

REVIEW ON WORKING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE DURING COVID-19
PANDEMIC

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PANDEMIC**

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ABSTRACT

REVIEW ON WORKING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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The Covid-19 pandemic has been engraved in history as perhaps the most challenging experience of the 21st century. It seems that its effects on societies and individuals will continue to be researched and debated for many years.

In this context, the main purpose of this study is to present the experiences of working women during the Covid-19 process, to present different examples of good practices from the world and to propose policy recommendations for Turkey within the scope of taking measures to deal with the negative experiences of this crisis and to minimize the negative effects that may be seen in a similar crisis. It is aimed to reveal that the lives of working women, which were already stuck between the private and public spheres in the pre-crisis periods, have become more chaotic with the crisis, by presenting it with a comprehensive background in the global and Turkish context and associating it with the context of the crisis.

By obtaining a gender perspective, this study deals with the problems and inequalities faced by women in working life with a holistic approach and examines the Turkish context after presenting this scope from a global level.

Keywords: Covid-19, gender, working women, social policy, Turkey

ÖZ

COVID-19 PANDEMİSİ DÖNEMİNDE ÇALIŞAN KADINLARIN DENEYİMLERİNE İLİŞKİN İNCELEME

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Covid-19 pandemisi, 21. yüzyılın belki de en zorlu deneyimi olarak tarihe kazınmıştır. Toplumlar ve bireyler üzerindeki etkileri daha uzun yıllar araştırılmaya ve tartışılmaya devam edecek gibi görünmektedir.

Bu bağlamda bu çalışmanın temel amacı, çalışan kadınların Covid-19 sürecindeki deneyimlerini sunmak, dünyadan farklı iyi uygulama örneklerini sunmak ve bu krizin olumsuz deneyimleriyle başa çıkmak ve benzer bir krizde görülebilecek olumsuz etkileri en aza indirmek için önlemler alınması kapsamında Türkiye'ye yönelik politika önerileri sunmaktır. Kriz öncesi dönemlerde zaten özel ve kamusal alan arasında sıkışıp kalan çalışan kadınların yaşamlarının krizle birlikte daha da kaotik hale geldiğini küresel bağlamda ve Türkiye bağlamında kapsamlı bir arka plan sunarak ve kriz bağlamıyla ilişkilendirerek ortaya koymak amaçlanmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifi benimseyerek kadınların çalışma hayatında karşılaştıkları sorunları ve eşitsizlikleri bütüncül bir yaklaşımla ele

almakta ve bu kapsamı küresel düzeyde ortaya koyduktan sonra Türkiye bağlamında irdelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Covid-19, toplumsal cinsiyet, çalışan kadın, sosyal politika, Türkiye

*To my precious family and my lovely husband
as a gratitude for their always-felt love and support*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KFF	Kaiser Family Foundation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE PA	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
TÜBİTAK	Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey)
TÜRKONFED	Türk Girişim ve İş Dünyası Konfederasyonu (Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation)
TURKSTAT	Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜSİAD	Türk Sanayicileri ve İş İnsanları Derneği (Turkish Industry and Business Association)
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 process, described as a "pandemic" on 11th of March 2020 by World Health Organization (WHO), has been written in the history of societies as an experience that the populations living in the 21st century have not yet seen (WHO, 2020). The measures implemented in countries due to the pandemic have resulted in many consequences, and it has been observed that policies that are deficient or insufficient in some areas have had negative effects on individuals in various areas. It can be said that working women are one of the groups most affected by this process, when new conditions including the changes in the working order, the closure of day care centers and schools, distance education, inability to provide some outsourced products/services such as food, cleaning, care etc. combined with the responsibilities brought by the already challenging constructed traditional gender roles in societies.

Considering the widening of the gender inequality gap in the labor market at the global level due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in various fields, in order to stop this inequality from growing and to make positive progress, it is of critical importance to set aside the currently implemented "gender-blind" policies and to produce gender-sensitive policies based on statistics and data.

1.1. Operational Definitions

Within the scope of this thesis, some terms used in gender perspective studies have been utilized. This section presents the meanings of these terms in the context of the thesis.

The term “**gender-sensitive policies**” is used to refer to policies that are designed in parallel with the needs derived from the socially constructed roles of men and women and reshape the policy design process in a manner that further reflects these socially constructed roles.

The term “**gender-blind**” (or used similarly, “**gender-blind policies**”) is used in this study in the way to define "the opposite of gender-sensitive policies, in a way that ignores the socially determined gender roles, responsibilities and abilities of women and men" (Erol, 2021).

As in feminist literature, the term "**women's unpaid labor**" is used in this study to describe domestic work that provides jobs and care (care for children, patients, elderly, etc.) services that are necessary for the survival of household members, and that has no market value (Sumbas, 2021).

In the study, the term “**second shift**” is used in the way described by Hochschild as “the dual burden of paid and unpaid work experienced by working women” (Hochschild, 1989, as cited in Van Gorp, 2013).

In this study, the term “**work-life balance**” is used as explained by Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003, as cited in Kossek & Groggins, 2015) as referring to people’s perception towards how their time is allocated, how involved they are, and how satisfied they are across varying roles at work and at home. Contrary to some other terms that have the potential to have a subtext or create a positive/negative perception, such as "work–life interface, work–life enrichment, work–life conflict, work-life harmony", which are used in the same sense or in the same context as this concept, the researcher preferred to use the more classical term "work-life balance".

1.2. Research Questions

In line with the stated purpose, there are three research questions that are aimed to be answered within the scope of this thesis. These questions are provided below:

- Research Question 1:

How did the conditions that are created by the Covid-19 pandemic affect working women in the world and in Turkey?

- Research Question 1.1:

What are examples of good practice applied around the world to ameliorate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on working women?

- Research Question 1.2:

What solutions and social policy recommendations can be offered in order to ameliorate the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on working women and/or to minimize these effects in a similar period in the future?

1.3. Arguments of the Research

During the design phase of the research, as a result of examining the relevant literature and analyzing studies with different perspectives, some arguments were put forward by the researcher in a way that would guide the planning of the study. After the literature review, the following arguments have been put forward:

- Argument 1:

The Covid-19 pandemic process could have disproportionately affected working women in the world and in Turkey, both in the private and public spheres.

- Argument 1a:

Within the scope of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic process on the public sphere, women's labor force participation and employment participation rates could have decreased, and income losses could have been observed intensely.

- Argument 1b:

Within the scope of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic process on the private sphere, women's domestic workload and care responsibilities could have increased disproportionately compared to their already high level in the pre-pandemic period.

- Argument 1c:

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic process on women, seen in the private sphere, could have been also reflected in the public sphere: Women's increased household burdens and care responsibilities in this process could have become even more difficult or, in some experiences, impossible to carry out together with business life where it could have been observed that women even had to leave the labor force participation.

1.4. Significance and Contributions

The contribution of this study, which is considered to be the most important, is to provide a background to policy design within the scope of placing a structure that can be resistant at the level of individuals and society in the event of a possible crisis similar to the Covid-19 pandemic in the future. In this context, a pandemic was experienced that tested the effects of current systems on individuals in a way that could be called "experimental" and the effects were reported. With this study, these effects are revealed, good practices in different countries are given and policy recommendations are presented to improve the experience in the Turkish context.

Another important contribution of this study is the effort to present a gender perspective to the social policy design in Turkey, which has important consequences for women with the lack of gender perspective. Noting, in this context, the importance of identifying, analyzing and reflecting women's needs in policy design processes in terms of meeting their needs, through this study, a literature is provided to the decision-making mechanisms of the country, which have a traditional approach based on gender roles, revealing that the existing conditions of women outside the crisis period expose them to the vulnerability in the crisis.

Finally, this study contributes to the social policy literature with a comprehensive structure that reveals the effects of the Covid-19 period on working women, examines good examples and offers policy recommendations to improve experience.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

As a limitation of this study, it focused on working women, so those of working age who are not in the workforce, students, retirees, and those who cannot work for various reasons such as illness or disability are excluded from the scope of this study review. In cases where a more comprehensive examination is intended, it is recommended that all of these women's groups be included in the study.

1.6. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters.

Following Chapter 1, Introduction, is Chapter 2, Research Method, in which the methodological aspects of the research are presented. In this context, the objectives of the research were stated, and the foundations of the research methodology were explained. Afterwards, the details of the desk review of the research are presented. The databases where the research was carried out were listed, the keywords used for the literature review were specified, and inclusion and exclusion criteria were presented. Finally, the resulting final pool of resources is listed.

Chapter 3, titled Discussion, forms the body of the thesis. In this context, following the presentation of the background of gender-based inequalities, findings from different studies on the effects of the pandemic at the global level, and then, in the context of Turkey are presented.

Within the scope of Chapter 4 titled Practices in Turkey and Best Practices from the World, in the first place, the practices implemented within the scope of combating the pandemic in Turkey were presented. Afterwards, examples of good practice from around the world will be examined, revealing the various steps taken to improve the

experiences of women from different countries around the world who were adversely affected by the pandemic.

Finally, within the scope of Chapter 5 titled Conclusion and Policy Recommendations, concluding points on the study findings and the needs for policy arrangements in this direction were stated. Afterwards, policy recommendations are presented to improve the experience of working women in Turkey in a similar crisis period.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to present the experiences of working women during the Covid-19 process, to present different examples of good practices from the world and to propose policy recommendations for Turkey within the scope of taking measures to deal with the negative experiences of this crisis and to minimize the negative effects that may be seen in a similar crisis.

The main concern of the thesis is to reveal that the lives of working women, which were already stuck between the private and public spheres in the pre-crisis periods, have become more chaotic with the crisis, by presenting it with a comprehensive background in the global and Turkish context and associating it with the context of the crisis.

By obtaining a gender perspective, this study deals with the problems and inequalities faced by women in working life with a holistic approach and examines the Turkish context after presenting this scope from a global level.

2.2. Methodology

The research method of this study is based on desk review, data collection, analysis, and lastly interpretation.

Before presenting the data collected within the scope of this study, a literature review was conducted to present a theoretical background. By presenting a conceptual

framework reflecting the experiences of working women in the world and in Turkey in the pre-pandemic period, it is aimed to present the situation before the pandemic and to make it possible to compare the situation created by the effects of the pandemic.

The data of this study is based on the literature review derived from the former research conducted in the field on the experience of working women in the Covid-19 process, which is the focus of the research questions of this study.

The desk review also covers examples of good practices applied in the world to improve the negative experiences of women during the Covid-19 process.

2.3. Databases

Certain databases were scanned during the desk review process carried out within the scope of this study. These databases are listed below:

- METU Library (accessed via <https://open.metu.edu.tr/>)
- TurkStat Data Portal (accessed via <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/>)
- Dergipark (accessed via <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/>)
- ResearchGate (accessed via <https://www.researchgate.net/>)
- Taylor & Francis Online (accessed via <https://www.tandfonline.com/>)
- Google Scholar (accessed via <https://scholar.google.com.tr/>)
- Google Search (accessed via <https://www.google.com/>)
- UN Women Resources (accessed via <https://www.unwomen.org/en/resources>)
- UN Digital Library (accessed via <https://digitallibrary.un.org/>)
- OECD Digital Library (accessed via <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/>)
- ILO Publications (accessed via <https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/lang--en/index.htm>)
- World Bank e-Library (accessed via <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/>)

2.4. Literature Selection and Search Keywords

Within the scope of the research conducted in the specified databases, all the reports and statistics published from the beginning of 2019 to October 2022 in the databases of international non-governmental organizations were examined, and those who served the purpose of the study were included in the scope.

Within the scope of the research carried out in the specified databases, in the article databases, the following keywords were searched in multiple different combinations:

- gender
- pandemic
- Covid-19
- work life balance
- working women
- gendered effects

2.5. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria at the stage of selection and elimination of the resources reached as a result of searching the different combinations of the specified keywords in the databases specified in Turkish and English are as follows:

- Having a gender perspective
- Containing data segregated by gender
- Examining the impact of the pandemic on working women on one or more factors among care, labor force, employment, unpaid labor, work-life balance etc.
- Presenting comprehensive and reliable statistics or data based on a sample that can be generalized to a population

The exclusion criteria at the stage of selection and elimination of the resources reached as a result of searching the different combinations of the specified keywords in the databases specified in Turkish and English are as follows:

- Exploring the effects of the pandemic in terms of gender-based violence
- Comprehensive statistics or resources studied with a sample that can be generalized to the population
- Not including working women, for example focusing on non-working, student or retired women

It is important to note that the resources on the effects of the pandemic in terms of gender-based violence are not included in this thesis because the researcher believes that this issue should be studied separately and specifically.

2.6. Final Pool of Resources

The research phase of the thesis was carried out between September 2021 - June 2022, then the research was carried out again with the same database, the same keywords and the same inclusion-exclusion criteria for current studies in the September-October 2022 period, and some newly produced relevant articles and reports that are found were included in the scope of the thesis.

Finally, a pool of resources was created as a result of the selection of relevant resources and elimination of non-relevant resources, following the evaluation of a wide range of resources reached as a result of searches in Turkish and English in the databases specified with different combinations of the selected keywords, according to inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The final pool of resources consists of articles as well as reports and publications of official institutions and national and international organizations.

The name, author(s), date and source details of all the articles and documents used in the study are provided in the bibliography section.

CHAPTER 3

DISCUSSION

The Covid-19 outbreak, which the World Health Organization (WHO) characterized as a "pandemic" on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020), has affected every phenomenon of people's lives all over the world, without exception, and as this study is being written, its effects continue still.

With the increase in deaths caused by the pandemic, many countries around the world have taken serious measures to slow down and control the spread of this dangerous disease. These measures included physical closure of workplaces in most of the areas except for providers of vital goods/services, government agencies working with a limited number of personnel, prevention of travel or permission under certain conditions, full lockdowns, curfews for certain periods or certain groups, quarantine measures related to the disease, closure of schools and care centers.

Examined in temporal order, due to the contagious character of Covid-19 through close contact, the most important intervention taken in the first place was the maintenance of "social distance". Within the framework of this measure, the home isolation measure, which progressed in parallel with the closure of schools and workplaces, and the process of working from home for employees and home education for students started. After the temporary closure of workplaces operating in sectors other than basic needs, many workplaces had to be closed permanently as a result of deteriorated economic activities. As the pandemic took a long time to be brought under control, the lifespan of the measures that slowed the economy was also extended, and economies that "slowed down with the pandemic" in the first place were dragged into an "economic crisis".

The pandemic, which started as a public health problem, caused a deep economic crisis as well as major social problems with the effects of the measures taken in parallel with its globality and taking a long time to be brought under control. As a result of the pandemic which has completely differentiated daily life, and the measures that come with it, it is possible to observe various effects in personal, social and professional areas, from hygiene habits to socialization rituals, work arrangements, transportation planning, public order, etc. Considering the duration of the pandemic, which has become widespread with the intense human mobility in the world of 21st century, and the globality of the geographical areas affected by this pandemic, it is seen that the effects has brought a global and deep transformation.

The first picture of the measures taken was that they left people from all socioeconomic groups under equal conditions and changed everyone's daily routines however, in a short time, it was seen that the conditions brought by the measures affected some people or groups more. The groups most affected by the negative effects experienced in working life were insecure groups, including women, migrants, informal workers, those with low education levels, and young workers (Güler, 2021).

The effects of restrictions on economic activities and curfews were reflected in the working life in a short time: worldwide, there was an increase in unemployment figures, loss in income and a decrease in labor force participation, while it was also noted that poverty and inequality in the labor market increased in parallel with these results. As a result of the analyzes made based on the peak figures experienced in poverty due to the effects of the pandemic process, it has been estimated that there will be 121 poor women for every 100 poor men at the global level by 2030 (UN Women, 2020a).

Like the wave effect of a stone thrown into the water, the measures, which were implemented immediately, created an environment suitable for the fight against the epidemic to acquire a "gender-blind" character (Yerlikaya, 2022). In conjunction with other inequalities, the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed more pronounced gender inequalities in labor markets than previously perceived, and it mentioned in

the Policy Brief of United Nations, this pandemic has led to the deepening of *inequalities that already exist all over the world*, with a specific effect on the vulnerabilities within socioeconomic systems (UN, 2020).

The background to these inequalities will be presented in the next section, before presenting the implications of the Covid-19 process.

3.1. Background: The “Already Existing” Inequalities

The socio-economic effects seen with the Covid-19 pandemic and the changes it caused, as mentioned before, damaged some groups more disproportionately than others all over the world, and women were the major group that faced the greatest impacts. Although it is stated that these effects are seen all over the world, the experience in every country has not been the same. The results varied due to the different backgrounds and structures of the countries. In the contexts of countries characterized as developing and emerging economies, it has been reported that women have higher rates of being unemployed or leaving the workforce, loss of income and increase in household labor burdens due to background reasons such as the high informal working population, the discriminatory nature of the legislation, and traditional social perceptions (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020).

Among all, the main force under which women are disproportionately affected by the social and economic outcomes created by the conditions under the measures against the Covid-19 pandemic is traditionalized gender roles, which have been carried over to the present in almost every society in historical progress (OECD, 2021).

It has been reported that those who are most affected by the socioeconomic consequences of the epidemic and by the measures taken for the epidemic are women, who are the providers of unpaid labor at home and paid labor in the market (UN Women & UN DESA, 2021). Under the societal and domestic conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the impact, and so to speak, pressure of established social norms on gender roles has increased, resulting in women being

economically disempowered and overloaded by the burden of domestic labor, as a result of the combination of influences in the public and private spheres.

In the ongoing stages of human history, on the basis of biological characteristics, men and women have been identified by the societies with the public and private spheres and the types of labor in parallel, and this perception has turned into a culturally constructed norm over time. With the establishment of this norm in different cultures, it is seen that the established gender perceptions have entered a reproduction cycle, which is reflected from the household to the society and from there to the labor market (Yerlikaya, 2022).

It is known that the tradition based on gender roles, socially constructed on the basis of patriarchal norms, prevails in most societies in today's world; and as a result of these roles assigned to individuals by society in parallel with their gender, there is a connection with the weight of women's unpaid, "invisible" labor in the private sphere at the core of the problems women face in the public sphere.

The public space-private space duality, also known as "gendered division of labor", that women are regarded as the primary responsible for unpaid domestic production and care in the household, and men for paid labor in the public sphere, is the basis of the inequality that women experience in both the private and public spheres (Yerlikaya, 2022). While the inequality created by these socially constructed gender roles was affecting every aspect of women's lives even in the pre-epidemic period and creating different obstacles for their entrance/participation in the labor force and their continued employment, in such a crisis period that brings with it countless difficulties, women had to struggle with greater obstacles in the private sphere as well as in the public sphere.

Another consequence of the division of labor based on the dichotomy of the private-public sphere is that women's participation in paid employment is considered as a non-compulsory, optional condition, and it is almost an obligatory duty for men to do so however, even when women are in paid employment, they remain primarily responsible for unpaid labor in the household (Mies, 2014, cited in Yerlikaya, 2022).

As an extension of constructed social perceptions, it is seen that men also adopt certain roles and hinder, do not perform or prioritize those other than these roles. In their study, Clare Wenham and Liana Woskie found that even domestic work was "feminized". Accordingly, while those related to the public sphere of household chores - doing the duty of shopping for the house, etc. - are more adopted by men, the responsibilities of women concentrate on those within the confines of the home, which is characterized as the private sphere (Wenham & Woskie, 2021, as cited in Kabeer, 2021). Besides the persistence of gender norms in this study and similar ones, the inflexible approaches to the workplace conditions and employment structures of employees in the business world also result in men putting domestic responsibilities on a secondary level and outside of their responsibility, while placing employment as the primary priority (Gornick & Meyers, 2009, as cited in Craig & Churchill, 2021).

The burden of women being the main providers of domestic production and unpaid care labor as a result of the gendered division of labor also makes it difficult for women to participate in employment, and in the cases when they are included in employment, they face discrimination in crucial areas of employment such as working hours, wages and working conditions (Yerlikaya, 2022). The character of gender roles, which is the product of a cultural construction process, has caused women, who are already exposed to a dual workload, to face with the result that these burdens increase even more during the Covid-19 pandemic. In times of crisis, as the combined burden of labor in the public and private spheres and the pressure on women increase, the analysis of gender roles and efforts to solve the gender inequality brought by it become more important.

Building on the information provided by this theoretical background, the next section will present the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic process on working women at a global level.

3.2. Global Level: Effects of the Pandemic in the World

As mentioned earlier, practices such as social isolation and curfew, which are the unique regulations applied almost all over the world due to the Covid-19 process, have caused different groups to face different problems due to the established norms in society and the roles created by these norms. Due to the nature of the pandemic, which is contagious with close contact and creates deadly consequences, urgent measures have become necessary, and this situation of urgency has also strengthened the capacity of being gender-blind in the production of policies to combat the pandemic and its effects, of policy production, which already has a masculine operation.

It would not be correct to consider women as a homogeneous group and to state that each of them was affected at the same rate in the effects of this process, but the existing inequalities have become more aggrieved in some contexts and in some women's groups. In this context, the socio-economic status, social class, age and regional characteristics of the society they live in play a role in the differences in how women are affected (Sumbas, 2021).

3.2.1. Context of Unpaid Labor

There is a common misconception that domestic works and care responsibilities fall disproportionately to women only in traditional societies in which patriarchal cultural norms are prevalent. In fact, these tasks are performed disproportionately by women all around the world despite the perceived predominance of women in patriarchal societies (World Economic Forum, 2019, cited in Yerlikaya, 2022).

Considering the pre-pandemic period, the burden of domestic work and care services, women's unpaid labor, was disproportionately distributed between women and men. It was a well-known fact that women spent significantly more time than men for these forms of labor in the household. And yet, in pre-pandemic conditions, balancing time coordination and responsibilities for paid employment and domestic responsibilities was already a challenge, especially in households with working

women. This dual time constraint was a source of stress and pressure for mothers who wanted to maintain their employment status, especially in households with working mothers with young children (Jacobs & Gerson, 2004, as cited in Craig & Churchill, 2021).

Noting the emphasis on working mothers with young children, who experience this negative experience most intensely, “work-life balance” emerges as a difficult need to be met for many working women and men with children, but this balance is seen as problematic mostly from the point of view of women (Craig & Churchill, 2021).

3.2.1.1. Blurring the Temporal and Spatial Boundaries between Work and Household

The lesson learned from the experiences in previous epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola has been that during such epidemics, the care responsibilities of women in the household –care for children, for the elderly and for the sick– exceeded the pre-epidemic level (Seck et al., 2021). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the measures that create social isolation, such as quarantine, curfew, lockdown, which are based on the rule of protection of social distance, have especially damaged women in the work-life balance (Sumbas, 2021). In this context, the boundaries between the place and time where paid employment is realized and the place and time where domestic works are provided have disappeared and there has been a temporal and spatial overlap, which is the main reason for various problems that arise both in the household and in employment (Craig & Brown, 2017).

Under the conditions brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, not leaving the house due to fear or being forced to stay at home due to the rules, as a result of the blurring of the boundaries of work and household, as well as the daily routines of individuals living within the confines of the house has also created one of the conditions that increase the domestic burden. In the face of these conditions, with the change in the lifestyle in today's world, which is based on spending most of the time outside the borders of the household, the gender inequality in the focus of women's unpaid labor has become more visible and has increased disproportionately with unique changes.

3.2.1.2. Unavoidable Increase in Unpaid Labor

The responsibilities of women who have transitioned to the home-work system and the temporal and sometimes spatial conflicts of these responsibilities with other roles appear as another problem. Compensation for the purchase of domestic services, which has become difficult or impossible to obtain from the market, has also been a burden on women. The responsibility of the increase in the needs brought by the fact that the number of present individuals in the household have increased and the fact that these more individuals have spent more time within the boundaries of the household (Craig & Churchill, 2021), has felt on the women who undertake the arrangement of the home space and all kinds of care services (child, elderly, sick, etc.) in the household.

However, it should be emphasized regarding the increase in the workload in the household that although more individuals staying and them spending more time in the household is an important factor and a sub-reason under other factors, the important effects of other reasons that increase the workload cannot be denied.

3.2.1.3. Unequal Distribution of Unpaid Labor

When the pre-pandemic period is examined, it is seen in data of International Labour Organization that women were already spending 4.1 hours a day for domestic production and unpaid care work even before the pandemic, while the time allocated to this form of labor by men was 1.7 hours (ILO, 2017), which is a situation called "women's second shift" in the feminist literature.

Data indicates that although gender inequalities differ between countries and are particularly pronounced in developing country contexts, even prior to the pandemic, women were already spending three times as much time providing care for their families and performing unpaid household chores than men (UN, 2020; UN Women & UN DESA, 2019). In this respect, the findings of different studies conducted around the world concerning time use show that the number of total hours worked by

women is higher when paid work is combined with unpaid work when it is compared to men (UN Women, 2019).

In the OECD, there appears to be no country where men spend equal or more time in the unpaid work than women: According to regional statistics, women devote just over 4 hours in a 24-hour period to domestic labor, which is two hours more than men spend working. (OECD, 2021). It has been noted that these average rates seen in countries across the OECD are experienced with different inequalities in the context of different countries.

When the OECD-wide rates are examined, inequality in household unpaid labor is reported as 2.5 hours in Korea and Japan, while this statistic is recorded as the highest in Turkey with 4 hours, which are the cultures where traditional roles are established (OECD, 2021). While it is not surprising to see these rates in countries with traditional gender attitudes, gender equality is not achieved even in so-called developed, progressive or equality-supporting countries. In this sense, although the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish contexts show that there is a perception that seems to be gender-conscious and aims to achieve equality, even so, statistics on the time allocated for unpaid household labor between women and men reveal a difference of approximately 1 hour (OECD, 2021).

Behind the inequality in the use of time, it has been reported that almost all of the burden of extra household unpaid labor arising from the closure of schools and care centers under the conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic, when viewed from a global perspective, is provided by women. Putting aside the fact that this inequality was widespread in the pre-pandemic period, domestic work and care responsibilities, which are included in the scope of unpaid labor, are still disproportionately distributed in the household, even at a time when the time spent in the household is increasing due to Covid-19, when there is the potential to share responsibilities more equitably among parents (Queisser, 2021).

In the light of the necessity of domestic production and care work for the sustainability of economic and social life in societies, it is an ironic problem that this

time use gap created by the excess unpaid labor burden of women prevents women from participating or staying in the labor market cycle that continues on the back of women's unpaid labor. The changing conditions during the pandemic process have created an experimental environment, so to speak, that shows the importance of this unpaid labor. The nature of this pandemic, which differs from other crises, originated the dilemma of developing a solution to the difficulty of carrying out paid work in households due to the closure of schools and care centers as a result of quarantine and social distance rules, together with labor that requires special time such as care and home education (Cook & Grimshaw, 2021).

It was found that similar results were obtained in this sense by a public opinion survey conducted by Focus 2030 and Women Deliver in 17 countries across six continents and in 17 countries. In the study, the results indicated that, on average, 48% of women and 38% of men responded that, during the Covid-19 process, the amount of time allocated to household workload had increased (Focus 2030 & Women Deliver, 2021). As a matter of fact, one could say that the findings published in this study, which cover half of the world's population and, in this context, half of the population of women and girls aged 18 and over, do have a great deal of importance.

During April and May 2020, UN Women conducted a Rapid Gender Assessment across Europe and Central Asia in countries Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, and Turkey. The household burden index of the Rapid Gender Assessment survey revealed that the time spent on housework and care responsibilities in the household increased in this process, but this has not been experienced with an equal distribution between men and women: Based on the index which is calculated as the average number of these activities, while these responsibilities for women are stated to be provided with 3.2 activities of labor, this was expressed as 2.3 by men (UN Women, 2020b). In the mentioned index, while the average activity of married women was recorded as 3.6, it was reported as 4.1 for women with children in parallel with the conditions experienced with the pandemic.

According to the findings of the research data conducted by Andrew et al. (2020) with 3,500 families, it was found that among women and men who switched to working from home as a result of the restrictions in the Covid-19 period, the time that working women spared for childcare together in addition to their paid work was higher than that of men: The data reveals that while women devote an average of 10.3 hours of 24 hours in childcare-related activities, men participate in related activities for 8 hours. Findings on the time devoted to domestic chores, without revealing a different result, also revealed that women spend 1.7 hours more time on this form of labor than men in 24 hours (Andrew et al., 2020).

Examining the leading reasons behind the statistics found by the survey of UN Women, within the scope of burden of care work falling on women, it was revealed that the time allocated to take care of the education of children receiving distance education and to play with them and to provide care for the elderly increased, and within the scope of domestic work, more hours were allocated for cleaning, cooking and house arrangement compared to the hours spent for these works before the pandemic (UN Women, 2020b).

According to the expression of those between the ages of 18-34, which is the group that mostly includes the women who have children at a young age, it has been reported that women in this age group experience a large increase in time allotted compared to older women for care responsibilities and domestic work under unpaid labor (UN Women, 2020b). Contrary to these statistics on women, it has been reported that the role of men within the scope of domestic affairs and care responsibilities is to help, while their main duty is to work in the public sphere, and it has been found by the study that the load of unpaid work and household responsibilities -including cooking, cleaning, caring, emotionally supporting etc. for the household members- falls on women unequally (UN Women, 2020b).

As mentioned earlier, in the pandemic era, the fact that there was an increase in the number of people staying at home caused women's responsibilities towards unpaid care not just for the child, but for the entire household and the burden of housework to increase even further (UN Women, 2020a). In addition to this, the need for home

treatment of the disease due to the increasing burden of health systems was another factor that led to an increase in women's domestic roles (UN, 2020).

The findings of a subsample of working parents in a national survey of 2722 Australian men and women conducted by Craig and Churchill during the Covid-19 quarantine in May 2020 were also informative. The results of the study revealed that the unpaid workload of working women and men in the study increased greatly during the pandemic process in comparison to the pre-pandemic period, whereas the paid work declined slightly. These results supported previous studies concerning the effects of pandemics on the working population. Moreover, working women with children are also experiencing an increase in the amount of time allocated to unpaid work (Craig & Churchill, 2021).

In addition, the researchers found that, on average, unpaid housework and the need to provide care for the family were responsible for an increase in the amount of time devoted to housework. Parallel to the previous studies, it has been noted that a larger number of people are spending more time in the household, resulting in increased housework. Participants stated that the decrease in the number of household jobs procured from the market was indeed one of the factors that contributed to this incline. During the period during which the Covid-19 pandemic occurred, the paid productive labor provided by the market prior to the pandemic experienced a large shift from on-demand to unpaid labor provided by households as a result of the conditions experienced during the pandemic. As the study found, women experienced a greater increase in unpaid labor than men in absolute terms. In comparison to the mean pre-pandemic findings of the study, however, males experienced a greater proportional difference in unpaid labor, resulting in a reduction in gender differences in time devoted to caring.

There was a significant diminishing of the gap between women and men in terms of providing active care work and supervisory care in the context of childcare during this period. Yet, on the other hand, the amount of labor that is involved in housework and household management, which cover a significant part of household responsibilities, has remained relatively constant among women. The inequality in

this area did not seem to decrease during this period. The data of the study on this subject revealed that it is true that male labor has been observed increasing in the household, but it is more important to consider the context of this labor. Here, it is seen that men actually fill the time they spend as labor in the household as spending time with children, and they do not increase the time they spend on housework and management of the house, which is in line with a large number of studies that have been conducted over long periods of time indicating that men are spending more time on childcare than they are on housework (Sullivan et al., 2018, as cited in Craig & Churchill, 2021). As has been observed in the long term, and in a variety of contexts, this finding has been observed consistently over time.

Within the scope of the remote working measures taken against Covid-19, the expectation has emerged that the traditional gendered division of labor will be broken by the transition of women and men to work from home, and the burden of women will decrease as men have a greater role in domestic production and care labor. However, many studies have revealed that this expectation did not match the reality.

As noted by the study conducted by Thébaud, Kornrich, and Ruppanner (2019), men are already more likely to leave domestic responsibilities for women to complete and are more inclined to ignore these, dealing only with the “pleasant” aspects of childcare responsibility, for example (Stevano et al., 2021, as cited in Kabeer et al., 2021). At this point, it is noteworthy that while women tend to carry out their duties in their household without distinguishing between their responsibilities, men have the ability to be selective about their involvement. It is argued that the reason why men prefer this type of labor is that the time spent with the child is a “rewarding” form of labor (Craig & Churchill, 2021). The conclusion that can be drawn from this perspective is that what falls under the responsibility of women include not rewarding or enjoyable jobs, but ordinary or unpleasant jobs, which have a labor intensity that is high.

Deloitte also conducted a survey, which included the responses of 385 working women across Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Japan, the United Kingdom and

the United States, to provide insights into their experiences as working women. This study found that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic were reflected in working women's routines, their physical and mental health, and their careers. Almost ninety percent of the women who participated in the study indicated that they experienced changes in their everyday planning and how they spend their daily time under the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, yet 92% of this group felt that these changes had a negative effect on their lives. Among women who reported that the changes had disrupted their daily planning and scheduling, a 40% group stated that the disruptions prevented them from maintaining a work-life balance due to the disruptions in their daily planning and scheduling. A further 40% of the working women in this group stated that these negative circumstances adversely affect their physical and psychological health. A closer look at the additional statistics that were collected from this same group, reveals that 65% of the women in the same group indicated that their responsibilities for housework had increased with the Covid-19 process, and almost a third said that their total workload had increased as well. Furthermore, 58% of working women with children also reported that they faced an increase in the burden of childcare and 53% reported having increased the burden of homeschooling responsibilities within the same group (Deloitte, 2020).

İlkkaracan and Memiş also revealed in their study in 2021 that the unpaid working time of women increased by about 2 hours a day during the Covid-19 pandemic (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021). The finding reveals what the authors call the collapse of the “illusion of the modern woman”, shows that in the conditions created by the pandemic measures, women with higher education and purchasing power were also unable to resist, and the educational status was not decisive in the face of unpaid work, unlike before the pandemic.

3.2.1.4. Disproportionate Increase in Time Dedicated to Care Labor

The grievances faced by women during the pandemic measures have had even more negative effects on working women who have children, and the integration of the private and public spheres in this process has been one of the main driving forces of the difficulties. As a result of this intertwining, it has been observed that the time

allocated for unpaid domestic production and care has increased, and there have been losses in different dimensions in terms of paid labor. Under the extraordinary conditions brought by the pandemic measures, the group with the highest increase in the time allocated to care work was the women with children.

According to data of UN Women (2021), in terms of women with children, who allocated 28 hours a week for childcare responsibility in the pre-pandemic period, the time allocated for this labor under pandemic conditions increased to 31 hours. As a result of this disproportion between men and women in terms of time use, the already high workload of working women has increased even more.

In this context, it can be said that the basis of the difficulties faced by women was trying to keep up with an intense daily routine. With the closure of schools, the fact that school-age children switched to receive distance education within the borders of their home has become a phenomenon added to the burden of care. In addition to the closure of schools and care centers as part of the measures taken, and the transition of workplaces to a format where millions of people work from their homes, home care and domestic work responsibilities have increased as a result of the fear posed by the Covid-19 pandemic for health and hygiene.

Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, almost 16% of women with care responsibilities who participated in the Deloitte survey indicated that they provided 75% or more of the care for their children or other family members. When it comes to data on care responsibilities for children, the elderly, and patients during pandemic, it was observed that the number of women stating that they take on 75% of or more of the responsibility has increased almost three times as compared to the statistics prior to the outbreak, which was observed when care responsibilities were covering all types of care for children, the elderly, and patients. It was found that the working mothers with caring responsibilities surveyed had to assume additional responsibilities in order to cope with distance education and caring for other dependents, a consequence that negatively impacted their overall quality of life (Deloitte, 2020).

3.2.1.5. Disappearance of Alternatives to Care Labor

As schools have closed all over the world and households have isolated within the physical home environment, the care of children has moved from the paid economy, which means schools, day-care centers, and babysitters, to the unpaid economy, where this labor is performed by family members. For the care responsibilities, while there were alternatives such as support from the family institution or service from the market for domestic work and care responsibilities in the pre-pandemic life order, these supports had to disappear during the pandemic process. These alternatives include formal and informal services such as the purchase of care for the sick, the elderly or the child, the services of cleaning workers, services such as ironing, laundry, cooking, the care centers, and the support of the family institution for care and domestic work (Sumbas, 2021). The compulsory suspension of grandparent-based support, which plays a significant role in the scope of care within the Mediterranean regime, including Turkey, in the context of family institution, together with the social isolation and curfews that have been imposed as part of the Covid-19 process, have been another contributing factor to rising household problems (Moreno, 2011).

Putting their other downsides aside, extended families and households are central to care and intimacy (UN Women, 2019). With the transition to work from home and distance education, a physical environment has formed where the private sphere and the public space meet, paid and unpaid labor are intertwined, care services purchased from the market or provided by grandparents have also become mostly inaccessible (Zamarro et al., 2020). As childcare support services, which include options such as care centers, home care services, and care support by a relative such as a grandparent, decrease, the responsibility of childcare is mostly a role undertaken by women (Yolcu & Sezgin, 2021).

3.2.1.6. Falling Behind the Pre-Pandemic Level in Gender Equality Already Not Achieved

The confinement of working women's domestic responsibilities and roles in the labor market to the home area reveals the victimization of women in the pandemic process (Yolcu & Sezgin, 2021). In fact, the increased labor burden of household on women as a result of the gendered division of labor led to the interruption of the recent, already limited, progress in gender equality around the world, and cause to be worried that this progress will even fall further behind (ILO, 2021a).

Moreover, while progress was slow despite the steps taken to ensure equality before the pandemic, it has been reported that for the first time in the history of humanity, a regression has been experienced in the field of gender equality, with the effects of the global pandemic, and according to analysis, it will take another 136 years to achieve gender equality worldwide. (World Economic Forum, 2021).

In addition, The Women in Work Index, which provides information on the basis of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) analyzes and based on women's labor market statistics, including indicators such as women's labor force participation rate, unemployment rates and gender equality in wages, showed a decline in 2020 for the first time, after a "decade of slow but steady improvement" (PWC, n.d.) in women's employment rates, progress towards gender equality in employment in 33 OECD countries has resulted in at least two years reversing.

3.2.2. Context of Employment

It is observed that the effects of a deep economic crisis created by the Covid-19 crisis are affecting all populations all over the world and to a greater or lesser extent. However, the reflection of these economic effects on women's job and income security was more dramatic than that of men. The reasons for this unequal effect include inequalities in access to gender-based economic opportunities, differences in access to markets, gender-based norms and discriminations in occupations and

sectors, as well as gender gap, and, most fundamentally, gender roles, which were the realities existing in the pre-crisis period (OECD, 2020).

It has been identified by ILO that the effects of the pandemic on women and men differ depending on the sector in which individuals work, their level of vulnerability in employment, their access to labor and social protection, and their care responsibilities (ILO, 2020a). Under the influence of these factors, albeit at different levels and contexts, it has been found that working women have experienced job loss, especially in the informal sector and service sector, as well as loss of income, withdrawal from the workforce, reduction in paid working hours, diversification in employment forms, and resorting to coping arrangements such as unpaid leave. These experiences will be examined in the next subsections.

3.2.2.1. Decline in Women's Employment Rates and Increase in the Number of Women Withdrawn from Labor Force Completely

According to the data collected by UN Women and UN DESA during the crisis caused by the pandemic, there was a significant drop in the number of employed women by 54 million women, and an overall withdrawal of 45 million women from the labor force as a result, resulting in greater job losses for women than men. Looking at women's employment on the basis of global data, while the employment of men decreased by 3% from 2019 to year 2020 when the pandemic broke out, this rate was recorded as 4.2% for women (UN Women & UN DESA, 2021).

There has been a lot of widespread, abrupt, and exposure changes as a result of implementing the quarantine in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which have affected how working hours, work schedules, and ways of working have been changed for men and women working (Kulic et al., 2020).

3.2.2.2. Decrease in Hours of Paid Work

Based on the findings of the Rapid Gender Assessment survey conducted between April and May 2020 by the UN Women, it was revealed that more than 15 percent of

women who responded to the survey lost their jobs, and 41 percent had their hours of paid work reduced by more than four percent (UN Women, 2020b). The findings of the research data conducted by Andrew et al. (2020) with 3,500 families revealed that while working women spent 6.3 hours per week for paid work in the pre-pandemic period, this time decreased to 4.9 hours during the pandemic period. When comparing women and men with children working in a paid job, it was also reported that women's working hours decreased more than men due to the effects of the pandemic (Andrew et al., 2020).

There has been a disproportionate effect on self-employed women caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the Rapid Gender Assessment study, it was found that the self-employed women were the most affected of all working women's groups, and that around 70 percent of them were faced with reducing their hours of paid work or losing their jobs as a result of these changes. The percentage of women who lost their jobs in this group was 25%, as opposed to the percentage of men who lost their jobs, which was 21%, and the percentage of women who reduced their working hours was 49% in comparison to 53% for men (UN Women, 2020b). In any case, whether employed or self-employed, it is reported that the measure towards closure of schools and day-care centers in effect during the quarantine period extended childcare and education obligations for women and men, regardless of employment status (UN Women, 2020b).

3.2.2.3. Arrangements in Employment Context to Meet Needs

According to a study of work-life balance satisfaction, compared to the pre-pandemic period, working mothers with children aged 0-5 had greater difficulty striking a balance between work and family during the Covid-19 pandemic (Del Boca et al., 2020).

Women in most cases are the ones who make arrangements within employment in order to meet the expectations created by gender roles arising from established norms, which has a long history in which women are considered caregivers and men as the primary source of income. Consequently, women are those who alter the way,

structure, or even presence of employment and, in some cases, withdraw from the workforce in order to meet domestic demands and care needs in the home (Ranson, 2012; Warren, Fox, & Pascall, 2009; as cited in Craig & Churchill, 2021).

Another study conducted at the United Nations revealed that with the increase in the necessity of responsibilities at home and the effects of the pandemic process increasing gender equality in the workforce, there were negative consequences for women with children, reported as reducing their working hours to meet care requirements and harming their career development (Collins, Landivar, Ruppner, & Scarborough, 2021). The findings of this study, where dual earner households with children were examined, revealed that the working hours of mothers with children in primary school age decreased due to the distance education of their children at home, and in parallel, mothers with children between 1-5 years of age reduced their working hours by an average of 1.8 hours, where there was no significant change observed in work hours among fathers of younger children.

Approximately 10% of working women with children quit their jobs during the pandemic, according to the 2020 Women's Health Survey conducted by Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). Half of those respondents indicated that school closures were a contributing factor to their quitting decision (Ranji et al., 2021). Working mothers faced many added responsibilities as a result of schools switching from face-to-face to distance education. This included childcare and assisting with distance education more than usual. According to the findings of the KFF study, it was found that low-income women were three times more likely to quit their jobs due to the pandemic than high-income women, whereas the rate of leaving the job of single women with children was found to be significantly higher at 17% compared to 9% of women with children who are married or have a partner (Ranji et al., 2021).

There are many factors that contribute to women taking on a large amount of housework and the burdens of caring for their families in the context of their unpaid labor. This limits their work hours and their ability to concentrate on their work, especially for those who have to work from home during this period, so their productivity is decreased.

There have been many cases where the pre-pandemic order of work and family life, which is primarily based on space, time and business management, has disappeared, resulting in disruption of the career processes of many middle-class women in work (Sumbas, 2021). In this time period, women were perhaps most vulnerable to the problem of juggling work responsibilities in parallel with the time and place in which they cared for their spouses and children as well as housework and care for the children. As a result of the inclusion of the public sphere in which women carry out economic activities in the private sphere, working women have experienced a tiring and wearisome process in their effort to be both mothers and working women at home (Sumbas, 2021).

Apart from the fact that women prefer employment arrangements (or find themselves in conditions that they will have to do), it has been observed that there are workplaces that force their employees to take unpaid leave due to the economic contraction caused by the pandemic. An evaluation by UN Women found that approximately 10 percent of working women in Europe and Central Asia are forced to take unpaid leave, while only 6 percent are permitted to take partially paid leave according to their preferences (UN Women, 2020b). The Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) conducted the Women's Health Survey in 2020 on 4,805 adult participants in the United States and found that 47% of working mothers with children were granted unpaid sick leave as a result of their children's school or care center closing. This rate of working mothers with children who were granted unpaid sick leave was found to be as high as 65% for low-income mothers and as high as 70% for those working in part-time jobs (Ranji et al., 2021).

3.2.2.4. Implementing New Forms of Employment

It was also as a result of quarantine and social isolation policies that various coping mechanisms were introduced in employment, such as shift work, flexible work, remote working, unpaid leave, and short work (Sumbas, 2021).

UN Women's Rapid Gender Assessment shows that 44 percent of women who previously worked outside their homes as a form of employment switched to working from home as a form of employment as a result of the pandemic, compared to only 28% of men. It has been reported that one of the factors behind this rate is that highly feminized sectors such as schools and care centers have stopped working with the pandemic (UN Women, 2020b).

Teleworking or working from electronic devices and working from home, which are forms of employment within the scope of remote work, have become widespread globally during the curfew and distance rules imposed due to the nature of the pandemic (Thompson, 2022). In line with the ILO's reports, 17.4 percent of the world's employment, and that corresponds to approximately 557 million workers worldwide, was worked at home in the second quarter of 2020, when the first effects of the pandemic could be observed all over the world. Later, as the pandemic progressed, curfews and social distancing rules, that are common in the world due to the nature of the pandemic, were introduced in many countries, which led to an increase of almost 19 percent in the number of employees working from home, with a record of well over 50% in the countries with high incomes (ILO, 2021, cited in Thompson, 2022).

Based on the Deloitte research that was conducted in 2020, during the Covid-19 process, 46% of the working women who took part in the study, who switched to working from home, reported that they felt that the company was putting pressure on them to be accessible at all times in terms of their work, such as being online outside of working hours, or answering e-mails at any time that the company wished (Deloitte, 2020). In the study, 45% of the women who responded that they felt overwhelmed, while 48% of them reported that their physical health had suffered as a consequence of having to be available to respond to requests at all times as a result of feeling pressured to be available.

According to the findings of a study conducted with more than 1,000 parents with children working from home in the USA, men find the remote work system more beneficial than women. According to the results of the surveys conducted with the

parents in the process of working from home, 34% of men and 9% of women stated that they were promoted, while 26% of men reported an increase in their salaries compared to 13% of women (Rogers, 2020). During this change of work order, 28% of men stated that they took responsibility in critical jobs, while only 10% of women were given such responsibilities. Again, within the correlation, only 7% of women received positive feedback, while it was almost twice as much as 15% in men (Rogers, 2020). It would be wrong to say that these statistics are only related to the remote working order, because inequalities towards women in the job market were a fact that existed before the pandemic, so the effect of this background on these data should not be denied.

3.2.2.5. Sectors Severely Adversely Affected

It is also noted in different studies that the pandemic negatively affected some sectors more than others. During the Covid-19 crisis, the most significant reason for segregating the negative effects of employment was the structure of stereotyped sectoral compositions of employment for men and women, a fact which is closely related to the feminization and masculinization of sectors and occupations, as illustrated by the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2021c).

As opposed to the 2008 Economic Crisis, where sectors where men occupied the majority of positions were heavily impacted by the effects of the crisis, such as the construction-related subsector and manufacturing-based subsector, where men dominated the work force, this did not happen during the Covid-19 pandemic. After the outbreak of a global public health crisis in 2020, social distancing and quarantine measures, which were introduced to deal with this outbreak, and subsequent global economic collapse as a result of these conditions, have severely affected occupations in the service sector, which are overrepresented by women (Kulic, 2020).

The number of women working in the service industries covers around half of the total global workforce (Empower Women, 2020). Most of the sub-branches of this sector typically do not have the type of work that will allow remote working as a feature of their nature of work. Therefore, it has been noted that as a result of the

introduction of quarantine and curfew rules brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic and during the slowed down or closure of workplaces, women employed in such professions faced risks, lost their jobs, lost their income, or perhaps even quit their jobs. There is a substantial number of women who work in occupations within the service sector which do not offer remote working conditions so when they leave their homes to work on regular basis, they may need assistance with the care of their children or elderly family members who may need care in the household while they are away from home (OECD, n.d., as cited in Empower Women, 2020).

While it has been reported that the wholesale and retail trade, the hospitality, catering and tourism sectors, labor-intensive manufacturing sectors such as garment making, arts and entertainment services, business services, and the domestic work are among the occupations most affected by the pandemic, it has also been noted that employment losses in many countries around the world occurred in the service sector in the first place (ILO, 2021c; Kabeer, Razavi, & van der Meulen Rodgers, 2021). It is known that female workers are in majority in these mentioned sectors, where layoffs and economic stagnation were intense as a result of pandemic (UN, 2020).

In the service sector, women are over-represented in jobs defined as "feminized jobs characterized by low wages and poor working conditions, including the lack of basic worker protections such as paid sickness and family leave" and it is estimated that 54% of the population working in these jobs are women, which represents 75.4 million women (Yerlikaya, 2022, p.73). Looking at the global data, while men employed in the sectors most adversely affected during the pandemic process are 36.6% of all men in employment, this rate is seen as almost 40% for women (ILO, 2020b).

According to the statistics on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries, including Turkey, the majority of women are employed in these sectors which have low resistance to economic crises, of which sectors include service sector branches such as manufacturing, tourism and travel. In addition, most of the women are heavily represented in micro and small enterprises, and they are also employed in

part-time jobs rather than the "standard" form of employment, which are the areas where layoffs are the first solution resorted to in times of crisis (OECD, 2020).

Noting that service sectors account for 38.7% of employment rates in the global economy, women make up 54% of employment in the hospitality and catering sector and 61% of those employed in the arts, entertainment and other services (ILO, 2020b). Due to women overrepresenting in the sectors that were most affected by the pandemic, they suffered disproportionately higher job and income losses than the men during this crisis (Nagaraj, 2021, as cited in Thompson, 2022).

3.2.2.6. Precarious Jobs: The Shock of the Informal Economy

It is reported that women were already at a disadvantage when it comes to employment rates, full-time employment, and representation in managerial positions compared to men even in the pre-pandemic period (ILO, 2021b). It was the case even prior to the pandemic that the employment rate of women among the labor force participation rates is low globally. In addition, the representation rate of women in full-time and secure jobs, which are considered "standard" employment, is also low.

Even in the pre-pandemic period, women were disproportionately employed in non-common, precarious forms of labor, in which they were more likely to lose their jobs when the lockdown started and as the economic crisis continued to gain momentum (Cook & Grimshaw, 2021). Often, women themselves and their families are placed at risk of poverty and hunger due to the lack of social protection available in countries where they and their families lack equal access to government and financial services. As a result, women are unable to meet their basic needs such as food and shelter because of the lack of income they have lost (ILO, 2021c).

It is known that the Covid-19 crisis affects men and women differently, depending on the sector of the economy in which one works, the amount and type of social support the person is entitled to, and the role they play in providing care for their families. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, as in previous crises, the most vulnerable are those who are employed informally, and particularly in developing

countries where female employment rates are low and informal employment is prevalent. In addition to that, women who are employed informally have the highest risk of losing their sources of income.

According to studies on the population working in the informal sector, women were employed informally in the pre-pandemic population at a rate of 92% in developing countries and 64% in emerging countries (Bonnet, Vanek, & Chen, 2019). In line with this fact, it was noted that most of the employment loss rates experienced by women due to the pandemic were among the informal sector, and those working in the informal sector faced serious difficulties due to the contagious nature of the epidemic as well as the economic activities that slowed down due to quarantine measures (Yerlikaya, 2022).

The informal sector has seen a number of women lose their livelihoods as a result of temporary or permanent closure rules, resulting in a dramatic loss of income and the risk of them falling into poverty, in several cases (Thompson, 2022). It is estimated that the population working in the informal sector, which has experienced a large proportion of employment loss during the pandemic process, is approximately 2 billion in the world (ILO, 2020c). When the statistics of the informal sector in terms of women around the world are examined, it is seen that women working in the informal sector are at the forefront of the population, where the most reflections of employment losses brought by this global crisis are seen, with a large share of the informal sector, where an already dense population works, due to the over-representation of 70% specifically in developing countries (UN, 2020).

A report by the UN Women and UN DESA revealed that women who worked in informal employment reported a decline in incomes to 42.4% of what they had earned before the pandemic (UN Women & UN DESA, 2020). This is due primarily to the increase in the households' responsibility for providing direct care, as a result of the fact that care support cannot be obtained from either the family institution or the market under Covid-19 conditions.

The extent of the pandemic's effects on workers in the informal sector may be much greater than the reported estimates, particularly when unemployment is a major risk, illness is high, and care needs increase disproportionately. The effects of the pandemic may be far greater than previously estimated, particularly if workers lack access to social protection systems offering unemployment compensation, sickness benefits, and care leave benefits. During the pandemic, in addition to high unemployment and income losses in the informal economy, a highly concentrated area of employment for women, it has been reported that, despite limited information regarding formal employment, the number of working hours in this sector has decreased as well (Kabeer et al., 2021).

3.2.2.7. Working at the Heart of Risk: The Health and Care Workforce

While women perform most of the unpaid care work in the household, they also make up the majority of the health and care workforce globally (UN Women, 2019). The gender distribution of health care and social care workforce is known to differ substantially among countries, despite the fact that there is a systematic gender gap in the distribution of employees by occupation (Boniol et al., 2019), based on the data available. Even with all these differences, it remains the fact that women account for 70 percent of the overall healthcare and social care workforce around the globe (Boniol et al, 2019). Therefore, it is known that nurses, midwives and public health workers who work actively and under risky conditions on the front lines during the Covid-19 pandemic are mostly women.

It is important to emphasize that women working in the field of health and care, which constitute a significant part of the world population, carry out their professions in risky conditions and with long working hours during the pandemic period. It should be noted that this group of women also faced problems in terms of domestic care and housework needs in a critical period such as the pandemic, as a result of being included in the occupational group with a nature that cannot be switched to working from home.

3.2.2.8. Those Who Could Not Work but Most Needed in the Pandemic:

Domestic Workers

Another disadvantage brought by the pandemic process is that it has increased the unemployment of domestic workers as a result of the social distance rules introduced due to the contagious nature of the disease through close contact (Yolcu & Sezgin, 2021). The ongoing labor market disruptions and income insecurity as the realities of the industry have been severely experienced by domestic workers, who cover a large population around the world, during the pandemic.

Under the conditions created by the pandemic period, it has been observed that the need for patient care at home suddenly increased as a result of the overload of hospitals, the need for childcare due to the closure of schools and childcare centers, and the need for cleaning services due to the hygiene rules of the pandemic. However, despite the increase in the need for care and cleaning services as a result of all these conditions, due to the quarantine requirement brought by the close contact-transmitted character of the pandemic, domestic workers have been one of the groups that faced the most job and income loss in this period.

The majority of domestic workers who clean, prepare food, and provide care to families in many parts of the world are women, who often operate outside the realm of labor law and social protection (Kabeer et al., 2021). Considering that such high numbers of the domestic workers who could not maintain their pre-pandemic working structure and thus their income generation during the pandemic period are female workers, the fact that 72% of this large population has been unemployed under the conditions of the epidemic indicates the income loss of a large group of women (UN Women, 2020a).

At this point, the fact that a significant number of migrant female domestic workers are part of this dense population group of domestic workers needs to be emphasized. United Nations estimates indicate that 8.5 million domestic workers have lost their jobs and income as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (UN Women, 2020d). Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to risks and rights violations due to

migration law and practice that restrict rather than protect their rights in the face of Covid-19. As a result of the curfew imposed to prevent the spread of the pandemic, migrant domestic workers have frequently been exposed to different forms of isolation, either in their own countries or those of their hosts, leaving many of these individuals unemployed and without legal protection (Smriti et al., 2021, as cited in UN Women, 2020d).

3.3. Country Level: Effects of the Pandemic in Turkey

It would not be wrong to say that the social structure in Turkey is based on a context in which traditional gender roles are established. In this pattern, which is based on the perception that men belong to the public sphere and women to the private sphere, the existence of women in the working life is already a challenge for women, as men's contribution to the labor load in domestic work is almost negligible. For women living in a cultural context with this background, it is possible to talk about work-life conflict, not work-life balance. This conflict is also an important finding that reveals Turkey's established traditional gender roles. The most basic institution in which these traditional gender roles are adopted and reproduced is the family itself (Sunar & Fişek, 2005).

In the context of Turkey, while the role of men is related to the public sphere and being the breadwinner of the household, the role of women is to be the main responsible of domestic labor, and in this context, women's paid work is secondary, it is optional, not obligatory, and the expectations regarding domestic labor do not change even if the woman is working (Sunar and Fişek, 2005).

The result of these expectations from women based on gender roles is the picture where women are stuck between working life and domestic roles. In light of the disproportionate growth in household responsibilities that has been experienced by working women in Turkey due to the pandemic process, whose share of work in the total workforce is already very low, it has been investigated in a number of studies about the conflicts that these women experience.

3.3.1. Context of Unpaid Labor

Women in the Turkish population who wanted to work but were unable to work even before the Covid-19 pandemic cited the childcare burden in their household as the reason for not working, at a rate of %71 according to the data of the World Bank in 2015 (Sumbas, 2021).

3.3.1.1. Disproportionate Increase in Time Dedicated to Unpaid Labor

Based on OECD statistics, Turkey has the second largest gender gap among its member countries regarding unpaid work time, behind Japan, another country with a traditional setting, and women in Turkey spend an average of 4.5 times more time working unpaid than men (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021).

In parallel with the distribution of gender roles in Turkish society, it is well known that the most important reason why women do not participate in the labor force is the unpaid work associated with household responsibilities. When the data in the private sphere is examined, it is seen that according to the 2016 statistics of the OECD, working hours in Turkey are the highest among OECD countries, while the rate of women's time spent on housework is among the three countries with the highest rates in the OECD (Çoban, 2022), which constitutes the main barrier against women in Turkey entering the labor force. As a result of the barriers to employment, white-collar middle-class women often rely on market alternatives such as purchasing care service from a caregiver, hiring domestic workers to do housekeeping, or using alternative mechanisms within a family institution, such as receiving childcare support from grandparents (Aycan, 2005).

There are many visible or invisible institutions and services that support family life in daily life, formal groups such as schools, care centers, sports clubs, and most importantly informal groups such as family, and due to the pandemic, as Kandiyoti puts, when the support received from these institutions disappeared, all of these services were imposed on the household, that is, mainly on the woman (Başaran, 2020). Within the scope of Marriage Statistics published as a result of research

conducted by TURKSTAT, the times allocated for unpaid domestic and care work on the basis of gender in 2015 were investigated. While the findings show that 3.6% of men allocate their time to unpaid work, this rate is disproportionately found to be 17.9% for women (TURKSTAT, 2022).

3.3.1.2. Unequal Distribution of Unpaid Labor

The findings of the Family Structure Survey conducted in Turkey by TURKSTAT in 2016 shows that the following tasks, which are the "feminized" duties of household chores, are performed at very low rates with an outside service purchase or support from outside the household, and are mostly completed under the responsibility of household members: cooking (96.9% by household members), laundry (97% by household members), dishes (97.5% by household members), daily tidying and cleaning of the house (97.5%, by a household member at a rate of 1), weekly/monthly cleaning of the house (by a household member at a rate of 90.9%), ironing of laundry (by a household member at a rate of 89,6) (TURKSTAT, 2022). Considering the low rates of paid formal or unpaid informal support from outside the household for these domestic works and the context of gender roles in the country, it is understood that the time women have to allocate for household work and the burdens on women in this sense are far beyond estimations.

In the same study of TURKSTAT, the distribution of household members aged 15 and over who perform domestic work by gender was also investigated, and the findings were in parallel with this understanding. According to the findings of the study, women mostly undertake the work related to the private sphere: cooking is performed at a rate of 91.2% by women and 8.8% by men, laundry is performed at a rate of 91.3% by women and 8.8% by men, dishwashing is performed at a rate of 90.8% by women and 9.2% by men, daily arrangement and cleaning of the house is performed at a rate of 91.3% by women and 8.7% by men, weekly/monthly cleaning of the house is performed at a rate of 92% by women and 8% by men, and ironing of clothes is performed at a rate of 89.7% by women and 10.3% by men (TURKSTAT, 2022). On the other hand, it was found that among household duties, men intensively undertake the ones related to the public sphere and tabooed as "masculine/manly":

House painting was found to be 80.4% performed by men and 19.6% by women. Similarly, paying monthly bills is 77.7% men's responsibility, 22.3% women's responsibility, and basic maintenance and repair works are also heavily performed by men with a rate of 88.9%, while this rate is 11.1% for women (TURKSTAT, 2022).

The Time Use Survey conducted by TURKSTAT in Turkey in 2014-2015 investigated the time use of individuals aged 15 and over according to the type of activity, gender and working status. According to the findings, while working men spend about 6.5 hours a day in employment, this period is around 4.5 hours for working women. While the time allocated for providing care to the household and family is 46 minutes for working men, this figure is 3.5 hours for working women (TURKSTAT, 2022).

Under the conditions of quarantine measures applied during the Covid-19 pandemic period, the paid working hours of employees have decreased in Turkey as well as in the world. However, on the other hand, schools and childcare centers were closed due to pandemic measures, domestic workers, child or elderly care workers could not be served due to quarantine measures, access to market substitutes such as buying ready meals from outside decreased or disappeared completely, and various other factors have emerged, such as increased hygiene requirements and health needs due to the risk of transmission of the virus. All of these factors have led to an increase in the need and demand for domestic unpaid labor and production, and the reproduction of this burden on the shoulders of women to a much greater extent than before the pandemic (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021).

3.3.1.3. Coping Mechanisms for Care Responsibilities and the Disappearance of Alternatives to Care Labor

At the beginning of March 2020, the first Covid-19 cases in Turkey were recorded, and then on March 16, schools were closed, and on March 23, distance education was introduced in Turkey. This set of measures has come along with the problem of how to manage the responsibility for the care of the children at home as a consequence. When the transition to the home working system is added to this factor,

the changing daily life in the household is also reflected in the gender roles in a similar way with the pre-pandemic conditions. It has been determined that childcare responsibility has once again fallen on women within the family due to the closures of childcare centers, day-care centers, and kindergartens, as well as the almost complete disappearance of childcare support from grandparents due to the curfews imposed on people above 65 years old (Kaynak, 2022).

Within the scope of the Family Structure Survey conducted by TURKSTAT in 2016, the ways in which households handle childcare in Turkey were investigated. The findings showed that the most frequently applied method was care provided by the mother of the child with a rate of 86%, followed by the support of the grandmother at 7.4%, a care center or kindergarten at 2.8%, and receiving services from a caregiver at 1.5% (TURKSTAT, 2022).

In Turkey, companies with more than 50 female employees are required by law to provide childcare services to support the care providing needs of their employees. While this entails a commitment to comply with the law, the majority of companies choose to pay the penalty stipulated by the law rather than comply with this requirement. There are also challenges involved in choosing childcare centers as an alternative to these obligations not being provided by workplaces. These challenges are mainly due to the lack of quality childcare centers in the country, as well as their high prices. For this reason, the accessibility and widespread preference of childcare centers appear to be low probability.

It is a common practice in Turkey to receive children's care at home from a care provider. This can be accomplished at a more affordable cost than that charged by childcare centers. However, despite this, many households prefer to receive support from family institutions for childcare since it is an almost inexpensive option and feels safer than the market alternative. Turkey and similar collectivist countries are unique in the extent to which extended families are involved with childcare, so that, in most cases, parents can seek support directly from extended family members without resorting to institutional alternatives or home care (Aycan & Eskin, 2005).

3.3.1.4. Disproportionate Increase in Time Dedicated to Care Labor

A time use study conducted in Turkey during the nationwide lockdown, comparable to the 2018 study, has revealed that during this period, there has been a significant increase in the number of working men engaging in unpaid labor, either through the use of remote working systems or the reduction in working hours, which has been highly significant during this period. It has to be noted, however, that the increase in unpaid time spent by working women was still disproportionately higher in absolute value than the increase in the number of hours spent by men in unpaid work, resulting in a widening of the gender gap in unpaid work (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021).

The findings of another survey conducted by UN Women Turkey with a nationwide sample of 1,508 people also revealed that 52% of women reported increased time spent on unpaid care work while also 89% reported increased time spent on unpaid domestic work (UN Women, 2020b)

It is stated that the pandemic process is even more challenging for working women with children due to the distance education and care burden of children. To observe the effects of the pandemic, UNDP conducted a survey on time use involving 2407 people from every region of Turkey in May 2020, under the supervision of Memiş and İlkkaracan. According to the findings of the study, the unpaid workload has increased in general during the pandemic process. This seems to have increased the burden of both women and men, but data disaggregated by gender is critical to understand the context. In the case of women, the unpaid workload was taking 2.6 hours in a day before the pandemic, but this time increased to 4.5 hours during the pandemic process, while in the case of men, the unpaid workload was taking 0.3 hours before the pandemic but increased to 1.1 hours during the pandemic (UNDP, 2020). As such, it is understood that although the proportional increase may seem higher, the real increase is actually a reflection of the burden that women have experienced.

According to the other findings of the study, this disproportionate change in the difference between the paid, unpaid and total working hours of men and women in households consisting of married couples is subject to great variation according to the employment status and employment conditions of women and men in the household, and whether they have children or not. For women who continue to work, in the context of the increase in the total workload during the pandemic process, the total time allocated to paid and unpaid work from 7.7 hours a day before the pandemic increased to 9.2 hours a day during the pandemic period, with the simultaneous increase of both (UNDP, 2020).

In this context, there has been an increase in the duration of paid work from 6.2 hours to 6.5 hours, and in particular the time devoted to unpaid work by almost 80% from 1.5 hours to 2.7 hours, while within this group, for women who continued to work in the workplace, daily working hours have been recorded as exceeding 10 hours (UNDP, 2020). While there was a slight decrease in the daily paid working hours and a slight increase in the unpaid working hours of the men who continued to work during the pandemic period, the average daily working hours in total decreased from 7.7 hours to 7.6 hours (UNDP, 2020).

3.3.1.5. Disappearance of Alternatives to Unpaid Labor

On the other hand, it has been demonstrated during the Covid-19 epidemic, as Kandiyoti stated, that women in the household are burdened with unpaid domestic work when the family institution is not connected to any institution outside the household, including the market, as in pre-industrial societies (Başaran, 2020). Yet, this situation has been clearly and strongly experienced in Turkey, which is a traditional society in which informal family ties and intra-family support mechanisms are strong, as a result of the fact that people are trapped in households with Covid-19 and cannot receive outside assistance (Sumbas, 2021). In line, in the year 2021, Aksu Kocatürk conducted a study among 135 women in Turkey and found that the domestic obligations of women at home have increased disproportionately following the outbreak of Covid-19 (Yerlikaya, 2022).

Therefore, households are left on their own in terms of coping with unpaid forms of work, and in this sense, childcare became a serious problem in households with both men and women working. Among these households, in most cases, one of the spouses, which in most cases was the woman, had to stop working in order to care for the children. Those parents who had been able to continue their employment with the work from home system also took care of the child while they were working at home. There was, however, a serious income loss as the individuals were removed from the workforce and were pulled into the home to provide care, resulting in serious loss of income for the individual (Kaynak, 2022).

3.3.2. Context of Employment

The employment gap between men and women in Turkey is among the highest in the world (İlkkaracan, 2012). For many years, the country has been characterized by low female employment rates, and this cycle of unemployment continues as a result of structural disruptions in the labor market, as well as the impact of insufficient analysis of the care economy on the policy axis and the lack of policy design.

It is also important to note that Turkey is in a unique position when it comes to the composition of women's employment in comparison to other countries since women are heavily employed in agriculture. Additionally, Turkey has a very low female employment rate in comparison with other countries that have similar economic development. Because of the heavy unpaid workload of women, Turkey has the lowest female employment rates amongst all of the OECD countries, with only 32.2% of the working-age female population employed in 2019, compared to the OECD average of 61.3 percent for the same year (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021).

There are a number of barriers preventing women from becoming more involved in the labor market, such as the lack of pre-school childcare centers and elderly care services, as well as the poor access women have to maternity leave as a result of informal employment practices (Ilkkaracan, 2010, as cited in Değirmenci & İlkkaracan, 2013).

It is also true that women are still not yet able to obtain the level of decent working conditions found in developed countries in their labor market and that is one of the indicators of gender inequality in a country's labor market (Sezgin, 2021). As a result of this, it is evident that when examining the effect of the pandemic on the country's female unemployment rate and how it has been affected by the pandemic, it is very important to bring a specific analysis to bear on the particular country.

3.3.2.1. Decline in Already Low Employment Rates of Women and Increase in the Number of Women Withdrawn from Labor Force Completely

According to the findings of the Household Labor Force Survey, the rate of employed people aged 15 and over in Turkey in 2019 was 45.7%, while this rate was 28.7% for women and 63.1% for men (TURKSTAT, 2021). While the employment rate of individuals in the 25-49 age group with children under the age of 3 in their household was 59.8% in 2014, it became 58.7% in 2019. When this ratio is analyzed by gender, it was seen that the employment rate of women in the 25-49 age group with children under the age of 3 in their household in 2019 was 26.7%, while the employment rate of men was 87.3% (TURKSTAT, 2021).

According to the results of the research, while the duration of stay in working life was 16.7 years for women aged 15 and over and 37.7 years for men in 2013, it was 19.1 years for women and 39.0 years for men in 2019 (TURKSTAT, 2021). Although there is an increase in working life when the total number is taken into account without segregation by gender, when the figures are analyzed by gender segregation, it is observed that the working life of women is even less than half of that of men in both periods.

Employment rates according to educational status reveal more dramatic results. According to the 2020 TURKSTAT data, the employment rate of women with university education is more than twice that of women with less than high school education, and there are great differences among women according to education level, with more than one hour difference between unpaid working hours (İlkkaracan & Memiş, 2021).

Table 1. Change in the employment rate of women over the age of 15 and in the employment rate of women aged 25-49 with children under the age of 3 living in the household between 2019 and 2020

Year	The employment rate of women [15+ age]	The employment rate of women aged 25-49 with children under age 3 living in the household
2019	28,70%	26,70%
2020	26,30%	25,20%

Note. The table was prepared by the author and is based on statistics published by TURKSTAT (TURKSTAT, 2021; TURKSTAT, 2022).

Examining the effects of the pandemic period on these rates, while it is reported that the employment rate of those aged 15 and over in Turkey decreased from 45.7% in 2019 to 42.8% in 2020, when the composition of this population in employment is considered, 26.3% are women and 59.8% are men. In terms of employment of women, compared to the pre-pandemic period, as seen in Table 1 above, the employment rate of women over the age of 15 decreased from 28.7% to 26.3% when the transition from 2019 to 2020. In the same period, the employment rate of women aged 25-49 who have children under the age of 3 in the household decreased from 26.7% in 2019 to 25.2% in 2020, while this rate for men was 85.5% in 2020 (TURKSTAT, 2021; TURKSTAT, 2022).

UN Women Turkey conducted a nationwide survey in order to measure the impact of the pandemic on Turkish women with a sample size of 1,508 people. According to the survey findings, 19% of women lost their jobs compared to 14% of men, indicating that between them they had been affected by job losses in a different manner (UN Women, 2020b). In addition to that, 53% of the working population had their paid working hours reduced during the pandemic period, as a result of the process. Among these workers, self-employed individuals were the most adversely affected. Among self-employed, 72% of men and 59% of women saw their paid

working hours decrease, while among employed workers, 58% of men and 43% of women saw theirs decrease (UN Women, 2020b).

In 2020, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) conducted a survey in Turkey to assess how time spent in paid and unpaid spaces changed for men and women during stay-at-home measures. According to the findings of the study, the rate of total job and income losses for women was found to be lower than for men with a ratio of 32% to 54%. Since people who worked before the pandemic were included in the scope of job loss rates, the rate of women is lower than that of men. It is observed in this context that women with an employment rate of 31% face an absolute greater risk of unemployment loss than men with an employment rate of 18%. Additionally, the research revealed that 51% of women had taken a break from their work life due to a fragile situation. 26% had been fired, and 25% had been placed on unpaid leave. It has been estimated that the rate among men who experienced a break from their working life was 42% in total, of whom 21% had been dismissed and 25% were on unpaid leave (UNDP, 2020).

3.3.2.2. Sectors Severely Adversely Affected

In different studies conducted in Turkey, it was found that the rate of job and income loss in women during the Covid-19 period was higher than that of men, and it was argued that one of the reasons for this finding was related to the social isolation and quarantine policy aimed at slowing the disease, especially in the sectors it affected. Not only in Turkey, but worldwide, the sectors in question where women work predominantly are entertainment, service, travel and textile sectors. While the employment rate of women in Turkey is 32%, the field where women are most concentrated is the service sector with 56% (TURKSTAT, 2020, as cited in Sumbas, 2021).

The conditions faced by the employees of the service sector, who have almost completely come to a standstill in the pandemic conditions, have also been unique. In the pre-pandemic period, women who were able to balance their working life and household responsibilities with various coping mechanisms, and women who were

able to maintain their employment, could not maintain this order under pandemic conditions. Therefore, it would not be wrong to analyze that this group was also significantly affected by the pandemic conditions. At this point, for women working in the service sector, the conditions of the pandemic period caused a "loss of gains".

3.3.2.3. Advantageous Group Before Pandemic Turned to Disadvantaged with Pandemic: Academics

There is a certain level of economic security and a certain standard of living for women academics. Compared to other working women's groups in the country, they were in an advantageous position before the pandemic, and it could be seen as an advantage that they had the opportunity to switch to working from home and maintain employment during the pandemic. However, this group of women also experienced great disadvantages. While having this relatively sufficient economic background in academia, academic women in Turkey have become increasingly unable to carry out their academic duties due to their intense work schedules as well as the time they devote to their domestic responsibilities as a result of the pandemic (Parlak, Celebi Cakiroglu, & Oksuz Gul, 2021).

3.3.2.4. Occupational Segregation and Gender Wage Gap

On the labor market in Turkey, there are some occupations that are gender-segregated, which means that some occupations are considered as being appropriate for women while others are seen as more appropriate for men. It is demonstrated that women in Turkey are more likely to work in occupations and industries where employees receive lower salaries as compared to the rest of the market (Selim & İlkkaracan, 2002). This constitutes one of the reasons for the gender wage gap, together with the discriminative approaches in the labor market against women.

It is also found that women are more likely to work in workplaces that do not have collective bargaining agreements, within private sector, and in which social security protection measures does not apply to them (Selim & İlkkaracan, 2002). This

situation exposes the working women in this group to a more fragile position in times of crisis, where loss of job and/or income is experienced.

3.3.2.5. Precarious Jobs: The Shock of the Informal Economy

It is important to note that one of the most important structural characteristics of the Turkish labor market is the prevalence of the informal sector, which comprises a significant percentage of the economy, like most other developing countries, where people work without social protection measures (İlkkaracan & Selim, 2007). In addition to the lack of access to social security, other losses of working in the informal sector are the lack of rights such as care leaves, insurance funds, regulation of working hours, etc., that have been important in the face of Covid-19 pandemic.

42.2% of working women in Turkey work in precarious and informal jobs such as cleaning and childcare, which are the first groups to lose their income during crisis periods (UN Women, 2020e). Women working in the informal sector, who are not able to work under the conditions of the pandemic, have faced unemployment and loss of income, besides the health challenges of the pandemic, the shortage of livelihoods has shaken the households.

In this sense, women working in the informal sector, who could not benefit from the services provided by the state in the pre-pandemic period, were also deprived of social protection under the conditions brought by the crisis. In this context, informal sector workers who have lost their jobs, lost their income and been deprived of state protection have also faced difficulties in balancing their household responsibilities. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that women working in the informal sector have faced unique challenges.

3.3.2.6. Problems Stated by Workers

Nevertheless, as in many other regions throughout the world, women face a more fragile position in the labor market in Turkey (UNDP, 2020).

The findings of a study conducted by Carli in 2020 concerning the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on women in terms of their status, wages and professional advancement indicate that women faced a greater loss of employment than men during the pandemic period, that women's childcare responsibilities increased during the pandemic period, and consequently that job and income loss was a greater threat to women than men. According to the findings of this study, by examining the days when the closure practices that were so critical during the pandemic had been abandoned and workplaces had returned to normal, women stated to begin to encounter barriers to advancement in their careers that were not obvious to men (Yolcu & Sezgin, 2021, as cited in Carli, 2020).

Within the framework of the survey conducted by TÜSİAD, TÜRKONFED and UN Women with 339 companies between March and June 2020, the problems faced by employees during the pandemic period were investigated. When analyzing the most significant problems identified by female employees during the pandemic process, the top concern that stands out most to them is the difficulty of caring for the household and the experience of caring for children, elderly individuals, and patients as well. The second is the added workload, anxiety and mental burnout associated with working from home. The third is the lack of communication opportunities at home due to the restrictions imposed by working from home. Based on the answers of male employees to the same question, when compared to the answers given by female employees to the same question, it is evident that the main problems that are identified by male employees are low wages and income, followed by limited communication opportunities at home and psychological burnout (TÜSİAD, TÜRKONFED & UN Women, 2020).

The important findings in this study are as follows: While the rate of female employees who stated that their responsibilities for housework and care increased was 99%, this rate was 25% for men; and while the rate of female employees who stated that the working hours and therefore the workload increased with the transition to remote working order, this rate was 57% for men (TÜSİAD, TÜRKONFED & UN Women, 2020).

CHAPTER 4

PRACTICES IN TURKEY AND BEST PRACTICES FROM THE WORLD

In this chapter, firstly, the practices applied during the pandemic period in Turkey will be presented. Afterwards, examples of good practice from around the world will be examined, revealing the various steps taken to improve the experiences of women from different countries around the world who were adversely affected by the pandemic.

4.1. Measures and Policies Implemented in Turkey

In Turkey, officials from the Ministry of Health reported the first case of Covid-19 on March 11, 2020. In order to contain the spread of the pandemic, the government has taken a number of measures. These measures included social distancing, curfews, travel bans, quarantines for citizens returning to the country, the closure of schools and universities, and the closing of shopping malls, restaurants, and entertainment venues in order to control the spread of the virus.

Primary schools, secondary schools and high schools have been closed for 1 week as of March 16, 2020, and it has been announced that schools at this level will be taught by distance education as of March 23, 2020. However, with the increase of the effect of the pandemic and the expansion of its spread throughout the country, it was decided to extend the distance education process after 30 April 2020 until 31 May 2020, and the exams to be held at schools were postponed. In parallel with all these, as of 13 March 2020, private kindergartens, day care centers and private children's clubs were also closed.

There was an announcement on May 4, 2020, that there would be a gradual process to be followed for the removal of quarantine measures over the next couple of months. In the course of this gradual process, retail stores were reopened, travel restrictions were removed between major cities, retail facilities were reopened, and domestic flights were reauthorized (IMF, 2021).

In September, however, a few months after this gradual lifting of the quarantine measures had been put in place, a second wave of infections had started, and with the second wave, containment measures had to be put into place again, with the measures having to be tightened further into the last months of 2020. A number of measures were taken during the second wave of the outbreak, including the requirement to wear masks in public places, stay-at-home orders, curfews, the closing of retail workplaces or limiting their opening hours, the closure of pre-school centers and the prohibition of mass gatherings (IMF, 2021).

By 2021, it was announced that the restrictions would be lifted gradually, starting a gradual opening process again in early March. Similarly, following the announcement of the first phased opening process, where it was stated that quarantine applications would be phased out, followed by an increase in new cases as a result, there was another infection wave that occurred following the announcement of this second phased opening process. The restrictions were tightened once again in late March, and a full lockdown that had been announced in late April was officially announced by the end of May and extended until May. In the following weeks, it was announced that a gradual process would be implemented between the middle of May and the end of June, this time called as the normalization process (IMF, 2021).

The measures to prevent the spread of this virus, implemented by the government, brought with it many effects that have repercussions on society and the economy, and various mechanisms announced to deal with these effects.

A number of measures were taken, and various financial aids were provided with the Law No. 7244 on the "Law on Reducing the Effects of the New Coronavirus Epidemic on Economic and Social Life and Amending Some Laws". Practices such

as the prohibition of dismissal and unpaid leave allowance defined in this law are the measures taken within the scope of protecting the sectors and employment that are negatively affected by the epidemic. Efforts are made to limit the loss of employment through minimum wage support aimed at reducing the costs of companies.

Another practice that prevents the risk of loss of income within the scope of the law numbered 7244 is the short time working allowance for the citizens of businesses that stop or slow down their activities for 3 months. Although the application may seem beneficial at first, in fact, in order for an employee to be covered by these applications, the prerequisite for receiving short-time working allowance is to be a part of a registered employment defined within the corporate business relations, such as having paid insurance premiums for at least 450 days in the last three years (Bayar et al., 2020).

Within the scope of these mechanisms, as of April 17, 2020, workplaces are prohibited from dismissing their employees during the Covid-19 process, with the temporary article 10 added to the Law No. 4857. In the face of this decision, which aims to protect the employment of employees, short-time working, unpaid leave, low-interest credit, tax deferral and similar support alternatives were offered as a protection mechanism to workplaces affected by the economic contraction in the market brought about by the pandemic. However, it should be emphasized that since these policies do not have a structure that takes into account women's priorities or needs and prioritizes gender differences, it has been argued that they are not gender sensitive (Sumbas, 2021).

In addition to the legal regulations, it has also been observed that some private workplaces and municipalities use the initiative and give working parents/women the right of alternate leave. It has been noted that in the middle of 2020, when the pandemic peaked, a similar decision was implemented in government institutions to cover only pregnant and lactating women. However, it is noteworthy that this application does not include other parents/women who have children at preschool and school age who receive distance education.

It should also be noted that within the scope of the measures taken in April 2021, when one year of the pandemic was left behind, a specific application was carried out and administrative leave was given to female personnel with children under the age of 10 working in public institutions (Sumbas, 2021).

Among the measures in Turkey, regulations have been introduced, such as the shift of face-to-face school education to distance education, the transition to remote working (work from home) system instead of on-site working, social isolation measures, national curfews for certain age groups, including those aged 18 and under and 65 and over, which lead to the necessity of performing all care services and housework at home boundaries where household members are isolated (Çoban, 2022). Even if the measures taken regarding employment were gender blind, the limited measures regarding the unpaid care and domestic workload in the household were insufficient and could not even come close to reducing the burden of women.

4.2. Best Practices from the World

Different countries have implemented various practices to alleviate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on society and economy. Examining those that are gender sensitive among these practices is valuable in terms of inspiring a similar experience.

Basically, the most important step is actually the needs analysis. Considering the differing needs of different groups in the society within the scope of policy production is a fundamental factor for the production of policies that respond to needs. For example, some MENA countries have taken steps to consider women's special needs in the Covid-19 response. In Algeria and Tunisia, the fact that the Ministry of Women's Affairs, among other ministries, had a say in the committees responsible for preparing the crisis response was an important step towards reflecting the needs of women into the policy making. Also, in Egypt, the National Council of Women carries out a gender perspective monitoring of all policy measures implemented by the government and prepares publications on women-sensitive policies and programs to expand the literature and perspective (OECD, 2020).

Paid leave is an application that prevents the loss of income of people who need time off from work for their care responsibilities. There are instances where funds were allocated by the state to support businesses in order to enable this practice during such a period of economic contraction. For example, in Italy during the pandemic, working parents with children under 12 were given 15 days of leave paid at 50% of their salary which the state covered, or unpaid leave for parents with children over 12. As another alternative, parents were given the option of getting a receipt to pay for their care purchases (Queisser, 2021). In the United States, parents who care for their children whose schools are closed are granted the right to take paid family leave for a maximum of 12 weeks (IMF, UNDP & UN Women, 2021).

Providing care can be directed not only to children but also to the elderly, the sick and other family members in need, and it is important to take these into account. In this manner, in Spain, employees providing care to their dependents are entitled to a temporary 100 percent reduction in working hours (IMF, UNDP & UN Women, 2021).

One of the support alternatives that can be provided in order to strengthen individuals against the increasing burdens in terms of care provided to family members has been to provide social protection benefits. For instance, during the period of general isolation in Italy, childcare coupons were provided to working parents with a baby at home, and efforts were made to expand this assistance to support returning to business life when the general isolation is lifted as economic activities improve over time (ILO, 2020d).

Furthermore, Canada provided cash support to people who had to leave their jobs due to childcare during this process (IMF, UNDP & UN Women, 2021). In the United States, New York State provided childcare scholarships to essential workers such as health workers and grocers whose incomes are below federal poverty levels (New York State Office of Children and Family Services, 2020, as cited in UN Women, 2020c). At the beginning of the pandemic, Colombia took steps to nearly double the number of households receiving social protection benefits in a few months (UNDP & UN Women, n.d., as cited in Seck et al., 2021).

As another example, with the help of the Public Employment Service, various studies have been carried out with the goal of combining childcare subsidies and special maternity leave allowances with job search support and training for eligible employees registered with the Public Employment Service centers in the Republic of Korea. Nonetheless, while employers offered special family leave to female employees in this context, Public Employment Service centers provided subsidies to families financed by the state to ease the financial burdens (ILO, 2020d).

In order to support employees with care responsibilities, some arrangements were made within the scope of employment. In Morocco, flexible working arrangements have been introduced for female staff who are pregnant or have dependent children (ILO, 2020b).

In addition, various practices have been implemented in order to prevent the loss of employment and decreasing income. Germany, within the scope of its short-time work compensation application, provided higher short-time work compensation to workers with children (ETUC, 2020, as cited in Cook & Grimshaw, 2021, p. 223). For example, Armenia has provided cash transfers to workers registered in sectors and businesses that are dominated by women and have been negatively impacted by Covid-19, such as hospitality, public catering, tourism, barbershops and beauty salons, and retail (Gentilini et al., 2020).

A number of income support measures were implemented in Argentina in order to provide income support to all domestic workers regardless of their employment status, such as the Universal Child Allowance and Emergency Family Income (UN Women, 2020a).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

As demonstrated, the conditions that emerged with the Covid-19 pandemic have negatively affected working women in many socio-economic aspects in Turkey as well as all over the world.

According to data from different studies discussed earlier, the unpaid labor of women, which includes many forms of labor including domestic work, care services, providing the basic vital needs of the individuals in the household (food, laundry, ironing, hygiene, etc.), supporting the education of the child, emotional support to the individuals in the household, was affected by many factors in this period, and increased disproportionately.

The closure of kindergartens and care centers, the suspension of face-to-face education in schools and the transition to distance education were among these factors that increased women's unpaid labor. The absence of access to institutional care, as well as the disappearance of home care services and care provided by the family network, contributed to these factors and resulted in the burden being placed on women. In addition to childcare, the responsibility of elderly and patient care has resulted in the increase of women's unpaid labor as a result of the same factors and also the overcapacity of hospitals due to the pandemic.

As it has been revealed by different studies, the factors such as closing the workplaces, switching to the remote/home working system, and introducing stay-at-

home rules required more people to spend longer periods of time in the household, and this also contributed to the increase in unpaid labor with the increase in needs.

On the employment side, it is possible to say with data based on studies that different employment groups are affected in different ways, but that they are adversely affected, albeit different groups and different conditions. That is, it has been revealed in studies that there are women who were currently working in secure employment forms and who continued to work during the pandemic process, and that there are those who have switched to the home-work system, and that working hours have decreased in this group and that they have difficulties in coping with the challenge of the conflict between unpaid and paid labor.

While it can be said that the academic women in this group were at an advantageous point regarding the work-life balance prior to the pandemic, it was discussed that this group also faced great challenges during the pandemic process. Thus, it has been seen that highly qualified working women have also been exposed to the inevitable negative effects of this crisis.

Additionally, service sector and informal sector workers, which constitute a large part of the female labor force, were affected in different ways. In this context, studies have revealed that the service sector has become a sector where intense employment loss and income loss are experienced due to the slowdown and work stoppage brought by the pandemic.

Women working in the informal sector, on the other hand, were already in precarious conditions before the pandemic and were already deprived of official rights and benefits. In a period when the crisis has increased existing fragilities and brought new needs, their existing vulnerabilities have extended even more as they have remained from many benefits that include health insurance, paid leave, short work allowance, right to medical report, employment security, financial benefits, etc.

In the overall framework, in Turkey, while a decrease in women's employment rates was recorded, the rate of women in the workforce was also decreased due to women

leaving the workforce, and income losses were experienced. Women's employment, which is currently at low rates in the country, has fallen behind before the pandemic. While the presence of women in the labor market decreased, their unpaid labor increased in parallel.

There were already some existing problems in the structure of the labor market of Turkey that characterized the pre-pandemic experience, and these became more evident with the experience of Covid-19 process and the economic contraction that accompanied it, making the already unique problems caused by the pandemic and its impacts even more challenging.

Although many measures and regulations have been implemented in the framework of the Covid-19 pandemic, it does not appear that these regulations and measures are adequate to address both the needs and inequalities that may arise as a result of gender issues. Several significant criticisms have been leveled at the Covid-19 measures and regulations, including those relating to the absence of working arrangements for adults in families where both males and females work, or the absence of support for parents whose children are transitioning to distance education during this period, requiring special care (Işık, 2020, as cited in Sumbas, 2021).

As a result of the Covid-19 virus, which poses a risk of transmission in close contact, working women, considered the primary caregivers, have experienced a significant amount of grief because they no longer receive support from family institutions or caregivers.

While the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities on women according to gender roles constitutes the obstacle on the domestic side, gender-based discriminations in the labor market form the basis of the barriers faced by women in the labor market. Regarding employment, the risk of being out of the workforce and not having income security is a risk for women that has a permanent character independent of the pandemic in Turkey (Bayar et al., 2020).

There are several statistics available regarding the number of men and women who have lost their jobs. About 90% of them and 70% of them have completely left the workforce. It has been revealed that women are less likely to find work and are less prepared to work than men in the context of returning to work (Yerlikaya, 2021). In the absence of aimed practices that are based on gender-sensitive policies, women who withdraw from the labor market are more likely not to return to work, posing an enormous risk to Turkey, which is already dealing with a low level of female employment (ILO, 2021).

The Covid-19 outbreak has had a great deal of beneficial effects on the education of people, not only in Turkey, but around the globe in general, with regard to the importance of public services and social protection in the face of a crisis like this. In this sense, it has become evident that there is an urgent need for the government to enhance access to social protection measures. This is crucial for workers to cope with the problems they are experiencing as a result of the economic downturn.

With a lot of experience behind us, it was obvious that public services and social protection measures should be made available to everyone in this context, for the benefit of all. As the pandemic period unfolded, the importance of those working in the care and education industries, cleaning industries and transportation industries, as well as other basic areas, where most people work at low wages and in precarious positions, represented mostly by women and migrants, has been made apparent (ITUC, 2020, as cited in Güler, 2021). It is therefore crucial that policies be created and implemented in order to ensure that workers in these industries are protected.

Another important point emphasized by the Covid-19 pandemic was the prioritization of the care economy in social policy. It is argued that there is an increasing "familialization" in Turkey, which focuses on the role of the family in care, and policy design based on this approach is also aimed at supporting family-provided care (Aybars, Beşpınar, & Kalaycıoğlu, 2018).

However, it is known that the policies and practices aimed at providing care needs through the family, in fact it is women who assume this role, contribute to making

the care work invisible, and in this sense, the existing gender inequality is reproduced in this way (Aybars, Beşpınar, & Kalaycıoğlu, 2018). Therefore, it is important to see care service as a burden that should be taken from the shoulders of the family, that is, from the shoulders of the women, in policy design related to the care economy. In this sense, the institutionalization of care services will contribute to gender inequality in the long term. It will liberate women from their care responsibilities in the household and, in the case of working women, will positively benefit their employment rates and years worked.

Considering all the findings and the experiences of working women, it would not be wrong to state that the crisis is gendered. The next and final section offers policy recommendations on steps that can be taken to mitigate the negative effects of the crisis on working women and to make women more resilient to crises in the long run.

5.2. Policy Recommendations

In the words of infectious diseases expert Jeremy Farrar himself: “In the future, we are going to see more complex epidemics. Covid-19 is a symptom of the drivers we will live with throughout the 21st century.” (WHO, 2022, p.12). Given that scientists have predicted similar experiences will occur in the near future, and that we have already experienced such an example across the globe, it is necessary to take precautions in order to be prepared for such scenarios.

The pandemic does have a global impact, but it would be a mistake to assume that common solutions are required for all countries. It has been demonstrated that during the Covid-19 process, the policies of each country based on gender equality in the pre-pandemic period, and specifically regulations governing care, have been the most influential factors in determining the difficulties women encountered in the labor market and balancing work and family life (Akkan & Kesici, 2021). Due to the demographic, political, and institutional characteristics of each country, a wide range of social policy systems have emerged, each of which is contextually unique (Scharpf & Schmidt, 2003, as cited in Cook & Grimshaw, 2021, p. 217).

It has led to different consequences for women, both directly and indirectly, when policies are designed around existing problematic gender-based structures by considering them as fact rather than a problem, including gender discrimination in employment, unpaid and unequal division of labor, and ideologies that embrace gender roles, rather than addressing problems associated with these issues (Karamessini & Rubery, 2013, as cited in Cook & Grimshaw, 2021, p. 217).

It is now a common knowledge that is experienced in global level that the care work of women is much more critical in times of crisis than in non-crisis periods to keep society alive (Mercado et al., 2020). It is of urgent importance to focus on this labor burden of women in times of crisis. As damaged economies and societies are rebuilt and healed after the crisis, by addressing the burden of care labor that has been placed on women's shoulders, it is critical to determine how to proceed and how to redistribute this labor so that it becomes a fundamental part of society and the economy (Mercado et al., 2020).

In this unique period during which employment systems evolved into other forms and extended family care service services were not available to provide, it was once again revealed that the primary local institutions and needs of the workforce should be examined in the same context as the statistics and needs of families and households. This was true even in the period before the pandemic, when the employment system and the economic needs of the workforce were intertwined (Stevano et al., 2021, as cited in Kabeer et al., 2021). It was even more obvious with the onset of the pandemic how much interdependence there is. As a result of the need for care, there have been reports of women leaving the workforce completely, leaving behind their careers. In parallel, the economic crisis associated with the pandemic and the shocks in the business world are also reflected in household dynamics (Kabeer et al., 2021).

There is an extremely critical role played by extended families and households in reducing the impact of crises in the public sphere, strengthening resistance, and facilitating post-crisis recovery. Essentially, the spiritual role of women is at the core of this influential role of local institutions. Women did, however, experience an

increase in stress and pressure during the Covid-19 process, when they were overwhelmed in time and space due to the conditions of the pandemic and faced an excessive burden due to this process. As a result, even if the spiritual roles mentioned are fulfilled, the pressure on women has reached unprecedented levels.

It has been apparent from experiences during the pandemic that measures must be developed and strengthened to assist parents, and in particular working mothers, in balancing work and family responsibilities (OSCE PA, 2022). As the structural problems in society remain the same, policies are needed based on the same points as those required before the pandemic to reduce the risk of gender inequality during the pandemic and to support women's participation in the labor market (Queisser, 2021).

Within the scope of employment and its modalities, there are many positive discrimination practices that can provide women with a great deal of benefits. It has been suggested that the implementation of flexible working hours or paid leave for working parents, especially for women, as well as providing care support services to families who need help during such times of crisis, especially healthcare workers, who are required to work at a time of distance education implementation, as well as incentives that promote female employment (Sumbas, 2021) are some of the practices that can be considered.

Targeted action is needed in adopting a gender-sensitive and family-friendly approach and designing policies accordingly. It is necessary to put in place policies that address the problems of unpaid care work, as well as reduce the burden of time use placed on women in order to solve the problems of unpaid care work women experience during both non-crisis and crisis periods in their lives.

Historically, gender-based roles have played a significant role in women's decision to seek employment and acceptance into the labor market. It is due to their burden of domestic work and care that they devote so much time to them. Women are placed under a tremendous burden during times of crisis because of their participation in the workforce (Yerlikaya, 2022).

It is also expected that by changing the mentality, both men and women will be more likely to engage in domestic and care work. Raising awareness is critical to addressing long-standing gender inequalities, such as the unequal division of labor in the household, the gender pay gap and the underestimation of women's labor. It is imperative that the community becomes aware of the unequal division of labor between men and women by making the unpaid care and domestic work of women more visible.

5.2.1. Data Collection and Needs Analysis: Collection and Analysis of Gender Disaggregated Data Scanning Relevant Components to Identify Needs

At the policy design stage, decision makers should have data for the target audiences and policy making as a result of the analysis of these data should be targeted in terms of meeting the needs. Of course, the policy that will be produced for a target audience that has no knowledge will not meet the needs. In fact, at some points, specific policies are not even produced for groups whose data is not available. Therefore, the collection of data for individuals with special needs and who are fragile in society, and for all different population groups, is the most basic requirement for policies to serve the needs. In this context, it should be aimed to collect data on women in a way that includes data components that have the potential to analyze needs.

As has already been demonstrated, both the pandemic itself as well as the economic crisis which has resulted from it have had disproportionate impacts on the livelihoods of women and their ability to work in paid positions. In the case of gendered effects on women, public policies have the ability to either erode them or alleviate them depending on its nature. By analyzing country-level data on policies and aggregated indicators of gender inequality over the long term, country-level data on policies can be used to assess the gender implications of policies (Cook & Grimshaw, 2021).

It is important at this point not to consider women as a homogeneous group and to consider that each women's group will have different needs, because the resilience and vulnerability of women with different sensitivities and needs towards non-

standard periods such as crises will vary. In this sense, obtaining data on how the pandemic is impacting women differently is imperative to understanding how it affects them differently. Using gender-disaggregated data, a number of policy tools may be developed, including gender impact assessments that assess the achievement of the intended outcomes of policy packages, and gender-based budgetary audits that assess potential expenditures and their potential impact on women (OSCE PA, 2022).

5.2.2. Supporting and Promoting Return to the Workforce

It has already been revealed by the findings of various studies that there are women who left the workforce temporarily or completely due to various reasons such as difficulties in meeting the needs of children, patients and elderly care during the pandemic process. Supporting these women in their return to the workforce and encouraging the labor market to recruit female workers will be critical in terms of increasing low female employment rates. Women should be supported by measures geared toward their re-integration into the workforce, as well as measures aimed at addressing gender-based inequalities, such as gender wage gaps (OSCE PA, 2022). Among these measures are training programmes, wage incentives for employers when hiring female employees, as well as the development of new skills to prepare women for the new requirements of the market (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021).

5.2.3. Strengthening and Expanding the Social Protection System

Among the population already employed when the Covid-19 pandemic began, women were more negatively affected by the pandemic than men, and they suffered more job loss and unpaid leave. This indicates that comprehensive policies regarding employment and income protection need to be developed in a gender-sensitive manner (UNDP, 2020). More comprehensive support and social protection for female workers needs to be included in order to provide a gender-conscious response to a possible crisis such as Covid-19. In this context, it is critical to implement investments in universal, gender-sensitive social protection systems in order to ensure the income security of women (UN Women, 2020a).

The needs of the pandemic have placed new burdens on the responsibilities that working parents were already dealing with before the pandemic. In this context, it would not be wrong to say that working women need time, access to services and income to cope with the challenges of a crisis such as a pandemic (UNICEF, ILO and UN Women, 2020). Within the scope of expanding the scope of social protection, which is at the forefront of gender-sensitive policies and practices that provide these needs, in order to prevent layoffs and to protect the employment of all workers, there are measures such as providing paid leave for care needs, paid leaves for workers unable to continue working during a health crisis like a pandemic, flexible working arrangements, practices for the protection of employment and income, care supports, temporary unemployment allowances and short-term working allowances to protect employment and avoid layoffs (ITUC, 2020, cited in Güler, 2021).

It is imperative that social protection systems be comprehensively strengthened with the aim to ensure that all working women are covered. Health insurance, paid sick and maternity leave, pensions and unemployment compensation should be provided to all women in formal and informal employment to reduce job losses and compensate for lost income. These policies should encompass those who are not covered by legal employment contracts or social protection, including day laborers, informal workers, and employees in vulnerable self-employment settings, including domestic workers, workers in family businesses or family farms, as well as migrant women (UNDP, 2020; UN Women, 2020c). Both the public and private sectors are to take the necessary steps to comply with the requirements for decent work and social protection in this context.

It is important to note that increasing the coverage of the social protection system, which takes informal work into account, will be beneficial to women more than men, since the probability of women working in the informal economy is higher (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021). The broadening of this coverage will also enhance the ability of individuals and households to better prepare themselves for any income shocks or crises that will occur in the future. It is also imperative to protect the rights of all workers in all sectors of the economy, including the formal and informal, and

to ensure decent working conditions as part of a proper wage system in order to increase resilience (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021).

5.2.4. Public Investments in Care Economy and Increasing Accessibility of Care Services

Among the basic problems in the labor market participation stage of women are finding a job and preparing the domestic conditions to the conditions in which they can have the opportunity to participate in employment, and on the other hand, the problems in the context of staying in employment when they can be able to enter the labor market are the inequities and discriminations that they encounter in the labor market as well as adapting the domestic situations to make employment sustainable. What is meant by domestic conditions is to plan how to meet the care needs of children, patients, the elderly, and others in need of care, and to ensure that this is sustainable.

A very significant step in supporting female employees in the context of employment would be the support they receive in terms of care work. In the wake of the pandemic, working parents have had a heightened need for affordable and quality childcare than they usually do during non-crisis times. When a crisis like the pandemic occurs, and when childcare facilities close, childcare needs should be addressed from a long-term perspective rather than from a short-term one. There exists a significant inequity in childcare use across groups with different income levels, and this is a particularly critical issue when it comes to single mothers, with a very high cost of childcare (Queisser, 2021). Due to this, policy priorities should include accelerating investments in early childhood education and care. This should include ensuring that access to quality, affordable, and safe care is expanded, enabling parents to continue their working lives. In order to ensure equity in such policies, governments should ensure that they are implemented in a manner that maintains equity, encourages both mothers and fathers to work, and ensures that public assistance is available to persons who are most in need (Queisser, 2021).

The care economy, including health services, education, pre-school education, pre-school care services, long-term care services, day care services for the elderly and disabled, provided for children, the elderly, people with disabilities and patients, as well as adults in employment, has significant social and economic returns. Increasing public investments in the care economy, which has been neglected in terms of financial policies, will bring with it the benefits of reducing unemployment by creating new employment opportunities, contributing to alleviating the unequal household workload that increases gender inequality, and supporting women's ability to maintain their employment and return to the workforce. Thus, it will be a meaningful measure in terms of overall economic recovery and increasing women's resilience to crisis and non-crisis times (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021). In this sense, it is important to improve the availability of affordable, quality childcare services to ensure that women remain in the labor force or return to the workforce (UN Women, 2020a). In addition to childcare, investments to strengthen the infrastructure and increase accessibility in patient, elderly, disabled care and long-term care services should also be included.

5.2.5. Expanding the Scope of Leaves: Paid Care Leave and Paid Parental Leave

Care responsibilities for people in need of care, such as children, the sick, the elderly and the disabled, were the reasons why working people faced the risk of loss of income if they took leave outside the crisis. It has been observed that the number of people who need to take leave from work for such care-related reasons has increased especially during the pandemic period compared to the pre-pandemic period. In this context, the practice of paid leave is critical in order to prevent loss of income (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021) and to ensure the sustainability of employment specifically for women.

Also, in line with the data of previous studies, the policy changes, such as the provision of predetermined paternity leave payable without reduction in wages, have been shown to increase fathers' involvement in childcare and housework during paternity leave as well as in subsequent years (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007,

as cited in Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). Thus, there could be a greater reduction in the burden on women as a result of providing mandatory and non-transferable paternity leaves, which could result in a more equitable distribution of care responsibilities as well as household chores (IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021). In this manner, several organizations, including the ILO, encourage policies that provide for secure-paid parental and care leave in order to minimize the negative effects of Covid-19 on the workplace (ILO, 2020a).

5.2.6. Providing Opportunities for Different Work Structures: Flexible Schedule, Reduced Working Hours, Remote Working/Working from Home

Flexible work schedule, which is based on the reorganization of working hours and the application of flexible time management models suitable for the needs of the employee and the employee's family, has been observed as a useful practice in dealing with increased household responsibilities during the pandemic period. The ability to control when employees work gives them flexibility, allows them to control the time boundaries between work and other areas of their lives in a balanced manner, resulting in less conflict (Clark, 2000).

It has been demonstrated that the flexible work schedule supports workers,' especially working parents' ability to have a balance between unpaid care labor in the household and their paid labor in the labor market, also during non-pandemic periods (IMF, 2018, as cited in IMF, UNDP, & UN Women, 2021). The shortened and flexible working hours have the potential to allow parents to adapt to the increased care burdens due to the closure of schools and daycare centers, which will ultimately contribute to gender equality (UN Women, 2020c).

When evaluated in the context of female workers, flexible working arrangements can be particularly liberating during periods of school closures and limited childcare options (UNICEF, ILO & UN Women, 2020). Also, it is noteworthy that several studies have demonstrated that women can maintain their working hours after childbirth by utilizing flexible work arrangements (Chung and Van der Horst, 2018).

In addition, flexible work schedules improve the productivity of employees in challenging conditions (UNICEF, ILO & UN Women, 2020). Increasing the right to flexible work is discussed to be beneficial, ensuring that flexible working is a default rather than an exception (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020).

Changes in business structures, not only temporally but also spatially, have the potential to positively affect employees, especially working women.

Having the opportunity to work from home is beneficial for workers because it gives them the freedom to integrate work and family demands, such that parents can potentially combine childcare with paid work at the same time, for example providing care for a sick household member while working from home (Chung and van der Lippe, 2020). Moreover, employees who commute a long distance to work, are argued to have more time for childcare and/or work if they are able to work from home because they are not required to travel (Peters et al., 2004).

5.2.7. Reflecting Needs in Policy Design: Participation in Decision Making

When the essence of the disadvantages of women is examined, it is concluded that the historical differences in the roles, duties and responsibilities of women and men, as well as the fact that the policies that strengthen and essentially reproduce these differences do not adapt the gender perception to their mechanisms and approaches, and ultimately the policies are reproduced as gender blind. Since gender-blind policies that are designed without taking into account gender-based roles and needs, reproduce rather than help transform the character of gender inequality, the disadvantages that women face in periods other than pandemic-like crises and during crises, lead to the deepening of this inequality and the persistence of the disadvantages (Yerlikaya, 2022). In this sense, an important component to ensure that women's needs are reflected in the decision-making process in the context of policies and practices is the participation of women in decision-making bodies and advisory boards.

Although the place of women in decision-making mechanisms is undoubtedly important in terms of the reflection of the gender perspective on policies, what is critical here is that women in these positions also have a gender perspective and adopt an approach that considers the needs of women. Otherwise, the presence of a woman who has adopted traditional gender roles in the advisory board or decision-making mechanisms does not have the capacity to cause any change in terms of gender equality and any step towards gender sensitive policy design.

Taking this into account, for example, when a woman holds a position with the responsibilities in designing family policies and coordinating the implementation of those without having a gender perspective, it would be witnessed that the existing inequalities are reproduced even in the presence of this woman in a high-level position. Therefore, it should be deduced from here that although it is important for women to have a place in certain seats, what is critical here is that these women have a gender perspective or, if not, that these women gain this perspective, through various prerequisites, raise awareness about the differing problems and needs of women, and be educated about the position they will carry before starting the relevant task.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

GİRİŞ

Bu tez, 11 Mart 2020 tarihi itibariyle Türkiye'de etkili olmaya başlayan Covid-19 pandemisinin çalışan kadınlar üzerindeki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Covid-19 pandemisinin çeşitli alanlardaki etkileri nedeniyle küresel düzeyde iş gücü piyasasındaki toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği uçurumunun genişlediğini göz önünde bulundurulduğunda bu eşitsizliğin büyümesini durdurmak ve olumlu yönde ilerlemek için halihazırda uygulanan “toplumsal cinsiyet körü” politikaların bir kenara bırakılarak, istatistik ve verilere dayalı toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı politikalar üretilmesi kritik önem taşımaktadır.

Tez metni içerisinde “toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı politikalar” terimi kadın ve erkeklerin toplumsal olarak inşa edilmiş rollerinden kaynaklanan ihtiyaçlara paralel olarak tasarlanan ve politika tasarım sürecini toplumsal olarak inşa edilen bu rolleri daha iyi yansıtacak şekilde yeniden şekillendiren politikalara atıfta bulunmak için kullanılmıştır.

“Toplumsal cinsiyet körü” veya “toplumsal cinsiyet körü politikalar” terimi, toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı politikaların aksine kadın ve erkeklerin toplumsal olarak belirlenmiş toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini, sorumluluklarını ve yeteneklerini göz ardı edecek şekilde anlamında kullanılmıştır.

Kadının ücretsiz emeği terimi, hane halkının hayatta kalması için gerekli iş ve bakım (çocuk, hasta, yaşlı vb. bakımı) hizmetlerinin sağlandığı, piyasa değeri olmayan ev işlerini tanımlamak için kullanılmıştır.

İş-yaşam dengesi terimi ise insanların zamanlarının nasıl tahsis edildiğine, ne kadar dahil olduklarına ve işte ve evde değişen rollerden ne kadar memnun olduklarına ilişkin algılarına atıfta bulunmak için kullanılmıştır.

Tezin araştırma soruları şu şekildedir: Covid-19 pandemisinin yarattığı koşullar dünyada ve Türkiye'de çalışan kadınları nasıl etkiledi? Covid-19 pandemisinin çalışan kadınlar üzerindeki etkilerini iyileştirmek için dünya çapında uygulanan iyi uygulama örnekleri nelerdir? Covid-19 pandemisinin çalışan kadınlar üzerindeki olumsuz etkilerini iyileştirmek ve/veya gelecekte yaşanabilecek benzer bir süreçte bu etkileri en aza indirmek için ne gibi çözüm ve sosyal politika önerileri sunulabilir?

Tezin argümanları şu şekildedir: Covid-19 pandemi süreci dünyada ve Türkiye'de hem özel hem de kamusal alanda çalışan kadınları orantısız bir şekilde etkilemiş olabilir. Covid-19 pandemi sürecinin kamusal alana etkileri kapsamında kadınların iş gücüne katılım ve istihdama katılım oranları düşmüş ve gelir kayıpları yoğun bir şekilde gözlemlenmiş olabilir. Covid-19 pandemi sürecinin özel alana etkileri kapsamında kadınların ev içi iş yükü ve bakım sorumlulukları pandemi öncesi dönemde zaten yüksek olan düzeyine göre orantısız bir şekilde artmış olabilir. Covid-19 pandemi sürecinin kadınlar üzerinde özel alanda görülen etkileri kamusal alana da yansımış olabilir: Kadınların bu süreçte artan ev içi yükleri ve bakım sorumlulukları daha da zorlaşmış, hatta bazı deneyimlerde iş yaşamıyla birlikte yürütülmesi imkânsız hale gelmiş, kadınların iş gücüne katılımdan ayrılmak zorunda kaldıkları gözlemlenmiş olabilir.

Bu tez, gelecekte Covid-19 pandemisine benzer olası bir kriz durumunda birey ve toplum düzeyinde dirençli olabilecek bir yapının yerleştirilmesi kapsamında politika tasarımına altyapı sağlanmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Mevcut sistemlerin bireyler üzerindeki etkilerini “deneysel” denilebilecek şekilde test eden bir pandemi yaşanmış ve etkileri raporlanmıştır. Bu çalışma ile bu etkiler ortaya konmakta, farklı

ülkelerdeki iyi uygulamalar örneklenmekte ve Türkiye bağlamında deneyimi iyileştirmek için politika önerileri sunulmaktadır.

METODOLOJİ

Bu tez, çalışan kadınlara odaklandığından çalışma çağında olup iş gücüne dahil olmayanlar, öğrenciler, emekliler ve hastalık veya engellilik gibi çeşitli nedenlerle çalışmayanlar bu çalışma incelemesinin kapsamı dışında tutulmuştur. Daha kapsamlı bir incelemenin amaçlandığı durumlarda bu kadın gruplarının tamamının çalışmaya dahil edilmesi önerilir.

Tezin temel amacı, çalışan kadınların Covid-19 sürecindeki deneyimlerini ortaya koymak, dünyadan farklı iyi uygulama örnekleri sunmak, bu krizin olumsuz deneyimleriyle başa çıkmak ve benzer bir krizde görülebilecek olumsuz etkileri en aza indirmek için önlemler alınması kapsamında Türkiye'ye yönelik politika önerileri sunmaktır. Toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifine sahip olarak kriz öncesi dönemlerde zaten özel ve kamusal alan arasında sıkışıp kalan çalışan kadınların yaşamlarının krizle birlikte daha da kaotik hale geldiğini küresel ve Türkiye bağlamında kapsamlı bir arka plan sunarak ve kriz bağlamıyla ilişkilendirerek ortaya koymak, bu tezin temel kaygısını oluşturmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın araştırma yöntemi, masa başı inceleme, veri toplama, analiz ve son olarak yorumlamaya dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışma kapsamında toplanan veriler sunulmadan önce, teorik bir arka plan sunmak için literatür taraması yapılmıştır. Pandemi öncesi dünyada ve Türkiye'de çalışan kadınların deneyimlerini yansıtan kavramsal bir çerçeve sunarak, pandemi öncesi durumu ortaya koymak ve pandeminin etkilerinin yarattığı durumu karşılaştırmaya olanak sağlamak amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın verileri, çalışmanın araştırma sorularının odak noktası olan çalışan kadınların Covid-19 sürecindeki deneyimlerine ilişkin alanda daha önce yapılan araştırmalardan elde edilen literatür taramasına dayanmaktadır. Masa başı incelemede Covid-19 sürecinde kadınların yaşadıkları olumsuz deneyimlerin iyileştirilmesi için dünyada uygulanan iyi uygulama örneklerine de yer verilmektedir.

Tezin araştırma aşaması Eylül 2021 - Haziran 2022 tarihleri arasında gerçekleştirilmiş, daha sonra güncel araştırmalar için Eylül-Ekim 2022 döneminde seçilen veri tabanı, seçilen anahtar kelimeler ve seçilen dahil etme-hariç tutma kriterleri ile araştırma tekrar yapılmış ve ilgili yeni üretilmiş bazı makaleler ve bulunan raporlar tez kapsamına alınmıştır. Nihayetinde seçilen anahtar kelimelerin farklı kombinasyonları ile belirlenen veri tabanlarında Türkçe ve İngilizce olarak yapılan aramalar sonucunda ulaşılan geniş bir kaynak yelpazesinin dahil etme ve hariç tutma kriterlerine göre değerlendirilmesinin ardından ilgili kaynakların seçilmesi ve ilgili olmayan kaynakların elenmesi sonucunda bir kaynak havuzu oluşturulmuştur. Nihai kaynak havuzu, makalelerin yanı sıra resmî kurumlar ile ulusal ve uluslararası kuruluşların rapor ve yayınlarından oluşmaktadır.

TARTIŞMA

Dünya Sağlık Örgütü'nün 11 Mart 2020 tarihinde "pandemi" olarak nitelendirdiği Covid-19 salgını, istisnasız tüm dünyada insanların yaşamlarına dair her olguyu etkisi altına almıştır. Suya atılan taşın dalga etkisi gibi hızlı bir şekilde uygulamaya konulan tedbirler, salgınla mücadelenin “toplumsal cinsiyet körü” karakter kazanmasına uygun ortam yaratmıştır. Diğer eşitsizliklerle bağlantılı olarak Covid-19 salgını, iş gücü piyasalarında daha önce algılanandan daha belirgin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır ve bu salgın, sosyoekonomik sistemlerdeki kırılğanlıklar üzerinde spesifik bir etki ile tüm dünyada zaten var olan eşitsizliklerin derinleşmesine yol açmıştır.

Covid-19 salgınına karşı alınan önlemlerin koşullarının yarattığı sosyal ve ekonomik sonuçlardan kadınların orantısız bir şekilde etkilenmesinin ana sebebi, tarihsel süreç içinde hemen her toplumda günümüze taşınan gelenekselleşmiş toplumsal cinsiyet rolleridir. Covid-19 pandemisinin yarattığı toplumsal ve ev içi koşullar altında yerleşik toplumsal normların toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri üzerindeki etkisi ve baskısı artmış, bu da kadınların ekonomik olarak güçsüzleştirilmesine ve kamusal ve özel alandaki etkilerin birleşmesi sonucu ev içi emeğin yüküyle aşırı yüklenmesine neden olmuştur. “Toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı iş bölümü” olarak da bilinen kamusal alan-

özel alan ikiliği, kadınların ev içi ücretsiz üretim ve bakımdan, erkeklerin ise kamusal alanda ücretli emekten birincil sorumlu olarak görülmesi; kadınların hem özel alanda hem de kamusal alanda yaşadığı eşitsizliğin temelinde yatan nedendir.

Özel-kamusal alan ikiliğine dayalı iş bölümünün bir diğer sonucu da kadınların ücretli istihdama katılımının zorunlu olmayan, isteğe bağlı bir koşul olarak görülmesi ve erkeklerin istihdamının neredeyse zorunlu bir görev gibi görülmesidir. Ancak kadınlar ücretli istihdamda olsalar bile evdeki ücretsiz emeğin birinci dereceden sorumlusu olmaya devam etmektedirler. Bu iş bölümü kadınların istihdama katılımını zorlaştırmakta ve istihdama dahil oldukları durumlarda dahi çalışma saatleri, ücretler ve çalışma koşulları gibi istihdam alanında önemli ayrımcılıklara maruz kalmaktadırlar.

Yakın temasla bulaşan ve ölümcül sonuçlar doğuran pandeminin doğası gereği acil önlemler alınması gerekli hale gelmiş ve bu aciliyet hali, zaten eril bir işleyişi olan politika üretiminin pandemi ve etkileriyle mücadele politikaları üretiminde toplumsal cinsiyet körü olma kapasitesini de güçlendirmiştir.

Kadınları homojen bir grup olarak ele alıp bu sürecin etkilerinden her birinin aynı oranda etkilendiğini söylemek doğru olmayacaktır ancak var olan eşitsizlikler bazı bağlamlarda ve bazı kadın gruplarında daha da dramatik bir hale gelmiştir. Bu bağlamda yaşadıkları toplumun sosyo-ekonomik durumu, bireyin sosyal sınıfı, yaşı ve bölgesel özellikleri kadınların nasıl etkilendiklerindeki farklılıklarda rol oynamaktadır.

Ataerkil toplumlarda bu durumun baskın olduğu algısına rağmen ev işleri ve bakım sorumlulukları esasen tüm dünyada orantısız bir şekilde kadınlar tarafından yerine getirilmektedir. Kadınların evdeki bu tür işlere erkeklerden önemli ölçüde daha fazla zaman ayırdıkları pandemi öncesinde de bilinen bir gerçektir. Pandemi öncesi koşullarda zaman koordinasyonu ile ücretli istihdam ve ev içi sorumluluklar arasında denge kurmak, özellikle çalışan kadınların olduğu hanelerde zaten bir zorluktu. Bu olumsuz deneyimi en yoğun şekilde yaşayan küçük çocuklu çalışan annelere dikkat çekerek “iş-yaşam dengesi” çalışan ve çocuklu birçok kadın ve erkek için

karşılanması zor bir ihtiyaç olarak karşımıza çıkmakta ancak bu denge çoğunlukla kadınlar açısından sorunlu görülmektedir.

Covid-19 pandemisi sürecinde sosyal mesafenin korunması kuralına dayalı olarak uygulanan karantina, sokağa çıkma yasağı, tecrit gibi sosyal izolasyon yaratan tedbirler; özellikle kadınları iş-yaşam dengesinde zarara uğratmıştır. Bu bağlamda ücretli istihdamın gerçekleştirildiği yer ve zaman ile hane içi işlerin sağlandığı yer ve zaman arasındaki sınırlar ortadan kalkmış, zamansal ve mekânsal bir çakışma olmuştur ki bu hem hanede hem de istihdamda ortaya çıkan çeşitli sorunların temel nedenidir. Kadınların ücretsiz emeği odağında toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliği daha görünür hale gelmiş ve özgün değişimlerle bu eşitsizlik orantısız bir şekilde artmıştır.

Evden çalışma sistemine geçiş yapan kadınların sorumlulukları ve bu sorumlulukların diğer rollerle zamansal ve bazen de mekânsal çatışmaları, başka bir sorun olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Pandemi döneminde piyasadan temin edilmesi zor veya imkânsız hale gelen ev içi hizmet alımlarının karşılanması da kadınların omzuna bir yük olarak eklenmiştir. Hanede daha fazla bireyin bulunmasının getirdiği ihtiyaçlardaki artış ve bu daha fazla bireyin hane sınırları içinde daha fazla zaman geçirmesinin sorumluluğu, ev ortamının düzenlenmesini ve hane içindeki her türlü bakım hizmetlerini (çocuk, yaşlı, hasta vb.) üstlenen kadınların üzerine düşmüştür.

Pandemi öncesinde dünya çapında yapılan farklı araştırmaların zaman kullanımına ilişkin bulguları, ücretli iş ile ücretsiz iş birleştiğinde kadınların toplam çalışma saatlerinin erkeklere göre daha fazla olduğunu göstermiştir. Pandemi sürecinde zamanın kullanımındaki eşitsizliğin arkasında, küresel bir perspektiften bakıldığında, pandeminin yarattığı koşullarda okulların ve bakım merkezlerinin kapanmasından kaynaklanan fazladan ev içi ücretsiz emeğin yükünün neredeyse tamamının kadınlar tarafından sağlandığı bildirilmiştir.

Çeşitli araştırmalar, pandemi döneminde kadınların erkeklere göre ailelerinin bakımına ve ücretsiz ev işlerine daha fazla zaman ayırdığını ve kadınların kendi içinde kıyaslandığında da bu tür işlerde pandemi öncesine göre daha fazla zaman harcadıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Bunlara ek olarak sağlık sistemlerinin artan yükü

nedeniyle hastalığın evde tedavi edilmesi gerekliliđi de kadının ev ii rollerinin artmasına neden olan bir diđer faktör olmuştur.

Okulların kapanmasıyla birlikte okul ađındaki ocukların ev sınırları iinde uzaktan eđitime gemesi, bakım ykne eklenen bir olgu haline gelmiştir. Verilere gre pandemi ncesi dnemde haftada 28 saatini ocuk bakımı sorumluluđuna ayıran ocuklu kadınlar tarafından pandemi koştullarında bu emeđe ayrılan sre 31 saate ıkmıştır. Bir araştırama, bakım sorumlulukları olan alıřan annelerin uzaktan eđitim ve ocuk, yařlı ve hasta bakımı ile bařa ıkmak iin ek sorumluluklar stlenmek zorunda kaldıkları ve bunun genel yařam kalitelerini olumsuz etkilediđi bulmuştur.

Tm dnyada okullar kapanmıř ve haneler fiziksel ev ortamında izole olmuřken ocukların bakımı; okullar, kreřler ve ocuk bakıcıları gibi cretli ekonomi alternatiflerinden bu emeđin aile yeleri tarafından gerekleřtirildiđi cretsiz ekonomiye kaymıřtır. Bakımevleri, evde bakım hizmetleri, bykanne ve bykbaba gibi bir yakın tarafından bakım desteđi gibi seenekleri ieren ocuk bakım destek hizmetleri azaldıka ocuk bakımının sorumluluđu daha ok kadınların stlendiđi bir rol haline gelmiştir.

Toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı iř blmnn bir sonucu olarak hane halkının kadınlar zerindeki artan iř yk, son dnemde dnya apında zaten sınırlı olan toplumsal cinsiyet eřitliđindeki ilerlemenin kesintiye uđramasına yol amakta ve bu ilerlemenin daha da gerisinde kalacađı endiřesini dođurmaktadır. Kresel salgının etkisiyle insanlık tarihinde ilk kez toplumsal cinsiyet eřitliđi alanında bir gerileme yařandıđı bildirilmiřtir ve analize gre, dnya apında toplumsal cinsiyet eřitliđini sađlamak yz otuz altı yıl daha alacaktır.

Covid-19 krizinin yarattıđı derin ekonomik krizin etkilerinin tm dnyada ve az ya da ok tm toplumları etkilediđi grlmektedir. Ancak bu ekonomik etkilerin kadınların iř ve gelir gvencesine yansıması erkeklere gre daha dramatik olmuştur. Bu eřitsiz etkinin nedenleri; toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı ekonomik fırsatlara eriřimdeki eřitsizlikler, pazarlara eriřimdeki farklılıklar, toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı

normlar ve meslekler ve sektörlerdeki ayrımcılıklar ve en temelde, kriz öncesi dönemde mevcut gerçekler olan toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini içermektedir.

Salgının yol açtığı kriz dönemindeki verilere göre, istihdam edilen kadın sayısında yaşanan 54 milyon gibi ciddi bir düşüşün yanı sıra toplamda 45 milyon kadın iş gücünden tamamen çekilmiştir. Covid-19 salgınına yanıt olarak karantina uygulamasının bir sonucu olarak, çalışan erkek ve kadınlar için çalışma saatlerinin, çalışma programlarının ve çalışma biçimlerinin nasıl değiştiğini etkileyen çok sayıda yaygın ve ani değişiklik olmuştur.

Yapılan bir araştırmada elde edilen bulgulara göre, çalışmaya katılan kadınların yüzde 15'inden fazlasının işini kaybettiği ve yüzde 41'inin ücretli çalışma saatlerinin yüzde 4'ten fazla azaldığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca tüm çalışan kadın grupları içinde en çok kendi hesabına çalışan kadınların etkilendiği ve yaklaşık yüzde 70'inin bu değişiklikler sonucunda ücretli çalışma saatlerinin azalması veya işini kaybetme durumuyla karşı karşıya kaldığı tespit edilmiştir. Bulgular, çalışan kadınların pandemi öncesi dönemde haftada 6,3 saati ücretli çalışmaya ayırırken pandemi döneminde bu sürenin 4,9 saate düştüğünü ortaya koymuştur.

Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin yarattığı beklentileri karşılamak için istihdamda düzenlemeler yapanlar çoğu durumda kadınlardır. Araştırmalar, ilkökul çağında çocuğu olan annelerin çocuklarının evde uzaktan eğitim alması nedeniyle çalışma sürelerinin azaldığını, buna paralel olarak 1-5 yaş arası çocuğu olan annelerin çalışma saatlerinin ortalama 1,8 oranında azaldığını ancak küçük çocukları olan babaların çalışma saatlerinde önemli bir değişiklik gözlenmediğini ortaya koymuştur. Başka bir araştırmaya göre, çalışan ve çocuklu kadınların yaklaşık yüzde 10'u pandemi döneminde işini bırakmıştır.

İstihdamda vardiyalı çalışma, esnek çalışma, uzaktan çalışma, ücretsiz izin, kısa çalışma gibi çeşitli başa çıkma mekanizmalarının devreye girmesi de karantina ve sosyal izolasyon politikalarının bir sonucu olmuştur. Çalışmalar, daha önce bir istihdam biçimi olarak evlerinin dışında çalışan kadınların yüzde 44'ünün, erkeklerin yalnızca yüzde 28'ine kıyasla, pandeminin bir sonucu olarak bir istihdam biçimi

olarak evden çalışmaya geçtiğini göstermiştir. Bu oranın ardındaki etkenlerden birinin de okullar ve bakım merkezleri gibi oldukça kadınlaştırılmış sektörlerin pandemi ile birlikte çalışmayı bırakması olduğu bildirilmiştir.

Erkeklerin iş gücüne hâkim olduğu inşaatla ilgili alt sektör ve imalata dayalı alt sektör gibi, pozisyonların çoğunluğunu erkeklerin doldurduğu sektörlerin krizin etkilerinden ağır şekilde etkilendiği 2008 Ekonomik Krizinin aksine Covid-19 salgını sırasında yaşanan bu olmamıştır. 2020'de küresel bir halk sağlığı krizinin patlak vermesinden sonra bu salgın ve buna bağlı olarak yaşanan küresel ekonomik çöküşe karşı alınan sosyal mesafe ve karantina önlemleri, kadınların ağırlıklı olarak temsil edildiği hizmet sektöründeki meslekleri ciddi şekilde etkilemiştir.

Hizmet sektörlerinde çalışan kadınların sayısı, toplam küresel iş gücünün yaklaşık yarısını oluşturmaktadır. Bu sektördeki alt dalların çoğu, işin doğası gereği genellikle uzaktan çalışmaya izin verecek çalışma türüne sahip değildir. Dolayısıyla bu tür mesleklerde çalışan kadınlar risklerle karşı karşıya kalmış, işlerini kaybetmiş, gelirlerini kaybetmiş ve hatta işlerini bırakmak zorunda kalmıştır.

Pandemiden en çok etkilenen meslekler arasında toptan ve perakende ticaret, konaklama, yemek ve turizm sektörleri, hazır giyim, sanat ve eğlence hizmetleri gibi emek yoğun imalat sektörleri, ticari hizmetler ve ev işlerinin olduğu bildirilirken diğer yandan dünyanın pek çok ülkesinde istihdam kayıplarının en başta hizmet sektöründe yaşandığı da kaydedilmiştir. Pandemi nedeniyle işten çıkarmaların ve ekonomik durgunluğun yoğun olduğu bu söz konusu sektörlerde kadın işçilerin çoğunlukta olduğu bilinmektedir. Bu işlerde çalışan nüfusun %54'ünün, yani 75,4 milyon çalışanın kadın olduğu tahmin edilmektedir. Küresel verilere bakıldığında pandemi sürecinden en olumsuz etkilenen sektörlerde istihdam edilen erkekler, istihdam edilen tüm erkeklerin %36,6'sını oluştururken bu oranın kadınlarda %40'a yakın olduğu görülmektedir.

Covid-19 bağlamında özellikle kadın istihdam oranlarının düşük olduğu ve kayıt dışı istihdamın yaygın olduğu gelişmekte olan ülkelerde en savunmasız olanlar kayıt dışı istihdam edilenler olmuştur. Araştırmalara göre pandemi öncesi nüfusta kadınlar, az gelişmiş ülkelerde %92, gelişmekte olan ülkelerde ise %64 oranında kayıt dışı

istihdam edilmekteydi. Bu gerçek doğrultusunda pandemi nedeniyle kadınların yaşadığı istihdam kaybı oranlarının büyük bölümünün kayıt dışı sektörde olduğu, kayıt dışı kesimin hem salgının bulaşıcı doğası hem de karantina tedbirleri nedeniyle yavaşlayan ekonomik faaliyetler nedeniyle ciddi sıkıntılarla karşı karşıya kaldığı bildirilmiştir.

Kadınlar evdeki ücretsiz bakım işlerinin çoğunu yaparken, aynı zamanda küresel olarak sağlık ve bakım iş gücünün de çoğunluğunu oluşturmaktadır. Kadınların dünyadaki genel sağlık ve sosyal bakım iş gücünün yüzde 70'ini oluşturduğu belirtilmektedir. Bu grup içerisindeki kadınların pandemi gibi kritik bir dönemde evden çalışmaya geçilemeyecek nitelikteki meslek grubuna dahil olmaları sonucunda ev içi bakım ve ev işi ihtiyaçları açısından da sorunlarla karşı karşıya kaldıklarının altı çizilmelidir.

Pandemi döneminin yarattığı koşullarda hastanelere aşırı yük binmesi sonucu evde hasta bakımı ihtiyacının bir anda arttığı, okulların ve çocuk bakım merkezlerinin kapanması nedeniyle çocuk bakım ihtiyacının arttığı ve pandeminin hijyen kuralları nedeniyle temizlik hizmetlerine olan ihtiyacın arttığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ancak tüm bu koşullar sonucunda bakım ve temizlik hizmetlerine olan ihtiyacın artmasına rağmen pandeminin yakın temasla bulaşan özelliğinin getirdiği karantina zorunluluğu nedeniyle ev işçileri en çok iş ve gelir kaybı yaşayan gruplardan biri olmuştur. Bu büyük nüfusun yüzde 72'sinin salgın koşullarında işsiz kalmış olması, büyük bir kadın grubunun gelir kaybına işaret etmektedir. Bu noktada önemli sayıda göçmen kadın ev işçisinin bu yoğun nüfuslu ev işçileri grubunun bir parçası olduğunun vurgulanması gerekmektedir.

Türkiye bağlamında erkeğin rolü kamusal alan ve evin geçimini sağlayan kişi olmakla ilgilidir ve kadının rolü ev içi emeğin ana sorumlusu olmaktır. Bu bağlamda kadının ücretli çalışması ikincildir, isteğe bağlıdır, zorunlu değildir ve kadın çalışsa bile ev içi işçiliğe ilişkin beklentiler değişmemektedir. Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine dayalı olarak kadınlardan beklenen bu rollerin sonucu, kadının çalışma hayatı ile ev içi roller arasında sıkışıp kaldığı tablodur. Halihazırda toplam iş gücü içindeki payları çok düşük olan Türkiye'de çalışan kadınların pandemi süreci nedeniyle

yaşadıkları ev sorumluluklarındaki orantısız büyüme ışığında, bu kadınların yaşadığı çatışmalar bir dizi çalışmada incelenmiştir. Türk nüfusunda çalışmak isteyen ancak Covid-19 pandemisinden önce bile çalışamayan kadınlar, 2015 yılı verilerine göre yüzde 71 oranında hanedeki çocuk bakım yükünü çalışmama nedeni olarak gösterdi.

İstatistiklere göre Türkiye, ücretsiz çalışma süresi konusunda üye ülkeler arasında en büyük ikinci toplumsal cinsiyet farkına sahip ülkedir ve Türkiye'deki kadınlar, erkeklere göre ortalama 4,5 kat daha fazla süreyi ücretsiz çalışmaya harcamaktadır. Günlük yaşamda aile yaşamını destekleyen, okullar, bakım merkezleri, spor kulüpleri gibi formal gruplar ve en önemlisi aile gibi enformel gruplar olan, görünen veya görünmeyen birçok kurum ve hizmet vardır. Pandemi nedeniyle Kandiyoti'nin ifadesiyle bu kurumlardan alınan destekler ortadan kalkınca bu hizmetlerin tamamı hane halkına, yani en başta kadına dayatılmıştır.

Covid-19 pandemi döneminde uygulanan karantina tedbirleri şartlarında dünyada olduğu gibi Türkiye'de de çalışanların ücretli çalışma saatleri azalmıştır. Ancak öte yandan pandemi tedbirleri nedeniyle okullar ve kreşler kapatılmış; karantina tedbirleri nedeniyle ev işçileri, çocuk veya yaşlı bakım çalışanları hizmet verememiş; dışarıdan hazır yemek almak gibi pazar ikamelerine erişim azalmış veya tamamen ortadan kalkmış ve virüsün bulaşma riski nedeniyle artan hijyen gereksinimleri ve sağlık gereksinimleri gibi çeşitli başka faktörler ortaya çıkmıştır. Tüm bu etkenler, ev içi ücretsiz emek ve üretime olan ihtiyaç ve talebin artmasına ve bu yükün pandemi öncesine göre çok daha büyük ölçüde kadınların omuzlarında yeniden üretilmesine yol açmıştır.

Mart 2020 başında Türkiye'de ilk Covid-19 vakaları kaydedilmiş, ardından 16 Mart'ta okullar tatil edilmiş ve 23 Mart'ta uzaktan eğitime geçilmiştir. Bu önlemler dizisi, sonuç olarak evde çocukların bakım sorumluluğunun nasıl yönetileceği sorununu da beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu faktöre evden çalışma sistemine geçiş de eklendiğinde hane içinde değişen günlük yaşam, pandemi öncesi koşullara benzer şekilde toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine de yansımıştır. Kreşlerin, gündüz bakım evlerinin ve anaokullarının kapanması ve 65 yaş üstüne yönelik sokağa çıkma yasakları ile büyükanne ve büyükbabalardan gelen çocuk bakım desteğinin neredeyse tamamen

ortadan kalkması nedeniyle aile içinde çocuk bakımı sorumluluğunun yeniden kadına düştüğü görülmüştür.

Bulgular, kadınların %52'sinin ücretsiz bakım işine harcanan zamanın arttığını ve %89'unun ücretsiz ev işlerine harcanan zamanın arttığını ortaya koymuştur. Mayıs 2020'de Türkiye'de yapılan bir zaman kullanım araştırmasının bulgularına göre evli çiftlerden oluşan hanelerde kadın ve erkeklerin ücretli, ücretsiz ve toplam çalışma saatleri arasındaki farktaki orantısız değişim hanedeki kadın ve erkeklerin çalışma durumuna, istihdam koşullarına ve çocuk sahibi olup olmamalarına göre büyük farklılıklara tabidir. Buna göre kadınların ücretsiz çalışmaya ayırdıkları süre neredeyse %80 artmıştır.

Kandiyoti'nin de belirttiği gibi, sanayi öncesi toplumlarda olduğu gibi aile kurumunun piyasa dahil hane dışındaki herhangi bir kuruma bağlı olmadığı durumlarda evdeki kadınların ücretsiz ev işlerinin yükü altına girdiği Covid-19 salgını sırasında ortaya konmuştur. İnsanların Covid-19'da hanelere hapsedilmesi ve dışarıdan yardım alamamasının bir sonucu olarak gayri resmi aile bağlarının ve aile içi destek mekanizmalarının güçlü olduğu geleneksel bir toplum olan Türkiye'de bu durum açık ve güçlü bir şekilde yaşanmıştır. Türkiye'de yapılan bir başka araştırma ise, hane halkının ücretsiz çalışma biçimleriyle başa çıkma konusunda kendi haline bırakılması nedeniyle kadınların evdeki ev içi yükümlülüklerinin orantısız bir şekilde arttığını ortaya koymuştur.

Kadınların ağır ücretsiz iş yükü nedeniyle Türkiye, aynı yıl için OECD ortalaması olan yüzde 61,3 ile karşılaştırıldığında, 2019'da çalışma çağındaki kadın nüfusunun yalnızca %32,2'si ile tüm OECD ülkeleri arasında en düşük kadın istihdam oranlarına sahiptir. Kadınların iş gücü piyasasında gelişmiş ülkelerdeki insana yakışır çalışma koşullarını henüz yakalayamadıkları da bir gerçektir ve bu, bir ülkenin iş gücü piyasasındaki toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliğinin göstergelerinden biridir. Sonuç olarak, pandeminin ülkedeki kadın işsizlik oranına etkisi ve pandemiden nasıl etkilendiği incelenirken ülkeye özgü bir analiz getirmenin çok önemli olduğu açıktır.

Pandemi öncesi döneme göre 15 yaş üstü kadınların istihdam oranı 2019'dan 2020'ye %28,7'den %26,3'e gerilemiştir. Aynı dönemde hanede 3 yaş altı çocuğu olan 25-49 yaş arası kadınların istihdam oranı 2019'da %26,7'den 2020'de %25,2'ye gerilemiştir. UN Women bulgularına göre kadınların %19'u, erkeklerin ise %14'ü işini kaybetmiş, bu da iş kayıplarından farklı bir şekilde etkilendiklerini göstermektedir. Ayrıca kadınların %51'inin kırılgan bir durum nedeniyle çalışma hayatına ara verdiği, %26'sının işten çıkarıldığı ve %25'inin ücretsiz izne ayrıldığı ortaya konmuştur.

Türkiye'de yapılan farklı çalışmalarda Covid-19 döneminde kadınlarda iş ve gelir kaybı oranının erkeklere göre daha yüksek olduğu tespit edilmiş, bu bulgunun nedenlerinden birinin de özellikle etkilediği sektörlerde hastalığı yavaşlatmayı amaçlayan sosyal izolasyon ve karantina politikasıyla ilgili olduğu ileri sürülmüştür. Türkiye'de kadın istihdam oranı %32 iken, kadınların en yoğun olduğu alan %56 ile hizmet sektörüdür.

Türkiye'de çalışan kadınların %42,2'si, kriz dönemlerinde gelirini ilk kaybeden grup olan temizlik ve çocuk bakımı gibi güvencesiz ve kayıt dışı işlerde çalışmaktadır. Pandemi koşullarında çalışamayacak durumda olan kayıt dışı sektörde çalışan kadınlar, işsizlik ve gelir kaybı ile karşı karşıya kalmış, pandeminin sağlık sorunlarının yanı sıra geçim sıkıntısı haneleri sarsmıştır.

TÜRKİYE'DEKİ UYGULAMALAR VE DÜNYADAN İYİ UYGULAMALAR

Türkiye'de uygulanan önlemler ve politikalar şunları içermiştir: İlkokul, ortaokul ve liseler kapatılmış, bu kademedeki okulların yüz yüze yapılacak sınavları ertelenerek uzaktan eğitimle öğretim yapmalarına karar verilmiştir. Tüm bunlara paralel olarak özel kreşler, gündüz bakımevleri ve özel çocuk kulüpleri de kapatılmıştır. Market, bakkal, fırın gibi temel ihtiyaç maddelerinin satıldığı işyerleri dışında işyerleri kapatılmış, şehirler arası seyahat kısıtlanmış, toplanmalar yasaklanmıştır. Halka açık yerlerde maske takma zorunluluğu, evde kalma emirleri, sokağa çıkma yasakları vb. dahil olmak üzere başka önlemler de alınmıştır. Hükümet tarafından bu virüsün yayılmasını önlemek için alınan önlemler, toplum ve ekonomi üzerinde yansımaları olan birçok etkiyi beraberinde getirmiş ve bu etkilerle başa çıkmak için çeşitli

mekanizmalar açıklanmıştır. Bir dizi önlem alınmış ve çeşitli mali yardımlar sağlanmıştır. İşten çıkarma yasağı, ücretsiz izin ödeneği gibi uygulamalar salgından olumsuz etkilenen sektörlerin ve istihdamın korunması kapsamında alınan tedbirlerdir. Şirketlerin maliyetlerinin düşürülmesine yönelik asgari ücret desteği ile istihdam kaybı sınırlandırılmaya çalışılmıştır. Gelir kaybı riskini önleyen bir diğer uygulama ise faaliyetlerini durduran veya yavaşlatan işyerlerinde vatandaşlara 3 ay süreyle kısa çalışma ödeneği verilmesi olmuştur.

Pandeminin pazarda yarattığı ekonomik daralmadan etkilenen işyerlerine koruma mekanizması olarak kısa çalışma, ücretsiz izin, düşük faizli kredi, vergi erteleme ve benzeri destek alternatifleri sunuldu. Ancak bu politikaların kadınların önceliklerini veya ihtiyaçlarını dikkate alan ve toplumsal cinsiyet farklılıklarını ön planda tutan bir yapıya sahip olmadığı için toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı olmadıklarının savunulduğu vurgulanmalıdır.

Dünyadaki iyi uygulamalar şunları içermiştir:

- Kadınların karar verme mekanizmalarında ve izleme ekiplerinde yer alması
- Bakım ihtiyacı olan çocukları olan çalışan anne ve babalara ücretli izin verilmesi
- Çalışma saatlerinin azaltılması veya esnek çalışma gibi farklı çalışma düzenlemelerinin sağlanması
- Çocuk bakımı kuponları, nakit desteği, çocuk bakımı bursları, daha yüksek kısa çalışma tazminatı, acil aile geliri ve diğer gelir desteği önlemlerinin sağlanması

SONUÇ VE POLİTİKA ÖNERİLERİ

Türkiye'de hem iş gücü piyasasının yapısında hem de pandemi öncesi deneyimi karakterize ederek haneleri şekillendiren sosyal normlarda zaten sorunlar vardı. Bu sorunlar, Covid-19 sürecinin deneyimi ve beraberindeki ekonomik krizle birlikte daha da belirginleşerek pandeminin yarattığı zaten benzersiz olan sorunları ve etkilerini daha da zorlaştırmıştır.

Covid-19 pandemisi çerçevesinde birçok tedbir ve düzenleme hayata geçirilmiş olsa da bu düzenleme ve tedbirler toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı ihtiyaç ve eşitsizlikleri ele alacak şekilde tasarlanmamıştır.

Bu bağlamda toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı politikalar, ücretsiz bakım emeği sorunlarının ele alınmasının yanı sıra kadınların zaman kullanım yükünün azaltılması açısından önemlidir.

Zihniyetin değiştirilmesi ve farkındalığın artırılması, hem erkeklerin hem de kadınların ev ve bakım işleriyle daha fazla meşgul olmaları için çok önemlidir.

Toplumsal cinsiyet önceliklendirerek buna göre ayrıştırılmış verilerin toplanması ve analizi, ilgili bileşenlerin taranması, ihtiyaçların belirlenmesi için önceliklendirilmelidir.

Kadınları homojen bir grup olarak değil, her kadın grubunun farklı ihtiyaçlarının olacağını düşünmek merkeze alınmalıdır.

Kadınların iş gücüne dönüşünün eğitim programları, ücret teşvikleri vb. yoluyla desteklenmesi ve teşvik edilmesi uzun vadede faydalı olacaktır.

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