



## Advice for Academician Mothers with Only Child: "I Wish He Had A Brother"

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to reveal what kind of reactions academic mothers get from having a only child and their thoughts on having a child again. In this study, descriptive phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research designs, was used. The study group of research was composed of 9 academician mothers (32-51 age range; age range at marriage: 22-35; duration of the marriage; between 7-23 years) with an only child (5-25 age range), using the criterion sampling method, which is one of the purposive sampling methods. Inclusion criteria for the research; They are academicians who have a child of at least 5 years old and have only child. A semi-structured interview was used to collect the data. Content analysis was used to analyze the data collected. As a result of the analysis, the theme of "I wish he had a brother" was reached. As a result, it has been seen that academic mothers with one child are supported by their spouses to have one child; however, most of them want to have a second child. tap here to enter text.

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### 1. Introduction

It is seen that business life has an important role in the decision to have a child, especially among working women, since they are primarily responsible for the child's care. Today, the ratio of working women in the total workforce is 46% in the USA, 46.3% in Germany, 48% in France, 46.8% in the UK and 32.8% in Turkey (Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), 2020). According the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2018), the number of births of women in the world has decreased by half in the last fifty years and that the average number of children per woman in the world as of 2018 is 2.5, this number was doubled in the mid-1960s. is noteworthy. The increase in the number of children means that women participate less in the workforce (Aslan & Atabey, 2007; Dayıoğlu & Kırdar, 2010; Kızılgöl, 2012; Yıldırım & Doğrul, 2008). In other words, it can be said that as women's participation in the workforce increases, they prefer to have fewer children.

Turkish society has had an extended family structure because they were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry in the past, they lived in rural areas, and their close family ties were strong. In the last 20 years, the family structure has changed greatly because women have entered the business life in our society, the migration from the village to the city has accelerated, the health problems have increased, and the economic imbalance has increased. The increase in the educational status of women and their entry into the working life have made the nuclear family structure widespread (Palabıyık, 2018). However, there has been a transition from the extended family to the nuclear family system consisting of mother, father and children.

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Changes and difficulties in economic and social life push individuals to limit the number of children. Women's participation in business life and support for the home economy necessitated sharing responsibilities at home. The most important of these responsibilities is child care. For these reasons, parents can impose limits on themselves to have children. It is seen that families prefer only one child for many reasons. At the beginning of these reasons is the concern to give their only children a better and quality education and leave them a more economic future. Late marriage and health problems due to time-consuming studies lead people to have only one child [Ministry of National Education (MoNE, 2013)].

While women's participation in working life is increasing, they usually have children again because they believe that their children should have siblings. However, it cannot be said that every child has a sibling. The rate of families with one child in America is 16.8%; While the rate of those with two or more children is 23.6% and the rate of families with no children is 59.3% (Census, 2019); It turned out that the rate of only children in Germany is 26% (deutschland.de, 2020) and the number of families without children is 31% (GfK GeoMarketing, 2012). According to 2016 population data in France, the rate of only children in the 0-17 age group is 44.6%; it is seen that the rate of those who have one or more siblings is 56.2% (INSEE, 2020). According to the Turkey Family Structure Survey (2016), 34% of individuals have two children; 23% have three children; 12% have four children; 6% consists of families with five children and 15% with one child. In other words, families with two children in the first place in our country; Families with three children are in the second rank and families with one child are in the third rank. Although not in the first rank, these results show that the families that prefer to have one child are at a level that cannot be underestimated.

The concept of one child was first used by Adler (1928) in the literature. Adler (1931) has a negative view of only children in general. Only children are egocentric (Adler, 1964; Jiao et al., 1986), social skills are lacking (Claudy, 1984; Adler, 1964; Aydın, 2019; Ogelman & Sarıkaya, 2014; Downey & Condrón, 2004); more mental health problems than expected (Belmont & Marolla, 1973; Howe & Madgett, 1975; Makihara, Nagayave Nakajima, 1985); spoiled, lonely, attention-seeking, stubborn, restless, selfish (Jiao et al., 1986; Sorensen, 2008; Roberts & Blanton, 2001; Pitkeathley & Emerson, 2013); they have few friends (Graham-Bermann & Gest, 1991; Miller & Maruyama, 1976). Although some studies have found that only children are social, intelligent, have high leadership skills and self-esteem (Falbo, 2012; Falbo & Polit, 1986; Veenhoven & Verkuyten, 1989), the society's negative view of only children is similar to the above research findings. can be said to have an angle. People believe that only children have more negative traits than children with siblings (Polit & Falbo, 1987); It confirms that only children are perceived as spoiled, lonely, selfish, and restless by society (Roberts & Blanton, 2001). This negative perception can be interpreted as "He who has no siblings will be strange" (Eker, 2002, p. 150), "The crib is not empty in a happy family" (Yoldaşev & Gümüő, 1995, p.140), "One child is in trouble" (Geldiyev & Karayunusoglu, 2017, p.315) is also reflected in the Turkish proverbs.

The most important reason why today's parents with one child prefer to have one child is the fact that women are more involved in working life (Croda, Kyriazidou & Polycarpou, 2011; Contreras & Plaza, 2010; Dayiođlu & Kırdar, 2010; Rosenzweig, 1976; Weinlein, 2000). It can be said that academics, one of the professions in which women spend a lot of time in business life, is quite determinative on women's having children. 31.5% of female academics in Japan; 40% of female academics in the United States; 40% of female academics in Germany; 46% of female academics in Finland; 47% of female academics in Hong Kong (Aiston & Jung, 2015); 37% of female academics in Turkey (Çakır & Arslan, 2018) have children; This shows that the number of female academics who do not have children is much higher, whether they are married or not. While 56% of women (YÖK, 2020), who make up 45.2% of academics in Turkey, do not have children, 28% have one child and 15% have two children (Özkanlı & Korkmaz, 2000). In another study, the rate of women who had no children among academicians was 63%; the rate of those with only one child is 24.4%; the rate of those with two children is 10.4%; The rate of those with three or more children was calculated as 1.5% (Çakır & Arslan, 2018). These research findings show that more than half of female academics, both in our country and in the world, have never had a child. However, among female academicians who have children, it is seen that those who have only one child come first. Since approximately one-third of academic mothers have only one child, it can be thought that academic mothers represent an important population for research on parents of only children.

The fact that women with only one child or no child are more likely to be successful in academia (Baker, 2008) causes many academic mothers to prefer only one child (Dikmen & Maden, 2012). Therefore, it is seen that there is a need to reveal whether having an only child is a choice or a necessity for an academic mother, and

what is effective in the one-child decision and how it affects this decision. In addition, how academic mothers perceive having an only child; It is thought that revealing how others perceive them and how they are affected by this perception will make the experience of having an only child more understandable.

Women working in the academic field firstly wanted to direct their academic life, they left having children after their doctorate, and they could only have one child; It is seen that they either leave their pre-school children at home or take a break from their academic activities for a certain period (Demir, 2018). Women with only one child or no child are more likely to be successful in academia (Baker, 2008) causes many academic mothers to prefer only one child (Dikmen & Maden, 2012). In the light of these research findings, it can be said that the only child is both a choice and a necessity for academic mothers. For this reason, it is thought that it is important to reveal the perceptions of academic mothers who have only one child and what kind of reactions they get from their environment. This research is an original study in terms of revealing both the views of academician mothers with one child about having one child and the reactions of the society to mothers due to having one child. It is believed that this research will contribute to filling the gap in the literature, since there is no research in the literature examining the views of single-children mothers on having one child.

The aim of this study is to examine the views of academic mothers with one child about having one child. In line with this general purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

- 1- What are the opinions of academician mothers on the factors that affect they have an only child?
- 2- What are the views of academician mothers on the convenience and difficulties of having an only child?
- 3- What is the point of view of academician mothers' spouses and their circles (family, friends, etc.) about having an only child?
- 4- What are the views of academician mothers about having a child again?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Model**

In this study, descriptive phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research designs, was used. In qualitative research, data is collected through specific questions in order to understand and make sense of how individuals look at events as a result of their experiences from their lives. The feature that distinguishes qualitative research from other studies is that it deals with the opinions of sensitive individuals, difficult to work with, and trying to cope with many problems (Creswell, 2017). According to Patton (2014), the advantage of qualitative research is that it allows an in-depth analysis of a generally considered topic. In phenomenological research, all interviewees must have experienced the phenomenon under consideration or have established close relationships with people who have had experience with this phenomenon (Rolfe, 2006). Phenomenology is one of the preferred philosophical methods for collecting in-depth data, as it attaches great importance to experiences. It deals with how the events and experiences of the people are experienced and how they are given meaning (Mayring, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2015). According to the phenomenological point of view; there is no single truth, reality is subjective and what we know may change over time, depending on the situation, the environment and the conditions we live in (Smith, 2003). Phenomenological study is a definition that covers all the experiences of more than one person in their life about a phenomenon or concept (Creswell, 2015). The phenomenon of this research is being an academic mother with only one child.

### **2.2. Research Sample**

The study group of this research was formed by the criterion sampling method, which is one of the purposive sampling methods, from 9 academic mothers with an only child aged 5 years and older who worked in different faculties of Karabuk University in the academic year 2019-2020. In criterion sampling, all situations that meet a predetermined set of criteria can be studied. The criterion can be created by the researchers or determined by a prepared list of criteria (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2000). The criterion in this study is that it is an academic woman who has only one child aged 5 years and older. The socio-demographic data of the study group are shown below (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Study Group Information

Age	Child's age	Age at marriage	Duration of marriage	Educational status
42	5	27	15	Doctorate
32	5	25	7	Doctorate
37	12	24	13	Master's degree
51	20	29	23	Yüksek lisans
32	5	25	8	Doctorate
47	7	35	12	Doctorate
38	8	28	10	Master's degree
33	5	25	8	Doctorate
48	25	22	Divorced	Master's degree

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

In this study, semi-structured interview, one of the qualitative research techniques, was used to collect data. There are certain questions to be asked in semi-structured interviews (Glesne, 2012). In a semi-structured interview, the researcher can change the structure of the questions, ask additional questions or remove questions that do not match the content (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2000). A semi-structured interview form consisting of five open-ended questions was used to collect data in this study. The questions in the interview were prepared by the researcher and the thesis advisor following the purpose of the research. Two faculty members from the Guidance and Psychological Counseling Department conduct qualitative research to evaluate whether the questions in the interview form reflect the purpose of the research and whether they are understandable; The opinion of a faculty member from the Child Development Department was taken. Changing a question after lecturers' comments; It was decided to add one question.

The importance of piloting is also emphasized to ensure that a useful interview form is designed (Büyüköztürk et al., 2019). After receiving expert opinion for the interview questions, a pilot interview was conducted with an academican mother of one child to test whether the questions were functional. After the pilot interview, "What kind of reactions do you get from your environment as a parent with one child?" in the interview form. It turns out that the question is missing. It was determined that the academic mother's opinion of her husband's decision to have an only child was not a problem, and the semi-structured interview questionnaire was supplemented with the question, "How does your spouse react to you having an only child?" Other questions were found to be appropriate and understandable for the purpose of the research. After the arrangements made, the interview form was given its final form.

Alfred Adler (1931), first put forward the idea that children have a structure that categorizes them according to their position in the family and their birth order, and that each has its own characteristics. The concept of one child was first used by Adler (1928) in the literature. Adler (1931), who put forward the concept of birth order as a mechanism for understanding child behavior, argues that the position of the child's position in the family greatly affects his general development and attitudes towards life. Adler (1931) has a negative view of only children in general. The child, who is afraid of losing the mother and wants to keep his attention, is pampered by his mother. Based on this point of view, research questions were prepared.

To the participants;

- "What factors contributed to you having an only child?"
- "What are the conveniences and difficulties of having an only child?"
- "What kind of reactions do you get from your spouse and your environment when you have an only child?"
- "What do you think about having children again?" questions were asked.

Detailed information about the study was given to the participants, and it was stated that voluntary participation was essential and the participants signed the information and consent form. The researcher himself conducted the interviews. These interviews were conducted face to face. Interviews with the participants were recorded on a voice recorder. It was informed that the recorded interviews would be transcribed by the researcher, the identity of the participants would not be revealed, these texts would be reviewed by the experts whose opinions were obtained as part of the research, and would not be used

outside. The interviews took place between a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 25 minutes, adhering to the questions in the semi-structured interview form and giving the participants sufficient opportunity to think.

#### **2.4. The Role of the Researcher**

In qualitative research, analyzes are evaluated subjectively by their nature. Therefore, the researcher himself serves as a data collection tool. It is also important to be a person who spends time with the research subject, learns what is going on in the field, establishes one-to-one relationships with participants, and codes, categorizes, decontextualizes, and performs all applications related to recontextualization of the data (Tekindal & Uğuz, 2020). In phenomenological research, the researcher should be honest and aware of his own worldview and consider that there may be different opinions. In this way, the essence of the phenomenon examined by the researcher is accurately reflected (Kocabıyık, 2016). In this study, the fact that some of the employees of the institution where the researcher works have found that they have only one child has led to the emergence of the basic phenomenon. In addition to the old myth that only children are spoiled, asocial and selfish, the fact that the thesis advisor is an academic mother with only child played an important role. Therefore, it prepared the ground for researching the thoughts and feelings of both mothers with one child in the institution where they work and the thesis advisor's thoughts and feelings about only children.

#### **2.5. Data Analysis**

Phenomenological research consists of certain stages. These; determining the research problem, writing the problem and the purpose statement, designing the research, establishing the conceptual framework, identifying the participants, data creation process, data analysis and presentation. Phenomenological research stages are as follows: Horizontalizing, or listing all relevant expressions, Reduction of experiences to the invariant constituents, Thematic clustering to create core themes, Comparison of multiple data sources to validate the invariant constituents, Constructing of individual textual descriptions of participants, Construction of individual structural descriptions, Construction of composite structural descriptions, Synthesizing the texture and structure into an expression (Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015).

Encoding, audio or video etc., etc. is the process of making sense of the data collected in different ways (Creswell, 2017); It is a concise word or short expression that is used symbolically to describe a language-based or visual data (Saldaña, 2019). In the first stage of the analysis, a total of 47 pages of data obtained from the interviewees were coded by the researcher. The researcher did the coding. First, each participant's answers to all questions were coded; Afterwards, the codes describing the answers given by all participants to each question were reviewed and the coding was completed. Then, similar codes were combined and a more general expression representing these codes, categories and sub-categories was formed. To check the compatibility of the codes with the categories, the link between the code and the category was established by using the backward coding method. Back coding is a method of reverse coding the data in order of theme-category-code to verify the compatibility between the codes, categories and themes created from the analyzed data (Creswell, 2013).

Category is when codes with common features come together to form similar schemes (Saldaña, 2019). A subcategory can be defined as the category type used when there is more than one code and the power of all codes to represent the same category is reduced. In case of more than one code, subcategories were created in addition to the categories in the parts where all these codes had difficulty in representing a single category. Subcategories were determined as a result of the combination of similar codes. In the categorization stage, subcategories defining the codes and categories covering subcategories were obtained. At this stage, some codes are merged; It was decided to add new sub-categories. As a result of the content analysis, it was decided that the data obtained from four questions asked in the interview could be combined.

For this reason, the data obtained based on the experiences of academic mothers with one child are presented under four main headings. In the categorization stage, subcategories defining the codes and categories covering subcategories were obtained. Data were collected in 9 categories and 10 subcategories.

##### **2.5.1. Validity and reliability**

Meriam (2013) states strategies to ensure internal validity, external validity and reliability in qualitative research. Internal validity reveals whether the findings reflect the truth, in other words, their credibility. With participant confirmation, validity can be evaluated in qualitative research (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Silverman, 2018). Participant confirmation is done to test the accuracy of the themes or stories by taking the analysis tables or descriptions created by the researcher to the participants. On the other hand, expert opinion is taken to determine the accuracy of the analyzed data and the rigor of the study (Creswell, 2017). This study sought participant confirmation and expert opinion for validity control. Seven of the participants confirmed the encodings obtained from the data. Since only two of the participants did not give any feedback, it was tried to contact them by phone, but no response was received. Within the scope of the expert opinion, two experts evaluated the text analyzed by the researchers, and it was decided that the codes and categories reflect the data in general, however some changes should be made.

In qualitative research, whether the results are consistent with the collected data reveals reliability (Meriam, 2013). One of the ways to test reliability in qualitative research is intercoder reliability (Silverman, 2018). The process is based on researchers making coding independently and then comparing these codings (Creswell, 2019). In this context, the researchers coded the data independently of each other and agreed on similar codes on the analyzed text, discussed and came to a decision on different codes.

Differences of opinion about coding have been tried to be resolved by considering the theoretical framework of the research. To measure the consistency between coders, the formula of  $\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{consensus}}{\text{total number of opinions} + \text{number of disagreements}}$  was used. At this stage, a reliability of 80% should be sought for precoding-recoding reliability, which is higher than the case for intercoder associations (Miles & Huberman, 2019). The inter-coder reliability value of this study was calculated as .85.

## 2.6. Ethical

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. The Ethics Committee approved the study of the University of Inonu (No. 2020/3-5).

## 3. Findings

*"Which factors were effective in your having an only child?"* were asked, and the answers they gave to this question were grouped into two categories: obligations and preferences. The category of obligations is divided into three subcategories: work life, fertility problems and care; The preferences category is divided into two subcategories as personal preference and environmental influence.

*"What are the conveniences and difficulties of having an only child?"* was asked, and the answers they gave to this question were grouped into two categories as conveniences and difficulties. *"What kind of reactions do you get from your spouse and your environment when you have an only child?"* Spouses' responses to this question were divided into two subcategories, spouses' responses to the subcategory of reasons for wanting a child and each other's responses to two subcategories, recommendations for the second child and the only child. Ask the participants, *"What do you think about having children again?"* question was posed. The statements of the participants who stated that they wanted to have a child again in this question were divided into two sub-categories as reasons and concerns. The statements of the participants, who stated that they did not want to have a child again, regarding the factors affecting their continuation with an only child were grouped under three sub-categories: work life, physical/physical conditions and personal preference. The theme of "I wish he had a brother" was reached from the data obtained. In Figure 1, categories and sub-categories of this theme are given.

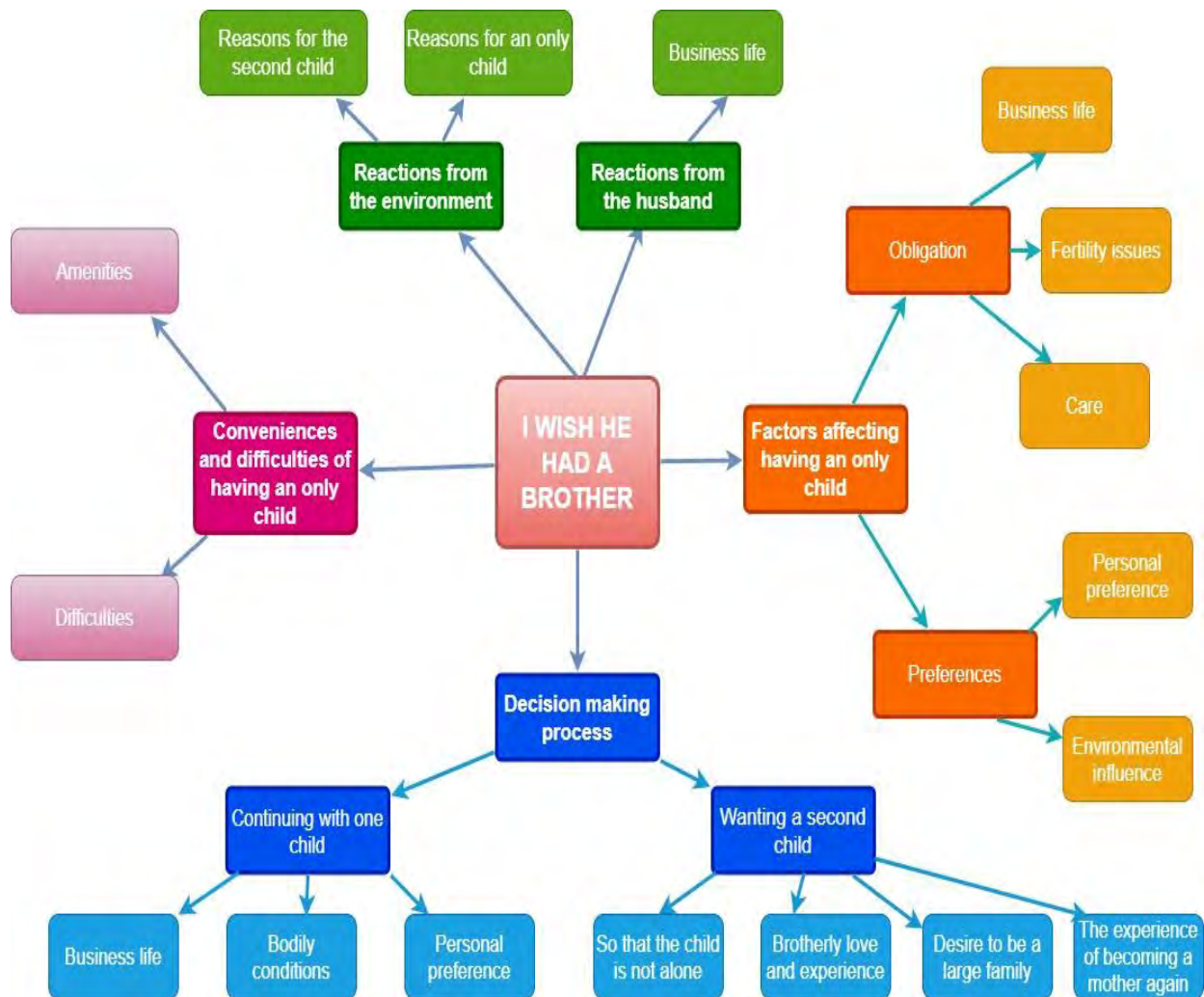


Figure 1. Theme, categories and subcategories

As seen in Figure 1, the factors affecting the participants' having only one child are divided into obligations and preferences. While most of the participants stated that they had to have an only child due to work life, fertility problems and difficulty of care; others stated that they preferred the only child by being influenced by the environment or personally.

Below are some quotations reflecting the sub-categories of work life, fertility problems, care in the category of necessity, and the sub-categories of personal preference and being affected by the environment.

*"I can say that the hard work of my husband led me to have an only child for now, because of the difficulties of my own profession. It is very difficult on our own, it is difficult for us to meet all the needs, we can only manage for now."* (Business life)

*"...I got married late, then I didn't have a child for a long time, I had treatments or something A... when I was born, I was in my 40s, and after that, it was A. But he was already seven years old, so the situation is against my will, you know. I don't know if I would like it, I'm not so sure about that either."* (Fertility issues)

*"I can't say that we have made such a decision in particular, but it may be the second one, but for now, the difficulties have been effective, raising it alone in a different way without family support. I can say that my husband's hard work has led me to have an only child for the time being. It is very difficult on our own, it is difficult for us to meet all the needs, we can only manage for now."* (Maintenance)

Most of the participants stated that having an only child has both easy and difficult aspects. Academician mothers stated that they could take care of their children sufficiently because they could devote a large part of their time to their children because they were only; They stated that an only child requires less responsibility and makes it easier to live a comfortable life. In general, when compared to the difficulties of having an only

child, it is noteworthy that the conveniences outweigh the difficulties. However, it was observed that most of the participants were sad because their children grew up alone and without siblings; being alone and wanting more attention were expressed as the prominent difficulties of having an only child.

*"For example, my friends, who have two or three children, go to her job and then run to the other because they are of different ages. Those who have more than one child have more responsibilities, we do not live it." (Decreased responsibility)*

*"First of all, it provides more opportunities in terms of finances, and it is easier to make your programs... If you can spend a little more time in social life, maybe you will be divided according to two or three..." (Living life comfortably)*

*"Being alone is definitely a challenge because she doesn't like to play too much alone or spends too little time with her toys." (being alone)*

When the participants' reactions from their spouses and surroundings were examined, it was seen that their spouses supported having one child. It was observed that the recommendations of the participants to have a second child from their environment predominated. The participants stated that not being able to take the responsibility of a second child is the determining factor in their spouses' desire for an only child. In addition, it was stated that one child is enough, they want to give all their love to their only child and their desire to raise ideal children are other reasons for their spouses' desire for an only child.

*"He thinks the same thing, he thinks that because of our living conditions, our working conditions, when we grew up we did not have elders with us, so we were raised alone, so of course we think about what it would be like if it was a second time, but we keep thinking about how we are going to grow. When you think about it, it's lonely." (Failure to Take Responsibility) "My wife is not someone who is worried about multiplying so much, she also thinks that it is necessary to raise better quality children rather than having too many children like me. Of course, whatever Allah wills happens, our thoughts will change later, and we will have another child..." (seeing enough)*

Below are some quotes that reflect the recommendations received from the environment to have a second child and continue with an only child.

*"He should not always be alone, he should have a sibling, he should not grow up alone, this is the reaction of everyone, why didn't you think about the second time, come on, you are old or something... The child should not grow up alone, he will need a sibling in the future, he will always feel incomplete, maybe he is missing when his friends live with his siblings. He will feel it, that's how we react." (He will be without a brother and alone).*

The participants' thoughts on having a child again were divided into two: wanting a second child and continuing with one child. More than half of the participants thought about having children again; The rest stated that they decided to continue with one child. Participants who wanted a second child cited as reasons that the child should not be alone, should experience sibling love, should develop a sense of trust, i.e., should experience brotherhood, the ideal of a girl and a boy, the longing for a little baby, i.e., the desire to be a mother again and to be a crowded family. They also stated that they were worried that they would not be able to learn to share and be a strong family with an only child.

Participants who chose to have an only child indicated that work life, i.e., intensive work, was the most important reason for having an only child. The reason for business life; personal preference, inability to share the love for the child, the desire to raise an ideal and only child, and divorce grounds were followed. In addition, it was stated that physical conditions such as being older, pregnancy and difficulty in care were also effective in continuing with one child. Two of the participants, who stated that they decided to continue with an only child, stated that they did not consider a second child due to the necessity of divorce and increasing age.

*"So it was not available on my terms, my son grew up in a car anyway, maybe that's why he likes cars, life was hard for us, my aunt is helping us now. But the second child would be very difficult to get such support. I didn't want to be selfish either, I didn't want to have another child without giving him good opportunities, I didn't want to raise another child in a car." (Business life)*



*"I am also a part of the society, socially, the child does not always seem to be complete without siblings, the sibling awareness is the thought that that child has the right to have a sibling. I think the same way, so I don't think being an only child is unfair to the other child..."* (Sisterly love tasting)

After all these expressions; The "I wish he had a brother" theme emerged by combining the categories of conveniences and difficulties of having an only child, factors affecting having an only child, decision-making process, reactions from the environment, and reactions from the husband.

#### 4. Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the factors that affect the mother's having one child, the conveniences/difficulties of having one child, the reactions from the spouse and the environment about having one child, and their thoughts on having a child again were examined in this study. Factors affecting academicians' mothers' having an only child are divided into obligations and preferences. Due to their hard work, more than half of academic mothers had to have only one child; It has been revealed that work life, fertility problems and care make an only child obligatory. For the remaining participants, having an only child was a choice; personal preference and being affected by the environment were the reasons for preferring the only child. In this study, it was seen that hard work was the prominent factor of having an only child. A study determined that 56 percent of female academics have no children, 28 percent have one child, and 15 percent have two children (Özkanlı & Korkmaz, 2000). As can be understood from this research, more than half of the female academicians have no children; It is seen that more than a quarter of them have only one child. The work intensity of women working in the academic field affects their ability to start a family and have children (Armenti, 2004; Demir, 2018; Dikmen & Maden, 2012; Santos, 2015); Findings that they married late, had late children, and faced difficulties in terms of family and having a child (Armenti, 2004; MEB, 2013; Yıldız, 2018); This study supports the finding that intensive work is determinant in mothers having only one child.

Parents may prefer to be only-child due to the anxiety of not showing enough attention to their children, having difficulties in their care, and not meeting their children's needs (Rossberg, 2008). The fact that female academics have responsibilities as a mother at home and their workload shows that they have a double duty. Academic mothers, on the one hand, make progress in the academic field; On the other hand, they may have to limit the number of children to balance these tasks (Beddoes & Pawley, 2014; Comer & Stites-Doe, 2006; Ergöl et al., 2012; Gönen & Hablemitoğlu, 2004; Santos, 2015; Yıldız, 2018). With these research findings showing that having an only child can be a choice or a necessity, for some of the academic mothers in this study, the only child is a necessity; The findings that it is a preference for some overlap. Given that female academics would prefer to have two or three children if they had the opportunity (Kemkes-Grottenthaler, 2003), this study's striking finding that having one child is a necessity is indicative of women's desire to have more than one child.

In this study, compared to the difficulties associated with having an only child, the conveniences outweigh the difficulties. While the ability to care for the majority of academic mothers is an easy aspect of having an only child, growing up alone turns out to be the most frequently cited difficult aspect of having an only child. While less than half of mothers are satisfied with having only one child, it turns out that more than half of them are sad and unhappy about leaving their only child without a sibling. The fact that only children have a higher level of loneliness than their siblings (Wei, 2005) and generally feel lonely and restless (Roberts & Blaton, 2001; Sorensen, 2008; Thompson, 1974) This confirms the finding that growth is the most commonly cited challenge. In addition to the above studies, only children have lower social skills than children with siblings (Aydın, 2019). The fact that their anxiety level is higher and their academic performance is lower (Wei, 2005) explains the dissatisfaction of more than half of mothers because they leave their only child without siblings.

Parents who have two or more children perceive parenting as more stressful and difficult than parenting a single child (Erkan & Toran, 2010; O'Brien, 1996; Kaytez & Durualp, 2016; Pektaş & Özgür, 2005; Yıldırım & Tüfekci, 2020), more child-related difficulties or behavioral problems than non-working mothers (Jordan, Cobb & McCully, 1989; Sperry, 1993), a working mother with more than one child; shows that she has more difficulties as a parent than a non-working mother with one child. As a result, the increase in the number of children in a house means that the problems to be experienced and the effort / time / effort spent by the parents

for the children increase, while taking care of some children, they cannot take care of others sufficiently. For this reason, it can be understood that the convenience of having an only child comes to the fore in this study.

In this study, it was seen that the participants' reactions about having one child from their spouses and their environment were similar, but mostly differed. Most of the participants wanted their spouses to have only one child; It has been revealed that not being able to take the responsibility of a second child is the most determining factor in these wishes. Since the spouses of the participants could not take responsibility of the second child, it can be thought that the role of the mother in the decision to continue with the only child was a factor. These research findings show that academic women either put their careers on hold to have children or postpone their decisions to marry and have children, have difficulty in balancing between their roles in the family and the intensity of work-life, and that academics limit the number of children they have (Forster, 2001; Kemkes-Grottenthaler, 2003; Beddoes & Pawley, 2014; Santos, 2015; Demir, 2018; Yıldız, 2018). In other words, in this study, spouses of academic mothers may be avoiding wanting a second child because they see the difficulties of carrying out both academic and motherhood roles.

This study revealed that the participants received advice from their environment to have a second child and to continue with an only child. It is seen that the recommendations of having a second child come to the fore in the reactions received from the environment. In the recommendations for having a second child, the reasons that the child will be alone and without siblings and that a girl and a boy are ideal came to the fore. In the direction of only two participants to continue with one child, most of the participants received advice on having a second child. It can be said that there is overlap between the findings that only children are lonely and restless (Roberts & Blaton, 2001; Thompson, 1974; Sorensen, 2008) and the environmental recommendations to have a second child because the only child in this study will be alone/siblingless. In addition, the negative view of the society towards the only child (Polit & Falbo, 1987; Aydın, 2019; Ogelman & Sarıkaya, 2014; Jamshidi et al., 2013; Doh, 1999; Roberts & Blaton, 2001) has a role in giving advice on having a second child. may be.

Findings in the studies that only children are alone (Roberts & Blaton, 2001; Thompson, 1974; Sorensen, 2008) are in line with the desire of only-child mothers to have a child again so that their children will not be alone. Sharing between siblings also leads to a strong bond in the family environment, and the role of brother-sister-sister affects this strong bond (Dunn & Brisbane, 1985). The fact that the younger sibling develops positive social behavior by modeling his or her older sister or brother (Durgel, 2007) explains mothers' desire for their children to experience sibling love, but also confirms concerns that it is not possible to be a strong family with one child. For the participants who decided to continue with one child, it was revealed that work life, that is, intensive working conditions, was the most determining factor. The work intensity of women working in academia affects their ability to raise a family and have children (Demir, 2018); research shows that mothers of academics limit the number of children or delay the timing of childbearing (Santos, 2015; Yıldız, 2018). In addition, Rossberg (2008) states that parents may choose to have an only child by calculating the gains and losses that having a child will bring and to ensure a higher quality of education for their children because they are afraid of not showing enough interest in their children, having difficulty caring for them, and not meeting their children's needs. The findings of this study support that the reasons for working conditions are an effective factor in the decision of mothers to continue with an only child.

Women academics put the academy at the center of their lives and either marry or have children in the later stages of later in their careers or refuse to marry (Yıldız, 2018). On the one hand, routine roles such as housework and child care, on the other hand, professional responsibilities such as lecturing, conducting scientific research, writing books, articles, and participating in activities such as congresses and conferences leave women with the problem of balancing work and family life (Comer & Stites). -Doe, 2006; Ergöl et al., 2012; Gönen & Hablemitoğlu, 2004; İrey, 2011; Masika et al., 2014; O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). Most of the academician mothers had to have one child due to work life, fertility problems and care; expressing their dissatisfaction with leaving their only child without siblings shows that they experience the sadness of not having more than one child. These findings show that most of the mothers who have only one child share a regret that "I wish he had a brother". It was observed that the theme "I wish he had a sibling" came to the fore, regardless of the advice from the environment and the mothers' reasons for wanting a second child. Although there are many studies on single children, it is seen that studies on mothers of only children are limited (Demir, 2018; Dikmen & Maden, 2012; Özkanlı & Korkmaz, 2000; Yıldız, 2018). In addition, it is noteworthy that no

research has been found on academic mothers who have only one child. In general, it is seen that there are studies on the roles of academician mothers in marriage, family, motherhood and academics.

This research aims both to fill the gap in the literature and to develop the positive perspectives of academic mothers with only one child about their children. It is seen that only children have a negative perspective on the literature. In fact, G. Stanley Hall claimed in his research that being an only child is a "disease" in itself (Act. Fenton, 1928). This research reveals that only children actually have positive characteristics under changing conditions and it is not unacceptable to have an only child.

The research consists of nine academic mothers working in different Karabuk University faculties in the 2019-2020 academic year and have an only child. The research data is limited to the semi-structured interview questions prepared by the researcher and the answers given by the academician mothers.

## 5. Recommendations

In this study, it was found that society's recommendation for the second child on the grounds that the child is not selfish, that one child cannot be a complete family, that a girl and a boy are ideal, and that the only child will be alone and without siblings confirms society's negative view of the only child. This negative view shows that "It is strange without a brother" (Eker, 2002, p.150), "In a happy family, the cradle is not empty" (Yoldaşev & Guemueş, 1995, p.140), "A child is in trouble" (Geldiyev & Karayunusoğlu, 2017, p.315), it is seen that there is a contrast in Turkish proverbs. This context requires a detailed study of the culture's perspective on the only child. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct both qualitative and quantitative research on larger populations to reveal the perspective of Turkish society on the only child. In the future, it is suggested that researchers plan studies that reveal the perspective of Turkish society on the only child.

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