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Araştırma Makalesi

A Lacanian Exploration of Party Drug Use Through Subjects' Discourses

Selin OKUMUŞ[1*], Didem SARAÇ[2*], Eylül Ceren DEMİR[3*]

[1] Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Arts and Science, Department of Psychology, Ankara, Türkiye

[2] Çankaya University, Faculty of Arts and Science, Department of Psychology, Ankara, Türkiye

[3] Adıyaman University, Faculty of Arts and Science, Department of Psychology, Adıyaman, Türkiye

Makale Bilgisi

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Abstract

Drug use continues to increase throughout the world, making it important to examine the phenomenon from different perspectives by considering the subjective experiences and discourses of drug users. This study explores drug use through a Lacanian psychoanalytic framework using theoretical reflexive thematic analysis. It aims to investigate the underlying reasons for party drug use among young adult men, as well as their relationship with the Law and the Other. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six men between the ages of 24 and 34. The findings suggest that the participants experience persistent difficulties with separation across different areas of their lives, including relationships, work or school environments, and drug use itself. These difficulties appear to be linked to the mother occupying an overwhelming presence, while the father remains relatively absent or overshadowed. In addition, participants tend to position themselves as exceptions to the Law, displaying perverse patterns, such as an urge to transgress limits and go beyond boundaries. Finally, they attribute exaggeratedly positive and almost magical qualities to drugs, perceiving substances as a unique solution to their problems.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

bağımlılık,
Lacan,
psikanaliz,
yeni ruhsal yapılanmalar,
tematik analiz

Öz

Uyuşturucu kullanımının dünya genelinde giderek artması bu olgunun öznel deneyimleri ve söylemleri merkeze alan farklı perspektiflerle incelenmesini önemli hale getirmektedir. Bu çalışma, uyuşturucu kullanımını Lacanyen psikanalitik bir çerçeve üzerinden, teorik refleksif tematik analiz yöntemiyle ele almaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, genç yetişkin erkeklerde parti/club uyuşturucusu kullanımının altında yatan nedenleri ve bu bireylerin Yasa ve Başka ile kurdukları ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda, 24 ile 34 yaşları arasında altı erkekle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, katılımcıların ilişkilerini, iş ya da okul yaşamlarını ve uyuşturucu kullanımının kendisini kapsayan bir şekilde yaşamlarının farklı alanlarına yayılan ayrışma güçlükleri deneyimlediklerini göstermektedir. Bu güçlüklerin, annenin baskın ve öznelliğe alan bırakmayan bir konumda yer almasıyla, babanın ise görece silik ya da gölgede kalmasıyla ilişkili olduğu düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca katılımcılar kendilerini Yasa karşısında bir istisna olarak konumlandırma eğilimi göstererek sınırları ve limitleri aşmak gibi perversif yapılanmaya işaret eden örüntüler sergilemektedirler. Son olarak, uyuşturucu maddelere abartılı derecede olumlu ve neredeyse büyülü özellikler atfetmekte, bu maddeleri sorunlarına yönelik eşsiz bir çözüm olarak görmektedirler.

*Sorumlu Yazar, Middle East Technical University, Social Sciences Building, Department of Psychology, Üniversiteler Mah. Dumlupınar Blv. No:1, 06800 Çankaya / Ankara, Türkiye
e-posta: psk.selinokumus@gmail.com
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Introduction

Party Drugs

The 23% increase in drug use over the past decade and the 45% increase in drug use disorders represent a critical issue in contemporary society (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023). The U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse categorizes several substances as "club drugs," including ecstasy, GHB, ketamine, Rohypnol, methamphetamine, and LSD, commonly used at events known as "raves", characterized by electronic dance music and all-night dancing (NIDA, 1999, as cited in Maxwell, 2005). According to various studies, social contexts such as music festivals, raves, nightclubs, pubs, and other party settings create environments that facilitate the use of these substances; as a result, recreational drug use has become increasingly normalized within such settings over time (Lojszczyk et al., 2023).

Recreational drug use has been defined as the occasional use of certain substances in certain settings and in a controlled way (Parker, 2005), proposed by some scholars as a non-addictive practice when handled responsibly (Järvinen & Ravn, 2011). Also, they argue for drug policies that promote safe use rather than punitive measures (Duff, 2005). However, this perspective normalizes drug use and overlooks the rising number of individuals seeking treatment for drug use disorders. Research also suggests that this pattern has extended beyond raves (Hopfer et al., 2006), rather than merely indicating a correlation between these social settings and increased drug use (Palamar & Keyes, 2020). Therefore, this may contribute to a shift from occasional recreational use toward more regular patterns of consumption. According to the World Drug Report (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023), 78 million people use party drugs worldwide.

Furthermore, there are negative outcomes associated with recreational use, like fatigue, nausea, impaired cognitive and work performance, and there is a risk of slipping from recreational use to having drug use disorders (Lennox, 2002, as cited in Parker, 2005). Such issues highlight the necessity for examining recreational drug use.

Psychoanalytic Approach to “Drug Use”

Psychoanalysis plays a critical role in understanding drug use by emphasizing subjective experiences, contrasting with biochemical approaches that neglect the complexities of human involvement (Malone & Goldman Baldwin, 2011). The belief that drugs affect all individuals the same is a misconception that simplifies the intricate relationship between drugs and the subject (Svolos, 2011). A clinical understanding of drug use necessitates examining the effects of substances and their connection to other forms of suffering, which can be effectively addressed through psychoanalytic methods (Loose, 2011).

Freud (1985) stated that masturbation is the primary addiction, with other forms of addiction serving as secondary substitutes. His research into cocaine revealed that stimulants affect individuals differently, noting that those with weaker willpower are more prone to misuse them. Freud emphasized that the roots of addiction should be examined within the subject (Svolos, 2011). He acknowledged that suffering is an inescapable aspect of life and characterized addiction as an effort to undo a loss by reducing discomfort, aiming for a more favorable mental state (Loose, 2002).

Lacan on Addiction

Lacan posits that addictions represent a way of achieving jouissance by breaking the relationship with the Phallus, meaning breaking the relationship with the social order and detaching from the Other (Svolos, 2011). Addiction is interpreted as a symptom related to the relationship with the Other, encompassing the unconscious adoption of culture, moral values, and ideals (Baltacı & Gençöz, 2019; Gençöz & Özbek Şimşek, 2020).

Lacan conceptualizes addiction as an attempt to escape the consequences of castration, which involves transitioning from absolute pleasure to limited pleasure (Lacan, 1991, as cited Loose, 2002). Addiction creates the illusion of retrieving this absolute pleasure, different from other sources of pleasure, such as sex and humor, which maintain social bonds. While these latter experiences include the Other as a sexual partner and the Other in terms of language, drugs use the toxic route of the body to deliver pleasure more immediately to escape the less immediate and less satisfactory way through the social bond (Loose, 2011).

Psychoactive substances such as MDMA and cocaine induce feelings of euphoria and pleasure, followed by states of exhaustion, depression, and craving. These effects occur independently of social and psychological contexts, meaning a detachment from symbolic reality and desire, leading to absolute pleasure.

Desire results from symbolic castration, when the subject is incorporated into the symbolic order, leading the subject to engage with various sublime objects imbued with symbolic meaning within social reality. However, drug users seek effects that transcend the symbolic meanings, appearing to be no longer a castrated subject of desire but instead a de-subjectivized body of the drive; the immediate drive is exchanged for socially moderated desire (Bjerg, 2008).

The Modern Subject and Addiction

Nowadays, people often lack the supportive social structures needed to face life's challenges, and the culture does not demand one to find subjective solutions. Therefore, people

seek external imaginary solutions like drugs and alcohol rather than gaining knowledge about their symptoms, which leads to real effects like anxiety and depression (Loose, 2011).

The discourse of capitalism prioritizes individualism, overshadowing the master's discourse that emphasizes social bonds. This focus on individualism fosters a detachment from the Other. The object of desire is no longer sought in the Other since it is purchased as if found in an object like a drug (Melman, 2010) and drug consumption implodes the desire for other products (Bjerg, 2008). Addiction can also emerge within the master's discourse as a symptom, along with guilt, since jouissance remains regulated by the Law and Other, and an excessive attachment to an object like a drug is retained as a transgression within social bonds. However, within capitalist discourse, the relation between the subject and the drug is promoted, while symbolic mediations are weakened. Thus, addiction may occur in other discourses as well, but capitalist discourse aggravates it by normalizing and increasing the subject's attachment to objects of jouissance (Vanheule, 2016).

Also, jouissance and pleasure have become almost an obligation in our culture. In today's discourse, it is now being said that previously restricted pleasures should be fully experienced. In parallel with this, party drugs are normalized in the lives of youngsters. The rising use of such substances complicates the distinction between addiction and casual use, as many individuals do not exhibit physical withdrawal symptoms, and their consumption patterns can fluctuate between periods of high and low use, named recreational use (Goode, 2005). However, there is still a risk of addiction, and being addicted would be fatal (Bjerg, 2008). Therefore, recreational drug usage should also be examined.

A key concept for understanding these contemporary shifts is what Melman and Lebrun (2002) term banal perversion — a notion that should be distinguished from classical Lacanian perversion as a clinical structure. Unlike structural perversion, which involves a specific disavowal of castration, banal perversion describes a broader cultural condition in which the regulatory function of the paternal Law is weakened and jouissance is increasingly organized around object-consumption. As Demir (2026) elaborates, banal perversion is not a distinct clinical structure alongside neurosis, perversion, and psychosis; rather, it occupies an intermediate position — one where a reference to the father is still present, but the father no longer functions as the bearer of the symbolic order. In this context, neurotic subjects may display perverse-like patterns — transgressing limits, resisting symbolic authority, and pursuing unmediated enjoyment — without meeting the criteria for structural perversion. This distinction is central to the present study, as the participants' discourses are interpreted through the lens of banal perversion rather than classical perverse structure.

The current literature lacks a thorough investigation into the reasons behind the increasing prevalence of party drugs. Loose (2011) emphasized that only subjects experiencing the effects of these drugs can provide valid insights into their subjective experiences. Consequently, this study will adopt a qualitative research method to explore subjective perspectives. The first research question of the study is, "What is the meaning of these drugs for individuals?". The second research question is, " How is the participants' relationship with the Law and the Other?". The final research question is " What is the association between drug use and social relationships?".

Method

Participants

The sample includes male individuals aged between 24 and 34 who began using party drugs at least six months ago to ensure that drug use has a persistent position in their lives and are currently pursuing a postgraduate degree or employed. The only exclusion criterion is being enrolled in an addiction treatment program, as this study targets people who do not consider drug use as a problem or even consider it has positive effects, and, therefore, do not seek treatment. Excluding participants currently in treatment was essential for a homogenous focus on non-clinical users and for understanding how drug use is subjectively justified, normalized, or integrated into everyday life.

It is also necessary to explain why the sample characteristics were selected in this manner. The World Drug Report (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023) found that men use cocaine, cannabis, and ecstasy three times more than women. Moreover, men account for 79% of drug-related deaths (EMCDDA, 2023). In the literature, studies have mostly focused on homosexual men's drug use (Lea et al., 2013) or problematic/addicted drug use. However, explanations for men's majority in recreational drug use are scarce (Darcy, 2020). Thus, men were chosen as the sample of this study.

Several studies have examined high school and university students' drug use determinants, and it has been mainly found that they perceive it as a leisure activity. However, a few studies have examined drug usage among graduate students and workers (Elek et al., 2006). With fewer formal obligations than adults, teenagers have more time for leisure and pleasure (Askew, 2016). However, young adults who are employed or pursuing graduate degrees have more responsibilities than adolescents and would experience more hardship in sustaining this lifestyle, considering the negative repercussions of drug usage. Hence, they were included in the study sample. The demographic information of participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Information about the participants

Nicknames	Gender	Age
Utku	Male	26
Hasan	Male	33
İnan	Male	34
Mehmet	Male	34
Kuzey	Male	24
Efe	Male	28

Data Collection

Semi-structured Interview Questions

The researchers asked open-ended questions to get participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Semi-structured interview questions were based on literature and research questions. For example, to explore the meaning of these drugs for participants, questions like "What kind of experience do you have when using these drugs?" and "Why do you think you want to use these drugs?" were asked. To investigate the association between party drug use and social relationships, questions like "Do you think these drugs have an impact on your social relationships?" were asked. Questions such as "You know that these drugs are illicit; what do you think about that?" were asked to explore their relationship with the Law and the Other.

Reflexivity

According to Braun and Clarke (2019), reflexive thematic analysis researchers are actively producing knowledge. The researcher's expertise, theoretical background, and subjectivity are used to interpret data to create themes. Thus, transparency and reflexivity during theme generation are essential.

As the researchers in this study, we are also psychotherapists who practice psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy. We became interested in drug use after encountering "party drugs" in our social circles. Upon studying psychoanalytic and Lacanian perspectives and new psychic structures, we concluded that approaching drug use from a Lacanian perspective is essential for developing deeper insights into this subject.

Starks and Trinidad (2007) advise researchers to use "bracketing" to reflect, acknowledge preconceptions, and listen to participants openly. While collecting data,

bracketing involves writing memos (Cutcliffe, 2003). We used observational notes to express our research feelings and thoughts. As Ahern (1999) advised, we wrote the journal before setting research questions and identified our biases throughout the study.

Methodological Background

The reflexive thematic analysis developed by Braun & Clarke (2006) has a repeated procedure of familiarizing yourself with data, coding, theme development, reviewing, revising, and writing up.

Themes illustrate key ideas, concepts, or topics that participants commonly express in the data. They are developed from codes and actively generated through the researcher's interpretations, theoretical assumptions, and analytic skills. Themes are not simple data summaries; they include interpretation and insights about the underlying discourses. Also, themes evolve during analysis as researchers delve deeper into the data; they do not remain the same throughout the process.

As researchers, we have a significant theoretical tendency; our research questions are related to the Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, and we examine the experiences of party drug users from a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective. Therefore, we used the theoretical reflexive thematic analysis and the guidelines set by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Braun et al. (2019).

This study adopts a constructionist approach since motivations and experiences are examined within a sociocultural and structural context, and latent-level meanings are used. Examining meanings at the latent level is appropriate for researchers from a psychoanalytic framework like us. Nonetheless, in practice, the difference between the two levels of analysis is more like a continuum rather than a dichotomy (Braun et al., 2019). Therefore, we examined both semantic and latent-level meanings.

In the theoretical approach adopted in this study, researchers examine the data using pre-existing ideas and theoretical knowledge, matching them to codes as they code. Still, we did not determine any coding frame or themes a-priori; we just used our theoretical knowledge while naming our codes and themes. The theoretical approach enables an analytical interpretation of the data regarding a particular research question, as opposed to a merely detailed description (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We concentrated on participants' relationships with their mothers, the first big Other in Lacanian theory, fathers, teachers, and managers, who also represent the big Other. We created codes and themes including (m)Other and the Other to include relationships with all these figures, which would not be named as such if we used an inductive and non-theoretical approach.

To enhance the trustworthiness of this study, several strategies consistent with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for qualitative rigor were employed. Credibility was supported

through prolonged engagement with the data, peer debriefing via supervision sessions, and reflexive memo-writing throughout the analytical process. Transferability is addressed by providing thick descriptions of participants' contexts and discourses, allowing readers to assess the applicability of findings to other settings. Dependability was strengthened through an iterative audit of the analytical process, including the documented revision of theme names and the removal of themes upon reflection (e.g., the "Cause for Anxiety" theme). Finally, confirmability was supported by grounding interpretations in direct participant quotations and maintaining transparency regarding the researchers' theoretical positioning.

Procedure

We acquired ethical permission from Middle East Technical University's Human Research Ethics Committee (protocol number: 0083-ODTUİAEK-2024) and recruited volunteers via social media announcements. Face-to-face or Google Meet interviews averaged an hour. Participants are informed of the purpose and content of the study. With participants' consent, voice recordings were taken during semi-structured interviews.

Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) divide research into six iterative phases. First, the researcher becomes familiar with the data by transcription and reading interviews. Coding and sorting data is the second phase. Sorting codes into themes, reviewing them, and naming and defining them are other phases. We reviewed themes with peer discussions and supervision. For example, since participants' discourses resonate with Lacan's term 'Frustration,' we directly created a theme with this name while conducting data analysis. After review, we concluded that a theme name that emphasizes participants' comparison behavior, the theme's main point, would be better. So, we renamed it “O/other Can Do It; Why Can’t I?” We found another theme, “Cause for Anxiety,” by interpreting that some participants' statements were meant to make the researcher anxious. Later, we removed this theme because the researcher's anxiety may have come from resistance, which was related to previous experiences and thoughts rather than the data.

Results

The analysis in this study yielded five superordinate themes, which are detailed alongside their subordinate themes in Table 2. This section provides descriptions of each theme and relevant quotations from participants.

Table 2.

Themes of Theoretical Thematical Analysis

1. All Around Everywhere: (m)Other
1.1.The Dominant (m)Other
1.2.The Only Child of the (m)Other
1.3.Insufficient Paternal Functions
2. Should I Stay or Should I Go: The Separation Issue
3. The Law: For Everyone but Me
3.1. Catch Me If You Can
3.2. Being the Rule Maker
3.3. O/other Can Do It, Why Can't I?
3.4. Trying to Cope with the Real Life
4. Symptoms of the Era: Perversion
4.1 Let's Go Beyond the Borders of the World
4.2 The Jouissance Trap
4.3 Inviting Others to Jouissance
5. The "Magical" Drug
5.1 Seeing Through Rose-Colored Glasses
5.1.1.Boosting the "Positive" Results
5.1.2.Negating the Negative Results
5.1.3.Normalization by Comparison
5.2 Creating (Imaginary) Social Bonds
5.3 Experiencing Drugs through the Body

1. All Around Everywhere: (m)Other

This theme explores the significant role of the (m)Other, the first big Other, in participants' lives. These influential figures, to whom they feel closest in the family, are mentioned as superior to the father. This results in a lack of focus on paternal relationships. Therefore, the father remains in the shadows, resulting in an insufficiency of paternal functions and subjectivity. This superordinate theme is broken down into three subordinate themes.

1.1. The Dominant (m)Other

The mother is mentioned as someone who knows the best about almost everything, who "governs/manages," and whose words are super important in participants' lives. The mother,

a dominant figure that participants idealize, is mentioned as "boss, lord, manager." Hasan's reference to his mother as "*my pasha*," a title historically reserved for powerful male governors, further indicates the idealization of maternal governance. This dynamic is characterized by a dominant form of interaction, as seen in Hasan's mother answering questions on his behalf, leaving no space for Hasan's subjectivity.

"*My pasha, my mother, answers the questions asked anywhere."*

1.2. The 'Only' Child of the (m)Other

Although the participants are now adults, they defined themselves as "*the only child of their mother*." Here, emphasizing being the "only one" and being the "mother's child" is important. Being the "mother's child" is thought of as defining oneself through one's mother and interpreted as positioning oneself as an object of the mother. The notion of being "one/only" recurs throughout their narratives, interpreted as positioning themselves as objects of their mothers, who are the "only ones" to complete them. For example, Inan answered, "To whom do you feel closest in the family?" by saying that his mother is closest, so he prefers his mother. He said the difference between his mother and father is too small in terms of semantic meaning.

"*If one of them is a thousand units close and the other is a thousand and one unit close, the one a thousand and one units close is my mom*."

However, it is also heard as "my one and only, my mother" and "being a unity with my mother" in Turkish, "*birim olan annem,*" interpreted as a dyadic, close relationship with his mother. It is considered an unconscious emphasis of being one with the mother, as he uses the word "bir" six times in his sentence, which means being one/only in Turkish.

1.3. Insufficient Paternal Functions

Participants express a lack of closeness with their fathers, often devaluing them and not mentioning them too much, which has been interpreted as a weak paternal function. Insufficient paternal functions also extend through the state and institutions in their lives.

Along with Mehmet's "*I have never experienced any restriction"* statement, Hasan explained his relationship with his father as *"You know, after a certain point — how can I put it — once I turned twenty-five, we started having real conversations. Until then, there wasn't much attention or involvement. I mean, there was, but it was more in the sense of "I work, I bring bread home." After a while, he started asking things like, "What did you do about school?" I was twenty-five at that time."*

Mehmet talks about somewhere they hang out as a motorcycle gang as follows "*What we actually have is, in a sense, an illegal bar — perhaps one could call it a "hobby house," though that would be misleading. In reality, it is fully set up and operatesas a bar. It is in a shop space within an industrial complex and is known to certain state institutions, yet it continues to operate without any direct intervention or objection from them."* an example of extension through the state. As these excerpts show, paternal function is precarious.

2. Should I Stay or Should I Go: The Separation Issue

This theme explores participants' issues regarding separation and subjectivity, primarily linked to their family dynamics, and how these manifest in various aspects of their lives, such as friendships, work, education, migration, romantic relationships, and drug use. Participants also have separation issues from their mothers, interpreted as oedipal issues. For example, Mehmet used the phrase "seducing a woman" by using a negation, and then he gave an example, including his mom, leading to the interpretation of an Oedipal issue.

> *"It is not about seducing a woman but rather making her feel good. I am saying this for everyone – it could be a colleague, my mom, or anyone else."*

Participants in the study expressed their experiences of attempting to leave their parental homes as a cycle of "*going and coming back*." This phrase encapsulates the struggle for separation, also encountered as moving to another city/country and coming back, leaving a girl/boyfriend and coming back, stopping taking drugs and coming back... Despite being working adults with the means to move out, all participants continue to live with their parents, suggesting unconscious obstacles to separation. One of them even had a traffic accident after separating from his home and went back to the family house, also interpreted as an unconscious obstacle to separation.

Hasan's description of his friendships, "*Imagine it like we are always living this kind of crowded communal life. There are five or six of us who are constant — we'd eat together, drink together, and go to someone's place together. Even though two or three people has their own apartments, no one would just split off and go home alone. We'd all go to one person's place the first night, then the next day to someone else's. It is always crowded*." and family, *"I said, "Let me come and stay with you — if you keep an eye on me, at least I'll finish school and actually study." So in a way, I kind of imposed myself on them — like I deliberately made them stay on top of me."* are concrete examples of separation issues.

3. The Law: For Everyone but Me

The theme's name comes from a participant's discourse as he explains his thoughts about illegal drugs.

> *"I can control it but think that some people cannot control it, so, it can be illegal for everyone but me."*

So, he wants to be an exception in front of the law. Since all the participants have an issue about being exceptions to the law, it is chosen as the name. This theme is broken down into four sub-themes.

3.1. Catch Me If You Can

Participants question the law about drugs being illegal, say they are against it, and play with it as if saying, "catch me if you can." They emphasized that they were exceptions by explaining how they were not caught, especially in strict regulatory environments. For example, Inan mentions that drugs reach him via state postal services. Accessing an illegal drug through a state institution is interpreted as playing with the law. His assertion that "*not every law is legitimate*" reflects a broader critique of the legal framework. Also, how Mehmet did not try to hide the illegal drug while traveling is interpreted as he wants to tell how he easily defeats the law, thinking that "they cannot catch me."

3.2. Being the Rule Maker

Participants in various domains, including drug use, work, and education, often establish their own rules, frequently disregarding existing legal frameworks.

> *"I prefer making my own decisions. I do not want someone forcing something on me or being compelled to do something."*

Mehmet's statement is interpreted as an unwillingness to abide by existing rules and obligations. He is also part of a gang that establishes its own rules and operates an "*illegal*" bar. The gang's rituals, which involve acceptance ceremonies and the adoption of new names, are interpreted as a refusal of the existing symbolic order and an attempt to create an alternative society governed by their own rules.

3.3. O/other Can Do It; Why Can't I?

Participants complain about how politicians (big Other) or people in other countries (little other) can use illegal drugs, which is interpreted as questioning/loosening the law. Participants emphasized that others have a right to use drugs while they do not. Therefore, instead of complying with the law and accepting it, which concerns castration, they experience frustration, complaining about the injustice they feel they are subjected to.

Utku argues that politicians, whom he sees as powerful figures, are capable of violating drug laws. Also, Mehmet states, "*S/he can smoke marijuana there; I cannot smoke marijuana here.*" All are interpreted as laws that are supposed to be abided by have no meaning for participants because laws are questionable.

3.4. Trying to Cope with the Real Life

Participants mentioned challenges and stressors in various aspects of their lives, including university, work, and romantic relationships. Rather than adhering to lawful coping mechanisms, many resort to drug use and push their everyday limits to manage these pressures. For example, Kuzey stated, "*I must learn a lot of new things…also there was the stress of being abroad and finding a job here… It (drug) becomes a way to cope with real-world stresses.*"

4. Symptoms of the Era: Perversion

In this era, due to capitalist discourse, individuals seek to maximize jouissance, which is about getting limitless enjoyment. The jouissance experienced through the object, drugs in this context, is frequently encountered in new psychic structures characterized by pervert symptoms. There are also other pervert patterns in participants. This topic is examined under three sub-ordinate themes.

4.1. "Let's Go Beyond the Borders of the World"

Participants shared instances of transcending limitations across various domains, including drug use, romantic relationships, and eating habits. Hasan's statement, which gave the name to this theme, is as follows:

> "*Let's go beyond the borders of the world…the borders of countries… they are just imaginary lines; we all live in the same world, but act like we are different people. You are Turkish, and he is American, but no, we all live on the earth; we are all earthlings.*"

Hasan's statement reflects a rejection of the traditional and cultural differences within the symbolic order and an urge to go beyond them, so loosening the grip of symbolic limits. Drug use is also a domain where the grip of the symbolic has been loosened and a mode of jouissance experienced as boundless. Thus, "going beyond borders" is not only a social claim but also a subjective position related to Law and its constraints on enjoyment.

4.2. The Jouissance Trap

Participants often escalate their dosage over time as the initial jouissance diminishes. Despite always feeling a lack, the pursuit of limitless enjoyment drives them to increase their intake, creating a vicious cycle, conceptualized as the jouissance trap. An illustrative example is the concept of the "*golden dose*," Utku mentions. It has the adjective "golden" in an enticing and affirming manner. However, it is an overdose and leads to death. This duality and a deadly reference are also a part of jouissance, a paradoxical pleasure that intensifies to an almost unbearable level.

Also, Efe emphasizes the significance of experiencing everything simultaneously, leading to profound satisfaction. He portrays his experiences as limitless, as below, interpreted as the "trap" of the jouissance.

> *"I had reached the highest enjoyment point I could achieve with something. ...It felt like I was experiencing everything I could enjoy as a human being all at once. I felt like I was making love with someone on one side, being with my close friends on another side, and feeling the music on another side, all at the same time."*

4.3. Inviting Others to Jouissance

Participants invite others, including close friends and family, to engage in drug use. For instance, Mehmet says "*Yes, unfortunately, I got her used to it as well (about his girlfriend using LSD)"* and *"I recommend it to my loved ones (about LSD).*"

Notably, Hasan mentioned inviting his mother to use a drug with a green prescription, which was not prescribed for her or him, and Utku invited his mother to a casino. These invitations to partake in illegal activities can be interpreted as an invitation to jouissance and an oedipal issue.

5. The "Magical" Drug

Participants characterized party drugs as miraculous and indescribable, highlighted their positive effects, associated negative effects with biological causes, and negated them. The

meanings participants attributed to party drugs and their perspectives on these drugs were examined under the subordinate themes explained below.

5.1. Seeing Through Rose-Colored Glasses

Across the subthemes – Boosting the "Positive" Results, Negating the Negative Results, and Normalization by Comparison – participants preserve an idealized image of party drugs, as they see drugs through rose-colored glasses. This discursive pattern indicates a protection of the object from negative meanings, allowing drug use to remain coherent and justified for themselves.

5.1.1. Boosting the "Positive" Results.

Participants tend to exaggerate the "positive" effects of drugs and idealize drugs, reflecting their beliefs and fantasies. Kuzey said, "*When that trauma happened, if I had not used it (ecstasy), my life could have gone much worse because it was something that motivated me about the future*," portraying the drug as a 'savior' that helped him cope and inspired hope for the future, but neglected the significant role of psychotherapy in his healing process. Similarly, Hasan said, "*By using meth, I can become a mayor; you can control everyone when you use meth. It is like your chakras are opening; you can catch every sentence from people's eyes and expressions,*" his fantasy about how he could become a powerful figure thanks to the drug. Both illustrate how individuals idealize drug use as a means of overcoming adversity and attaining power, highlighting a significant disconnect between reality and their perceptions.

5.1.2. Negating the Negative Results.

Participants stated that using drugs did not lead to any negative effects in their lives by using negations. They talked about specific cases but said these did not happen to them. The fact that such specific examples came to their minds is interpreted as meaning these things had happened, or that participants thought they might happen to them. So, participants either denied the bad events that had occurred or ignored their hunch that these things might happen to them.

For instance, Inan said:

> *I: I did not experience anything bad or miss out on anything, for instance, not getting a promotion because of this (using drugs) or being unable to take an exam.*
> *R: What does it mean to miss out on something? How did that come to your mind?*
> *I: I do not recall having a bad meeting or missing a trip out of town with my friends because my energy was too low.*

Furthermore, participants said that they had no problem even when describing an awful experience after using ecstasy. For example, Hasan said, "*Olcay cut his chin and passed out at home; again, we had no problem; our crisis management in such situations is excellent*."

5.1.3. Normalization by Comparison.

Participants likened and compared drugs to different substances and food that are legal, interpreted as participants' attempts to normalize drugs. Efe said: "*Compared to alcohol, I can control my mind better. I am aware of what I am doing; if I am doing something wrong, I can recognize it as wrong. But it is not like that with alcohol…*" By stating that an illegal drug's effects are better than a legal substance, he rationalizes his use of illegal drugs. Likewise, when asked about his motivation for trying different drugs, Inan said, "*I am an open-minded person; I also enjoy trying various foods…I even ate insects, which is not something everyone does*." This analogy reflects his effort to normalize drug use by framing it as a natural extension of his open-mindedness toward new experiences, rather than a deeper inquiry into the motivations behind his drug consumption.

5.2. Creating (Imaginary) Social Bonds

Participants stated that party drugs strengthened their social relationships and brought them together. Utku explains this situation: *"I can communicate with people much more easily. I mean, you're more relaxed — you kind of let go, you're more chill. For example, if you say something, the other person might normally get offended, but at that moment, people don't take it as personally. So communication becomes a lot easier."*

Additionally, they stated a struggle with expressing their emotions while they are sober, yet experienced a notable release while using drugs. Efe said, "*I cannot express these things a lot. I cannot say it openly or frequently and do not feel sincere when I do. But in that state, I felt I could truly say 'I love you' and mean it*". However, the context in which these relationships and emotions emerge suggests they may be imaginary, as they are closely tied to the altered states induced by substance use.

5.3. Experiencing Drugs Through the Body

Participants reach absolute pleasure by using drugs and feel pleasure intensely in their bodies by exceeding everyday limits, in which they can get pleasure in socially mediated ways through symbolic reality. For example, Utku told his experience as "*There is a phrase 'love'; at that moment, you want to love people a lot with the effect of bod…hormones. It feels like there*

is a surge of love…" He cannot articulate any other reason for his experience than the bodily experience/hormones caused by the drug, which are related to the real. Therefore, it is interpreted that he is detached from symbolic reality at that moment. Also, Kuzey's experience with drugs is interpreted as pushing the limits of the body with the drug's chemical influences on the body.

> *"You feel faster, see better, and feel you can do more. That superhuman feeling in your body fascinated me…I rethought my limits and what I can and cannot do as a human*".

Discussion

Participants characterized their mothers as omniscient figures who exercise control and instill fear, with Hasan referring to his mother as a "despot" due to her absolute decision-making authority. Also, all participants mentioned their mother when answering questions about who they feel closest to and whose opinions they value in the family. These dynamics reveal boundary-crossing and intrusive behaviors exhibited by the mothers that often disregard participants' subjectivity.

According to Lacan, strength and omnipotence belong to the big Other. In the case of participants, this strength appears in mothers, the first big Other. The baby's complete dependence on the mother leads to an unbalanced relationship in which the mother is omnipotent and dominant, and this imbalance can be persistent (Demir-Hekimoğlu, 2023), as evidenced by participants who continue to identify as their "*mother's child*". Also, Kuzey's desire to maintain a "*childish*" persona highlights this ongoing connection. These instances seem to be about filling the lack of the big Other, the mOther, by being in the position of object a, reducing themselves to an object position. In parallel with this, Altundağ states that the individual who perceives herself solely as a child in the gaze of the Other constructs her subjectivity through substance use: the person who was once someone's child is now dependent on another element, namely the substance (Altundağ, 2025).

Lacan explains the mother's desire by likening the mother to a crocodile and the child to one in the crocodile's mouth, at risk of being swallowed, suggesting that the mother's desire must be constrained (Clemens & Grigg, 2006). He proposes that the Name-of-the-Father serves as protective, interrupting the dyadic relationship between mother and child by introducing a third party, thereby establishing necessary boundaries through the father's prohibitive role. However, participants in the study often devalued their fathers or did not mention their fathers, compared to their mothers, moreover; they said their fathers never restricted them. For instance, Utku mentioned that he had gotten drunk and crashed his car a few times, hesitant to tell his mother about it, but told his father. He said, "*My father does not set rules for me.*"

As a result of the diminished role of the father, the lack of boundaries in the relationship with the mother causes children to distance themselves from being a subject and unable to desire. Also, the child takes the position of the object of jouissance, and symptoms like drug use emerge (Ergün et al., 2022; Demir-Hekimoğlu, 2023). So, the father's role is crucial for the child's becoming a subject.

Another consequence of insufficient paternal functions is the participants' failure to undergo the Oedipus complex, which transforms the mother-child relationship into a triadic structure through the father's intervention (Evans, 1996). The failure to resolve oedipal conflicts is evident in Utku's statement, "*I was somewhat influential in my parents' separation; it turned out to be a good situation for everyone.*"

According to Lacan, it is not the child but the mother who does not want to separate, and what gives the child anxiety is the failure to separate from the mother. In other words, castration is far from being the source of anxiety since it is what saves the subject from anxiety. Hasan's statement is interpreted as the anxiety he has about his subjectivity: "*When they do not accept that you are an individual, you have problems with the family. They do not accept that I am an individual, but are they doing this intentionally or unintentionally?*"

Separation issues are evident in various aspects of participants' lives, particularly in their career choices, which often mirror their family's professions, suggesting a lack of subjectivity. For example, Utku, whose mother works in a construction company, studied civil engineering. Many participants reported delays in graduating from university and struggling to separate from the school. Moreover, regarding leaving his job, Efe said: "*I wanted to quit, but I could not experience that split; I did not know how to quit. There was a fear inside me; sometimes, I struggle with quitting and making decisions.*" Also, participants cannot separate from substances and their effects once they have started using them. In all these examples, participants talk about difficulty separating from different things.

The current cultural shift aligns with participants' discourses. Nowadays, the father's role in society has diminished, as he has no authority/restrictive function. This change facilitates a transition from the repression of desires to their free expression and displaying enjoyment, promoting perversion over neurosis (Melman, 2002), which is called "banal perversion" by Charles Melman and Jean-Pierre Lebrun to describe the new psychic structures that have emerged in today's culture. At its core, banal perversion is not a structural perversion in the classical psychoanalytic sense. Rather, it is a neurosis that takes on the appearance of perversion. In other words, it does not correspond to one of the traditional Lacanian clinical structures (neurosis, perversion, psychosis) but instead expresses new psychic formations shaped by modern cultural and social conditions. In banal perversion, jouissance is organized around object-consumption without the classical perverse disavowal of castration. However,

the regulatory function of the paternal Law (structured through prohibition and authorization) is weakened, and the symbolic order undergoes erosion within the social field. Unlike structural perversion, these formations point to structural transformations characteristic of modern culture rather than to a distinct clinical structure (Özkan, 2020). Pervert patterns and characteristics of the participants are discussed under banal perversion in this study.

Participants exhibit pervert patterns in their relationship with the Law, knowingly engaging in illegal activities while testing its boundaries. Swales (2012) suggests that for pervert, "The Law is a façade that needs to be respected only for the sake of keeping up appearances … The Law of the father is demonstrated to be insubstantial in the face of the mOther's whims" (p. 63). Participants also keep up appearances since they are not caught and boast about it. These are interpreted as attempts to bolster the paternal function by engaging in acts invoking the law. They heighten the likelihood of being caught, yet frequently evade them, aligning their behavior with the characteristics of perversion.

Participants also have anticipatory fantasies about being caught before any actual incident. For example, Utku thinks, "*Did they come for us?*" whenever he sees a police car while he is on drugs. Also, Hasan said he talked to his girlfriend about getting caught before anything happened and told her what they should do in such a case: "*I might get caught, the police might raid the house; this is how it should be.*" From a Lacanian perspective, fantasies about being caught can be interpreted as a perverse defense providing relief from the excessive enjoyment they experience.

Instead of relying on the existing rules/law, participants bring their own rules, interpreted in line with the new psychic structure by Melman (2002). Today, people have started to accept "a sky empty of God" and that there is no one in the Other. They have become aware that heaven is empty of God, ideologies, promises, references, or ready-made solutions (Dimitridias, 2024). The values people have believed in and adhered to are emptying with the devaluation of the founding texts. Hence, humans today lack guidelines when making decisions and analyzing situations; consequently, people confront self-determination (Melman, 2002). In line with this self-determination, participants create their own rules. All participants described their way of taking drugs; in specific doses, and frequency, with certain people, in certain places, and in a "*conscious*" way. They also emphasized the importance of "*leaving them to their own devices*" in life in general.

Participants argued that drugs should be legalized since individuals will use them regardless of their legal status. Inan said "*Laws are things that others decide for me, and not everything legal is right because laws are human-made. So, I don't feel uncomfortable about doing something illegal.*" This view aligns with contemporary capitalist discourse, in which

there is no room for the big Other and prohibitions (Lesourd, 2018, as cited in Özkan, 2020). The participants also do not want any prohibitions.

Recent legal shifts began to protect alternative forms of enjoyment previously deemed illegal/perverse, like marijuana, now permitted in various nations. This evolution reflects a societal transition from seeking guidance through authority figures to finding meaning and belonging through objects. Participants described their enjoyment of drugs as "*greed*," since they could not reach the same point of enjoyment with anything else, reflecting their dependence on drugs to find meaning and belonging rather than anything else.

Participants pursue extreme pleasure and exceed limits through drugs, as is the case in perversion (Evans, 1996). They experience peak levels of enjoyment, with reports of intensified sensations, such as improved music, vibrant colors, and non-stop fun for hours. For instance, Kuzey said "*We had used it (drug) for five days in a row. On the sixth day, we were on our way back, traveling. I remember shivering for eight hours in just a T-shirt and shorts in the cold areas of the airport. It was terrible; I got sick afterward… But did we have a crazy good time? Of course, we had a blast; otherwise, we would not have done it.*" Similarly, Hasan stated that he uses drugs "*like there is no tomorrow*," reflecting an unrestrained chase for pleasure that can ultimately lead to detrimental outcomes.

Participants always want more drugs, highlighting the vicious cycle of addiction, as noted in the phrase, "*…it has no end."* Subjects get trapped because it is a misconception that objects can give sufficient enjoyment so that, in the end, the subject gets satisfied. The subject is unsatisfied, particularly the neurotic because of an inherent lack that can never be filled with any object. However, the contemporary capitalist discourse pushes people for jouissance at the expense of desire, by denying subjective lack and encouraging the purchase of enjoyment products that promise to treat the discontents of the civilization. Consequently, individuals perpetuate their drug use, driven by the deceptive promise of enjoyment found in consumerism (Ayres, 2022).

Participants also described boundaryless relationships in their personal and social spheres. Hasan said "*Everything is possible*" for a relationship with his close friend. Utku said he does not want to be monogamous because he wants to explore life and "*hook up with this person and then that person.*" Perversion is evident in how people treat their partner as an object to be discarded as soon as it is perceived as insufficient, as evidenced by Utku's description of people as "this person, that person," which devalues subjectivity and defined boundaries.

Today's individuals often behave as though they should have access to everything, despite knowing the inherent limitations in their lives. So, they deny the lack and are tempted by the possibility of experiencing all the successively proposed situations, tasting multiple and

varied enjoyments (Dimitriadis, 2024). Participants also said they like to experience different things and explained the cause of their use of many drugs as *"trying all of them/everything that comes up my way,"* and *"curiosity."* Utku said "*My life is generally built on experiences… there is also a bit of gluttony; I try many different things…*" However, this leaves subjects unable to find their place, lacking stability, and without projects (Gürsel, 2007). Although participants are either graduate students or employed, their lives are unstable: they change jobs frequently and move often, unsure of what they want.

Participants also invite others to use drugs or engage in illegal activities. Hasan described a hypothetical scenario involving drug use with his managers and asked the researcher whether she used any drugs. He said, "*We can never fully explain their effects in our conversation here; we need to try it,*" and made a joke, "*If you suddenly say, 'There is ecstasy here, let's use it…*'" all interpreted as his fantasy about making the researcher use drugs. Inviting others to enjoyment is interpreted as positioning oneself as the one who delivers the Other's jouissance, thereby violating the boundaries imposed by the symbolic order.

They also compared drugs to other socially acceptable substances, interpreted as an effort to normalize drug use. Bjerg (2008) argues that drug use differs from the enjoyment derived from food, music, or film. While these substances rely on sensory enjoyment within a social context, drug use is motivated by psychoactive effects and facilitates an 'asocial jouissance,' independently of the Other (Zizek, 2006). Nevertheless, participants spoke as if the drugs are 'magical,' giving all the enjoyment but being no different from other legal substances.

They also compared drugs to other socially acceptable substances, which was interpreted as an effort to normalize drug use. Bjerg (2008) argues that drug use differs from the enjoyment derived from food, music, or film. While these forms of consumption are mediated by the senses and embedded within the symbolic and social field, drug use is driven by its psychoactive effects and tends toward an asocial jouissance that bypasses symbolic mediation. In Žižek's (2006) terms, this can be understood as an attempt to access enjoyment more directly, outside the structuring function of the Other. From a Lacanian perspective, equating drugs with ordinary commodities obscures this structural difference: whereas everyday objects sustain desire through lack and symbolic circulation, the drug promises a more immediate saturation of jouissance. Participants' depiction of drugs as "magical" yet no different from legal substances thus reflects not only a strategy of normalization, but also a disavowal of the drug's proximity to an unmediated enjoyment that destabilizes the subject's economy of desire.

Participants report that drug use enhances their interpersonal relationships, allowing them to express affection more freely. Inan said: "*When I take MDMA I hug my friends more*

and say, 'You're my dear friend, I love you so much, I'm so glad you're here…'" It is discussed in the literature that MDMA increases feelings of love, being friendly, and having emotional empathy related to biological effects like increased oxytocin levels (Bedi et al., 2010; Hysek et al, 2014). However, these feelings last as long as there are biological effects and the enjoyment received from the drug together. Hasan expresses his social bonds when they take drugs as "*We call it "falling into love" — like really falling into love. It's this state where you just want to hug everyone. You're like, "My brother, my dear, I'm so glad you're here, I'm so glad we came, I'm so glad we're rolling, I'm so glad I'm doing this with you. I don't want this night to end. This is amazing*." However, as he got into jail because of drugs he says *"Even when I was in prison, he never called or checked on me. And when I got out, I didn't say anything like "I missed you so much" either. I never called or asked about him. We ran into each other once, and I didn't even look at his face"* about the same relationships. So, although there may be temporary loosening of the inhibitions related to repression under the effect of the drug that led participants to express themselves more freely, these social bonds are organized around shared enjoyment and the real, bodily effects of the drug. Therefore, they risk remaining at the level of an imaginary cohesion; imaginary bonds grounded in jouissance. People have always gathered around shared enjoyment like collective rituals and celebrations, but in the new economy, it is the only feature connecting the community instead of symbolic commitments; therefore, it is a poor social link (Melman, 2018). Also, the discourse of the subject is regulated through two axes. The horizontal axis signifies reciprocal connections with peers, while the vertical axis determines the relationship with the Other, the locus of the symbolic authority and the law which limits jouissance. Nowadays, there is a devaluation for the vertical axis, the authority of the vertical axis weakens, and more value placed on horizontal interactions organized around shared experiences. Participants' descriptions of intensified closeness during drug use can be read within this framework. The bond they describe seems to emerge primarily from a shared state of enjoyment rather than from symbolic commitments or enduring structures. Thus, their accounts may reflect a shift from vertically mediated social bonds toward horizontally organized communities centered on jouissance.

Conclusion

The study identifies familial dynamics, particularly maternal dominance and separation issues, as key factors influencing participants' drug use, fostering a preference for jouissance over engagement with the symbolic order and desire. Within this scope, the following themes emerged: *All Around Everywhere: (m)Other; Should I Stay or Should I Go: The Separation Issue; The Law: For Everyone but Me; Symptoms of the Era: Perversion;* and *The "Magical" Drug*. Taken together, these themes offer a structured response to the research

questions posed at the outset of this study: the first question — what is the meaning of these drugs for individuals? — is most directly addressed by the theme of The "Magical" Drug, which reveals how participants construct an idealized, almost omnipotent image of substances as unique solutions to their difficulties. The second question — how is the participants' relationship with the Law and the Other? — is illuminated across the themes of The Law: For Everyone but Me and Symptoms of the Era: Perversion, which together show how participants position themselves as exceptions to the symbolic order and pursue jouissance beyond its limits. The third question — what is the association between drug use and social relationships? — is addressed by the themes of Should I Stay or Should I Go and Creating (Imaginary) Social Bonds, highlighting how drug use is intertwined with separation difficulties and the construction of fragile, jouissance-based social ties.

Based on these themes, it was observed that while describing their relationship with drugs during the interviews, participants frequently referred to their mothers and reflected a dynamic in which the paternal function appeared insufficient. Accordingly, they expressed having difficulties related to separation and indicated that these issues extended across various areas of their lives, including work, university, and relationships.

Furthermore, participants described situations—both in relation to their drug use and in their lives more broadly—in which they resisted accepting limits, sought to transgress boundaries, or did not wish to be limited. Additionally, the fall of the big Other in contemporary culture, alongside capitalist discourse that promotes limitless and constant enjoyment, leads to broader societal shifts towards immediate gratification and perversion. Entering situations where they could be caught using drugs, or persistently thinking about the possibility of being caught, was interpreted as reflecting a fantasy of being caught. Such fantasies may be understood as attempts to obtain the gaze of the Other through drugs.

Finally, participants described drugs as "magical", portraying them almost as a savior. In parallel, they reported that in socially challenging situations, the effects of drugs made them feel more confident, better able to express their emotions, and capable of forming more intimate connections with others. This is important to emphasize because participants' use of party drugs rather in social settings, and their sense that these substances improve their relationships with others, indicate that party drugs specifically function as a means of relating to others.

What is peculiar about party drugs is the collective, performative, and enjoyment-oriented aspects of use unlike solitary substance use patterns, like marijuana, in which users explain their relaxation with the drug individually, while doing some actvities like drawing or watching a movie alone (Gürsoy, 2023). Party drugs are not used only to relax but are discursively constructed as "magical" objects that promise increased sociability and bodily

transcendence. Thus, through party drug use, contemporary capitalist discourse, banal perversion, and the weakening of paternal authority, which hypens enhancement and limitless enjoyment, not only relief from suffering, become visible.

This study demonstrates that participants' relationships with drugs reflect broader issues and recurring patterns in their lives. Instead of only addressing drug use, focusing subjects' discourse can facilitate them to articulate their deeper struggles, like the ones revealed in this study, within a symbolic framework. For instance, one of the participants, Utku mentions drugs make the social environment more "sincere". Also, notably, he said, "Because he is the father — the paternal figure in that family — there is usually a less sincere point in the father–son relationship" and mentioned his relationship with his mother is "more sincere". So, in a psychoanalytic session, this signifier can be worked through instead of focusing solely on drug use. Also, in many of the subjects' narratives, earlier experiences appeared to be dominated by the imaginary and the real registers, while the symbolic register—where the Law is located — remained fragile or insufficiently operative. In psychoanalysis, the Law is a fundamental symbolic function structuring subjectivity, desire, and social relations through introduction of the limits and internalization of the prohibitions. This is connected to the castration, which marks the impossibility of complete satisfaction and thus produces desire. However, unlike juridical law or moral norms, psychoanalytic law does not impose rules externally. In other words, the analyst does not embody the Law or function as a moral authority. Psychoanalysis establishes a symbolic framework — with free association, transference, and interpretation—allowing the subject's desire to be articulated. Lacan emphasized that analytic ethics is not enforcing norms but maintaining loyalty to desire. Interpretation aims to shed light on the subject's relation to the Law, not reinforcing superego demands (Evans, 1996). So, in cases of drug use, psychoanalysis could be where the symbolic framework is established and the subject's relationship to Law is illuminated, leading to the lack, desire, and subjective solutions instead of external ones like drug use. Therefore, rather than studying drug use solely as a symptom, it is considered more effective to approach it as a message—examining to whom this message is directed and how it relates to individuals' subjectivities.

Limitations and Future Research

This study consists of participants who use drugs recreationally in party/club settings and do not define themselves as addicts. Therefore, the discourses and experiences of the participants in this study may differ from those of individuals who identify themselves as addicts and who receive treatment or therapy for drug addiction. In future studies, research could be conducted with individuals who use drugs regularly in order to gain a deeper

understanding of their experiences with party drugs. In addition, this study focuses only on men's experiences with party drugs. Although the literature suggests that men are more likely than women to develop drug addiction, it would be important to conduct a qualitative study focusing on women's discourses about drug use. Furthermore, discussing the issue of addiction within the context of sexuation from a psychoanalytic perspective could also be a valuable direction for future research.

Researcher Contribution Declaration:
The first author contributed 40%, the second and third authors each contributed 30%.
Compliance with Ethical Standards:
This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards and was approved by the Middle East Technical University Ethics Committee.
Conflict of Interest:
The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.
Informed Consent:
Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed about confidentiality and their right to withdraw at any time.
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Öznelerin Söylemlerinde Madde Kullanımı: Lacanyen Bir İnceleme

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı parti/club uyuşturucularının (MDMA, kokain, ketamin vb.) genç yetişkin erkekler arasında artan yaygınlığını Lacanyen psikanalitik bir çerçeveden incelemektedir.

Bu maddelerin genellikle yalnızca partilerde veya tatil dönemlerinde zevk, rahatlama, sosyalleşme ya da eğlence amacıyla zaman zaman kullanılması rekreasyonel kullanım olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Literatürde rekreasyonel kullanımın kontrollü olduğu ve bağımlılık yaratmadığı vurgulanmaktadır. Ancak rekreasyonel kullanım da psikolojik ve bedensel sıkıntılara yol açmakta ve bağımlılık riskinin artmasına neden olmaktadır. Bu nedenle rekreasyonel madde kullanımının sebeplerinin ve etkilerinin araştırılmasının önemli olduğu düşünülmüştür. Yine literatüre göre erkekler kadınlardan daha fazla madde kullanmaktadır ancak erkeklerin madde kullanımı ile ilgili yeterli çalışma bulunmamaktadır.

Erkeklerin rekreasyonel madde kullanımını inceleyen bu çalışmanın araştırma soruları şunlardır: (1) Bu maddelerin katılımcılar için nasıl bir anlamı vardır? (2) Katılımcıların Yasa ve büyük Başka ile ilişkileri nasıldır? (3) Madde kullanımı ile sosyal ilişkiler arasında nasıl bir ilişki vardır?

Örneklem gurubu 24–34 yaş aralığında, en az altı aydır parti/club uyuşturucuları kullanan, lisansüstü eğitimine devam eden ya da çalışan, herhangi bir bağımlılık tedavisi sürecinde olmayan altı erkekten oluşmaktadır. Görüşmeler yüz yüze ya da çevrim içi olarak yürütülmüş ve yaklaşık bir saat sürmüş, etik kurul onayı Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi'nden alınmıştır.

Çalışmada yöntem olarak Braun ve Clarke'ın (2006) teorik refleksif tematik analizi benimsenmiştir. İnşaacı yaklaşım ile, veriler hem semantik hem de latent düzeyde, Lacanyen kavramlar (Başka, perversiyon, jouissance vb.) ile analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmacıların aynı zamanda Lacanyen psikanalitik çerçevede çalışan psikologlar olmaları nedeniyle araştırma ve analiz süreci refleksivite bölümünde detaylandırılmıştır.

Analiz sonucunda ise beş üst tema ortaya çıkmıştır: (1) Her Zaman, Her Yerde: Anne, (2) Kalmak mı Gitmek mi: Bir Ayrışma Meselesi, (3) Yasa: Ben Hariç Herkes İçin, (4) Çağın Semptomları: Perversiyon, (5) "Büyülü" Madde.

"Her Zaman Her Yerde: Anne," temasında katılımcıların hayatlarında annelerini bilgi sahibi, yönetici/efendi figürler olarak betimlemeleri, babalarından ise annelerinin gölgesinde kalan bir figür olarak bahsetmeleri öne çıkmıştır. Katılımcıların yetişkin olmalarına rağmen kendilerini "annesinin tek çocuğu" olarak anlatmaları, özneden çok nesne konumunu aldıkları şeklinde yorumlanmıştır.

"Kalmak mı Gitmek mi: Bir Ayrışma Meselesi" temasında katılımcıların arkadaşlarından, ailelerinden, şehirden/ülkeden, okullarından, işlerinden ve maddeden ayrışma–geri dönüş, git-gel döngüleri ele alınmıştır. Katılımcıların bu ayrışma sorunlarının ödipal meselelerle olan bağı da incelenmiştir.

"Yasa: Ben Hariç Herkes İçin" temasında katılımcıların yasa ile oyunları, kuralları kabul etmemeleri ve kendi kullarından bahsetmeleri dikkat çekmiştir. Siyasi figürlerin veya farklı ülke vatandaşlarının sahip oldukları haklara kendilerinin sahip olamaması ve buna dair sitemleri, yasa karşısında ayrıcalık talepleri ve kastrasyona dirençleri de bu temada incelenmiştir.

"Çağın Semptomları: Perversiyon" temasında katılımcıların sınırsız zevk/jouissance arayışı ön plana çıkmıştır. Sürekli doz artırma ihtiyacı ve "altın doz" gibi ifadeler katılımcıların içinde bulunduğu jouissance/zevk döngüsünü örneklemektedir. Katılımcıların sınırı aşmaya dair söylemleri (ülke/kimlik sınırlarının hayali olduğu söylemi) ve başkalarını (anne/arkadaşlar) da zevke davet etmeleri perversif örüntülerle ilişkilendirilmiştir.

Son olarak "Büyülü Madde" temasında uyuşturuculara adeta pembe gözlüklerle bakılması, olumsuz sonuçların inkârı ve alkol ya da yemek gibi yasal maddelerle karşılaştırarak uyuşturucunun normalleştirilmesi incelenmiştir. Katılımcılar uyuşturucu aracılığıyla kurdukları sosyal bağları ve bedenlerinde yaşadıkları yoğun zevki anlatmışlardır. Katılımcılar uyuşturucu etkisindeyken kurdukları ilişkilerin ve hissettikleri duyguların daha farklı olduğunu söyleseler de bu bağların maddenin beden üzerindeki etkilerine ve ortak zevk ekonomisine bağlı, kırılgan ilişkiler olduğu yorumlanmıştır.

Tartışma kısmında ise güncel kapitalist söylemin, nasıl büyük Başka'nın düşüşü ve zevk buyruğu ile birleşerek yasa–sembolik ekseni zayıflattığı incelenmiştir. Uyuşturucu gibi tüketim nesneleri üzerinden anlam/aidiyet aramanın nasıl yasa/sınır ihlallerini teşvik etmekte olduğu da tartışılmıştır.

Klinik pratikte ise yalnızca bir semptom olarak uyuşturucu kullanımına odaklanmak yerine, öznenin söylemini çalışmanın, kişinin hayatını domine eden imgesel ve gerçek yerine sembolik bağı güçlendirecek bir çerçeve kurmanın ve analistin varlığıyla yasa–eksik–arzu ekseninin güçlenmesinin, bu kişiler için öznel çözüm yollarını mümkün kılabileceği düşünülmüştür.