provided a normal life, her death is intended to

highlight this flaw in society. İkbâl exemplifies the classical-conservative type of woman.

In the final text, “*Ateşten Gömlek*”, Ayşe, who lost her husband and child in the war, served on the front lines as a nurse. Women were not isolated from social life; they worked with all their might wherever necessary, including the country’s liberation struggle. Women, just as men, sacrificed everything to participate in this sacred struggle. They strived to protect their homeland and homeland. Just as in the Dede Korkut Stories, Ayşe, like Selcen Hatun in the Dede Korkut Stories, fights against the enemy. Ayşe represents the heroic type of woman. Although unable to fight like Selcen Hatun, she is present at the front lines and serves as a nurse.

The ideal mother is depicted in the text “*Oğlumuz (Our Son)*”, a story unit in the 11th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook. The story depicts the sacrifices and profound love of a mother who has grown distant from her family, waits by the window until morning for her son when he comes home late, and exchanges the gold from her wedding for her son’s life to ensure a more comfortable life.

In the story “*Odalardan Birinde (In One of the Rooms)*”, the father, angry with his son and unwilling to let him come home, forces the mother to close the door of the house. The mother, against her will, bolts the door under the father’s control. Her own wishes are irrelevant. Mothers cannot harm their children. The ideal mother is portrayed in this way in the text.

In the novel “*Huzur (A Mind at Peace)*”, Mümtaz’s thoughts while waiting for Nuran are significant in reflecting the love felt for women. Mümtaz loves Nuran, just as Kerem loves Aslı. Nuran exemplifies the classical-conservative woman type.

In the novel “*Murtaza*”, Firdevs, like Dilber and İkbâl, dies as a result of her father’s abuse.

In the text “*Bir Saatlik Telâki*” in the story unit of the 12th-grade Turkish Language and Literature textbook, the protagonist imagines his wife waiting for him at the train station. His thoughts and love for her husband reveal the value placed on women.

In the text “*Parasız Yatılı*”, just like in the text “*Elli Kuruş (Fifty Kuruş)*”, a single mother works and sacrifices to provide for her child. This is an example of the ideal mother type.

In the text “*Üç İstanbul (Three Istanbul)*”, Belkıs appears as the negative woman who abandons her husband in difficult times, while Süheyla appears

as the ideal mother/wife type who, despite everything, never abandons her husband and child and fights for them.

In the novel *“Aylak Adam (The Idle Man)”*, the character of Ayşe represents the classical-conservative woman type.

In the text *“Sevgili Arsız Ölüm (Dear Shameless Death)”*, Nûgber and Zekiye work to support their struggling families. The ideal mother/wife type is present. In the texts *“Elli Kuruş (Fifty Kuruş)”* and *“Parasız Yatılı”*, we see women working for their families and children. In the text of her final novel, *“Selvi Boylum Al Yazmalım (My Girl with the Red Scarf)”*, Aysel represents the classical-conservative woman type.

The literature contains resources on Turkish family structure and the perspective on women, and these sources were utilized in this study. However, no studies on textbooks on this topic were found. In his study, *“Woman Types in Ottoman-Turkish Novels”*, Uğurcan (2002) examined woman types in selected works, including novels from the National Literature Period, beginning with the Tanzimat period, and classified them under five headings. These are: classical-conservative women, educated women, concubines, minority women, and Western women. The conclusion reached in the texts examined is that women believed to possess positive qualities are glorified. Contrasting characteristics are given to other women, highlighting the distinction between good and bad. While this is a similar study in terms of subject matter, the texts examined differ from this study in terms of the period in which they were written, the method of analysis, and the type of text. In his study titled *“Family, Women, and Personality Education in the Dede Korkut Stories”*, Kırbaçoğlu Kılıç (2011) examined the stories from the perspective of their own mindsets, touching on the social life of the period, family, women, and especially the roles and influences of mothers on the education of their sons. This study shares similarities with this study in that it emphasizes the family and women aspects in literary texts, but differs from our study due to factors such as the type of text examined, the method of analysis, and the period of the texts examined. Bars (2014), in his study titled *“Woman Types in Turkish Heroic Epics”*, examined the women’s types in Turkish heroic epics and identified the women’s types in the relevant texts. These types are: the heroic woman type, the wise woman type, the wife and mother woman type, the helper woman type, and the enemy woman type. The texts examined differ in terms of period and type of text. In his study titled *“Women in Turkish Culture and State Tradition”*, Acar (2019) examined the importance of women in society and the state from the earliest Turkish communities to the present day. He argued that when women are

given importance, this importance positively impacts the structure of society and the state. The study shares similarities with ours in that it uses the same principle regarding the value placed on women, but differs in terms of the textbook analysis, the text-focused approach, and the methodology.

In summary, this study examined 38 stories and novel texts in secondary school Turkish language and literature textbooks in the context of Turkish family structure and the perspective on women. The research results indicate that the roles of “*ideal mother*” and “*ideal wife*” are most frequently highlighted in the texts, while representations of educated, strong, and socially active women are inadequate. It has been determined that examples of Alpine women, such as Selcen Hatun in Dede Korkut, are limited, and that the texts also portray negative female stereotypes. While the texts emphasize family solidarity and national values, it is possible to say that the multifaceted identity of women in modern society is not sufficient. Therefore, it is of great importance to arrange course materials in a way that is compatible with cultural values, supports gender equality, and reflects the multidimensional identity of women, and to eliminate deficiencies in this regard.

## 5. 1. Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

Including more literary texts reflecting female characters in Turkish culture into the Turkish language and literature curriculum can provide pedagogical contributions to the literature.

Textbooks could be periodically analyzed in terms of content, and enriching them with works that emphasize women’s roles in social, political, and economic spheres in line with current social needs could reduce some prejudices regarding the perception of women.

“*Motherhood*” and “*wifery*” are important roles in Turkish culture. Therefore, Turkish language and literature textbooks could include more texts that emphasize women’s individual identities.

As stated in the curriculum, Turkish language and literature courses could be linked to other disciplines to ensure a more comprehensive treatment of women’s and family issues.

Texts examining the impact of technological developments, modernization, and digitalization on family structure and women’s roles could be added. Project assignments examining Turkish family structure

and the historical role of women can be given to students, and local female figures can be examined through oral history studies.

### **Author's Statement**

**Use of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies:** While preparing this chapter, the authors used Artificial Intelligence tools to increase grammatical accuracy and semantic clarity in the English translation process. The authors have reviewed and edited the content as necessary after using these tools and accept full responsibility for the content of the book chapter titled “Representation of Turkish Family and Women in Stories and Novels of Secondary Education Turkish Language and Literature Textbooks”.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this research.

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